

**WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES AND REPRESENTATIONS OF DIVERSITY
MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING IN A
MULTINATIONAL FOREST COMPANY.**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the relationship between worker identity and workplace practices from the perspectives of white and Aboriginal women working in a multinational forest company in the northern prairies. Over the course of three manuscripts I demonstrate the salience of ascribed and constructed identities of women to their experiences and representations of forest employment and corporate discourse. Setting the context for the remainder of the thesis, the first manuscript presents an analysis of employment segregation by gender and Aboriginal identity in Canada's forest sector in 2001 using segregation indices. Results demonstrate that forest employment was vertically segregated by both gender and Aboriginal ancestry in the forest sector in 2001. Men and women of First Nations ancestry were over represented in less-stable and lower paying occupations in woods based forest industries, and both white and First Nations women were over represented in forest services and clerical occupations. To explore women's perceptions of company practices of diversity management and restructuring, I then analysed interviews with women working in forest processing using critical discourse analysis. In my second manuscript, I demonstrated how women's representations of diversity management practices were linked to their social identities in terms of Aboriginal identity and class. Yet, as a whole, these representations prompted a questioning of the meaning of difference within diversity management, and of diversity management's ability to further the interests of marginalised workers. My third manuscript examining representations of restructuring, argues that there is a two way relationship between women's identities as workers and their representations of restructuring. Whether women reproduced or resisted restructuring was linked to their presented work identities and restructuring and practices in turn were helping to shape women's worker subjectivities. Results from this thesis demonstrated that how women represent themselves and workplace practices is related to their different experiences in the specific set of social relations of forestry work in the northern prairies.

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Despite the assistance from the individuals mentioned above, I accept responsibility for the viewpoints expressed in the thesis and for any errors or problems that remain.

This thesis is dedicated to Jesse Invik.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MNFC	Multinational Forest Company
NAFA	National Aboriginal Forestry Association
NAI	North American Indian
HR	Human Resources

1. INTRODUCTION: GEOGRAPHIES OF WORKPLACE CHANGE

Following more widespread shifts in Canada and the United States, the social relations¹ of forest processing work in larger operations in the Northern Prairies have been moving away from those established after World War II. Post-War social relations of work were characterized by social and legal contracts between business and organized labour that ensured high wages and job security of workers, and by the exclusion of women and racial minorities from access to these relatively good jobs (Amin 1994; Dunk 2002). The move away from this traditional understanding of forest processing work has involved two trends: the increasing introduction of workforce flexibility into forest processing, and the increasing heterogeneity of the workforce. As a result of first of these trends forest processing workers have increasingly faced technological displacement, flexible work systems, declining union strength and decreasing job security (Marchak 1983; Hayter and Barnes 1992; Hayter and Barnes 1997; Wilkinson 1997; Hayter 2003). The second trend, workforce diversification, has involved three simultaneous shifts. First, reflecting broader trends in the sociology of work, the 1990s signaled the entry of substantial numbers of women into non-traditional forest occupations (Tripp-Knowles 1999). Second, the idea of a diverse workforce was increasingly subsumed within broader human resource management strategies (Humphries and Grice 1995; Cavanaugh 1997). And, third, following the courts' increasing recognition of Aboriginal peoples'² rights to resources, governments and forest companies in Canada were increasingly striving to increase Aboriginal participation in the forest industry in the areas of planning, ownership and employment (Curran and M'Gonigle 1999; Reginald and Gordon 2003).

Although these two trends in employment practices may appear unrelated, there are several ways in which they are connected. First, many have argued that corporate diversity

¹ My use of the term social relations follows from Fairclough (2003). Social relations denote all interactions among social agents including both individuals and organizations. These interactions are regulated by social norms and situated within hierarchies of power. Consequently, the social relations of work involve all of the social interactions involved in processes governing work.

² I use the term Aboriginal people to collectively denote people of North American Indian ancestry, people of Métis ancestry and people of Inuit ancestry. This group represents many Nations with distinct cultures and histories, whose ancestors are the original inhabitants of Canada, and who for this reason share a special relationship to this land. I use the term First Nations to specify people of North American Indian ancestry, regardless of whether or not they are registered Indians under Canada's Indian Act.

management initiatives³ are a key element of broader human resource strategies aiming to fragment worker collectivism and replace it with a more flexible and individualized workforce (Humphries and Grice 1995; Marsden 1997). Second, economic restructuring⁴ is both gendered and racialized; having more negative consequences for both women and racial minorities than for white⁵ men (McDowell 1991; Leach 1993; Egan and Klausen 1998; Anderson 2001; Mckenna 2001). And third, workforce diversification has implications for the strength of organized labour. Although some authors have linked declining rates of unionization to the dismantling of a working class culture centered on the traditional white male industrial worker (Dunk 2002; Shenk 2004), others have argued that that a radical diversification of union culture is imperative to union renewal (Hansen 2004; Levesque et al. 2005; Yates 2005). These examples of interconnections between identity and economic change support Mitchell's contention that "...as the political economy 'globalizes', as it constantly revolutionizes the very basis of its own existence, it tends to undermine whatever sureties about identity have built up over the long haul of time"(2000; 11). Shifts in economic organization are thus necessarily accompanied by cultural shifts that alter the construction of identities.

My objective in this thesis is to understand patterns of workplace change from the experiences and perceptions of white and Aboriginal women workers. These perspectives are valuable since white and Aboriginal women's experiences as marginalized workers within forest processing mills provides them with a distinct vantage point with which to understand workplace practices and discourses. By focusing on the talk of women workers, I bridge several divides in economic geography: that between culture and economic processes, between representation and material experience, and between understandings of labour relations and of oppression based on gender and Aboriginality. The aim of this thesis is to examine the ways that white and Aboriginal women experienced and talked about workplace change in ways that reproduced and resisted dominant discourses. In this introduction, I first situate my research within the broader

³ Diversity management is the term given to a particular form of corporate management initiatives designed to increase diversity in the workplace. While there is considerable variation among diversity management strategies, common elements include the underpinning of initiatives with rationale that diversity will increase corporate productivity; and the understanding of diversity both within and outside of legally recognized categories including elements such as age and lifestyle (D'Netto and Sohal 1999; Carson, et al. 2004; Kamp and Hagedorn-Rasmussen 2004).

⁴ My use of the term economic restructuring refers to structural changes at the level of the firm, or the industry that involve firm closure, downsizing, outsourcing, and/or the introduction of more flexible labour practices.

⁵ I use the term white to indicate the racial category against which Aboriginality is defined. Since whiteness is privileged with invisibility, I identify subjects and people as white in an attempt to make racial dominance explicit.

literature on the economic geography of work. I follow this with a description of the specific context of workplace change in forest processing workplaces and a description of my rationale for examining the voices of white and Aboriginal women. Finally, I present an overview of my three manuscripts and how they contribute to our understanding of the relationship between identities and the changing nature of work.

Contribution to economic geography

Increasingly, economic geographers have acknowledged the inseparability of cultural⁶ and social relations from economic practice (Crang 1997; Amin and Thrift 2000; Barnes 2001; Jackson 2002). My research contributes to the development of a cultural economic approach in economic geography by examining how economic practices are reproduced, hybridized and resisted through different worker subjectivities embedded in forest processing workplaces. In contrast to more traditional approaches in economic geography that focus on a material understanding of the economy and take components such as firms, markets, wages and costs as given, a cultural economic approach sees economic practices as socially and discursively constructed and explores the ways in which the economy operates through a variety of different social and representational elements (Hudson 2004). My understanding of economic practices as discursively constructed, however, does not preclude a material understanding of workplace change. Rather I examine discourse as both a reflection of women's material experiences of change as well as a way of discursively reproducing and producing new understandings of work practices and identities which are underwritten by ideologies.

I consider identity in three ways throughout this thesis using the terminology of social identity, style and work identity. I use the term social identity, following from Fairclough (2003) to denote the part of a person's identity that results from how they are pre-positioned in society resulting from attributes that they are born with and from how they are socialized into particular social roles. My use of social identity, however, emphasizes how a person is positioned in society in relation to systems of power, part of which is determined by how one's identity is constructed by others. This conceptualization of social identity is similar to feminist standpoint

⁶ I am using the term culture and cultural relations to denote specific sets of social relations and the ideas and representations that accompany them.

theory which examines the ways that individuals are distinctly positioned within structures of power in society (Hill Collins 2000). Accordingly, I view the insights from people with marginalized social identities as capable of increasing our understanding of how particular social identities are marginalized by systems of oppression, and of how broader systems of power operate. Fairclough (2003) distinguishes social identity from personality, the individualized aspects of a person's identity unrelated to social roles or categories which enable them to enact their social identity in a particular way.

Where social identity signifies how individuals are constructed by others and positioned within social structures, I use the term style to denote how individuals represent themselves in text. In this use, the style of a text can result from both social identity and/or personality. In my second manuscript, one of my aims is to relate specific styles to social identities and representations of management discourse.

Last, in my third manuscript, I approach identity from a more constructivist perspective. I use the term work identity to denote specific styles related to how an individual positions her or himself as a worker. I follow Alvesson and Willmott's understanding of identity as how people draw narratives of themselves: to "...connect different experiences and to reduce fragmentation in feelings and thinking"(2002; 625); to distinguish themselves from others; to provide direction in how to behave; and that are underwritten by a particular set of social values. Thus work identity in my third manuscript refers to how people present themselves (that may encompass elements of both personality and social identity) relative to work. Specific work identities were identified based on relatively coherent presentations of sets of values and approaches to work by one or more individuals.

Understanding the representation and materiality of economic practices as co-constituted has been a key element underpinning geographer's definitions and understandings of globalization. While early approaches understood globalization as solely a set of material economic processes and outcomes, later critiques about whether these were supported by empirical evidence opened the door to understanding globalization as discursively constructed (Hirst and Thompson 1996; Leyshon 1997). Since the mid 1990s, most economic geographers have appreciated that globalization is a both material and discursive (Leyshon 1997; Herod 2000). For example, Kelly (1999) suggested that globalization discourse originates from real, qualitative changes in the economic system and should not be dismissed as simply political

strategy or rhetoric. More specifically, Herod's (2000) description of how globalization impacted workers included both material and discursive components: the increasing implementation of flexible labour relations, the dual movement of manufacturing work to developing countries and of labour internationally, and the discourse of global competition as a rhetorical device to discipline workers.

My research builds on these approaches that position global change as a set of representations and material changes by focusing on the nuances of representation at a smaller scale: workers' representations of change in particular workplaces. I accord primary importance to women's constructions of identity and workplace change, with the understanding that women's constructions are both grounded in material experience and influenced by discourses of change in forest processing workplaces. The way that discursive and material practices or policies play out in specific workplaces, however, is related to local social constructions of work and identity.

Geographers have highlighted how labour relations are socially embedded in place due to the relative spatial fixity of workers, to the fact that processes of labour control and performance are spatially situated, and the fact that regulatory institutions governing labour markets typically exist at a national or subnational scale (Peck 1992; Peck 1996; Martin and Sunley 2001; Christopherson 2002). Human resource management strategies are thus spatially situated, relying on the situated use of both practical and rhetorical instruments to discipline workers and dispel worker resistance; to induce workers to increase their work effort; to minimize work absences; and to normalize the incorporation and allocation of jobs among different social groups (Miller 1998; Hirsch and De_Soucey 2006).

The significant role of social identities in governing labour practices in local labour markets and specific workplaces has been widely acknowledged within and outside of the field of economic geography (McDowell 1991; Gottfried and Graham 1993; Oberhauser 1995; Stiehl and England 1997; McNicholas et al. 2004). In fact, a key aim of labour market segmentation theorists has been to relate the correlation between job quality and different social groups to social and cultural patterns of discrimination (Peck 1989; Leontaridi 1998). Labour market segmentation theories arose in opposition to human capital theories which were predicated on the notion of a self-regulating labour market within which workers rationally choose their occupations through a combination of human capital development (education) and interest.

Although labour market segmentation has been conceptualized in different ways⁷, what different labour market segmentation theories hold in common is that they discount the existence of a direct relationship between occupation and wages and skill. Instead they propose that ascribed characteristics of workers such as race or gender structure their labour market opportunities through social mechanisms such as employer discrimination and childhood socialization matching individuals with particular characteristics to particular jobs (Peck 1989; Peck 1996; Leontaridi 1998; Hiebert 1999; Bauder 2001). A key contribution that geographers brought to labour market segmentation theory was an emphasis on the local specificity of patterns of exclusion and discrimination that differentially allocate jobs in the labour market (Hanson and Pratt 1991; Hanson and Pratt 1995; Hiebert 1999; Bauder 2001). Bauder (2001) further emphasized that place-based symbols and cultural representations can shape job choices, mark the economic worth of residents, and help determine job allocation decisions in the workplace.

Insight on the social mechanisms governing the gendering of work has come from feminist geographers who have linked unequal conditions faced by women in the workplace and the labour market to the performance and representation of gendered identities at work (England 1993; McDowell and Court 1994; Hanson and Pratt 1995; McDowell 2001; Leslie 2002). The relationship between labour markets, jobs and spatially situated constructions of difference led Pratt and Hanson (1994) to suggest that employers are social geographers who consider worker characteristics such as gender, race, education, skills, work-culture and docility when making location decisions. In addition, Hanson and Pratt (1995), and others have suggested that gender identities are fluid, not only across space but over time and within the same individual as they are performed in different contexts (Hanson and Pratt 1995; McDowell 2001; Leslie 2002; Halford 2003; Halford and Leonard 2005). The construction of particular gender identities at work can serve to perpetuate workplace gender inequality which in turn impacts how women and men might experience workplace change such as economic restructuring or diversity management (McDowell 1991; Humphries and Grice 1995; Davis 2000; Leach 2000; Mckenna 2001). My research builds upon this work by interrogating differences among women to analyse how situated social and work identities are linked to specific experiences and representations of workplace change. In particular, I examine women's representations of practices of organizational restructuring and diversity management to critically examine new models of

⁷ For a more thorough review of labour market segmentation theory see Peck 1989 and Leontaridi 1998.

human resource management that promote values of workforce diversity, individualism and flexibility (Humphries and Grice 1995; Hirst and Thompson 1996; Liff and Wajcman 1996; Marsden 1997; Hughes 2005; Hirsch and De_Soucey 2006). To do this, I draw on insights from critical organizational literature on the relationship between identity and the production of discourses within organizations (Humphries and Grice 1995; Ezzamel et al. 2001; Alvesson and Willmot 2002; Symon 2005; Hirsch and De_Soucey 2006).

The changing nature of forest processing work

My examination of the relationship between the construction of identity and discourse is situated in the particular environment of forest processing workplaces. In addition to being associated with particular patterns of gender and Aboriginal/white relations (see section 3), forest workplaces have been impacted by the shift away from Fordist relations of production in ways that are distinct from other types of workplaces.

Natural resource based economies and communities are typically associated with boom and bust growth patterns (Clapp 1998; Halseth 1999; Hayter et al. 2003). This classification has led to the understanding of resource peripheries as “slippery spaces” (Hayter et al. 2003; 17) as a result of their dependence on capital from other locations, fluctuating global prices for primary products, as well as the tendency towards resource exhaustion and exploitation. In addition to this inherent instability, forest industries have also followed broader trends in industrial production. Since the 1980s, work in forestry in Canada has moved towards increasing productive flexibility and product specialization as firms have attempted to maintain profits in increasingly competitive forest product markets (Hayter and Barnes 1992; Hayter and Barnes 1997; Wilkinson 1997; Hayter 2003). In the forest sector, increasing global competitiveness has been described as the driver of pressure to diversify products and increase the flexibility of labour relations (Hayter and Barnes 1997; Holmes 1997). The specific strategies to increase the flexibility of production and labour in resource communities, however, have differed from those in more diversified economies. Numerical flexibility⁸ has often been achieved through the

⁸ Numerical flexibility denotes the realization of flexibility by varying the labour power over time. This typically involves employing workers on temporary contracts or as casual workers. In contrast, functional flexibility is the realization of labour flexibility by developing a multi-skilled workforce that is able to shift activities in response to changing production needs.

replacement of unskilled labour with flexible machines (O'hUallachain and Matthews 1996). The result of restructuring in resource industries has thus typically been documented as downsized, functionally flexible labour forces of core workers within larger forest companies. Other strategies to increase labour flexibility have included vertical disintegration, and outsourcing of the woods based segments of the industry such as logging, planting and silviculture operations to small operators rather than performed in situ by unionized company employees (Marchak 1983).

These changes impacted forest workers through the creation of sustained periods of instability, rapid change and job loss (Hayter and Barnes 1997). Moreover, the location of forest manufacturing firms in communities that often have little alternate economic development further amplifies the impact of job loss on individuals (Barnes et al. 1999; Dunk 2002). Dunk (2002) suggested that job loss among mill workers can also involve a shift in identity. While mill work promoted values of collective resistance and worker entitlement, Dunk found that assistance programmes for workers who were displaced promoted individualized ways of coping with change and moving on.

In Canada, restructuring and downsizing within the forest sector has been simultaneous to the increasing incorporation of both women and Aboriginal peoples in forest employment. While there has been research on women's participation in forestry, this has centred on outlining their experiences with discrimination and not on their experiences with management practices such as the promotion of inclusive workplaces. And, despite the increasing interest in Aboriginal involvement in the forest sector, there has been little research on the relative success of practices to increase Aboriginal employment. This has policy relevance since from the perspectives of many First Nations Bands, Tribal Councils and other Aboriginal groups, improving the economic well being of their members through increased employment opportunities has often been an intended outcome from forestry development initiatives (Anderson, 1999; National Aboriginal Forestry Association [NAFA], 1994; Parsons & Prest, 2003).

Rationale for looking at white and Aboriginal women

White and Aboriginal worker's experiences and perceptions of forest work are situated within a particular gendered and racialized context of work. The specific contexts of both white

and Aboriginal women's participation in forest processing provides them with unique perspectives that can shed light on our understanding of how forest practices are worked out in real life and how they intersect with other relations of oppression. The perceptions of white and Aboriginal women workers are shaped by their different experiences of work in forest communities, by how their identities are constructed by others and by how women subjectively position themselves as workers.

Several studies have demonstrated the salience of gender as a category limiting the participation of women in the forest sector (Marchak 1983; Reed 1999; Preston et al. 2000; Reed 2003). Women were historically excluded from many of the well-paid forms of employment in the forest sector and their entry into male-dominated forms of work has been marked by marginalization and overt discrimination (Reed 1999; Tripp-Knowles 1999; Reed 2003). Women's limited participation in many forms of forest sector employment has translated into economic and social marginalization, since the narrow economic base in many forest communities typically offers few well-paid employment opportunities outside of forest employment (Egan and Klausen 1998; Reed 1999). As a result, forest communities often have dramatic gendered bi-modal income distributions, since women in these communities are over-represented in low-paid forms of service sector employment relative to their urban counterparts (Parkins and Beckley 2001). Moreover, research on restructuring in the forest industry has shown that women are more likely to lose their jobs than men when downsizing occurs, a finding that is consistent across manufacturing industries (Armstrong 1996; Barnes 1999; Hayter 2000; Fonow 2003).

Aboriginal men have had a long history of participation in wage labour, particularly in the primary resource sector (Knight 1978). Historical research suggests, however, that despite a history of participation, Aboriginal men faced discrimination in forest employment; they were often excluded from participation in many types of forest employment, or confined to particular occupations with less desirable wages and work conditions (High 1996; Barron 1997; Pennier 2006). In the study region for this thesis, Aboriginal men were historically excluded from sawmill work but recruited as forest fire fighters, where "The work was highly dangerous and the wage returns pitifully small" (Barron 1997; 155). From WWII onwards, job quality in the forest industry became increasingly variable and differentiated into woods based industry sub-sectors which included work that was seasonal, poorly paid and piecemeal, and work in larger

manufacturing operations that was unionized, well paid, full time and year-round. Following classic segmentation theory, the allocation of jobs between the poorly paid flexible sector and the more stable highly paid sector typically follows patterns of discrimination in larger society; for example, treeplanting has historically employed marginalized groups of workers while pulp mill work has typically employed white men (Dunk 1994; Prudham 2005). Although I am not aware of any studies examining employment segregation in forestry by Aboriginal identity, evidence suggests that historically Aboriginal men were more likely to be employed in treeplanting, fire fighting and logging occupations than in larger sawmills and pulp mill operations (Barron 1997; Teskey and Smyth 1975).

The history of Aboriginal women's participation is unclear. Upon examining the history of Aboriginal participation in British Columbia's economy, Lutz (1992) found that Aboriginal people's participation in wage labour often followed traditional gender divisions of labour. Lutz was not able to find any evidence of women working in mining, railroad work or mining and as a result concluded that in occupations without parallels in traditional Aboriginal societies, that gender divisions likely followed those present in capitalist society. Although little is known about women's participation in forest employment, research examining broader patterns of occupational segregation by Aboriginal identity and gender has demonstrated that while Aboriginal men were over-represented in occupations unique to primary industries, Aboriginal women were over-represented in service sector occupations. This suggests that Aboriginal women are excluded from forest work to a greater degree than Aboriginal men. Moreover, similar to Aboriginal men, Aboriginal women have lower labour force participation rates and higher unemployment rates when compared to Canada's non-Aboriginal population. In light of the high proportion of Aboriginal people who live in forested areas, these employment disparities highlight the importance of examining Aboriginal women's employment in forestry (Hopwood et al. 1993).

Research examining Aboriginal people and work more broadly, has linked the discrimination that Aboriginal people have often faced from workers and employers to representations of Aboriginal people as deficient, as a problem to be fixed, and as outside of industrial manufacturing (Guard 2004; Wilson 2004). In his autobiography, an early Stó:lō logger named Hank Pennier described his need to continuously fight against stereotypes that typified Aboriginal people as 'lazy Indians' throughout the early logging period (Pennier 2006).

Similarly, women's marginalization within forestry has been linked to specific representations of masculinity; this included a masculinity associated with manual labour, emphasizing physical strength, and a masculinity associated with managerial proficiency, emphasizing objectivity and rationality (Tripp-Knowles 1999; Brandth and Haugen 2000; Reed 2003; Brandth et al. 2004). And, Dunk's (1994) research on white male pulp mill workers in Ontario's hinterland found that men constructed their identities as workers in opposition to both women and Aboriginal people, the latter who were considered as belonging in the bush and outside of mill work.

By centering my examination of the changing nature of work on white and Aboriginal women's representations and experiences of work, my hope is that this research will deepen our understanding of the construction of identities in forest processing, and of how social identities relate to changing employment practices in forest processing workplaces.

Thesis outline

My thesis consists of three manuscripts, each offering a different lens on our understandings of the relationship between identity and forestry work. The first manuscript establishes the broad context for the thesis by presenting an analysis of the employment segmentation of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men and women across Canada's forest industries. My second and third manuscripts look more specifically into the relationship between social and work identity and changes in forest processing employment within the subsidiaries of a multinational forest company operating in the northern prairies. The second paper offers a detailed examination of how white and Aboriginal women workers experienced and represented the firm's diversity management practices and the third considers the interplay between practices and discourses of economic restructuring, and women's worker subjectivities.

My first paper, entitled "Segregation of women and Aboriginal people within Canada's forest sector by industry and occupation," presents a descriptive analysis of employment segregation in Canada's forest industries by gender and Aboriginal identity. I use segregation indices as well as the comparison of the percentage distributions of different groups among

occupations and industries to examine horizontal employment segregation⁹ among occupational and industry categories segregation and then use the mean income of labour force participants in each category to infer vertical segregation¹⁰. I argue that white women and Aboriginal men and women are vertically segregated into occupations and industries in the forest sector that have lower mean earnings than those of white men. In contrast, non-Aboriginal men who were over-represented in jobs that are often unionized and that have standard employment relationships, Aboriginal men and women are over represented in seasonal woods based forest industries that offer non-standard and flexible forms of work. White women were over-represented in clerical occupations.

Both my second and third manuscripts are set in the context of an American owned multinational forest company operating in the northern prairies. In 2003, the multinational forest company owned 6 forest processing mills in the study region, making it the dominant player in the regional forest industry. These included one pulp and paper mill and a small sawmill in a community of approximately 30 thousand people and an oriented strand board mill, a plywood mill and two sawmills distributed among three smaller communities, each of less than 2000 residents. Interview candidates were solicited from four communities and mills and their associated forest management operations through the distribution of letters, postings and word of mouth. All firms were located in the forest fringe eco-region which was dominated by mixed wood boreal forests. The regional population of the area was approximately 30% Aboriginal in 2001.

My second two manuscripts offer critical perspectives on this multinational forest company's diversity management and economic restructuring practices, respectively. These manuscripts build on previous research examining the representation and construction of social identities and on discourses of change in the workplace. My focus is specifically on how white and Aboriginal women talked about human resource management practices of diversity management and economic restructuring practices. In each paper, I examine how women's representations of change reflected and reproduced dominant and critical discourses of change and how these representations were linked to social identity in one case, and work identity in the

⁹ Horizontal segregation is the separation of groups into different occupations and industries without distinguishing whether the difference follows a hierarchy of power and opportunity.

¹⁰ Vertical segregation is the differential representation of groups among job hierarchies where jobs may be ranked in terms of wages, stability and job quality. The presence of vertical segregation shows material inequality among groups.

other. I employ critical discourse analysis to access the interconnection of identity and discourses of change.

I approached interviews with women workers as a white, middle class, educated woman seeking to understand white and Aboriginal women's experiences of forestry work and their associated experiences of class, racism and sexism. Although I cannot discount the impact that my social location had on my research, I adopted a similar approach to Best (2003), seeing my interviews as a point of translation that enabled me to gain an (incomplete) understanding of and sensitivity to marginalized subject positions. Throughout my interviews, I drew on a familiarity with resource industries and manufacturing workers which I gained from having grown up in a hinterland community and from having worked for several summers in resource communities across Canada and the United States. These experiences often allowed me to more easily develop rapport with the women. To facilitate the translation of women's experiences throughout the interview I sought explanation of terms and situations that I did not understand. Further evidence that the interviews became a process of translation was interviewees' occasional use of phrases such as "Do you understand?" to ensure mutual understanding.

My second manuscript looks specifically at white and Aboriginal women's talk about the multinational forest company's diversity management practice and discourse aimed at increasing the representation of women and of Aboriginal workers. Diversity management has been proposed by business consultants and academics as a way to reconcile the need for economic competitiveness with a desire to overcome economic injustice evident in patterns of occupational segregation based on gender, ethnicity and ability (Cox 1994; Ettliger 2001). The business rhetoric of diversity management is that workplace diversity is beneficial to productivity (D'Netto and Sohal 1999). Critics of diversity management have aligned it with other human resource management strategies that shift worker management relations from collective to individualized forms, suggesting that it can help to re-entrench racism and facilitate new forms of worker control (Humphries and Grice 1995).

I build on this critical management research by examining the specific ways that diversity management was articulated and experienced by white and Aboriginal women working in forest processing workplaces in the northern prairies. I argue that women's representations of diversity management practices reflected their particular locations as white or Aboriginal women. These situated representations highlighted the contradictions inherent in diversity management

practices that promote inclusion while neglecting broader structures of discrimination and disempowerment.

The third manuscript continues to develop the relationship between work identity and workplace change however instead of focusing on inclusion, its focus is on how women talked about economic restructuring practices. Restructuring practices in forestry have been linked to a dismantling of traditional mill-worker identities (Dunk 2002). In the three decades following WWII, workers could expect stability, high wages and good benefits from mill work. Mill work culture came to be associated with hard physical labour and strong values of collectivism, as well as with masculinity and whiteness (Dunk 1994; Reed 1999; Tripp-Knowles 1999; Brandth and Haugen 2000; Reed 2003). Since the 1970s, however, forest processing industries began to see repeated waves of industry restructuring that have resulted in increasing flexible labour relations, layoffs, downsizing, and mill closures (Armstrong 1996; Hayter 2000).

Since women working in forestry have been found to be more vulnerable to economic restructuring than men, and since they have work histories and experiences that differ from those of the white men in their communities, they have a unique vantage point from which to examine the relationship between work identity and perspectives towards restructuring. Women might be expected to legitimize restructuring since they might not associate themselves with a male collectivity, or to delegitimize restructuring based on their heightened vulnerability.

I suggest that there were two ways that discourses of organizational restructuring were integrated with women's work identities. First, women's presentations of work identities were linked to whether they reproduced or resisted dominant discourses of organizational restructuring and second, restructuring discourse and practice was actively shifting how women identified with work.

By interrogating the intersection of worker identities and workplace change, this thesis hopes to advance both our understandings of the constitution of social identities and forestry work, as well as our understandings of the role of new management discourses and work cultures in institutionalizing changing forest work practices.

On 6/14/07, Lorraine Mayer <mayerl@brandonu.ca> wrote:

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> Hello Susanne

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> I have just received the hard copies of the journal your article has been
> published in. They will be sent out shortly. As for copyright consent, I am
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> meantime, I hope this letter will suffice.

>

> I hereby give Suzanne E. Mills consent to re-print the article "Segregation
> of Women and Aboriginal People Within Canada's Forest Sector by Industry
> and Occupation" in her thesis. The article has been published in Canadian
> Journal of Native Studies, Vol 26., 1 2006.

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> Thank You

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> Lorraine Mayer

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2. SEGREGATION OF WOMEN AND FIRST NATIONS WITHIN CANADA'S FOREST SECTOR BY INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION.¹¹

Abstract

This study examines employment segregation by gender and by First Nations ancestry within Canada's forest sector in 2001. Results show that while gender segregation was principally by occupation, segregation by First Nations ancestry was principally by industry sub-sector. White women were over represented in clerical occupations and First Nations men were over represented in woods based industries. Patterns of employment for First Nations women differed from those of both First Nations men and white women.

Cette étude examine la ségrégation d'emploi par le sexe et l'ascendance Premier Nations dans le secteur forestier au Canada en 2001. Les résultats démontrent que la ségrégation par le sexe était principalement par profession tandis que la ségrégation liée à l'ascendance Premier Nations était surtout par sous-secteur d'industrie. Les femmes blanches occupaient les postes administratifs de façon disproportionnée et les hommes Premier Nations se trouvaient plutôt dans les emplois de l'industrie du bois. De plus, les modèles d'emploi pour les femmes Premier Nations différaient de ceux d'hommes Premier Nations et de femmes blanches.

¹¹ This manuscript is In Press in the Canadian Journal of Native Studies and will be published in 2007.

Introduction

Forestry continues to be an important industry for Canada and an important source of employment for residents of rural and remote forested regions in the provincial norths. Historically however, jobs in the forest industry have not been equally distributed across the population. Several studies have demonstrated that women and Aboriginal people have not been equitably represented in many forms of forest employment (Teskey and Smyth 1975; Hopwood et al. 1993; Merkel et al. 1994; Rossiter 1995). Due to the variability in employment conditions and wages among jobs in the forest sector, the existence of unequal representation might easily result in income inequity among groups in regions with high forest sector employment. Over the past decade there has been widespread acknowledgement of the need for forest companies to develop hiring and management practises that support the employment of both women and Aboriginal peoples in forest work at all levels (Anderson 1999). Despite the political and social importance of diversity in forest employment there has been no recent examination of the degree of occupational and industry segregation within the forest industry across Canada. This paper addresses the need for a better understanding of employment inequities by presenting recent data on employment segregation by First Nations¹² ancestry and gender in the forest sector.

Literature review

Employment segregation is the tendency for groups of people to be differentially represented across a particular set of occupations and/or industries. Differences in group representation across jobs is often linked to social inequality since jobs in different occupations and industries are variable in terms of wages, benefits, degree of stability and other qualitative attributes. In this paper I distinguish horizontal segregation, the separation of groups into different occupations and industries without distinguishing whether the difference follows a hierarchy of power and opportunity, from vertical segregation, where the differential representation of groups is hierarchical and demonstrates inequality among groups in terms of wages, stability and job quality.

¹² My use of First Nations in this paper includes both status and non-status First Nations as defined by Canada's Indian Act. I use the term Aboriginal people to denote anyone of First Nations, Métis or Inuit ancestry.

Gender segregation in the work force has been the focus of sociological inquiry for almost half a century. Since women's work has often been devalued, occupational gender segregation has resulted in economic disadvantage for women in the paid work force (Cohen and Huffman 2003). Women have typically been over represented in white and pink collar professions while they have been under represented in higher status white collar professions and blue collar jobs. While segregation in the work force has declined over the past half century, gender continues to be a strong determinant of occupation (Robinson 1998).

There was a general decrease in occupational segregation by gender in many countries, including Canada from the 1950s through to the 1990s (Brooks et al. 2003). Although women have continued to be over represented in service and clerical occupations, these occupations have become more integrated. Women have also increasingly entered male dominated managerial and professional occupations. Disadvantages faced by women as a result of vertical occupational segregation by gender may be declining, yet women have remained under represented in the trades and in primary sector employment, which includes work in forestry, fishing and mining.

Studies of occupational gender segregation in Canada have often examined women as a homogenous group (Brooks et. al. 2003; Fortin and Huberman 2002). Studies outside of Canada have shown, however, that when patterns of gender segregation are examined among different ethnic groups, observed patterns of occupational segregation by gender are more complex (Blackwell 2003; Cassirer 1996). For example, occupational gender segregation within an ethnic group may be lower in situations where men take less desirable 'female' jobs due to racial discrimination, or when occupations dominated by an ethnic group are gender integrated. Alternatively, occupational segregation may be high in ethnic groups where men are advantaged and able to attain high status occupations. Studies comparing ethnic segregation with gender segregation have typically found that occupational gender segregation within a given ethnic group is greater than occupational ethnic or racial segregation (Blackwell 2003; Kaufman 2001). In addition, since there is also typically more variability in the occupations of men, there is often more potential for occupational segregation by ethnicity for men than for women (King 1992).

In this paper I examine employment segregation by gender and First Nations ancestry. I use First Nations ancestry to denote respondents who indicated having ancestors belonging to a North American Indian group in the 2001 census (see explanation in data sources). Although it would have been desirable to also examine segregation among people of Métis and Inuit

ancestry, due to the requirement for groups to be exclusive, and limitations of data series used it was not possible to examine all groups. First Nations ancestry is not an ethnicity but a term used to recognise how Canada's first peoples differ from the non-Indigenous population of Canada. First Nations does not describe one homogenous culture but rather encompasses many Nations with distinct cultures. First Nations people are a group demarked as the descendents of the original occupants of the territory known as Canada and as such possess a special relationship to this space. First Nations people should not be discussed as an ethnicity abstracted from their distinct history and relationship to the land and to newcomers. The term First Nations ancestry is used in combination with the term First Nations people in this paper. Although the term ancestry is problematic since it implies that First Nations is the ethnic background of an individual and not an identity situated in the present and linked to membership in a distinct Nation, in this paper the term First Nations ancestry was used to accurately reflect the data used in analysis that were based on the ethnicity and not the identity question in the 2001 census.

Several studies have demonstrated that labour force characteristics of Aboriginal peoples in Canada differ from those of Canada's population as a whole (Lautard 1982; George and Kuhn 1994; Voyageur 1997; Kuhn and Sweetman 2002; Dore and Kulshreshtha 2003). Employment data suggests that First Nations people face both exclusion and occupational segregation within Canada's labour market (Satzewich and Wotherspoon 2000). Labour market exclusion is shown through employment and unemployment figures for Canada's Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal populations. The percent of single origin Aboriginal males employed in 1991 was 25 percent lower than the percent of non- Aboriginal males employed while unemployment levels were approximately twice as high for Aboriginal men and women than for non- Aboriginal men and women (Kuhn and Sweetman 2002). In addition, job retention rates have been found to be substantially lower for Aboriginal people than for non- Aboriginal people. These differences in labour force characteristics suggest that Canada's Aboriginal people participate in a different labour market from the non- Aboriginal population.

The few studies that have examined occupational segregation of Canada's Aboriginal population have found a high degree of occupational segregation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people (Lautard 1982; Satzewich and Wotherspoon 2000). In Lautard's study using census data from 1971, First Nations males and females were found to hold different occupations from non-First Nations Canadians and from one another. First Nations women were more likely

to have service occupations while First Nations men were more likely to hold occupations in fishing, hunting and trapping, farming and other primary industries. Both male and female First Nations people were less likely to be employed in professional or clerical work than non-First Nations Canadians. According to Lautard, this high horizontal occupational segregation, translated into strong vertical segregation, leading to economic disadvantage among First Nations peoples. Satzewich and Wotherspoon's (2000) analysis using data from the 1986 census has further supported the patterns outlined by Lautard, showing that the distribution of occupations for Aboriginal men and women differed from the distribution for all Canadian men and women. Aboriginal men were less likely than non-Aboriginal men to hold white collar jobs and among blue collar jobs Aboriginal men were over represented in construction and primary occupations and under represented in production, fabrication and processing jobs. Occupations of Aboriginal women were more similar to those of non-Aboriginal women than to those of Aboriginal men, however compared to non-Aboriginal women, Aboriginal women were over represented in service sector positions which are typically lower paid. The over representation of Aboriginal men in primary industries in both studies is indicative of the long history of Aboriginal people's participation in wage employment in primary industries such as agriculture, fishing and logging (Knight 1978). From the above studies of occupational segregation, it is impossible to determine the quality of the jobs available to Aboriginal peoples within primary industries due to the use of broad occupational categories over all industries.

Qualitative studies examining the participation of First Nations peoples in primary industries suggest that within these industries First Nations people have historically been relegated to poorly paid employment in undesirable and unstable occupations. For example, from the 1950's to the early 1980s, First Nations workers from northern Saskatchewan were recruited for work in the sugar beet industry in southern Alberta (Laliberte 1993-1994). Since this seasonal work was deemed agricultural work, provincial labour laws did not apply and the migrant workers were badly exploited (Laliberte and Satzewich 1999). Similarly, in British Columbia First Nations women provided seasonal cheap labour in canneries (Muszynski 1988). In both of these situations, the partial dependence on a subsistence economy allowed survival between times of wage employment allowing First Nations people to act as a reserve army of inexpensive labour. A Saskatchewan government report from 1975 suggests strong occupational segregation within the forest sector (Teskey and Smyth 1975). In 1972, First Nations people

were three percent of the employees in pulp and paper mills, and nine percent of employees in large sawmills, both forms of employment offering the greatest stability, and the highest pay. In contrast the percent of loggers who were First Nations ranged from 20-73 percent, and the percentage of seasonal workers in small sawmills who were First Nations was 27 percent. Both of these types of work entailed greater physical danger. More recently, The Aboriginal Forestry Training and Employment Review (Hopwood et al. 1993), using data from the 1986 census reported similar patterns, with Aboriginal people representing 7% of the total forestry and logging work force, 4% of the wood processing work force, and 2% of the total pulp and paper mill work force. This report also found that the proportion of Aboriginal people employed in forest related activities had decreased as a result of a move towards large-scale forest operations which are often centered in larger centers.

While there have been no reports calculating segregation indices in the forest sector in Canada by gender there have been several qualitative studies examining the barriers faced by women in different areas of forest employment (Preston et al. 2000, Reed 2003). Many qualitative studies on women in forestry have identified barriers to women's employment in forestry and have attempted to link the cultural portrayal of forestry work as masculine, with the continued low representation of women in this sector (Tripp-Knowles 1999; Brandth and Haugen 2000). Women working in forestry have faced overt discrimination and have been barred from advancement (Tripp-Knowles 1999). For rural women, who have few employment options outside of the primary sector, this occupational segregation has resulted in economic inequality between women and men. Studies examining labour force characteristics of resource based communities typically show higher than average gender gaps in income (Sinclair 2002; Parkins and Beckley 2001) and that women in resource communities are more likely to be underemployed than women in urban areas (Jensen et al. 1999). Thus occupational segregation in rural primary industries may become transferred into regional labour market patterns. Forsberg (1998) identified how forest communities in Sweden have a higher degree of occupational segregation by gender and fewer women present in political life.

A neglected area of inquiry within this literature is, however, the exploration of how gender segregation in rural labour markets is negotiated with other identities. In light of the continuing importance of primary industry employment to First Nations people, and the

Aboriginal title¹³ that many First Nations assert on forested lands that are presently leased for harvest by large forest companies, examining how gender and First Nations ancestry intersect in employment segregation in the forest sector has political importance.

My objective with this paper is to present more recent, and industry specific data on the segregation of First Nations people and women within the forest sector in Canada. I will use these data to compare segregation by gender with segregation according to First Nations ancestry and to examine segregation by First Nations ancestry within the male and female forestry labour force within industry and occupational categories of the forest sector.

Methodology

In this paper I defined segregation as the degree of evenness of the distribution of a group among categories. This definition, although suitable to assess the integration of groups in occupational or industry categories, is not sufficient if one wishes to infer power differences between examined groups and may be understood as a measure of horizontal segregation. To examine how measured segregation may translate into economic advantage or disadvantage (vertical segregation), results following from the calculations below were discussed in the context of additional information including industry characteristics and mean incomes for occupations within each industry.

Indices of segregation

The Duncan index (D), also termed the index of Dissimilarity, is commonly used to measure segregation (Duncan and Duncan 1955). The Duncan index measures the proportion of

¹³ Aboriginal title is the inherent right of First Nations peoples to use and occupy the land they inhabit. Aboriginal title remained an ambiguous legal concept until the Supreme Court's decision on the *Delgamuuk* case in 1997 (Saku and Bone 2000). The *Delgamuuk* Supreme Court decision reaffirmed and defined Aboriginal title stating that although the Royal Proclamation formalised Aboriginal title, the existence of Aboriginal rights and title pre-existed the proclamation. Aboriginal title is acknowledged as a communal property right held by First Nations people over lands allowing them rights to exclusive use and occupation of these lands (Slattery 2000). Aboriginal title is protected under Canada's constitution and can't be sold or transferred except to the Crown; (Behrendt 2000).

the population of a group that would need to change categories in order for two exclusive groups of interest (A & B) to be equally distributed across all categories. D is calculated as (1.) the sum of the absolute differences between the relative occurrence of each interest group in each category (in this case occupation) where A_i = the number of people from group of interest A in occupation i , A_T = the total number of people from group A across occupations, B_i = the number of people from group B in occupation i and B_T = the total number of people from group B across occupations.

$$1. \quad D = 0.5 \sum |A_i / A_T - B_i / B_T|$$

The popularity of D when compared with other indices has arisen from the fact that it was thought to meet several criteria indicative of a good index (Duncan and Duncan 1955). These include: compositional invariance, that the index is not affected by a proportional increase in A_T or B_T in all i categories or by an increase of all groups within the i^{th} category; organisational equivalence, that the index is not affected by the number or combination of categories examined (provided they are similar in level and direction of segregation); and, principle of transfers, that an individual's movement from one category to another affects the index. Gorard and Taylor (2002) have demonstrated, however that D does not meet criteria for strong compositional invariance since it is affected by changes in either A_T or B_T when their proportional distribution amongst categories remains constant. In addition, others have demonstrated that in cases of where one group of interest is small relative to the number of categories i , D index values will be biased upwards due to the greater likelihood of random segregation when numbers are small (Peach 1996). Each of these criticisms posed a challenge for the interpretation of occupational segregation in this paper due to the small number of First Nations women in the forest industry and due to the varying labour force participation by respective groups among industries.

I addressed the weak compositional invariance of D by also using the segregation index (S) proposed by Gorard and Taylor (2002). S meets the condition of strong compositional invariance, and is given by (2.), where T_i = the total number of people (from both groups A and B) in occupation i and T_T = the total number of people (from both groups A and B) across occupations.

$$2. \quad S = 0.5 \sum |A_i / A_T - T_i / T_T|$$

The principal disadvantage of S is that it is not symmetrical, that the index will differ according to which group is examined. In addition, due to the sensitivity of both indices to occupational structure, comparisons of occupational segregation among industry sub-sectors that differ in occupational sub structure will be made only if differences are large and with caution.

In this paper I used both the Duncan index and the Segregation index to calculate industry segregation by gender within the total population¹⁴, and within the total population with North American Indian ancestry. Further, Duncan and Segregation indices were calculated for industry segregation by First Nations ancestry within the total population and total males and females. Last, Duncan and Segregation indices were calculated as a measure of occupational segregation within industry categories by gender and by First Nations ancestry.

In order to increase the interpretive value of analyses, for each of the above analyses percentage distributions among industries and occupations were presented for women and people of First Nations ancestry and differences in the distributions of groups of interest (for example males and females) among categories (industries or occupations) were computed. Differences were calculated as the proportion of group A's total population in a given category, minus the proportion of group B's total population in category x. If the resulting number is positive, it indicates that group A has a relatively higher representation in category x, than group B, while a negative number indicates that group B has a relatively higher representation in category x than group A.

To assess whether horizontal segregation as calculated by the above measures has resulted also in vertical segregation, mean incomes for the total population in selected industries and occupations were also examined.

Data

Data were ordered as special runs from the 2001 census from Statistics Canada and included all labour force participants 15 years of age and over, living in Canada who reported

¹⁴ The total population consists of workers in Canada's forest sector as outlined in the methods.

having an occupation in a forest industry¹⁵. In this paper, forest industries include both woods based activities that included activities related to regeneration, and logging and manufacturing industries, which included the processing or manufacturing of wood products. North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) categories were used to classify forest industries. Woods based forest activities included 1131 timber tract operations, 1132 forest nurseries and gathering of forest products, 1133 logging and 1153 support activities for forestry. Manufacturing industries included industrial classifications 3211 sawmills and wood preservation, 3212 veneer, plywood, and engineered wood product manufacturing and 3221 pulp, paper and paperboard mills. The manufacturing industry 3219 other wood product manufacturing represents a range of occupations that are more removed from forest extraction (for example furniture manufacture). Since the majority of jobs in other wood product manufacturing were located in urban centres and they are not representative of what is normally considered forest employment, this industry was excluded from analysis.

Occupational categories include all broad occupational categories of the National Occupation Classification System (NOCS) used by Statistics Canada, except for categories D. health occupations, E. occupations in social science, education, government services and religion and F. occupations in arts, culture, recreation and sport since these occupational groupings represented less than 3000 labour force participants in the selected forest sectors. I presented income and labour force data for more narrow occupational categories when a more narrow division of broad occupational categories facilitated an increased understanding of the participation of First Nations peoples and women in the forest sector.

To assess industry segregation by gender among First Nations peoples in industries and occupations, I used the First Nations origin group Total North American Indian (NAI) from Statistics Canada. This group included all respondents who reported having at least some ancestors as belonging to a NAI group, including respondents with both single and multiple origins. I did not include Métis respondents since multiple response NAI data would not preclude an individual being of both Métis and NAI ancestry, a situation that would violate index requirements for exclusivity. The population of people without First Nations ancestry was

¹⁵ Data used for this study was funded by a grant from the Status of Women Canada for the project entitled “Hidden Actors, Muted Voices: The Employment of Rural Women in Canadian Forestry and Agri-food Industries,” conducted by researchers, Diane Martz and Maureen Reed.

calculated by subtracting the population with NAI ancestry from the total population for each occupation/industry.

Results

Segregation among forest industries

Results demonstrate that for the examined industry classifications within the forest sector of Canada, segregation of individuals with First Nations ancestry from those with no First Nations ancestry was greater than segregation between men and women. The degree of segregation by gender among forest industries in Canada did not differ between the First Nations population and the non-First Nations population (Table 2.1). The industries over represented by men versus women were also similar except for pulp, paper and paperboard mills. In this industry sub-sector men were over represented in the non-First Nations population while in the First Nations population, women were over represented. Within both groups women were over represented with respect to men in timber tract operations, forest nurseries and gathering of forest products, support activities for forestry, and veneer plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing while men were over represented in logging, and sawmills and wood preservation sub-sectors. This division may reflect a difference between the gender stereotypes of jobs in what may be constituted as traditional forest industries and forest industries that are portrayed as support industries, or that have emerged more recently such as veneer, plywood and engineered wood product manufacturing. The latter industries became more prominent in the 1980's as new technologies allowed the economic use of, and thus harvest of less valued hard wood tree species to produce manufactured wood products.

The distribution of First Nations women among industries differed from the distribution of all women described above. Of all women of First Nations ancestry working in Canada's forest industries, the majority, were employed in sawmills and wood preservation and in support activities for forestry. In the sub-sector support activities for forestry, 13% of all labour force participants were of First Nations ancestry, 2% of which were female.

Indices of industry segregation by First Nations ancestry revealed segregation among industry sub-sectors for both males and females (Table 2.2). Both males and females with First

Nations ancestry were over represented in woods based forest activities and under represented in manufacturing sectors when compared with the non-First Nations population. The segregation of people with First Nations ancestry into select forest industries was more pronounced for men than for women. Within woods based industry categories, people with First Nations ancestry comprised 13% of the work force in support activities for forestry, 9% of the workforce in forest nurseries and gathering of forest products and 8% of the work force in logging and timber tract operations respectively (Table 2.3). Within the sawmills and wood preservation sub-sector, First Nations men represented 5% of the total workforce while First Nations women represented <1%. Both men and women of First Nations descent were under represented in pulp and paperboard mills (First Nations men represented 2% of the workforce and First Nations women represented <1%).

Segregation among occupations within forest industries

There were three main outcomes of analyses of occupational segregation within industry categories. First, patterns of occupational segregation by gender and First Nations ancestry within industries differed from patterns of segregation among industries. Second, occupational segregation by gender was greater than occupational segregation by First Nations ancestry within all but one industry sub-sector. And third, the degree of occupational segregation by gender and First Nations ancestry differed among industry categories (Table 2.3).

Segregation by gender among occupations within industry sub-sectors was greater than gender segregation calculated among industries. The finding that gender segregation among occupations is greater than gender segregation among industries is consistent with other studies that have found women to be concentrated in a small number of occupations throughout all industries (Frances et al. 1996). The occupational categories where women were over represented in all industries were business, finance and administrative occupations. The concentration of women into gender specific occupations is even more pronounced when selected sub categories of this occupational classification are examined; 95% of secretaries were women (Table 2.4). In all other occupations, women formed the minority of the work force; women comprised 35% of the workforce in sales and service occupations and less than 20% of the work force in all remaining occupations. Women were particularly under represented in the

occupational category trades and transportation and equipment as well as in logging and forestry machine operators, workers and supervisors.

For people of First Nations ancestry, a different pattern emerged. Segregation between people with and without First Nations ancestry was greater among industries than among occupations within industries (Table 2.3; Table 2.4). Moreover, occupations where women were dominant were amongst those where the proportion of First Nations people present was lowest. First Nations people comprised <3% of the workforce in the occupational categories secretaries, clerical, professional occupations and management. Similarly, the highest concentrations of people with First Nations ancestry were found in the male dominated occupations unique to primary industry, where people of First Nations ancestry represented 11% of the labour force. Within these occupations, First Nations people were more likely to be employed as labourers or logging and forestry workers than as machine operators or supervisors. Although the low number of women of First Nations ancestry participating in the forest industry may partially explain these trends, the negligible presence of First Nations women in clerical and secretarial work suggests that First Nations women are not participating in the forest sector in the same way as non-First Nations women.

Occupational segregation was more pronounced among women and men than among people with and without First Nations ancestry. Duncan indices measuring occupational segregation by gender ranged from 0.14 to 0.66 while Duncan indices measuring occupational segregation by First Nations ancestry ranged from 0.10 to 0.38. This finding is analogous to comparisons of occupational gender segregation with segregation among ethnic and racial minorities, which have consistently found higher gender segregation among occupations. The logging industry sector had the highest occupational segregation by gender while support activities for forestry had the highest occupational segregation between First Nations and non-First Nations people. Within support activities for forestry First Nations people were under represented in management, business and finance and professional occupations and over represented as labourers and manufacturing workers.

Vertical segregation - income

When examined in light of annual income data for respective occupational and industry categories, First Nations people and women were concentrated in lower paying occupations and industries to a greater extent than non-First Nations people and men. First Nations people in particular were concentrated in less stable occupations.

There are two ways in which occupational and industry segregation within the forest sector might adversely affect a social group. The first, by limiting the number of jobs offered on the market for social group x, occupational segregation may exclude participation of an individual from group x in the sector. In this study, I propose that women are disadvantaged in rural areas because of exclusion from the forest sector as a whole. Women only made up 13% of the total labour force in the forest sector, and were only the majority in clerical and secretarial positions. The low female share of the forestry labour force is likely the result of the sex typing of most jobs in the forest sector as male. A second way in which occupational segregation may lead to economic disadvantage for social group x is through concentrating the employment of group x in less desirable jobs. Upon examining results using income as a proxy, occupational segregation translated into economic disadvantage (vertical segregation) for First Nations people as people of First Nations ancestry were concentration in lower paid industry sub-sectors in the forest sector.

Some industry segregation by gender was vertical while some was horizontal. Vertical segregation was present in the over representation of women in support activities for forestry and in forest nurseries and gathering of forest products, industries where employees have the lowest annual incomes (Table 2.5). Horizontal segregation by gender was evident in the over representation of women in veneer, plywood, engineered wood product manufacturing, a sub-sector with wages comparable to the male dominated sawmill and wood preservation sector.

Non-First Nations women were concentrated in administrative occupations, particularly secretarial work. The occupations women held in this industry sub-sector included business, finance and administration and sales and service occupations, both occupations with low average incomes relative to other occupations within forestry. Clerical work however is typically viewed as a stable form of employment and within larger manufacturing industries clerical

positions are often unionized. The average incomes of people with occupations as secretaries ranged from \$20,574 to \$38,565.

Women's exclusion from most forms of forest sector employment is significant in light of the fact that women living in rural areas often have limited employment options. Since employment in the forest sector is typically better paid than employment in other sectors in forest specialized regions, it is likely that the sex typing of the majority of forest sector jobs as male has negative implications for rural women who are not able to find employment in the forest sector.

Mirroring Teskey and Smyth's report in 1975, First Nations people were both excluded from jobs and industries near the high end of the income spectrum and concentrated in jobs and industries at the low end of the income spectrum. People of First Nations ancestry were almost completely excluded from the pulp, paper and paperboard mills, only making up 2% of the labour force. Pulp, paper and paperboard mills offer the highest wages of all forest industries and also offer the most stable employment since paper mills rarely have periodic shut downs as is common with sawmills. The industry sector where the share of the labour force of First Nations ancestry was highest was support activities for forestry followed by forest nurseries and gathering of forest products. First Nations people comprised 13% and 9% of the labour force in these sub-sectors respectively. Average annual incomes for individuals with occupations in these sub-sectors were lower than parallel occupational groups in all other sectors. Moreover, within each of these industry categories, First Nations men and women were more likely to be employed in the lowest paid occupations (primary production labourer and logging and forestry worker and sales and service) than non-First Nations people. Individuals in these occupations and industry sub-sectors had among the lowest mean annual incomes of all occupations in the forest industry, \$14,148 and \$20,539 respectively. Of all occupations in these sub-sectors however, First Nations women were most likely to be employed in sales and service occupations in sub-sectors where the mean annual incomes are \$16,253 and \$18,180. First Nations men were also well represented in occupations unique to the primary industry, particularly in logging, where the average income was \$27,801. While the average income for people working in logging occupations approximated that of people working in sawmills, logging may constitute a less desirable job due to high injury rates, and financial instability¹⁶.

¹⁶ Individual logging contractors or small companies assume financial risk through the purchase of increasingly expensive equipment and the prospect of unemployment when wood prices decrease.

Conclusion

Results from this study suggest that the outcomes of the intersection between gender and First Nations ancestry differed whether segregation was examined among industries or among occupations within industries. Similar to results from studies examining the intersection of ethnic minorities with gender, segregation by First Nations ancestry was greater among men than among women. While First Nations women's employment patterns in the forest sector had some similarity to those of non-First Nations women, their experiences were distinct in that they were more likely to be employed as labourers, and in the industry sub-sectors support activities for forestry and forest nurseries and gathering of forest products, than non-First Nations women. Results suggest that the experiences of First Nations women in the labour market are a result of a unique combination of feminization and racialisation that is particular to First Nations women. Within the forest sector, First Nations women were not only excluded from male dominated occupation/industry combinations, they were also excluded from the female dominated clerical and secretarial occupations.

In addition, this study points to the importance of industry category when examining segregation. While segregation between people with and without First Nations descent was greatest among industries, gender segregation was highest among occupations. First Nations people were under represented in manufacturing industries that offer more stable employment and higher wages. In contrast, within all industries non-First Nations women were employed in selected feminized occupations. These results confirm the results of previous studies which show that across industries, the employment of women is often limited to fewer 'feminine' occupations. The examination of both industry sub-sector and occupation in this study was necessary to understand processes of segregation in employment in the forest sector by First Nations ancestry and gender.

In the context of the distribution of benefits from forest sector developments, it is probable that women of First Nations ancestry have faced the greatest disadvantage as they have been excluded from both male and female dominated forms of employment.

Recommendations

As policy developments continue to promote and encourage the participation of First Nations men and women in forestry, the specific processes of exclusion and segregation experienced by both First Nations men and First Nations women need to be considered. Future research should investigate supply and demand side labour market processes to determine their impact employment opportunities and outcomes for both First Nations men and women in the forest sector. This exploration would benefit from qualitative studies that explore employer behaviour and individual's employment trajectories, as well as from spatial analysis to examine whether patterns of residence impact employment of First Nations people in forest sub-sectors.

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Table 2.1 Differences in the distributions of males and females (Dif.) and percent distribution of females working in the forest sector amongst industry sub-sectors (% Fem) for total population, population with First Nations ancestry (NAI) and without First Nations ancestry (Non-NAI) in Canada in 2001. Negative signs indicate that the proportion of males in a particular industry

Industry	Total		NAI		Non-NAI	
	<i>Dif.</i>	<i>% Fem</i>	<i>Dif.</i>	<i>% Fem</i>	<i>Dif.</i>	<i>% Fem</i>
1131 Timber Tract Operations	0.00	0.73	0.00	0.45	0.00	0.75
1132 Forest Nurseries and Gathering of Forest Products	0.02	2.74	0.03	3.58	0.02	2.69
1133 Logging	-0.05	20.65	-0.11	22.82	-0.04	20.52
1153 Support Activities for Forestry	0.07	16.31	0.04	23.94	0.08	15.85
3211 Sawmills and Wood Preservation	-0.06	24.46	-0.03	24.16	-0.07	24.48
3212 Veneer, Plywood, Eng. Wood Prod. Man.	0.03	11.53	0.06	11.19	0.03	11.55
3221 Pulp, Paper and Paperboard Mills	-0.02	23.58	0.02	13.87	-0.02	24.16
Duncan Index	0.13		0.14		0.13	
Segregation Index	0.11		0.13		0.11	
Female share of labour force	13.44		12.47		13.50	

exceeds the proportion of females. Man.= Manufacturing, Eng.=Engineered, Prod.=Products.

Table 2.2 Differences in the distributions of people with and without First Nations ancestry (Dif.) and percent distribution of people with First Nations ancestry working in the forest sector amongst industry sub-sectors (% NAI) for the total population, males and females in Canada 2001. Negative signs indicate that the proportion of people without First Nations ancestry exceeds the proportion of people with First Nations ancestry in a particular industry. Man.= Manufacturing, Eng.=Engineered, Prod.=Products.

Industry	Total		Males		Females	
	<i>Dif.</i>	<i>% NAI</i>	<i>Dif.</i>	<i>% NAI</i>	<i>Dif.</i>	<i>% NAI</i>
1131 Timber Tract Operations	0.00	0.59	0.00	0.61	0.00	0.45
1132 Forest Nurseries and Gathering of Forest Products	0.00	1.34	0.00	1.02	0.01	3.58
1133 Logging	0.08	32.30	0.09	33.65	0.02	22.82
1153 Support Activities for Forestry	0.11	20.63	0.12	20.16	0.08	23.94
3211 Sawmills and Wood Preservation	-0.03	27.05	-0.04	27.46	0.00	24.16
3212 Veneer, Plywood, Eng. Wood Prod. Man.	-0.03	6.25	-0.03	5.55	0.00	11.19
3221 Pulp, Paper and Paperboard Mills	-0.14	11.84	-0.15	11.55	-0.10	13.87
Duncan Index	0.20		0.20		0.11	
Segregation Index	0.19		0.19		0.11	
NAI share of the labour force	6.05		6.11		5.62	

Table 2.3 Differences in the percent employed among males and females (gender) and among people with and without First Nations ancestry (NAI) in each forest industry classification in Canada 2001. In the analysis of occupational segregation by gender, negative signs indicate that the proportion of males in a given occupation exceeded the proportion of females in a given occupation. In the analysis of occupational segregation among individuals with and without First Nations ancestry, negative signs indicate that the proportion of people without First Nations ancestry in a given occupation exceeded the proportion of people with First Nations ancestry.

Occupations	1131 Timber Tract Operations		1132 Forest Nurseries and Gathering of Forest Products		1133 Logging		1153 Support Activities for Forestry		3211 Sawmills and Wood Preservation		3212 Veneer, Plywood, Eng. Wood Prod. Man.		3221 Pulp, Paper and Paperboard Mills	
	Gender	NAI	Gender	NAI	Gender	NAI	Gender	NAI	Gender	NAI	Gender	NAI	Gender	NAI
A. Management	-0.04	-0.07	-0.03	0.01	-0.01	-0.02	-0.03	-0.03	-0.01	-0.02	-0.03	-0.05	0.01	-0.02
B. Business, Finance & Admin.	0.39	-0.10	0.08	-0.06	0.58	-0.04	0.27	-0.05	0.38	-0.03	0.26	-0.03	0.41	-0.01
C. Natural & Applied Sciences	-0.01	-0.08	-0.07	-0.08	0.02	-0.01	-0.06	-0.12	0.01	-0.01	0.00	-0.01	-0.01	-0.04
G. Sales and Service	0.02	-0.06	0.01	0.01	0.06	0.00	0.05	0.01	0.03	0.00	-0.01	-0.02	0.04	0.02
H. Trades, Transpor, Equip. Oper.	-0.06	0.06	-0.05	-0.05	-0.19	-0.05	-0.07	-0.04	-0.19	-0.03	-0.21	-0.02	-0.28	-0.03
I. Occ. Unique to the Primary Industry	-0.27	0.31	0.06	0.14	-0.44	0.12	-0.15	0.22	-0.02	0.02	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.03
J. Occ. Unique to Pro., Man. and Uti.	-0.02	-0.06	0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.00	-0.01	0.01	-0.21	0.08	0.00	0.14	-0.17	0.06
Duncan index	0.41	0.38	0.15	0.18	0.66	0.13	0.31	0.24	0.42	0.10	0.26	0.14	0.46	0.10
Segregation Index	0.32	0.35	0.09	0.17	0.59	0.12	0.24	0.21	0.38	0.10	0.22	0.14	0.40	0.10
Share of labour force (women, NAI)	22.05	7.98	40.90	9.01	11.20	7.88	22.21	12.65	10.95	5.45	17.48	4.26	12.59	2.85

Table 2.4 Percent composition of male and female, First Nations and non-First Nations forest workers in Canada in select industry categories and occupations. M = males; F = females; Man. = manufacturing; Equip. = Equipment; Oper. = Operators; Pro. = Processing; Rel. = Related; Admin = Administrative; Uti = Utilities; Ind = Industry; Prod = Production; Super. = Supervisor.

Percent Labour Force Share			A. Management				B. Business, Finance, Admin.				C. Natural & Applied Science				C1 Technical				G. Sales & Service				H. Trades, Transport, Equip. Oper.				I. Occ. Unique to Primary Ind.				J Occ. Unique to Pro., Man., Uti.				J0 Supervisors, Man.				J1 Machine Oper., Man.				J3 Labourers, Man.				Total - All occupations			
1131 Timber Tract Operations	NAI	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1								
		M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	11	0	17	13	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8									
	non-NAI	F	11	96	100	89	20	0	18	27	9	13	0	0	7	30	14	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	20													
		M	89	4	0	11	80	100	82	73	77	75	100	83	79	57	86	100	100	100	86	100	100	100	86	100	100	100	86	100	100	100	71																	
1132 Forest Nurseries and Gathering of Forest Products	NAI	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	4	0	0	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3													
		M	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	20	8	13	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	6																	
	non-NAI	F	19	73	83	57	16	20	17	38	9	39	0	57	30	21	47	75	0	0	47	75	0	0	47	75	0	0	47	75	0	0	37																	
		M	69	27	17	43	84	80	83	50	91	50	100	43	47	64	40	25	100	100	40	25	100	100	40	25	100	100	54																					
1133 Logging	NAI	F	0	4	4	3	1	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1																	
		M	5	0	0	1	5	3	6	4	6	9	8	8	9	12	8	8	6	15	8	8	6	15	8	8	6	15	7																					
	non-NAI	F	9	83	95	79	14	12	15	42	2	3	3	2	2	8	4	0	4	5	4	0	4	5	4	0	4	5	11																					
		M	86	13	1	18	80	84	78	50	93	87	90	90	89	79	87	92	89	79	87	92	89	79	87	92	89	79	81																					
1153 Support Activities for Forestry	NAI	F	1	5	4	2	1	2	1	9	0	2	1	2	2	2	4	0	4	6	4	0	4	6	4	0	4	6	2																					
		M	3	0	0	1	6	3	7	8	6	15	9	15	23	9	15	0	18	9	15	0	18	9	15	0	18	9	11																					
	non-NAI	F	8	82	94	85	17	18	16	59	4	16	8	1	8	24	10	29	7	6	10	29	7	6	10	29	7	6	21																					
		M	88	13	2	12	77	77	76	25	90	67	83	82	67	65	71	71	71	79	71	71	71	79	71	71	71	79	67																					
3211 Sawmills and Wood Preservation	NAI	F	0	2	3	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1																					
		M	2	1	-1	1	2	1	4	4	4	7	4	6	6	9	6	3	5	7	6	3	5	7	6	3	5	7	5																					
	non-NAI	F	9	71	94	71	13	11	13	21	2	7	4	4	6	13	7	3	6	9	7	3	6	9	7	3	6	9	10																					
		M	88	26	4	26	84	88	82	75	93	86	91	90	87	77	87	94	89	84	87	94	89	84	87	94	89	84	84																					
3212 Veneer, Plywood, Eng. Wood Prod. Man.	NAI	F	0	1	0	0	1	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	2	1																					
		M	1	1	0	1	2	0	2	2	3	2	0	8	0	0	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	5	3																					
	non-NAI	F	10	63	100	61	15	15	15	15	4	11	0	8	21	14	16	4	20	18	16	4	20	18	16	4	20	18	17																					
		M	89	34	0	37	81	83	82	83	92	86	100	84	79	86	78	92	75	76	78	92	75	76	78	92	75	76	79																					
3221 Pulp, Paper and Paperboard Mills	NAI	F	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																					
		M	1	1	0	2	1	1	2	2	2	8	0	12	9	14	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2																					
	non-NAI	F	14	57	93	55	12	11	13	26	2	6	5	0	0	24	8	5	6	11	8	5	6	11	8	5	6	11	12																					
		M	84	40	4	42	87	88	85	70	96	85	95	88	91	62	89	91	91	86	89	91	91	86	89	91	91	86	85																					
All Forest Industries	NAI	F	0	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1																					
		M	3	1	0	1	3	2	4	3	4	10	7	8	13	10	5	3	4	5	5	3	4	5	5	3	4	5	5																					
	non-NAI	F	10	71	95	71	14	13	14	33	3	9	4	3	8	17	8	4	7	10	8	4	7	10	8	4	7	10	14																					
		M	87	25	2	27	82	85	80	62	93	80	89	89	79	71	86	92	88	83	86	92	88	83	86	92	88	83	79																					

Table 2.5 Mean earnings of all individuals (Can. Dollars, 2001) in select industries and occupations. Man. = manufacturing; Equip. = Equipment; Oper. = Operators; Pro. = Processing; Rel. = Related; Admin = Administrative; Uti = Utilities; Ind = Industry; Prod = Production; Super. = Supervisor.

	1131 Timber Tract Operations	1132 Forest Nurseries and Gathering of Forest Products	1133 Logging	1153 Support Activities for Forestry	3211 Sawmills and Wood Preservation	3212 Veneer, Plywood, Eng. Wood Prod. Man	3221 Pulp, Paper and Paperboard Mills
Total - All occupations	26,416	20,777	36,374	26,341	38,249	39,009	55,236
A. Management	44,975	56,343	63,299	54,676	84,610	89,078	96,749
B. Business, Finance, Admin.	31,566	27,804	31,803	28,833	38,367	37,119	45,540
<i>B2 Secretaries</i>	25,930	20,574	28,880	25,264	28,612	33,478	38,565
<i>B5 Clerical</i>	25,961	25,618	27,428	26,309	32,321	32,781	40,657
C. Natural & Applied Science	36,747	40,416	42,509	37,800	46,539	43,168	59,147
<i>C0 Professional Occupations</i>	40,585	62,213	50,787	49,135	58,776	51,564	64,061
<i>C1 Technical</i>	33,468	25,854	37,993	33,194	38,393	39,492	55,455
G. Sales & Service	44,581	18,180	28,174	16,258	30,431	38,648	42,671
H. Trades, Transport, Equip.	32,747	30,075	42,562	35,102	42,899	40,483	56,603
I. Occ. Unique to Primary Ind.	19,244	16,538	32,232	18,904	36,734	39,161	43,663
<i>I11 Super. Logging, Forestry</i>	24,806	29,690	46,888	32,791	55,402	70,068	61,078
<i>I15 Logging Machinery Oper.</i>	34,433	32,132	38,893	28,100	38,138	43,957	49,576
<i>I16 Logging, Forestry Workers</i>	16,843	15,627	27,801	20,539	30,910	22,455	32,066
<i>I2 Labourers, Primary Prod.</i>	11,767	12,306	27,177	14,148	30,503	31,678	32,205
J Occ. Unique to Pro., Man., Uti.	26,585	23,191	31,735	21,551	33,269	32,903	51,680
<i>J0 Supervisors, Man.</i>	0	30,872	48,933	25,504	53,802	49,034	69,304
<i>J1 Machine Oper., Man.</i>	24,118	37,669	33,197	24,098	34,217	34,500	53,373
<i>J3 Labourers, Man.</i>	22,365	8,743	22,634	20,403	28,079	30,841	43,739

3. WHITE AND ABORIGINAL WOMEN WORKER'S PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN A MULTINATIONAL FOREST COMPANY.

Abstract

Diversity management, the promotion of diverse workforces as a way to increase firm competitiveness, has gained popularity as a human resource strategy in firms across the United States and Canada. This paper examines women's perceptions of diversity management practices introduced in forest processing mill subsidiaries of a multinational forest company operating in the northern prairies of Canada. Drawing on interviews with white and Aboriginal women workers, I used textually based critical discourse analysis to examine women's talk about diversity management practices. My findings show that women's presentations of diversity management practices were linked to their social identities in terms of Aboriginal identity and class. While white non-unionized women represented the diversity management by drawing on discourses of liberal individualism, white unionized women re-framed diversity practices within a discourse of sameness associated with trade unionism. Despite their divergent ideological underpinnings however, the talk of both groups drew on discourses characterizing Aboriginal people as belonging in the bush and as deficient workers in industrial manufacturing. Aboriginal women positioned themselves in response to these external constructions of Aboriginality, drawing on their experiences being treated as token employees. Although women's talk incorporated different discourses of sameness and difference, when taken as a whole, women's perspectives prompt a questioning of meaning of difference within diversity management, and of diversity management's ability to further the interests of marginalized workers. This research suggests that the recognition of difference in the workplace needs to be integrated with, and not in opposition to, worker control over the workplace.

Introduction

Work in larger forest processing mills in Canada has long been associated with a white male working class culture that celebrates physical strength, hard work, and practical skill, defining itself in opposition to both women and Aboriginal peoples (Dunk 1994). Consequently,

Aboriginal people and white women living in forest communities in Canada have historically been under-represented in year round forest processing work and concentrated in service sector work or in forest industry sub-sectors associated with lower wages, fewer benefits and less job security (Dunk 1994; High 1996; Egan and Klausen 1998; Brandth and Haugen 2000; Reed 2003; Pennier 2006). In this context, promoting diverse workplaces to challenge the exclusion and marginalization of women and Aboriginal men from better paid forest employment has the potential to increase the well being of women and Aboriginal peoples in forest regions. In this paper I draw on interviews with white¹⁷ and Aboriginal¹⁸ women to critically examine an American multinational forest company (MNFC)'s¹⁹ implementation of diversity management practices to increase the inclusion of women and Aboriginal people in its operations in the northern prairies of Canada.

In common usage in Canadian society, the term diversity (which is a neutral term to denote difference) has increasingly become ascribed with positive connotations. Fittingly, the corporate idiom of diversity management denotes management discourse and practices aimed at the inclusion of marginalized peoples in the workplace following a logic that ascribes positive value to difference. The underlying rationale for this valuation is economic. Specifically, diversity has been professed as beneficial to the productivity of firms as labour markets and customers become more diverse (D'Netto and Sohal 1999; Ettlinger 2001; Carson et al. 2004; Kamp and Hagedorn-Rasmussen 2004). This underpinning of diversity with economic rationale, however, has caused some to question diversity management's ability to increase the well-being of marginalized workers (Cavanaugh 1997).

In that institutional practices and discourses such as diversity management are implemented in workplaces, they are embedded in particular social relations and representations that shape social identities²⁰. While these local constructions of social identity help to shape

¹⁷ The term white was used to describe the non-Aboriginal women interviewed. None of these women were people of colour and all self identified as being of Canadian or European ancestry. Since the predominant racial division in the region was that between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people I use the term white to emphasize how whiteness superseded ethnic differences among the non-Aboriginal women.

¹⁸ The category Aboriginal included any woman who identified herself as having Cree, Métis and/or Dené ancestry whether or not she was a Status Indian as defined by Canada's Indian Act.

¹⁹ In accordance with the ethical agreement for this research project, the name of the multinational forest company in examination could not be disclosed.

²⁰ I use the term social identity, following from Norman Fairclough (2003) to denote the part of a person's identity that results from the characteristics that they are born with and their socialization into particular social roles. A person's social identity includes how they are positioned in society in relation to systems of power and how their

workers' experiences, the majority of studies in economic geography have pertained to the construction of social identities in the workplace and not to the relationship between social identity and representations of organizational discourses and practices. The paucity of empirical work critically examining workplace cultures led Wills (1999) to state in an article about labour and learning, that "...geographers have done little to examine critically these contemporary business discourses of employee knowledge, involvement and empowerment from *the point of view of the worker*" (1999; 447; my emphasis). My research speaks to this call, and extends it, by focusing on the situated perspectives of women workers working in male dominated forest processing mills to critically examine diversity management.

I look to workers who are the targets of diversity management, white and Aboriginal women, to critically examine diversity management practice and discourse. I begin by reviewing the literature on diversity management which shows how the discourse of diversity management as an approach to the inclusion of marginalized groups can be understood as a move towards individualist ideology and as a narrowing understanding of the concept of worker inclusion. I situate the consideration of sameness and difference within the particular context of social identities in forest employment in Canada and suggest that the constructions of identities as different or the same are not easily translated into either progressive or regressive power relations. I then present results from a critical discourse analysis of interviews with women working in subsidiaries of an MNFC to argue that although women with different social identities had different representations of diversity management, representations of each group highlighted specific ways that diversity management failed to fully include women in the workplace. Moreover, the talk of white women pointed to their dual positions as both objects of diversity management practices, and as subjects who, through their talk of the 'other' helped to structure the experiences of Aboriginal women.

Discourse of diversity management

Ettlinger (2001) has suggested that diversity management is an example of how workers' interests might be furthered, not through organized labour or identity based collective action, but

identity is constructed by others. Fairclough contrasts social identity with personality, the part of a person's identity that is individualized and not related to ascribed roles or categories.

through evolutionary developments resulting from changing labour markets. From this perspective diversity becomes synergistic to firm competitiveness as labour markets become tighter and more diverse. In the business literature workforce diversity is professed to increase firm productivity by eliminating labour market distortions resulting from discriminatory hiring in a tight labour markets, by increasing team performance and by providing improved cultural knowledge of more spatially (and culturally) diverse markets as firms became more international in scope (D'Netto and Sohal 1999; Carson et al. 2004; Kamp and Hagedorn-Rasmussen 2004).

The rise in popularity of diversity management within corporations signaled a shift in the discourse of workplace inclusion practices from a focus from the equal treatment of all workers to the active promotion of difference among individual workers (Liff and Wajcman 1996). Early efforts to address employment discrimination in both Canada and the United States were predicated on legal requirements for equal treatment (Agocs and Burr 1996). Legislation in Canada, including the federal Employment Equity Act (1986), the Federal Contractors Program (1986) as well as provincial employment equity legislation, have required that applicable employers collect and report data for target groups (women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and racial minorities), and review formal and informal policies and practices with the goal of removing systemic barriers²¹ (Agocs and Burr 1996). And, although the application of legislation in practice has often been reduced to targeted hiring of individuals from designate groups, employment equity policy's "...fundamental purpose (w)as a remedy for systemic discrimination in the workplace"(Agocs 2002; 257). Legislation thus required that employers increase the representation of designate groups, and that they review and correct policies that systemically discriminate against designate groups. More recently in Canada, the promotion of employment equity, and in the U.S., the promotion of equal opportunities and affirmative action, have been supplanted, at least discursively, by the notion of diversity management. Although some authors have questioned the extent to which this shift has resulted in tangible changes in company practices, discursively, diversity management marked a departure from earlier approaches because of its underlying economic rationale and its focus on difference rather than sameness or equality (D'Netto and Sohal 1999).

²¹ Federal legislation only applies to workers in particular sectors (communications, finance and transportation), public service workers and federal contractors. In most cases, provincial legislation is limited to workers in the provincial public service. MNFCs operating in Canada are not federal contractors and as such are not covered under employment equity legislation.

Critical assessments of diversity management have suggested that diversity management is a more narrow approach to inclusion than previous regulatory approaches since it helps to shift industrial relations towards individualised employment contracts and since it values aspects of difference based on economic rationale (Cavanaugh 1997; Prasad 2001; Marsden 1997; Humphries and Grice 1995). Humphries and Grice (1995) and Marsden (1997) have argued that diversity management aims to fragment worker collectivism and replace it with a more flexible and individualized workforce of newer human resource management relations. Diversity management positions difference as an attribute of the individual rather than that of an oppressed group. The discourse of diversity management hinges on discourses of meritocracy, individualism, productivity, and corporate ethics, and differentiates itself from affirmative action by focusing on the characteristics of individuals who will provide value to the company rather than targeted groups that face discrimination. This parallels newer forms of HR management that focus on individualized rankings, rewards, and punishments which become normalized as part of a firm's day to day operations. These relatively more innocuous forms of worker control eliminate explicit conflict from the workplace while shifting worker-management relations to more individualized forms. The individualization of workers within diversity management thus undermines the collectivity among members of target groups and the notion of broader worker collectivity, both forms that empower workers by lowering the risks and increasing the effectiveness of resistance (Martin 1995)²².

Critical appraisals of diversity management can be understood as a narrowing of the concept of inclusion. Prasad differentiates a narrow approach to the inclusion of marginalized workers from a broad approach using the vocabulary of workplace empowerment:

...(A) broad view of empowerment sees the condition of powerlessness in organizations in its totality, situates the organization in the broad matrix of sociohistorical formations, and conceptualizes empowerment as the elimination or eradication of all of the factors – structural, institutional, social, economic, political, cultural, psychological, and so on- that may lead to powerlessness. (2001; 52)

²²A second critique has questioned the meaning of diversity within diversity management claiming that the underlying economic rationale of diversity management is assimilatory in that only forms of diversity that advance capital accumulation are valued. Thus diversity management has been shown to be at odds with the inclusion of forms of difference that are not helpful to capital such as disability or Maori values of collectivity (Woodhams and Danieli, 2000). Moreover, the fundamentally economic rationale can result in the exploitation of the cultural traits of workers or in the re-entrenchment of racism as political aspects of cultural or group difference are disregarded in favour of cultural attributes (Jones 2004).

From this perspective, efforts that are themed discursively as the removal of discrimination (in order to attain equality), allow for the consideration of how a broader set of factors than discourses centred on the valuation of difference as an attribute of human capital. While the former considers how the under-representation of different groups in the workplace is embedded in broader historical and present structures of inequality, the latter sees difference as select individual attributes of potential value to the company that are unrelated to power. In this paper I develop this conceptualization by drawing on women forest workers' experiences and representations of diversity management to explore the particular ways that they felt that diversity management was not able to provide true empowerment or inclusion.

Social identities, work and sameness and difference

A close analysis of the particular social identities and power relations operating in specific workplaces are particularly important when talking about approaches to workplace inclusion, since the vocabulary of sameness and difference form a dichotomy where the meaning of each term only exists in reference to the opposing term (Scott, 1994). Since dominant groups have often asserted the difference of others to leverage power, what constitutes difference or similarity is often defined relative to the dominant group. In this, forestry is no exception. In a study of pulp mill workers in Northern Ontario, Dunk (1994) found that construction of women and Aboriginal people as different and outside of mill work was elemental to white men's notion of working class identity that emphasized similarity with one another that was founded on strength, hard work, and collective solidarity. Dunk's research shows how while the concept of similarity was used to promote the empowerment of workers vis à vis the employer, discrimination founded in the identification of difference based on gender and Aboriginal identity structured the oppression of these groups.

This association of a discourse of sameness with organized labour follows from the notion that the traditional working-class identity provides empowerment through its ability to create a tradition of solidarity and a culture of collectivism (Coole, 1996; 21). This solidarity is based on an underlying tenet of union culture, its "...reflex towards unity... ..based on the practical knowledge that management listens to an organized group of workers completely differently than it would listen to an individual rebel"(Martin, 1995; 31). The need for a

common stance when bargaining and for the power to collectively withdraw labour effort has entrenched worker equality as a key aim of collective employer contracts, and worker unity as a key discourse among unionists. It thus follows that union discourse relies on the notions of similarity and sameness since these concepts are seen as integral to empowerment.

In Dunk's study, the collective identity of forest workers also operated to define Aboriginal men as different and exclude them from well paid employment in forest manufacturing. Although Aboriginal men have a long history of forest work, this history was marked by discrimination, exclusion and stereotyping (High 1996; Pennier 2006). The participation of Aboriginal men in forestry was tempered by structures of racism and colonialism that helped to confine participation to occupations and sub-industries with less desirable wages and work conditions (High 1996; Teskey and Smyth 1975). In addition, research on Aboriginal people and work more broadly has shown that Aboriginal people often face discrimination from co-workers and employers related to characterizations that they are deficient, that they are a problem to be fixed, and that they are outside of industrial manufacturing (Guard 2004; Wilson 2004; Pennier 2006)

Unlike Aboriginal men, who have a long history of participation in forestry, women have historically been excluded from almost all forms of forest work²³. Forestry work is linked to various forms of masculinity and as consequence, centres the male subject as the normal worker (Brandth and Haugen 2000). For women living in forestry, the construction of women as 'other' has transpired into their exclusion from and marginalization within, employment in forestry (Tripp-Knowles 1999; Brandth and Haugen 2000; Reed 2003; Brandth et al. 2004). Unequal opportunities for employment have resulted in material inequality and in social exclusion for women living in forest communities where there are often few well paid job opportunities for women and where jobs in forestry often dictate social status (Reed 1997; Parkins and Beckley 2001).

While power relations in the workplace in the form of control over work tasks, wages, benefits, promotion and status, are related to multiple factors in addition to gender, studies of women in forestry have neglected to examine how gender intersects with other structures of oppression such as class, racism and colonialism. In particular, Peters' (1998) research on First Nations women suggests that First Nations women have distinct experiences and understandings

²³ The one exception being clerical work.

of space resulting from the intersection of both patriarchy and colonialism. The particular frameworks developed by First Nations women to understand the city, challenged the exclusion of First Nations from urban space, valued feminine forms of collectivity and re-positioned the role of First Nations women in their imagined spaces of First Nations culture and governance. Thus both collectivity among First Nations people and distinctness from western urban forms were central to frameworks developed by First Nations women. The importance of questions of self-governance to First Nations women highlights how the recognition of difference can also be used to gain power and influence politically. In particular, the Aboriginal peoples have struggled for recognition of their rights to resources and land to resist oppressive structures of colonialism.

A further difficulty with examining women working forestry as a coherent whole is that it uniformly positions women in the category of oppressed and does not understand them as also complicit in the subjugation of themselves and others (Valentine 2007). White women's participation in maintaining racist social structures is an important consideration when examining organizational programmes designed to include racial others such as diversity management since programmes that single out difference can lead to a re-entrenchment of existing racist relations and to the increased vulnerability of the groups that they are intended to help (Srivastava 1994; Khayatt 1994). What is necessary is a more nuanced examination of the talk of women that recognizes the importance of looking at both similarities and differences among women (Khayatt 1994).

In this paper, I explore the nuances of women workers' talk to critically examine the implementation of diversity management practices in the subsidiaries of an MNFC located in the northern prairies. I argue that women's representations of practices of inclusion based on gender and Aboriginal identity reflected their situated positions in the material and discursive context of forest workplaces, related to whether they were Aboriginal or white and whether they were unionized or non-unionized. Perspectives drew on discourses of sameness and difference to both reinforce and challenge dominant power relations. Despite their differences, however, women's representations were similar in that each pointed to ways in which the scope of diversity management practices was too narrow to provide for the true inclusion of marginalized peoples in the workplace.

The particular case

My examination of how social identities relate to women's representations of diversity management was situated in the subsidiaries of an MNFC operating within the northern prairies region. A testimony to the increasing size of forest companies in Canada, the MNFC had become the dominant producer of forest products in the region, having acquired five mills, most in the decade immediately prior to the research. Diversity management emanated from the firm's headquarters in the U.S. alongside corporate slogans drawing on notions of efficiency, productivity and competitiveness. Implementing diversity management in the northern prairies however, often meant challenging local social norms of work. Although many forest companies had moved in and out of the region since the early 1900s, a relatively continuous presence of forest mill work had resulted in the development of a strong working class culture associated with labour union activity. Work in forest processing mills, the mainstay of this union culture, was not equally available to women or Aboriginal peoples, although the latter comprised a relatively high proportion of the population in the region (over 30% of all communities in 2003). Evidence suggests that Aboriginal people were excluded (systematically or otherwise) from work in the region's larger forest processing mills early on (Teskey and Smyth 1975; Quiring 2004). Women were excluded to an even greater extent since the mills only began to hire women for non-clerical positions in sawmills and pulp mills in the mid 1980s. By 2003, the MNFC's regional workforce was comprised only 15.9% women, and only 12.3% Aboriginal people (Table 3.1). Aboriginal women only represented 2.5% of all of the workers in the firm's regional operations. This history of marginalization related to social identity provides a rich setting to examine the implementation of diversity management and perceptions of difference and sameness.

According to the HR representatives, the goal of diversity policy was to have workplaces where women and minorities were representative of local demographics. In the northern prairies, this meant increasing the representation of Aboriginal people and women²⁴. The inclusion of Aboriginal people had become a particularly important initiative for the company

²⁴ When asked about the company's efforts to represent people with disabilities all three of the HR managers indicated that this was not a main focus of the regional operations because of the high cost of integration of people with disabilities in their workforce that consisted of a high proportion of jobs requiring physical labour.

because of mounting political pressure surrounding Aboriginal employment in the forest sector²⁵. Closely following management literature professing diversity management, the central diversity policy of the MNFC was not only about numbers, but also about changing the way the company operated to ensure that hiring practices and workplaces became amenable to diversity. As such, the company had adopted a broad definition of diversity that included not only legally protected recognized groups but also age, lifestyle and differences in experiences and ideas. Since the mid 1990s, the company listed diversity as a top business priority and company-wide diversity practices included tying managers' bonuses to diversity targets, implementing diversity training programs for all management, and promoting 'clean' workplaces that were free from harassment (Jossi 2005).

Regionally, this was enacted through ensuring that women and Aboriginal people were represented in new hires, altering the work experience requirements for recruitment, changing the spatial location of recruiting and applicant testing to reserves for First Nation applicants, and ensuring representation from marginalized groups in summer student positions. Diversity practices also included promoting flexible work arrangements, holding diversity and Aboriginal awareness sessions, promoting a heightened awareness of discrimination and harassment and targeting women and Aboriginal men for promotion. Despite aiming to have better representation of target groups, managers emphasized that people also needed to be recognized as individuals. As stated by one manager "I think you have to be careful and I think you really need to talk about human beings rather than designated groups..."(HR2)²⁶. Likewise, the company's approach did not eliminate merit as a key factor in hiring and promotion; women and Aboriginal candidates were preferentially hired or promoted only if they were equally qualified to other candidates.

Methods

My analysis of white and Aboriginal women worker's representations of diversity management initiatives was based on interviews with women workers and management

²⁵ Because almost all forest harvesting in Canada occurs on Crown land, provincial and federal governments have retained a high degree of control of company activities in the forest industry relative to other industries and have been instrumental in pushing for the inclusion of Aboriginal peoples.

²⁶[Numbers]=numbers of the interview transcripts showing similar findings; I=interviewer; HR#=human resource manager participant with number corresponding to transcript; P#=woman worker participant with number corresponding to transcript;= section of text not shown; (pause) =break in speech; [name]=Proper name removed to protect confidentiality of respondent and company.

representatives within four forest product mill subsidiaries and associated forest management divisions of an MNFC in the summer and fall of 2003. These interviews were a subset of a larger data set of 40 interviews with women working in forest processing mills across the northern prairies. Interviews with women workers were solicited using: letters distributed with the paycheques, postings on bulletin boards, and word of mouth. Semi-structured interviews lasted one to two hours and asked a wide range of questions about women's work lives, aiming to develop a comprehensive picture of each woman's perspectives towards and experiences of her work. Interviews took place off of the work site in a location of the women's choice; locations included cafes or restaurants, women's homes, and government offices. Question areas included finding work, work history, the negotiation of work and family, hiring and promotion opportunities and whether these were targeted to female and Aboriginal employees, quality of work life, perceptions of the company and the union, and perceptions of the incorporation of Aboriginal culture in the workplace. In using the terminology Aboriginal culture, I acknowledge that multiple Aboriginal cultures exist, but that there may be commonality in their exclusion from the western workplace related to the marginalization and colonization of the ways of life of diverse Aboriginal peoples (Johnson et al. Forthcoming). For this reason, Aboriginal culture was not defined in the interview, but left to the interpretations of interview participants.

An initial coding of all 40 interviews revealed that women's experiences and representations differed based on whether or not they worked for the MNFC. I therefore chose to restrict my analysis of practices of inclusion to the talk of women working across the subsidiaries of one MNFC (the dominant company in the region) since the human resource management of these firms was centralized and since women's representations of diversity management displayed similarity across subsidiary firms. As a result my data set included 29 women: five white women who worked as managers or professionals, and 24 women who worked in hourly positions as clerical workers or labourers. Of the hourly workers, 10 self-identified as having Aboriginal ancestry and 14 self-identified as having European or Canadian ancestry. These interviews represented 10% of the total female workforce of the MNFC's regional operations (including all six mills) and 15% of the total number of women working across the four mill subsidiaries examined. The average age of the women interviewed was 39.5 and the average number of years that women had worked for their respective employers was eight and a half years. Although some women had migrated to their communities of work for

employment, most were living in their home communities prior to obtaining their job; on average women had lived in their present community for 21.5 years. Only 18 of the 29 women had children living with them, several of the women having obtained their job later in life after their children had left home. All of the women were employed full time since collective agreements prohibited part time work and since part time work was operationally difficult for women who worked as managers.

I supplemented interviews with women workers with interviews with three HR managers (out of a total population of five managers who had HR responsibilities) who worked for the MNFC's regional operations. Interviews with HR managers were solicited through the regional Human Resource Manager; each was responsible for HR practices at one or two of the mill subsidiaries. These interviews were one to two hours in length and asked questions about the company's approach to the inclusion of workers from the four designated groups in Canada's Employment Equity Act²⁷, the company's experiences with industry change, and the company's approach to worker management and control. Although local union representatives declined interviews, I deepened my understanding of forest work in the region by conducting unstructured interviews with three national and sub-national level union officials and with several unstructured interviews with a provincial government industry representative. I also examined documents from the unions, company, media and government.

Interviews with HR representatives established the organizational context and an overview of local-level changes made to promote diversity. I analyzed interviews with women workers in greater detail using thematic analysis followed by critical discourse analysis. In the first round of coding, I identified all text segments where women referenced company practices to promote the inclusion of women or Aboriginal people (in accordance with company strategies outlined in HR interviews). Many references were in response to a number of interview questions that asked specifically about the inclusion of Aboriginal people and women in the workplace; examples include "Do you think that there are different challenges for getting a job at the mill for women versus men?", "What can you think of that might support Aboriginal cultural values in the workplace?" and "Have you experienced any discrimination or harassment from a co-worker?" Other references to company practices of inclusion surfaced in response to more

²⁷ The four groups designated within Canada's Employment Equity Act include: Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, members of a visible minority and women.

general questions such as “What do you like about your job?”. I then grouped codes into themes showing similar patterns among participants’ representations of diversity, and re-examined specific representations in the context of each interview transcript in its entirety to link women’s representations to their specific experiences of work. Themes that emerged from initial coding were further analyzed using critical discourse analysis. Interviews were not intended to be representative of all of the experiences of women forestry workers in the region but were instead used to better understand some of the common discourses circulating among white and Aboriginal women workers in the MNFC.

Discourse analysis has been offered as a useful tool for geographers to explore tensions between understandings of the material world as objective and its representation through language and culture (Lees 2004). While its use in their sub-discipline is still relatively infrequent, economic geographers have begun to use discourse analysis to examine representational aspects of economic institutions and labour market practices (Raghuram and Strange 2001). Since critical discourse analysis is understood to “move back and forth between reflecting and constructing the social world” (Rogers et al. 2005), it provides a lens with which we can better understand how institutional practices are reflected in language, and in turn how language helps to construct people’s experiences of institutional practices. Fairclough’s (1992), method of critical discourse analysis involves three components: text analysis – examination of the structure of the text itself; discursive analysis – analysis of how the text is linked to and produces or reproduces different discourses; and analysis of socio-cultural practices – how the text functions as a social practice within an ideological framework. Following Fairclough (2003), a text can be examined for three types of meaning: meaning related to ideological representations of the world, meanings related to the representation of identities, and meanings related to the social interaction itself. My examination of women’s representations of diversity focuses on meanings related to representations of identity and ideological representations of diversity management. In relation to identity I examine how women represent themselves in text, which Fairclough denotes as style (which draws on both social identity and personality) and how women represent others in text, in so doing structuring other’s social identities.

Results: discourses of inclusion

The discourses that women drew on to represent diversity management initiatives and the style of interview texts were aligned with social identity categories related to whether women self identified as Aboriginal or white and to whether they were hourly unionized workers or non-unionized managers and professional workers²⁸. Women's positions drew on the diversity discourse itself, on regional discourses of Aboriginal identity, and on discourses related to the union movement. Three general forms of representation of the diversity practices emerged from the interviews corresponding to three social identity groups of women: white women who were not unionized who drew on individualistic discourses; white women who were unionized who drew on union discourse of sameness; and unionized Aboriginal women²⁹ who spoke in response to being seen as token employees by co-workers and management. The talk presented within each group was not inclusive of all of the perspectives of the women interviewed; rather they reflected some of the common discourses circulating in the MNFC concerning the incorporation of women and Aboriginal people into the workplace. Since talk concerning the inclusion of Aboriginal workers and women were distinct I separate their discussion within my presentation of each group of women's representations of diversity management practices.

Discourses of individualism and difference

By definition, women not represented by collective agreements were in individualized employment contracts. In addition, five of the six women were employed as managers or professional workers placing them higher in the company's chain of command than the unionized workers. These two aspects of the women's employment differentiated them from unionized women workers in terms of their access to knowledge and to discourses circulating within the firm. Non-unionized women's representations of the company's diversity initiatives drew on several connotations commonly interwoven with discourses of diversity management.

²⁸ The category of non-unionized women included all women working as managers or as professionals along with one clerical worker who worked in a non-unionized unit. This worker was frequently given management responsibilities, and accordingly presented herself in text as an actor in the implementation of diversity management.

²⁹ Indicative of their very small representation in management and professional occupations in the mill, all of the Aboriginal women interviewed were working as labourers or clerical workers, groups that were all represented by collective agreements, barring one non-unionized clerical unit.

These included discourses of meritocracy, individualism, productivity, and corporate ethics (Humphries and Grice, 1995; Kamp and Hagedorn-Rasmussen, 2004). The styles of non-unionized women's talk were also distinct from those of other women; women often represented themselves as spokespeople for the MNFC, reflecting their class positions relative to hourly workers and their positions as white workers in mills owned and managed by white workers.

Gender

In their talk about diversity practices pertaining to gender, women's representations of the diversity discourse often drew on personal narratives of their experiences to support company rhetoric. I concentrate on women's talk related to two practices that HR managers presented as strategies to promote diversity within the non-unionized workforce: the option of flexibility, in terms of location and hours of work, and the targeting of opportunities for promotion to women and Aboriginal people.

Talk concerned with the company's practice of offering flexible work practices reflected the notion of individualism and corporate ethics within the diversity discourse [21, 27, 32, 35].

I: So thinking back about your job, what do you like about your job?

P27...I like the principles and the values of the company that I work for. I always kind of said to myself, if working for [Company name], working for any company, if it ever came to the point where my values, like if I was being told to do something that I did not agree with I don't think I could do it just for the money. I think I would have to go find somewhere else to work. And I haven't hit that part yet so, so far so good. So far we're still okay. And there is a lot of flexibility in my job, like I was saying before, you know I have a young family, there is more recognition given to the women and men in our operation that have young families and if someone is sick and they're staying at home because their wife has to work or whatever they're still in contact you know people that have laptops, people can phone in if they're missing a meeting or whatever, there's a lot of accommodations that have come along with people recognizing those family values.

Respondent 27's talk about the flexible work practices of the company was bracketed by the assertion that the company had values. The speaker referenced her personal values using a number of conditional clauses, 'if working for...', 'if it ever came to the point where...', to

add emphasis. This technique of moralization supported her authority to judge those of the company. She then classified the practice of offering flexible hours as an example of company ‘values.’ The woman conferred further authority on her claim by highlighting her identity as a mother of a young family. The way she presented the firm’s flexibility, however, to the effect that special accommodations would not be made only for women but also for men in a similar situation, reflected the underlying tenet of individualism; the special circumstances of each individual would be taken into account, and not the blanket needs of an essentialized group. Moreover, her description of how flexibility operated within the firm emphasized a continuation of work, ‘the use of laptops and phones,’ in such a way as to not hamper firm productivity. Thus difference was not linked to a reduction in productivity, consistent with dominant diversity discourse. Accordingly, all six of the non-unionized women positioned themselves as high producers who were dedicated to the company. After describing her very heavy workload and many hours of overtime one woman stated “...you want to do your job well, and you don't want to be viewed as if, as if you're not pulling your own weight”(P19). Likewise, another woman described how she didn’t question the need to work over time: “ ...the company says we’re supposed to be here from 8 til’ 4:30 but we know what needs to be done and what needs to happen during that week... ... and we just do it”(P32).

The theme of labour productivity was present in women’s discussions about the promotion of women within the organization, which revealed some of the contradictions in the discourse of diversity management.

I: Do you think you will choose to apply for those positions or?

P21: Not in the near future, and that’s a personal decision because of where my kids are, but I know that if I wanted to and that in a couple of years I could move on to a different role if I wanted to but I don’t want to.

... ..

I: ...do you feel that any of the challenges or opportunities are different for you than those that men might have?

P21: Yes I have, I do, but I think they are in a positive way to be honest... ..like I believe that [Company name] they are looking strongly to have women and Aboriginals in top leadership roles, and they’re encouraging that and that’s what, that’s where I find some pressure, that I’m a woman in a management role and they

want me to, they want to see me move on into bigger roles and I've got to challenge that back and say that's not what I want right now...

In the context of the interview, the statement 'that's not what I want right now,' was a paraphrase of her earlier statement 'Not in the near future... ..because of where my kids are.' The last excerpt, then, was demonstrative of the contradictions underlying the discourse of diversity that professes to encourage the promotion of women. Not applying for promotion was described as 'a personal decision,' and as an act of resistance against the company through the statement 'I've got to challenge that back.' These semantic devices framed the woman's not moving to higher roles in the organization as an *individual* choice, and not as a barrier facing women as a group. These meanings relied on the assumption that promotions necessarily entail longer hours of work not manageable while raising children. And, despite the speaker's emphasis on the individual level, her reference to children when answering a question about the differences facing women, suggested an assumed understanding that as a *woman* with young children, she would not find it manageable.

As shown in this excerpt, the company's drive to increase the diversity of upper management by promoting women, and its drive to compel workers to work long hours were in conflict. This tension reflected the tenets of liberal individualism that underlie diversity management, that so long as conditions are fair, individuals are able to compete in the market and they will be rewarded accordingly (Humphries & Grice, 1995).

Aboriginal identity

When discussing the company's diversity strategies pertaining to Aboriginal identity, the talk of all six of the non-unionized women exhibited a managerial style positioning them as spokespeople for the company's diversity strategy. Responses were consistent with diversity discourse in that they focused on the inclusion of difference rather than on the removal of inequity. They differed, however, from both the diversity discourse and the responses about the inclusion of women, in that they were informed by discourses that characterized Aboriginal people as under producers and not as strong workers.

Talk of practices pertaining to Aboriginal people often demonstrated a belief that the company's efforts to hire Aboriginal people were rooted in benevolence [27, 32, 19]. A white

woman manager described her understanding of the relationship between the company and Aboriginal people as follows:

P35...we work hard to try and incorporate Aboriginals into the workforce and give them opportunities and deal with their things that are of traditional value, like you know the berry picking, the gathering, the hunting and stuff...

The speaker used the word ‘we,’ positioning herself as a representative of the MNFC and in a position of power relative to ‘Aboriginals,’ who were classified as different through the use of ‘their things.’ The relationship between the company and Aboriginal people was presented as one where the company ‘give[s] them opportunities,’ insinuating that the relationship was unequal and not as mutually beneficial as the diversity discourse predicted. That traditional harvesting activities were represented as ‘things’ that need to be ‘dealt with,’ had the connotation that Aboriginal culture was a barrier to the company’s goals and that these needed to be overcome in order to have successful production. Aboriginal people were characterized as different because of their nature based activities (berry picking, hunting). The presentation of Aboriginal people and Aboriginal activities as ‘in the bush’ and not reconcilable with industrial production draws on discourses that position Aboriginal people as a people who are deficient according to the measures of industrial production. Another woman emphasized the degree of the company’s benevolence towards Aboriginal people in the allocation of logging and tree planting contracts stating “...[company name] has went [sic.] to some pretty lengthy extents to in order, like even to the extent of helping them set up their business, helping them manage finances ...” (P19). By talking about the company’s efforts as ‘pretty lengthy extents,’ and using the word ‘even,’ to induce the hearer to see the company’s ‘helping’ set up a business and manage finances, as beyond the expectations of what the normal activities of a company are, the women represented the company’s assistance of Aboriginal contractors as exceptional.

In addition to the portrayal of the ‘helping company’ two of the non-unionized workers linked the accommodation of difference to the company’s knowledge of the assertion of Aboriginal rights in the courts [32, 35]. This was evident in one white woman manager’s description of an Aboriginal awareness session that she had participated in: “Just entails, you know, there again, how we are supposed to be treating the Aboriginals, how we look at it. It explains some of the law around how things are done differently”(P32). Her use of the words ‘supposed to,’ communicated a sense of obligation to treat Aboriginal people *differently*.

Reference to the law as a guideline of how things were to be done differently, demonstrated that the speaker understood the company's rationale for including Aboriginal people to be rooted in recent legal decisions concerning Aboriginal rights. Thus the inclusion of Aboriginal people in the workplace was represented not as benefiting the company directly, but rather as a necessity due to the growing recognition of Aboriginal rights in the courts and the associated militancy of Aboriginal groups claiming rights to resources.

Discourses of sameness

Access to discourses circulating within the unions shaped white unionized women's representations of company diversity practices. Similar to Aboriginal women, white unionized women were less aware of diversity practices than white non-unionized women (Table 3.2). Of the three groups of women, however, white unionized women were most aware of the union's efforts to assist women³⁰. They were also the most likely to use a vocabulary common to the *worker equality* discourse associated with union culture including words such as same, equal, and fair. Throughout interviews with white unionized women, the use of this vocabulary in relation to the union occurred 30 times (Table 3.2). This language of solidarity is based on an underlying tenet of union culture, which is its "...reflex towards unity... ..based on the practical knowledge that management listens to an organized group of workers completely differently than it would listen to an individual rebel"(Martin 1995). The need for a common stance when bargaining has entrenched worker equality as a key aim of collective employer contracts, and worker unity as a key discourse among unionists. It thus follows that union discourse relies on the notions of similarity and sameness since these concepts are seen as integral to empowerment. What is of interest are the ways in which women leveraged the vocabulary both in defense of class interest and worker empowerment, but also to reproduce racist discourse constructing the inclusion of Aboriginal workers as unequal. The style of women's talk also exhibited a sense of solidarity, with women presenting themselves as members of a collective of workers. The precise meanings of sameness were thus context specific and leveraged for particular purposes.

³⁰ Women's knowledge of the union efforts to empower women were limited to a union women's school operated by the provincial federation of labour and a women's committee that was established in one of the locals, though its influence in union activities was marginal.

Gender

In white women's talk about the company's efforts to include women in the workplace, a discourse of sameness often presented same treatment as the removal of unequal discriminatory practices towards women. As a result, several women described the company's targeted hiring of women as creating equal conditions for employment [13, 25, 29, 33, 34], and two women described the firm's hiring in terms of the absence of discrimination [5, 7].

The extent to which the discourse of sameness associated with union solidarity was prevalent in women's talk was demonstrated particularly well by women's narratives of specific incidents related to the implementation of diversity practices. In total, three women recounted narratives where the union opposed a specific company practice aligned with diversity management that they felt would be beneficial to women workers. In one such example, a woman described the union's response to the company management's proposal to allocate two of nine new apprenticeship positions created to alleviate a trades-persons shortage, to diversity target groups. In response to a question about how the union had represented interests that were specific to women workers the chair of the women's committee provided a description of this incident:

P6: I guess the biggest example that comes to mind is, we had an apprenticeship program... ..the company had offered seven positions plus two if the two other ones came from the diverse group, being women, Aboriginal or disability, so that was an opportunity for us to have apprenticeships in two more jobs. However it was voted down on the membership floor to have these extra two positions specifically because of seniority, is where the membership was coming from. So a very sad thing.

I: So because of the apprenticeships would have [sic.] to go to people that had less seniority?

P6: Right. The seven regular apprenticeships we'll call them, those are all awarded specifically on seniority. The other group, those would have been awarded on seniority of those identified groups but because those groups have been in the work place for so fewer years than the general white male population, they in total have less seniority so the membership, it would have meant (pause) that was the bottom line to me was two more jobs... ..that was a very sad situation.

This choice of narrative in response to a question about how the union had represented the interests of women framed the incident as an example of how the union had failed to support women workers. Despite this negative framing, the speaker positioned herself in solidarity with the union throughout her talk, using the term ‘us’ to describe the union.

In her depiction of the event, the speaker communicated disappointment not only for the outcome of the vote, but also for the reasoning behind the decision. Though the narrative described the union’s ‘no’ vote as resulting from a refusal to allocate apprenticeships to workers of lower seniority, the position that she communicated was that the union had not understood her line of reasoning: that the creation of two positions was an advance for workers in the context of a workforce that was being downsized. Her sadness at the vote’s outcome was thus not presented as a defeat for the rights of women and Aboriginal people, but rather as a defeat for workers. While she clearly understood that women and Aboriginal workers were systematically barred from promotion as a result of seniority, the argument that she emphasized was the significance of the diversity apprenticeships in terms of job creation: ‘the bottom line to me was two more jobs.’

In a second account, a woman described her conflicted position towards requests that women with small children had made to work part time. Although the firm was supportive of the requests, the union local stood firmly opposed.

I: ...are there any ways that the firm took interests of women into consideration?

P38: ...I know of some girls, especially the ones coming back from mat leaves, you know, they would love to work part time. Personally I tell them you know, this union has fought long and hard to have us all hired full time and that’s not something that’s not something they’re going to like... ..not for us few women. That’s hard, it’s for the benefit of the whole, for the majority but it does make it hard for the ones that are just having babies now.

This woman responded to a question about the firm by recounting barriers faced by the union. This reflected the degree to which the union mediated unionized women’s experiences. The style of the women’s talk was inconsistent; she shifted back and forth between positioning herself with all workers ‘to have us all hired full time’ and positing herself with women ‘not for us few women’. She defended union stating that it had ‘fought long and hard’ and that the basis

for the decision was for the benefit of the whole. Thus, while the woman was sympathetic to the cause of the women, she talked from an ideological basis in collectivity, that the interests of the individual should be forgone for the benefit of the whole.

Each of these narratives demonstrated how women continued to emphasize their positions as workers (who need the solidarity of male co-workers) while recognizing that their identities as woman were sometimes different from male majority.

Aboriginal identity

The white unionized women's discussions of company practices pertaining to Aboriginal inclusion also used the lexicon of equality. Some women described the targeted hiring of Aboriginal people using similar connotations that they used to describe efforts to include women stating that practices to include Aboriginal people were fair or that they were evidence of the company not being discriminatory [1, 5, 7, 12, 33]. In response to a question about what the firm did to incorporate Aboriginal women, one woman stated "...everybody is equal. The employer is an equal opportunity employer, so they are not discriminatory or anything" (P5). This woman's assertion that everyone was treated equally by the firm was equated with both the absence of discrimination, and with the firm's status in the United States as an Equal Opportunity Employer requiring them to meet targets for the hiring of women and minorities. While this example shows a limited understanding of what constitutes fair, other women's use of a the vocabulary of equality revealed contrary meanings to portray Aboriginal inclusion as unfair:

P25: ...as far as I know they supported the fact that (pause) in fact I think that they even went out of their way... ... to put postings up on the reserve that there was a hiring going on so I thought that was quite fair because they didn't go into every other community to do that. So in that way I think it was, so they all, you know they definitely had their opportunity to put in for jobs.

I: And was that successful do you think?

P25: Well we have one person that I know of that is off the reserve that travels to the reserve, that's working...

A sense of trepidation to talk about Aboriginal inclusion was indicated in the text by the placement of the clause ‘as far as I know,’ before the proposition about Aboriginal hiring, and by the use of ‘I *think* it was,’ which lessened the speaker’s commitment to her description. While the speaker used the word ‘fair’ to describe diversity practices, its meaning was contradicted by the phrases ‘went out of their way,’ and ‘they didn’t go to every other community to do that.’ When taken as a whole, the text portrays Aboriginal people as the recipients of special treatment from the company. In combination with the tone of trepidation, this ambiguity might signal an attempt by the speaker to not appear racist since, as suggested by van Dijk “...in any discourse about minorities, white speech participants are aware of the norms of nondiscrimination and conscious of the fact that they should present themselves as tolerant citizens”(1993; 145). The speaker may have used the word fair to moderate her thoughts that Aboriginal people were getting underserved preferential treatment.

The statement that Aboriginal people had ‘had their opportunity,’ attributed blame for the low representation of Aboriginal people in the workplace to Aboriginal people and not the company. This sentiment was echoed by another woman who stated “They’re trying” (P12), in reference to the company’s attempts to include Aboriginal people. Both text segments implied that the inclusion of Aboriginal people in the workplace is difficult and perhaps impossible. Although this depiction of Aboriginal people was similar to that of the non-unionized women, unionized women were more likely to describe company diversity practices pertaining to Aboriginal people as unfair.

A more direct use of the discourse of sameness was employed to oppose any diversity practice that was seen to treat Aboriginal people *differently* from other workers [17, 22, 39]. This narrow use of the notion of sameness was presented in this exchange:

I: ...do you think there are any challenges that Aboriginal people might face to getting a job at the mill might be different from those that aren’t Aboriginal?

... ..

P22: Actually yeah, better because they want to hire minority groups because the pressure is on them to make sure that their work site has, and I know around when I got hired and after I got hired they hired lots and lots of women, and I think it actually affected their workplace, because there’s women out there that cannot do the job to the same skill level that some of the men can do because some of it is physical

and if you have a shift full of women, well who's going to do the grunt work?...
...and they've had special hiring just for Métis and Aboriginals, so.

While the question asked about Aboriginal people, the woman's response argued against the differential hiring of women, a position that she, as a woman, felt she could take without appearing sexist. The speaker, using gender as a surrogate for Aboriginal identity, argued that the company should not engage in preferential hiring for Aboriginal people. Her argument was supported by the propositions that: 1. the company has hired a lot of women, 2. women have on average a lower physical skill level than men, and 3. that the workplace has suffered as a result. The connection between these propositions and the hiring of Aboriginal peoples was left unfinished that 'now there has been a special hiring for Métis and Aboriginals.' The implied completion of the argument relied once again on the circulation of discourses that Aboriginal people had inherent characteristics, like women, that would make them inferior workers.

When white unionized women talked about the company's efforts to include Aboriginal people, the notion of union equality was employed to justify exclusion. Their perspectives relating to their own experiences as women however were both critical of the union and supportive of the general premises of union 'equality.' In relation to their own experiences, the white women demonstrated strategic approaches to the diversity strategies of the company [5, 12, 13, 22]. The women's representations of the company's diversity were predominantly favourable, yet they were unwilling to let go of the collectivism of the union, responding more aptly from within its discourse.

Tokenised perspectives

Unlike the white unionized women whose talk about diversity practices often incorporated discourses of sameness, (92% of the women paraphrased 'the union treats everyone the same'), only 30% of Aboriginal women referred to the union as treating everyone the same or equally (Table 3.2). For the most part, Aboriginal women presented themselves as indifferent to and unaffected by the union, and in response to my question: "Does being unionized affect working conditions for you?" six women responded with paraphrases to the avail of "...I don't think our union does much for us, I really don't" (P14) [4, 17, 36, 37, 40]. Instead, the style of

Aboriginal women's talk reflected both a sense of collectivity with other Aboriginal workers and a feeling of being a member of a group that was tokenized by both the company and white co-workers.

Aboriginal women's descriptions of how they understand the company's diversity practices often made reference to the dominant discourses categorizing them as token minority hires, not as good workers. Tokenism has been defined in terms of the degree to which any visually identifiable group is a minority in the workforce and thus more visible (Yoder and Berendsen 2001; Yoder 2002). Outcomes of tokenism for groups disadvantaged in broader society can include social isolation, increased stress and a higher pressure to perform. Here, I use the term tokenism to describe how Aboriginal women saw themselves in the workplace owing to their position as a socially disadvantaged group and as a target group for the company's diversity strategy.

Aboriginal women as a group were relatively isolated in the firm. Unlike white women, who comprised 94% of the clerical workers although they were under-represented in almost all occupational groups, only seven Aboriginal women were employed as clerical workers of a total of 68 (Table 3.1). In addition, while 38% of the white unionized women reported experiences of discrimination or harassment from a co-worker, 60% of the Aboriginal women interviewed stated that they had faced discrimination from a co-worker (Table 3.2). And while 85% of white unionized women stated that they had no experiences of discrimination or harassment, only 30% of Aboriginal women did not represent discrimination and harassment.

Gender

Aboriginal women's talk about diversity practices pertaining to gender, were markedly negligible. This suggests that either their identity as Aboriginal had a greater impact on their experience, or that the women felt it was more important to communicate their experiences as Aboriginal to me, since as a white woman I might have been assumed to have an understanding of gender but not of Aboriginality. The little that Aboriginal women did have to say about gender was often entwined with their Aboriginal identity, as a feature that amplified their status as a token employee. For example, several women discussed their hiring as being a result of the company's need to hire both Aboriginal people and women [8, 14, 23, 27, 35].

Aboriginal identity

Aboriginal women's descriptions of diversity practices pertaining to Aboriginal identity were often descriptions of their experiences dealing with hostility towards diversity initiatives expressed by co-workers. Two women described incidents of backlash to the company's diversity strategy [10, 40]. An experience of feeling tokenized was described by one woman:

I: Do you think that there are different challenges for getting a job at the mill for people who are Aboriginal versus people who aren't?

P10: Well when Aboriginal people come in there, the comment from oh well (pause) and it's not a lot either, a minority hey? But they're the ones that flap their lips and its like, "oh they're only here because they're Indian, they're Aboriginal, they're not qualified." You know, you still have to prove yourself hey? But that takes a long times sometimes but it's sort of (pause) uh yeah.

This statement about backlash against Aboriginal employees directly followed a question about whether being Aboriginal made a difference in getting a job. This suggests that the speaker was defending Aboriginal workers in an environment where other workers would likely state that Aboriginal people were being hired preferentially. Thus the speaker responded to my question by contextualizing backlash to the hiring of Aboriginal people using a direct representation of the speech of a, presumably white, co-worker. The woman's representation of discourse pertaining to Aboriginal people resembled that communicated in the talk of white women workers above, that Aboriginal people were 'not qualified,' and were the recipients of unfair advantaged in company hiring. This excerpt was followed by two sentences that aimed to communicate the impact that this type of discourse had on Aboriginal workers: the sense that they needed to prove themselves as good workers, and that this process can take a long time. The first of these sentences was phrased as a question, using collective forms of the words 'you' and 'yourself,' to both engage and invite the white listener to empathize with the Aboriginal experience. Aboriginal women also resisted being stereotyped as bad workers by positioning themselves as good workers when describing their work, why they had obtained their jobs or why they had been promoted [40, 8, 12]. Being marked as different through inclusionary policies and practices can have negative personal repercussions by signaling difference associated with perceived

disadvantage and deficiency (Khayat 1994). Consequently, in order to be accepted by their co-workers, Aboriginal people needed to compensate for the construction of Aboriginal workers as “lazy” by working harder, in this way emphasizing their sameness to white workers.

When representing the firm’s approach to Aboriginal inclusion, Aboriginal women framed the inclusion of difference as desirable, but criticized the firm’s approach to inclusion of difference, representing it as superficial. Aboriginal women felt tokenized by the company, and that the discourse of Aboriginal inclusion had not materialized into tangible benefits. Aboriginal women interviewed typically represented the company’s version of the incorporation of Aboriginal people (either through the structural change or the incorporation of Aboriginal culture), as rooted in the public relations aims of the company and not in a genuine desire to build links with Aboriginal communities. One woman complained that she felt that she was often used as a ‘token’ Aboriginal person at career fairs [10], and four others stated that they felt that the company’s pro-Aboriginal and family friendly policies had not materialized into tangible changes [4, 26, 37].

In response to a more open ended question about how the firm might support cultural values in the workplace, the interviewee had the following to say:

I: ...what can you think of that might support cultural values in the workplace...?

P37: There were no culture values there. Nothing. Just the hiring the Aboriginals just to make it look good

This excerpt is a statement with a high level of commitment. The respondent used the pause after the question to make the negative statement that the company did not support cultural values³¹. Her authoritative denial of the presence of Aboriginal culture in the workplace was followed by a strong assertion that under the rhetoric of Aboriginal inclusion the company did ‘just the hiring’ for purposes that were unrelated to true values or ethics, ‘to make it look good.’ The strong tone of her statements and her use of the word ‘just’ indicated that she had unmet expectations rooted in corporate discourses related to Aboriginal inclusion.

This comment reflected a perception made by many of the Aboriginal women that since the company was uncaring and that its basis for inclusion was profitability, and not a

³¹ The interpretation of what was meant by cultural values was left open to interpretation by the listener.

true desire to promote Aboriginal people to higher positions in the company, incorporate Aboriginal culture, or give Aboriginal people a voice in shaping strategies designed to promote Aboriginal inclusion in the workplace [4, 10, 14, 24, 26, 37]. This feeling of Aboriginal people not being empowered in the company was communicated by one woman who responded to a question about how the company might support Aboriginal cultural values in the workplace by stating:

P24: Well I think first of all, like even if they did have, like someone who was Aboriginal working in management because I know of people that belong to some of the, like the First Nations and that and who have applied out there but have never been accepted even for a simple secretary job.

Although this Métis and non-status First Nations woman was concerned about hiring and promotion, her primary concern was not with her own rank within the company, but with the attainment of power of Aboriginal people as a whole within the firm. Her desire that the company have ‘someone who was Aboriginal’ work in management, and her linkage of having an Aboriginal person in management with increased hiring of Aboriginal people, indicated that her belief was that having greater Aboriginal representation at higher levels would provide collective empowerment for Aboriginal people within the mill. In other words, she felt that to further the interests of Aboriginal people as a whole, Aboriginal people needed more say in the company’s operations. The content of her talk, that First Nations people not being promoted or hired at the mill, also reflected a general sentiment among the Aboriginal women, that diversity management practices were more about rhetoric than about material change that neither challenged the racial stereotypes of their co-workers nor the material disempowerment of Aboriginal people.

Discussion: revisiting the question of diversity

Women’s representations of the diversity practices of the corporation were linked to their social identities which structured their experiences and their access to discourses from the company, the union, and resulting from the set of gender and racial relations of northern prairie communities. Although superficially women’s representations both challenged and sustained

dominant discourse of diversity management, the talk of each group of women demonstrated specific ways that diversity management failed to allow for the true inclusion of marginalized workers. In addition, results question the understanding of women in forestry as located only in oppressed subject positions. In particular, white women's discussions of diversity practices pertaining to Aboriginal people served to reinforce discourses of dominance and marginalization circulating in the workplace.

Representing diversity practices

Women's social identities shaped their representations of the company's diversity practices and offered critical insights into diversity management. Since white non-unionized women positioned themselves as managers and not as workers, their talk about diversity practices was typically aligned with that of the company despite contradictory personal accounts of their experience with diversity management. Their discussion of company practices to increase diversity reflected an underlying commitment to liberal individualism, meritocracy, and company competitiveness, central pillars of diversity management. Not surprisingly, non-unionized women's talk about their material experiences exposed contradictions within diversity discourse. The pressure to over-work and the resulting decision of several women not to move to higher positions within the company was inconsistent with their feelings of personal support from the company in relation to their social identities as women in a male dominated industry. And, the extent to which women talked about the company's diversity strategy benefiting their work lives was through the ability to work flexible hours and work from home. The worker subject that the MNFC aimed to recruit and develop to make the company "the best forest company in the world"(P27) was not limited by gender, but was specific in that subjects were impelled to "take initiative, be ambitious, to do really good work."(P27) Despite discourse that promoted work hours conducive to family life and the ability to work part time, women did not feel that these options were available to them. Thus although white non-unionized women reproduced the rhetoric of diversity management, they were disempowered by the company's drive for productivity which was irreconcilable with their roles as mothers of young children. Consequently, diversity management's narrow approach to the inclusion of marginalized workers that did not give adequate attention to women's unequal share in the work of

reproduction, resulted in superficial empowerment in practice; none of the women managers interviewed were prepared to apply for promotion to higher levels in the company since the enormous work load was incommensurable with their family responsibilities.

Alternatively, white unionized women's use of the vocabulary of sameness and equality in their talk highlighted the significance of union discourses in framing women's approaches to inclusion. Women's talk about both the union and the firm with respect to the inclusion of women, were often framed through the notion of worker sameness and equality. Moreover, women's accounts of particular incidents where diversity management practices emphasizing difference conflicted with the union's understanding of equality demonstrated negotiated positions. Representations of diversity practices as positive hinged on whether or not the practices threatened their understanding of worker collectivity which they saw as key to their empowerment as women workers. Women's use of the notion of sameness to discuss inclusion practices based on gender were in some cases used to broaden the scope of what sameness meant, echoing the long history of organising by women within unions in Canada (Briskin and McDermott 1993; White 1993; Briskin 1999; Briskin 1999). By reframing diversity management as worker equality, white women workers were able to incorporate aspects of diversity that they viewed as beneficial, while continuing to support worker control of the workplace. When women recounted narratives about practices desirable for women that were not supported by the union, women presented stances that reaffirmed the importance of collectivity. This negotiation points to the problem of promoting the inclusion of marginalized groups while ignoring marginalized worker's identities as workers who require collective empowerment to have control over the conditions of their work. From this perspective, a broader understanding of the empowerment of marginalized workers requires approaches that are integrated with and not opposed to broader notions of worker empowerment.

Last, Aboriginal women's representations of the company's diversity practices signaled the need to address patterns of discrimination and the material marginalization faced by Aboriginal workers in the labour market to fully include Aboriginal workers. Aboriginal women desired recognition and a work environment free of discrimination. Unlike unionized white women, Aboriginal women did not draw on union discourse in their talk, emphasize sameness, or talk about working with the union to have their needs met. Since the company's discourse of diversity management did not address issues of power in the workplace, it was limited in its

ability to create Aboriginal inclusive workplaces. Further, by not challenging regional racist discourses constructing Aboriginal people, diversity practices tokenized Aboriginal women as recipients of benefits by both management and co-workers. Last, Aboriginal women's emphasis on Aboriginal people needing more control in the workplace alludes to Aboriginal people's assertion of rights to resources, and of their related rights to be full participants in the forest sector as owners, managers and workers. As eloquently stated by Cavanaugh, since "...power-free discourses operate to separate the political and the economic, it seems a bit premature to equate celebrating differences with celebrating equality"(1997; 44).

Constructing Aboriginal workers

Though the MNFC's diversity strategy aimed to change the culture of the company to foster a climate conducive to hiring and retention of Aboriginal peoples and women, white women used the language of diversity management to reproduce specific discourses about Aboriginal workers. These discourses drew on historical characterizations of Aboriginal people as inferior, and of Aboriginal culture as incompatible with industrial work (High 1996). None were commensurable, however, with the corporate discourse of diversity management whereby individual difference is contended to benefit firm productivity. This discrepancy between the corporate discourse of diversity and how it was discussed in relation to Aboriginal inclusion in these workplaces was particularly evident when comparing white women's talk of the inclusion of women with their talk of the inclusion of Aboriginal people. In positioning themselves as separate from, and superior to *different* Aboriginal workers, non-unionized white women characterized the inclusion of women in the workplace as compatible with firm productivity goals, and Aboriginal people as 'needing help.' Unionized white women's constructions of Aboriginal identity used the notion of similarity to at once condemn special initiatives to increase the representation of Aboriginal people in the workplace, and to characterize Aboriginal populations as poor workers. These findings corroborate previous research suggesting that Aboriginal people are often defined as outside of the working class, as inferior workers, and as belonging 'in the bush' (Dunk, 1994; Guard, 2004).

Conclusion

Though women's representations of the diversity practices differed reflecting their different social identities in the workplace, they all spoke to the inadequacies of diversity management to address the inclusion of marginalized workers. Diversity management aims to extract the question of the marginalization of difference in the workplace from its foundations in broader patterns of oppression. This narrow conception of the inclusion of difference overlooked women's unequal role in reproductive work, women's need for empowerment as workers, and broader patterns of discrimination and inclusion. By attempting to replace the notion of collective similarity with one of individualized difference, diversity management extracted class-based politics of worker control from the inclusion of difference and instead enforced a new form of sameness. Workers who bargain as individualized units have little recourse to company pressure for increased productivity that can homogenize difference. Collective bargaining in and of itself is not enough, however; despite being unionized, Aboriginal women did not state that their interests were represented by the union. Women's talk about diversity management underscored the need for worker control of inclusion policies and practices since worker control is a precondition to the consideration of factors extending beyond those that are beneficial to capital accumulation.

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Table 3.1: Occupational distribution of women and Aboriginal employees in the firm's regional operations in 2003.

Occupational groups	Total Employees			Aboriginal Employees			
	Total	Female		Total Aboriginal		Female	
	No	No	% ¹	No	%	No	%
Hourly Operations	968	160	16.5%	158	16.3%	31	3.2%
Hourly Trades	351	1	0.3%	23	6.6%	0	0.0%
Sales/Service	18	6	33.3%	2	11.1%	0	0.0%
Admin/Clerical	68	64	94.1%	7	10.3%	7	10.3%
Supervisor	100	5	5.0%	8	8.0%	1	1.0%
Semi Professional	24	5	20.8%	1	4.2%	0	0.0%
Professional	78	19	24.4%	4	5.1%	1	1.3%
Managers	51	4	7.8%	1	2.0%	1	2.0%
Total	1658	264	15.9%	204	12.3%	41	2.5%
Management employees							
Senior Managers	5	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Middle Managers	46	4	8.7%	1	2.2%	1	2.2%

¹ Percent of total workforce in a given occupational group.

Table 3.2 Women's references to particular employer diversity practices; reproduced discourse of union sameness; presented experiences or an absence of discrimination or harassment. I= total no. of discrete incidences of talk, (word, phrase or sentence), %=the percent of women with 1< incident of talk throughout interview.

	Total Non- union	White Union	Aboriginal Union	All women
	no = 6	no = 13	No = 10	no = 29
	I %	I %	I %	I %
I. Knowledge of particular practices pertaining to diversity				
1. Hiring quotas and targets	20 (100)	24 (85)	12 (70)	55 (79)
2. Hiring process changes	2 (33)	4 (31)	3 (30)	8 (28)
3. Diversity training	3 (50)	5 (23)	2 (20)	10 (28)
4. Aboriginal awareness training	7 (83)	1 (8)	3 (20)	11 (28)
5. Promotion for women and Aboriginal workers.	5 (50)	3 (23)	2 (20)	10 (28)
6. Union women course	1 (17)	8 (46)	2 (20)	10 (28)
II. Reference to discourse of union sameness¹				
	3 (33)	30 (92)	5 (30)	37 (55)
III. Experiences of Discrimination or harassment*				
None	11 (50)	15 (85)	7 (30)	32 (45)
Yes, from management	2 (33)	1 (8)	3 (30)	5 (17)
Yes, from co-workers	1 (17)	6 (38)	6 (60)	13 (41)

*Categories are not exclusive since some women experienced discrimination or harassment from both management and co-workers.

¹Paraphrasings of 'the union treats everyone the same.'

4. “CHANGE IS GOOD, DONKEY.” RESTRUCTURING WORKER IDENTITIES IN THE FOREST SECTOR.

Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between discourses of economic restructuring and the subjectivities of women working in forest processing in a province in the northern prairies province. I draw on semi-structured interviews with 29 women working in subsidiaries of a multinational forest company to argue that there is a two-way relationship between women’s representations of their work identities and discourses of organizational restructuring. First, women drew on their presented work identities in ways that reproduced and resisted dominant discourses of restructuring. Women reproduced discourses legitimizing restructuring through the presentation of work subjectivities that valued flexibility and individualized approaches to empowerment and mobility. Women also resisted these constructions, delegitimizing restructuring through the presentation of traditional characterizations of mill work. Second, restructuring had a regulatory effect on women’s understandings of their work identities. By destabilizing women’s experiences and understandings of mill work, the rhetorical and material effects of organizational restructuring were altering women’s constructions of work identity. This paper offers empirical support for the contention that worker subjectivities are integral to the legitimization of organizational change and that organizational change is, in turn, contributing to a broader shift in worker subjectivities.

Introduction

For over two decades, forest processing employment in Canada has been characterized by on-going waves of restructuring. The terms industry and organizational restructuring have been used to denote structural changes that included downsizing, outsourcing, and the introduction of more flexible labour processes. Workers have been affected by these changes directly, but also indirectly, through the impact of discourses of restructuring on workers' perceptions of job security and capacity for organized resistance. Although there have been many studies examining effects of economic restructuring in forestry on firm profitability, (Barnes et al. 1999), community well-being, (Prudham 1998), and gender relations, (Egan and Klausen 1998; Reed 1999), little attention has been paid to the discursive construction of restructuring and how it is related to the construction of forest work identities (for two examples see Dunk 2002; Vaara et al. 2006). This study contributes to research on economic restructuring by answering the question: how do women's presented work identities relate to discourses of economic restructuring?

The most comprehensive examination of the relationship between forest restructuring and worker identities to date is Dunk's (2002) study of displaced pulp mill workers. Dunk's underlying thesis was that the traditional industrial worker identity that was instrumental to collective resistance was being gradually dismantled in the wake of job loss by the promotion of values such as individualism and self-sufficiency through re-training and counseling programmes. Notably, Dunk's analysis of workers' perceptions of restructuring focused on workers who had already lost their jobs and did not include female workers. The latter is significant because women working in forestry have been found to be more vulnerable to economic restructuring than men, and because women's experiences are situated differently than men's given the gendered context of work. Women's increased vulnerability results from their greater likelihood of losing their jobs when downsizing occurs and their lower chances at finding similarly paid work after they have lost their jobs (Armstrong 1996; Barnes et al. 1999; Leach 2000; Egan and Klausen 1998; Mckenna 2001; Bakker 2000). Women working in forest processing mills are likely to have work histories that differ from those of the white male forest processing workers since they are more recent entrants into forest processing work, and are over-represented in non-standard forms of work relative to men (Armstrong 1996; Tripp-Knowles

1999; Reed 2003). In addition, traditional formulations of mill worker identities predicated on masculinity have resulted in the social exclusion of women within forest workplaces and communities (Dunk 1994; Reed 1999; Reed 2003). This set of experiences positions women forest workers at the margins of forest worker culture. From this vantage point, women workers' experiences and perceptions of restructuring in forest workplaces might offer a clearer perspective on how identity constructions are linked to contested discourses of organizational restructuring. In this study I examine how women's portrayals of economic restructuring related to how they constructed their self identities and how restructuring in turn contributed to regulate these identities.

Increasingly, geographers studying labour are paying attention to the contested nature of industrial change (Herod 1997; Cumbers and Atterton 2000; Tonkin 2000). From this perspective, workers are not passive victims to economic restructuring, but rather are agents that both resist and reproduce organizational change. I begin by contextualizing economic restructuring in the forest industry in the northern prairies as set of relatively recent set of material and discursive practices. I then present the later as a discursive struggle that aims to legitimize or delegitimize company actions. I argue that since restructuring implicitly involves changing the roles and subjectivities required of forest workers, economic restructuring requires a shift in workers' own notions of work identity. Drawing on interviews with women forest workers, I develop two ways that discourses of economic restructuring were integrated with women's subjectivities. First I argue that whether women sought to resist restructuring through discursive delegitimization or to legitimize economic restructuring was related to how they made sense of their work experiences and their understandings of work. Second, I argue that economic restructuring was regulating women's conceptions of identity, helping to produce more flexible work identities. I conclude by considering the shifting realities of work in the forest sector.

Restructuring in the northern prairies

Previous research on restructuring of the forest sector in Canada has been theorized as a move from Fordist towards more flexible relations of production from the mid to late 1970s to the present. Literature situated in British Columbia documented a series of successive cyclical downturns associated with job loss, mill closures and an increasing wood volume to worker ratio

during this time (Hayter and Barnes 1997; Hayter and Barnes 1992; Hayter 2003). A shift to flexible relations of production required the development of both functional flexibility implemented in core groups of workers who have good work conditions and high salaries, and numerical flexibility from a larger pool of casual and temporary workers who have low wages and poor work conditions (Amin 1994; Barnes and Hayter 1997; Barnes et al. 1999). These new requirements of flexible production resulted in mill closures, the downsizing of workforces as workers were technologically displaced by machines, the implementation of functionally flexible work systems for remaining workers, and the outsourcing of logging and silviculture activities (Marchak 1983; Hayter and Barnes 1992; Hayter and Barnes 1997; Wilkinson 1997; Hayter 2003).

The post-war history of the forest sector in the northern prairie province doesn't conform to several of these trends. First, unlike the predominantly softwood coastal and interior forests of British Columbia, the northern prairie province's commercial forests are located in the boreal plain, an area characterized by mixed boreal forests comprised of both conifer dominated, hardwood dominated and mixed wood stands. These forests were considered less productive than British Columbia's forests since: the total area available for harvesting was smaller; tree diameters and size were smaller; forests and manufacturing mills were further from markets and transportation routes; and, hardwoods (predominantly trembling aspen and balsam poplar) comprised a significant component of Saskatchewan forests. Until the mid-late 1980s technology to make use of these *Populus spp.* was limited and hardwood stands were considered unusable for either pulp or wood. An increasing use of hardwood species for pulp and oriented strand board production helped to increase total roundwood production from 2 376 000 to 4 545 000 cubic meters from 1970 to 2000; the ratio of softwood to hardwood harvested decreased from 4.96 in 1970 to 1.49 in 2000 (Statistics Canada 2002a). In addition, until the mid 1980s most forest companies in the province were publicly owned and as a result less subject to fluctuating business cycles. As a whole, employment in forestry has increased steadily from 1961 to 1997 with some fluctuation in numbers in response to the closure and openings of specific mills because of the high relative influence of individual mills on the small forest sector (Statistics Canada 2002b). In addition, the ratio of jobs to wood production has increased over time, from 0.62 in 1970 to 0.89 in 1997. The late arrival of restructuring of forest operations in the forest sector in the northern prairies was most strongly associated with the increasing dominance of one

multinational forest company (MNFC) in the province in the mid to late 1990s and with changes in the softwood lumber dispute in 2001 that increased the tariffs on softwood exports to the United States from the province. Both the philosophy of the multinational company and increasing pressure on the forest sector resulting from tariffs were thus changing the nature of forest work. For example, although all but one of the subsidiaries of the MNFC in the province were considered profitable at the time of the interviews, compared with forest workers who worked for other mills, workers within the MNFC faced a substantially higher degree of job insecurity and vulnerability.

Discourses of economic restructuring

As demonstrated by Cumbers and Atterton (2000), organizational restructuring within multinational corporations does not happen seamlessly. Rather it is a contested process that requires the disruption of long established patterns of social relations of trust between corporations and workers and communities. This contestation is not only a material struggle between workers and corporations over workplace practices, however. It is also a discursive struggle over which meanings come to shape social relations in the workplace. The discursive struggle over the framing of organizational restructuring is also manifest beyond the workplace, in discourses promoted through news media and academic and policy discourse (Hirsch and De_Soucey 2006; Vaara et al. 2006). Hirsch and De Soucey (2006) found that while all discourses of economic restructuring drew on similar constructions of the global economy and local impacts, the discursive framing of these constructions and impacts were divergent, oscillating between two poles: the positive frame rooted in the business and management literature that emphasized increases in the efficiency, profitability and competitive ability of firms, and an opposing frame routed in Marxian sociology and organized labour that emphasized growing inequalities among workers and a decrease in worker's general well-being.

The positive framing of restructuring as necessary to compete in today's world usually emanates from organizations. According to Phillips et al. (2004), organizations disseminate and construct discourses about organizational actions if the actions deviate from prior practice or if actions affect perceptions of the organization's legitimacy. Restructuring fits this model since it

often involves a shift from prior labour practice in organizations and since it often incurs harm to workers which has a delegitimizing effect in the eyes of the workers or the community.

My analysis of organizational restructuring was set across four subsidiaries of an American owned multinational forest company [MNFC]³² operating in a province in the northern prairies. The American based MNFC was the largest forest player in the province owning six forest product mill subsidiaries (a pulp and paper mill, three sawmills, a plywood mill and an OSB mill) across four communities and having acquired two long term leases to harvest approximately two thirds of the marketable timber in the region³³. In the case of the MNFC restructuring of its operations in the northern prairies required legitimization since it was both a deviation from prior practice and was incurring harm on workers. Organizational restructuring involved a shift away from a period of relative stability in the late 1990s and a decrease in the job security and job quality of workers. In the 80s and 90s the MNFC acquired most of its subsidiaries in the northern prairies from smaller companies where workers had come to expect high job security. Restructuring was thus a departure from the previous experiences of many workers. In the three years prior to the study, the MNFC had downsized the workforce within one of its larger mills, increased the frequency of seasonal and unscheduled layoffs in another mill, and introduced new work systems that altered shift schedules, speeded up the production process, centralized clerical operations, and changed break schedules of workers in several mills. These changes were undesirable for most workers, as was the decreased job security that had resulted from continual threats of closure across all of the mills.

Two techniques that have commonly been used to legitimize restructuring include rationalization "...reference to the utility of institutionalized social action..."(Vaara et al. 2006; 797), and normalization "...reference to normal or natural functioning or behaviour..."(Vaara et al. 2006; 797). Accordingly the two dominant discourses circulated by the MNFC pertaining to restructuring were the rationalization that organizational restructuring was a necessary consequence of changing market conditions for forest products, and the normalization that

³² The name of the multinational forest company could not be disclosed because of the ethics agreement governing this empirical research project. Similarly, because of the small number of forest companies operating in the province, the name of the province could not be disclosed and was replaced with 'the province' or 'the northern prairie province.'

³³ Contextual information about the MNFC was drawn from company documents as well as from semi-structured interviews with the HR regional manager and two HR managers responsible for study mills. Interview texts were analysed for their content using thematic analysis and critical discourse analysis. For a more detailed description of my methods see pg. 104.

restructuring was part of the regular operations of the company and the characterization of the regional workforce as particularly unusual in their unwillingness to adapt to change.

One function of corporate restructuring discourses is to locate the need for organizational changes at a scale above that of the union or the government using rationalization (Vaara et al. 2006). Human resource (HR) managers in the MNFC rationalized the company's decision to downsize and restructure its regional operations by attributing the causes of restructuring to market factors outside of the control of the corporation such as: a declining global demand for paper, a rising Canadian dollar, and distance from markets (in the case of pulp and paper) and the softwood lumber dispute and the global price of softwood lumber (in the case of softwood lumber). In each case, restructuring was deemed necessary by reference to rules of the global economy: the mills would not be profitable in the industry if they did not restructure. Miller (1998) has argued that the use of profitability to legitimize organizational restructuring is underwritten by the move away from an understanding of corporations as responsible to stakeholders (which include the public, the workers and the corporation), towards a more limited model of corporate responsibility that includes only share holders. And, since most shares are traded within one year, this implies a focus on share value in the short term, which is increased by firm downsizing and restructuring announcements.

The normalization of restructuring by organizations draws on the discourse that traditional organizations are outdated and that success in the current economic reality requires organizational change (Hirsch and De_Soucey 2006). Normalization was used by the regional director of HR management at the MNFC who portrayed restructuring as usual company practice and positioned the labour relations environment in the region as the anomaly. Both forest workers in the region and provincial labour legislation were portrayed as backward and as resistant to change. When asked about restructuring he responded:

HR3: ... We're asking for flexibility, we're asking for changes, we're in a collective agreement, we're trying to do away with some of the, what we see as the entitlements of [the province]...

The talk of this HR manager constructed the province where the mills were located as an exceptional environment. Restructuring decisions were framed as normal company practices that were difficult to implement because of the pro-labour environment in the region. The terms

‘flexibility,’ and ‘changes,’ were employed to minimize the harm that workers would incur as a result of restructuring. The HR manager normalized restructuring and located the source of conflicts over the implementation of restructuring practices in the “entitlements of the province.”

Both strategies of rationalization and normalization were combined later in the interview with the HR director when he was asked to describe the most pressing local issues related to employment at the MNFC. He replied that it was:

...helping people understand the need to change, be flexible according to the changing global market. So again, helping people understand that we're in competitive markets and you know right now, in the United States, in sawmills, don't have to pay the tariffs...

This text communicates that the aim of regional HR management which was to change the orientation of workers ‘helping people understand the need to change, be flexible.’ Workers within the company were positioned as the obstacle, and were compared to what was needed in the changing global market. This reference to global competition and specifically the softwood lumber dispute both helped to rationalize change while framing change as the new norm.

Alternatively, discourses that are critical of economic restructuring are often produced out of the direct experiences of workers, by organized labour or through social science research. According to Hirsch and De Soucey (2006), portrayals of restructuring that resist dominant pro-restructuring discourses have become less prominent over time, while legitimizing portrayals have become more commonplace. Portrayals aiming to delegitimize economic restructuring have often used moralistic strategies that draw on humanistic and nationalistic values (Vaara et al. 2006). Humanist perspectives emphasize the impact of firing workers, closing operations and/or firm relocation on the life chances and well being of workers. They emphasize that restructuring entails an increase in the inequality among workers and overall increase in worker vulnerability. Nationalist sentiments are also drawn upon to criticize restructuring. This discourse suggests that globalization, of which restructuring is one component, results in declining power and well-being of the nation state as investment and jobs move to other regions (Vaara et al. 2006).

Within the MNFC, discourses that were critical of economic restructuring were circulated by the union and among workers. These discourses sought to delegitimize restructuring by emphasizing worker vulnerability and the nationalist discourse that the multinational company

did not care for local communities since it was controlled from the United States. Unlike the dominant discourses of restructuring produced by the MNFC, which were underwritten by an economic rationale, critical discourses drew on moralistic arguments that accorded importance to community and worker well-being which were harmed by restructuring.

Restructuring and changing worker identities

Corporate restructuring requires the development of a new set of worker behaviours and positionalities (Turnbull and Wass 2000; Littler and Innes 2004). Similar to all changes in corporations, these transformations require workers' acquiescence. Thus, dismantling the institutions of collective bargaining in itself is not sufficient; it is also necessary to compel workers to commit to workplace changes that bring about increased uncertainty and decreased work satisfaction (Streeck 1995). From this perspective, the successful implementation of organizational change necessitates a (psychological) shift in workers' mentality towards work.

Studies examining changes in worker orientations have theorized that the shift from Fordist to post-Fordist labour relations, has been matched by a shift in workers' identities (Hughes 2005; Kuhn 2006). According to this conceptualization, a worker ethic valuing long-termism, emotional attachment to work, authoritarianism, commitment and loyalty is being replaced with a new worker ethic that involves emotional detachment "short-termism, an obfuscation of authority, and abhorrence of dependence, and the fiction that we are in control of our destinies" (Hughes 1995; 607). This new worker ethic requires that workers "become temporally flexible and spatially mobile, and to view such responsibilities not as conditions of employment but as moral virtues" (Kuhn 2006; 1339). Moreover, Smith (2006) has argued that this shift has also involved a shift in the type of worker resistance, arguing that past forms of resistance based on collective withdrawal of labour effort are being substituted with new forms of worker resistance, such as the ability to quit work and move to another employer. These changes in worker identities have been theorized as both outcomes of identity regulation, (employers' attempts to regulate the identities of workers), and of individuals' active constructions of identity to make sense of their lives in the context of new insecurities and demands both inside and outside of the workplace (Alvesson and Willmot 2002).

The majority of studies examining links between discourses of restructuring and worker identities have argued that discourses of economic restructuring, globalization, and capital flight have been used to dispel resistance among workers (Miller 1998; Kelly 1999; Herod 2000; Turnbull and Wass 2000; Littler and Innes 2004). This study contributes to the above and to the work of Dunk (2002), which examines how forest workers constructed their identities in the aftermath of job loss by developing explicit links between worker subjectivities and discourses of restructuring. It is premised on the notion that identities are integral to the discursive construction of organizational practices, but that power relations in the corporation are asymmetrical and that organizational discourses help to regulate worker identities (Symon 2005). Further, my focus on the talk of women workers is significant since women have historically been positioned outside of traditional formulations of mill worker identities, and since their work histories and position in the labour force accentuates their vulnerability to economic restructuring (Armstrong 1996; Barnes et al. 1999; Leach 2000; Mckenna 2001; Dunk 2002).

To develop a more nuanced understanding of the link between worker identity and restructuring discourse I adopt a constructivist notion of identity following from Alvesson and Willmott (2002). Alvesson and Willmott's conceptualize identity as the way an individual connects different experiences and ideas to present a coherent narrative of self. An identity needs to be constructed by an individual through identity work which involves the incorporation of discourses and experiences that refute, form and strengthen a particular self-identity. I draw on this understanding of identity to denote work identity as how individuals present themselves as in texts in relation to their orientation towards work and their understanding of themselves as workers. While work identity from this perspective is the result of individual subjectivities, I also recognize that the production of identities is influenced by the production of discourses to regulate identities within organizations where power relations are asymmetrical. The extent of an individual's need to engage in identity work is less pronounced in relatively stable situations than in conditions of change or transition which "serve to heighten awareness of the constructed quality of self-identity and compel more concentrated identity work"(Alvesson and Willmott 2002; 626). Since organizational restructuring involves changing work practices and discourses, it follows that identity work is required for workers to make sense of changes in relation to their self-presented work identities.

Methods

My analysis of discourses in women's talk about economic restructuring in the forest industry was based on 29 interviews with women working within the MNFC. These interviews were drawn from a larger project that interviewed 40 women working in forest processing mills across the northern prairie province. Interviewees were solicited using letters requesting their participation in the study distributed with paycheques, by postings on bulletin boards and by word of mouth. Semi-structured interviews lasted one to two hours and asked a wide range of questions about women's work lives, aiming to develop a comprehensive picture of each woman's perspectives towards and experiences of work. Question areas included finding work, work history, the negotiation of work and family, hiring and promotion opportunities, quality of work life, perceptions of the company and the union, and perceptions of job security.

An important outcome of initial coding of all 40 interviews was the observation that the talk of women working across the subsidiaries of one MNFC (the dominant company in the region) referred to the themes of job change, layoffs and job insecurity much more often than women working for other firms in the province. This prompted an in-depth examination into restructuring and job security talk of women working within the MNFC.

Of the 29 women interviewed working within the MNFC, 10 self identified as being Aboriginal, 20 were labourers, three were clerical workers and five were managers or professionals working across four forest processing mill subsidiaries of the MNFC. These interviews represented 10% of the female workforce of the MNFC's regional operations and 15% of the total number of women working across the four mill subsidiaries examined. I supplemented the interviews with women working in the MNFC with interviews with three HR representatives out of a total of five HR managers working for the MNFC's regional operations. Interviews with HR representatives were solicited by asking the regional Human Resource Manager for interviews with the HR managers responsible for HR practices at each of the mill subsidiaries. These interviews were one to two and a half hours in length and asked questions about the company's approach to the inclusion of workers from groups designated in Canada's employment equity legislation, their experiences with industry change, and their approach to worker management and control. Although local union representatives declined interviews, I broadened my understanding of the context of forest work regionally by conducting unstructured

interviews with three higher level union officials, several unstructured interviews with a provincial government industry representative and by examining written materials from the unions, company, media and government.

I analyzed interviews with the women using critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis strives to critically examine language and its relationship to power associated with social structures (Wodak 2001). This relationship sees language as a social practice that “indexes power, expresses power, (and) is involved where there is contention over and a challenge to power” (Wodak 2001; 11). Thus discourse is at once critical to the constitution of power (as a social practice), and to how power is reflected (as a way of representing social practices). Hence, the social and political contexts of a text’s production are essential to deciphering its ideological assumptions and power relations (Wodak 2001). I examined women’s talk about restructuring as embedded both within the dominant discourses circulating within the company, and within each interview transcript as a whole; women’s talk on restructuring was examined in relation to how she presented herself at different points throughout the interview.

In approaching the interview texts, I examined two major aspects of meaning in texts: representation and identification following from Fairclough (2003). My analysis thus focused on the relationship between representations of restructuring and women’s presentations of their worker identity in their talk. While it is not possible to outline all of the steps involved with critical discourse analysis because of the high degree of reinterpretation and re-reading of texts, I can identify three predominant stages. First each transcript was read in its entirety and the text was coded according to techniques of legitimization and delegitimization as well as how their talk of restructuring related to their work identities. Legitimizing talk was talk that portrayed restructuring as positive, or talk that justified the company’s actions in any way. De-legitimizing talk was talk portrayed restructuring negatively emphasizing worker vulnerability and corporate responsibility for changes. I then re-read transcripts paying attention to women’s orientations towards work and to the discourses that they drew on to represent restructuring. Particular examples of individuals displaying representative linkages between work identities and perspectives towards restructuring were then selected and analyzed in further detail.

Results

I examine two ways of understanding the relationship between women's constructions of identities and how they talked about restructuring in the context of their lived work experiences as women in forest processing. First, women drew their work identities to reproduce or resist dominant discourses of economic restructuring. Second, restructuring was helping to regulate women's subjective orientations towards work. I begin by examining talk about restructuring of some women who presented relatively coherent identities throughout their interviews to demonstrate that women's use of discourses of legitimation or delegitimation were related to how they constructed oriented themselves as workers. I then examine the talk of women who moved back and forth between legitimation and deligitimation to examine how practices and discourses of economic restructuring shaped the identity work of women in their interview talk.

Contested restructuring discourse and worker identities

The contested nature of discourses of restructuring was exemplified by the diversity of women's talk about restructuring. At one pole, some women drew on flexible work identities to legitimize restructuring. At the opposite pole, other women delegitimized restructuring by presenting subjectivities characteristic of traditional mill workers. I present some examples of text from women at each of these poles; women who presented fairly stable work identities over the course of interview transcripts and how these work identities link to legitimizing or delegitimizing discourses of economic restructuring (Table 4.1).

Traditional work identities

Previous research examining restructuring in forest industries has found that since workers in forestry often have a strong sense of identity associated with their work they often experience a strong sense of loss upon losing their jobs (Barnes et al. 1999; Dunk 2002; Egan and Klausen 1998). Because of a history of marginalization within forest processing work, women might be expected to have weak identifications with mill work and in turn, weak expressions of vulnerability in response to restructuring. Results show that while this was the

case for some women, other women, particularly those who had worked at the mill for over five years, expressed both traditional understandings of mill work and vulnerability to organizational restructuring.

In the period following WWII work in larger forest processing mills was exemplary of traditional male industrial employment with strong unions, high wages and good benefits (Dunk 2002). According to Hayter “firms preferred an industrially experienced and stable workforce” (2000; 260), and this was equated with married men who were over 25 years old. After initial turnover at start-up, tenure at forest processing mills was often long since workers were locked in by seniority principles. Innovation and creativity among workers was discouraged in favour of a homogeneous, reliable workforce that could be relied upon (Dunk 2002). The location of forest processing work in hinterland communities also often lead to a geographic component to forest processing worker identities; Dunk found that pulp mill workers’ identities were linked to a strong sense of collectivity and regional identity as residents of a hinterland that is under the control of distant metropolitan centres (Dunk 1994).

Traditional accounts of worker resistance in forest processing typically involved the collective withdrawal of worker effort through strikes. More recent analyses of worker resistance have argued that are many more subtle forms of resistance occur in workplaces on a day to day basis (Symon 2005). From this perspective I considered the construction of understandings of restructuring practices that undermined dominant pro-restructuring discourse as a discursive form of resistance against restructuring. Since one aim of organizations is to construct particular worker subjectivities, resistance can arise in part to defend particular identities (Ezzamel et al. 2001; Kuhn 2006). According to Dunk (2002), employees that adopt traditional industrial worker identifications outlined above are those who are considered problematic by management seeking to implement new flexible work regimes. The presentation of traditional mill work identities can strengthen constructions of restructuring that undermine corporate legitimizing discourse.

While all women incorporated some delegitimizing discourse of restructuring in their talk, several women presented critical discourses about restructuring repeatedly throughout their interviews [10, 12, 13, 24, 25, 33, 38]. This talk resisted the dominant discourse of harmless restructuring promoted by the company by presenting an alternate discourse underwritten by the belief that corporations should be responsible to local communities.

Women who emphasized vulnerability to restructuring consistently in their interviews were more likely to present themselves as a union member and to talk about restructuring by referencing a loss of attributes that they associated with industrial work. Constructions of work identity were collective, invoked structural understandings of gaining and retaining work, located agency in both the company and in the union, and valued community and personal contact.

One woman who presented a traditional mill worker identity throughout her interview delegitimized restructuring by referencing a period of time when the company had threatened to shut the mill down before implementing a number of work system changes.

P38: Oh boy, last winter was harsh. Made it through by the skin of our teeth. Changed schedules because lumber prices were very low and they told us that we were going down. They told us that we would go down in December I believe it was, and we would be down 'till spring. And we managed to continue to convince them not to do it, our union convinced them not to do it, come up with a new shift schedule...

In her talk, this woman who had just over five years seniority, displayed a critical outlook towards restructuring emphasizing the vulnerability of the workers using the words 'Oh boy,' 'harsh,' 'by the skin of our teeth,' and 'that was hard.' She indicated that she was skeptical of the information that the company conveyed to the workers by directly attributing parts of her description to the company's voice: 'They told us that.' Again, at a later point in the interview, she brought the company's voice indirectly into her talk to show how the company used the discourse of competition among mills within the firm as a threat stating "...that's when they really bring out the graphs and show you how bad you suck, you know. Just so... ..You'll be one of the first to go when we do start shutting mills down, you know."(P38) This incorporation of company rhetoric in a critical fashion was repeated by several women who delegitimized restructuring [6, 22].

Although the woman indicated that she had understood some external economic constraints (such as lumber price) as truths, she also positioned the company as an agent that had power and that had different interests from the workers, with whom she collectively identified using the term 'we.' The woman looked to the union to resist restructuring stating 'our union convinced them not to do it.' She portrayed this resistance as of a very limited

nature, as restricted to negotiations with management, reflecting her understanding of the underlying power discrepancy between the company and the workers. This propensity to place the union as a mediator that is able to lessen but not stop the harm incurred by workers as a result of restructuring was present in the talk of several women [5, 6, 22, 38].

A structural understanding of employment also shaped how the woman responded to a question that asked how she would support herself if she lost her job later in the interview. She replied “Oh Lord, Lord. I do think about it. Last resort I would leave, I would leave town... ..find work here if there was any left after the mill shut down...”(P38). The woman’s emotional reaction displayed vulnerability at the thought that she might lose her job. Her response indicated that she valued stability, both spatially and temporally. She expressed both anxiety at the thought of potential mill closure, and the thought of leaving her town: she would only leave as a ‘Last resort.’

This linking of jobs at the mills to a morality of community values was also expressed by another woman who was the first woman to be hired at the mill where she worked, having worked at the mill for 25 years. She stated “...If that mill shuts down there would be no more work here and I think that's why we tolerate a lot of the things that are happening down there because we need to work. The community would fold up” (P13). Her reasoning for why workers tolerate concessions was based on the underlying assumption that: workers had an attachment to place that resulted in a collective interest to keep the community going; and, that if the workers become more militant, the mill would shut down. Women who were critical of economic restructuring countered dominant restructuring discourse that valued high mobility for both capital and workers by emphasizing valuation of community, attachment to place, and worker well being. This narrative of capital flight devastating local communities reflects a common theme in writings on forest communities (Barnes et al. 1999; Carroll 2000).

In line with this narrative, women who were critical of restructuring presented expectations that the company should remain in, and take care of the community. This expectation of permanence was communicated by several women who delegitimized restructuring, stating that they had expected to keep working in the mill until retirement [12, 13, 24, 26, 33]. In response to my question about whether it made a difference that the firm

was a multinational company, one woman who worked as a clerical worker for the company for 16 years replied:

P12: I'm a believer in talking care of a community that you are taking your resources from and this isn't that, and I think it is that multi-national philosophy of share holding matters the most... ..so we can cut 100 jobs in [local community] and so be it. There's a loss of personal [pause] no accountability...

Drawing on moralistic argumentation, this woman delegitimized restructuring. She contrasted present restructuring based on share holders with her own beliefs about how companies should operate saying 'I'm a believer'. Unlike the company, she valued accountability, commitment and loyalty. By inferring that the wood belonged to the community, she drew upon traditional discourse of the relationship between governments and forest companies, that governments traded wood for jobs (Luckert and Salkie 1998), and indicated that this compromise was being broken.

Women who presented critical perspectives towards restructuring described their jobs as permanent, displayed emotional attachment to their work and vulnerability to job loss, and sought collective responses to restructuring. Though women were critical of the employer and talked about collective responses to restructuring, there was an underlying recognition that the union had relatively little power in face of threats to close the mills [22, 33, 39].

Legitimizing restructuring

Talk legitimizing restructuring predominantly used techniques of rationalization and normalization and incorporated discourses of globalization, labour mobility, and flexibility. Women who legitimized restructuring presented their worker identities as emotionally detached, adaptable, and competent. The presentation of an individualized, flexible orientation towards work was typical of women who consistently legitimized restructuring throughout their interviews [1, 17, 21, 27, 29, 35, 40].

Women who were managers or workers with a higher degree of education often presented themselves as competent, employable and adaptable workers [21, 27, 29, 35]. When asked what challenges she faced continuing in her job, one manager replied:

P27: Probably just... ..if the forest industry in Canada, and then how it would affect in [this province], if it was to get any worse, you know then there's the potential that you know they wouldn't need operations... ..in [this province]. But I don't know, I consider myself fairly employable... ..we would go somewhere else or just choose to do something different as well.

Her response combined rationalization of a potential closure of the firm's operations in the province with the presentation of herself as an employable person who is able to relocate and change jobs easily. She provided only an unfinished sentence to rationalize the company's actions: that the firm's decision to shut down operations would be based on 'the forest industry in Canada,' and further normalized the company's actions by providing neither critique nor substantial explanation for her contention that perhaps the firm 'wouldn't need operations... ..in [this province].' Her response suggested that she did not feel vulnerable to ongoing layoffs, only to the complete closure of the mill's operations. And, even this vulnerability to mill closure was mitigated by her confidence in her ability to find work and her mobility. This complemented her presentation of herself earlier in the interview as a "high performer." Another woman manager presented a similar perspective, stating "I think I do well in my job, and that's why I think I'm secure in it"(P21), in response to a question asking whether she felt that she had job security. The women's talk related a worker identity of being a high performance worker to job security reflecting the merit-based underpinnings of their individualized employment contracts; in contrast with unionized workers, managers were laid off based on performance rather than seniority. This merit based approach compelled the women to position themselves with their employer, and sometimes in opposition to their co-workers. One woman stated "It was a real good wakeup call for other people" (P35), suggesting that restructuring was increasing the productivity of workers who had previously not been working hard enough.

Rationalization was often used as a rhetorical device not only to legitimize restructuring but also to render restructuring normal. One woman, who, at the age of 40 had worked in six different jobs prior to working at the mill for 10 years rationalized restructuring throughout the interview while positioning herself as someone who was able to adapt and change jobs. Although she indicated that her employment status was 'tentative,' suggesting vulnerability, this statement was immediately followed by a statement rationalizing the company's layoffs. She

stated: "I recognize why they're doing it, they need to cut down um, our costs ... you have to become competitive within the company because the bottom ones are going to be the ones that are going to either be closed or shut down... And I understand why they're doing it..."(P29) Her insistence that that she understood 'why they are doing it' suggested that since she could reason the changes, she could accept them. Her rationalization was underwritten by a belief that the firm needed to maximize profitability.

This presentation was in accordance with the worker identity she presented throughout the interview. She presented herself as a versatile worker who was in control over her own destiny. She emphasized the aspect of choice in her description of what she would do if she lost her job.

P29: ...I actually have thought about that because I've, depending on how things turn out with this cut, I'm not sure I want to work there, and I don't think it's healthy to only look at you know the fact that I want to stay there as long as possible, hanging on by my fingernails. So part of it is I have been going back to school, taking some computer courses that the company will pay partially for, so that I have some more skill. But it's, it's actually never occurred to me that I wouldn't find a job. I've never not had a job in my adult life. In fact I've never been lucky enough to have time off between jobs in my life. I seem to have another one lined up just in time. ...I have a very varied experience level... ...I assume I can get a job...

In this description of what she would do if she were to lose her job, the speaker focused on what little control she did have over her situation: she was able to take advantage of training and look for alternate employment. She described these individualized responses to restructuring as a 'healthy' approach which she compared to 'hanging on by my fingernails.' She presented herself in control of the situation and able to respond to change, drawing on her past experience being able to find work easily. The use of mobility, rather than collective action as a form of worker resistance, fits within an increasing consumerist approach to work. As argued by Smith "the rhetoric of a more marketized capitalism encourages the worker as a 'consumer' of workplaces to shop around if dissatisfied, rather than stay and improve conditions by organization through unionization, collective bargaining or recourse to the law for dispute resolution."(2006; 390-391).

Arguably, this woman's orientation towards work was not only shaped by her work experiences at the mill, but by her previous experiences of living through restructuring. These

prior experiences had helped to normalize restructuring for the woman. When asked what challenges she faced to continuing to work at the mill she stated: "...I think it's the same throughout the workforce in general. A lot of it's going towards the whole, um, people getting, ah, people expected to continually learn, to continually change"(P29). Changes were thus the same as those in the 'workforce in general.'

Restructuring was also normalized in women's talk through the use of references to prior work experience in non-standard, low paid forms of employment. This perspective differed from that of technical workers and managers above, in that work was instrumentalized as a means to a paycheque rather than consumed for its qualities itself. Women with this perspective had less than 5 years seniority and presented themselves as flexible and adaptable workers who were able to find alternate employment or relocate were they to lose their jobs [1, 17, 40]

Reflecting the experience of the majority of the women working at the mills, these women had entered mill work after having worked in 'feminized' jobs in their communities, most of which consisted of low-paid service sector employment or seasonal work in the primary sector [1, 4, 14, 17, 24, 26, 37, 40, 38, 25, 6]. The contrast between work in non-standard forms of work and work in the mill had lead two women to compare their jobs to winning the lottery, [38, 40] and others to state that they felt that they were overpaid [13, 34, 38]. Although only some women with prior work experience in non-standard forms of work legitimized restructuring, these women referred to their prior work experiences in the process of legitimization.

The talk of low-seniority women drew a sharp contrast between their experiences at the mill and their previous employment experiences to legitimize restructuring in their present job [1, 17, 40]. They saw work at the mill as an exceptional environment. This legitimization was underwritten by an individualistic worker orientation. One Métis woman with two years seniority at the mill and had previously worked in seasonal and contractual work tree planting and in tourism stated:

P40...I myself want to go to work, have a riot while I'm there, pick up my paycheque and come home. I don't like to get all stressed out or get all emotionally involved in something that, you know is going to happen. We voted these people to do it but I think when you've done nothing for your whole life but be in a union, you come out of school and you be in a union and you've never had any job experience before which is a greater part of what is happening down here and you're spoiled

rotten... ..But nowadays, all these people that have been working there for twenty some years have no idea what the market is for jobs but there because they've been there their whole life.....I try not to listen to it too much because they have no idea what's going on in the real world out there for jobs. ...don't whine to me that somebody is taking your mitts away. I can't get it, I can't, it's hard.

This woman positioned herself as a worker who was in touch with the 'real world' labour market, as a worker who is emotionally detached from change in the workplace, who works hard, gets her paycheque and goes home. This reflected an instrumental orientation towards work devoid of loyalty, or expectation of long-term stability. She contrasted her attitude towards work with that of other co-workers who had higher seniority and who were active in the union. She characterized these workers as spoiled children stating that the workers were 'spoiled rotten,' that they whined, and by comparing roll backs and shift changes with 'taking your mitts away'. This use of metaphor helped paint a contrast between work in the mill, an exceptional and sheltered environment, and work in the real world. In this way restructuring was normalized as a 'real world' processes and hence as something that 'you know is going to happen.'

The restructuring was not only legitimized because it was considered part of normal labour market practices, however, it was also linked to a valuation of mobility. In response to a question about how she would advise her children in terms of employment opportunities, one woman who presented a flexible identity stated:

P1: I personally would never want my child to work at that mill.

I: Why?

P1: Because they would turn out really lazy. It's just....it's not a good place. It's too good a money and they would never leave....there are people there that have never left [the community], have never left [this province]. Some have worked there for thirty years, that's all they will ever do. So if we ever shut down [pause] what is your job experience, ummm they would say like a trim saw operator. Well where are you going to find one of them? There is so much out there in Canada, that I would never want my kids to be stuck here

The woman began with several highly committed negative assertions about mill work: that it makes people lazy, that 'it's not a good place' and that the money is 'too good.' Her support for these contentions drew upon two discourses: the discourse of moving away as a precondition to

life fulfillment and experience and the notion that the mill work did provide preparation for the real world labour market. Her tone insinuated that people who worked at the mill and who had not left the community were failures stating ‘that’s all they will ever do.’ She thus saw mobility and job change as indicative of life success and as linked to one another. Her advice demonstrates an orientation towards work that places the onus on individuals to be able to adjust to the ‘reality’ of the labour market if the mill shuts down.

To legitimize restructuring, women used rationalization, drawing on dominant discourses of global change, and normalization, drawing on their prior work experiences.

Both strategies were most common among women who presented themselves as flexible and adaptable workers. The perspectives differed in that some women approached work in an emotionally detached way, some positioned themselves as consumers of work, and some identified strongly with the company. In general, legitimizing strategies were associated with work identities valuing mobility and job change in response to restructuring, and individualized merit-based employment relationships. Agency and power was thus located at the level of the individual following the ideology that individual workers are responsible for their own training and to find work. They should thus be prepared to change jobs, to be geographically mobile and to obtain an education if they want a wage above minimum wage.

The strong associations between perspectives towards restructuring and worker identity highlight the ideological underpinnings of presented identities that dictate how individuals incorporate and perceive other discourses and material changes. For this reason, Dunk posited that ‘ideal worker’ under Fordism has:

...been most seriously affected by deindustrialization and whose established patterns of wages and work are seen as most problematic by the terms of the new management philosophy. Their wage expectations and their insistence on bureaucratic labour practices such as formal job descriptions and seniority rights are viewed by the critics of Fordist-era labor market policies as unrealistic. They are the ones who typify the problematic inflexible workers.(2002; 885)

From this perspective, restructuring requires the dismantling of traditional industrial work identities that exist among mill workers.

Changing expectations/ Identity regulation

Discourses of restructuring have been linked to shifts in work identity since one consequence of the continuous or repeated downsizing is decreased job security among workers (Turnbull and Wass 2000). In a study of managerial downsizing (Littler and Innes 2004) found that widespread restructuring was resulting in not only the removal of excess bureaucracy (measured as the ratio of managers to other workers), but also in the wages, job security and stability of managerial work. And, according to Littler, the new labour market structure was impacting "...managers' behaviour in a fundamental way in relation to psychological contracts, flexibility, and commitment"(2004; 1180). Findings such as these have led several researchers to argue that declining worker power is not only the *outcome* of restructuring, but also its *intent*. From this perspective, the underlying rationale for restructuring is not to increase profits, but rather to re-define employment and construct a new form of worker (Miller 1998; Dunk 2002).

The talk of most women was located in between poles of legitimization and delegitimization, and consequently both their presentations of restructuring and their work identities oscillated back and forth throughout their interview (15 women expressed either rationalization or normalization in combination with expressions of worker vulnerability). I explain the inconsistent perspectives and uncertainty in many of the interviews with women as incidences of active identity work by the women as they try to incorporate both the reality and the discourse of economic restructuring in their work identity. I argue that for these women, restructuring practice and discourse were helping to re-shape women workers' identities.

For several women, the actual practice of restructuring was changing their expectations and understanding of their work. Women's talk about their work often moved back and forth between talking about their jobs as 'good jobs' and re-assessing their situation in relation to their experiences [4, 8, 10, 14, 23, 33]. The contradictions between women's expectations of their work and their experiences of restructuring were reflected in how women described their employment status and the nature of their work. Three women who were working at a small sawmill that had faced annual layoffs of increasing length for four years expressed uncertainty when asked to describe their employment status [4, 14, 36].

I: And how do you describe your present employment status?

P14: Well it's full-time permanent but apparently now since we've restarted we are only going to run from March 'til December, yeah March 'til December... ..So I don't know if that's considered seasonal, whereas before we were laid off for six months.

The layoffs were disrupting her understanding of her work as 'full-time permanent' causing her to re-assess her work status 'I don't know if that's considered seasonal.' The actual experience of restructuring was changing what work meant for the women; expectations of stability, control over working conditions, high wages and benefits were being replaced with insecurity, and a loss of worker control over work conditions, wages and benefits.

Women's descriptions of their job status were not only affected by their experience of restructuring, they were also affected by the rhetoric of future restructuring. One woman working in a mill where the management had stated that they were planning on downsizing their workforce by half indicated her confusion about her employment status in a dialogue about job security.

I: Do you have more job security than you did in 2001?

... ..

P10: I don't know, it's hard to say that. I could be gone tomorrow so even though I have a permanent job there and I'm in a position that was supposedly there at the time, so (pause) I don't think so.

In response to a question asking whether her job security had improved in the past four years, the woman replied with uncertainty stating 'I don't know' and 'I don't think so.' This, and her phrase, 'it's hard to say' showed that she was unsure how to answer the question. She used the words 'even though,' to position the level of job insecurity she had as contradictory to her understanding of her work as permanent. Another woman described her job security with a similar uncertainty:

P13: No I think it's about the same. We've had a good year (pause) unless you're talking about the fact that the mill could shut down... ..But as far as the money benefits, like the dental plan and all that you were talking about before, that has remained the same...

This woman began her description with a tentative claim that her job security was the same using ‘I think,’ lessening her commitment to the statement. She then stops and starts, beginning to make a positive statement about their job security, and then changing the direction of her answer to assert ‘the fact that the mill could shut down.’

Given that threats of mill closure were made continuously over the 3 years leading up to the interview, her statement that the mill had had a ‘good year’ could be read as a comparison of the mill’s performance in the current year (when the prices were way up) against a backdrop of the company’s threats to shut the mill down that had been present for the previous 3 years. Her inclusion of wages and benefits in her reply later in her statement implied that she felt that if these were there then job security should be present as well.

The uncertainty present in women’s descriptions of restructuring extended beyond how women described their jobs. Active identity work took place when women tried to make sense of the contradictions between their negative experiences of restructuring and their desire to be good workers which for some meant reproducing pro-restructuring discourse. Incoherent narratives were often the result.

The talk of one First Nations woman who worked at a mill that had recently eliminated 150 jobs and was planning future cutbacks, moved back and forth between expressions of vulnerability and the notion that restructuring was normal and good.

I: Do you consider your current job an ideal situation for you?

P8: Currently, yes.

I: why?

P8: I guess the hours, what we do, with what training I have had, everything's just, right now but some people in our department are retiring so it's going to mean changes, there are always changes. I tell my daughter change is good, Donkey. That's quite commercial. Nothing stays the same. We need to change.

I: What kind of changes are you envisioning?

P8: We'll get a different workload, different (unclear) make our job a little bit challenging... ..But I am looking at my truck, I think ten years government ten years Cameco, my ten years is coming up. hopefully I'll be here another ten years.

I: So do you see the change as a good thing or a bad thing or a neutral thing?

P8: I guess it's inevitable. I'd like to (pause) retire at one point retire, is there opportunity to retire?

The woman began her answer to why she stated that her job was ideal with a positive description of her work conditions stating 'everything's just.' She quickly qualified her positive description using the words 'right now' and 'but,' to highlight that these work conditions were temporary and that she was uncertain whether her job would continue to be ideal. Throughout the exchange, the woman continued to communicate apprehension in the face of restructuring, stating 'my ten years is coming up,' and 'a little bit challenging' and with her final statement 'is there opportunity to retire?' This apprehension was tempered with the woman's desire to embrace change stating 'change is good, Donkey,' 'We need to change,' and in response to the interviewer's attempt to clarify the woman's position towards change by stating 'I guess it's inevitable.' Thus, although restructuring entailed greater job insecurity and undesirable job changes, the woman was reluctant to criticize restructuring, feeling like she needed to adapt to change and to see change as positive. Another woman painted a similarly contradictory description of change, shifting back and forth between talk describing the negative impact of changes on her work life, and statements that normalized change "I mean certainly all positions are changing whether is clerical or unionized or non-unionized. That's just the way things are."(P32)

Economic restructuring had a regulatory effect over women's identities. First, practices of restructuring were altering women's experiences of work and causing them to understand their jobs differently leading to work identities that normalized flexibility and uncertainty. Second, negativity resulting from women's experiences of restructuring was tempered by corporate discourses that normalized and legitimized restructuring.

Conclusion

This paper offers empirical support for the arguments that organizational restructuring is both reproduced and contested through women workers' constructions of their subjectivities and that by disrupting worker's experiences and constructing discourses legitimizing change, economic restructuring helps to shape worker identities.

Despite the history of women's exclusion from traditional mill work identities, many women in this study drew on understandings of work linked to traditional industrial work identities to resist restructuring. This refutes the contention of some authors that the increasing presence of women in traditional blue collar industrial workplaces has helped to fragment workplace culture needed for strong notions of collectivity and unionism (Dunk 2002; Schenk 2004). In fact, the breadth of representations of organizational restructuring presented by the women in this study was comparable to the breadth of men's perspectives towards mill closure found by Dunk (2002). While some unionized women helped to normalize and legitimize restructuring drawing on prior work experiences, these women were of low seniority, and arguably had less contact with and access to delegitimizing discourses promoted through the union. Similarly, women working in management likely had less access to discourses that were critical of restructuring and more personal incentives to reproduce restructuring discourse.

The diverse array of subjectivities presented by the women was constructed in an environment of unequal power relations between workers and the company. Although women who presented delegitimizing perspectives of restructuring saw the union as an agent able to influence the implementation of restructuring, they saw this agency as limited because of the company's threat of capital flight. Women who presented vulnerability towards restructuring can be understood as facing greater emotional costs than women who presented themselves as having control over their future. The reproduction of discourses that rationalized and normalized restructuring in the regional operations of the MNFC were in this way able to discipline women's real feelings of insecurity and discontent.

Both pro-restructuring discourse and worker's recurring experiences of restructuring in the labour market which render restructuring an increasingly normal part of a worker's experience are normalizing new forms of worker identities. As argued by Phillips et al. (2004), normalizing is a key component of institutionalization. This suggests that increasing restructuring in the forest sector is helping to institutionalize new worker identities which value flexibility, individualism and mobility.

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Table 4.1 Links between discourses of restructuring and identity.

	Discourses of restructuring		Style/presentation of identity
Positive pole: Flexible worker	Rationalizing – need to compete in global market Normalizing – New workplace is the status quo	<u>Psychological approach to work:</u>	Flexible Willing to move Hard worker Self-starter Emotionally detached Rational
Negative pole: Traditional worker	Critical of restructuring Attachment to place Corporate responsibility to community	<u>Psychological approach to work:</u>	Inflexible Caring for other workers Talk about collective rather than personal Not willing to move Emotionally connected

5. CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I demonstrated the salience of ascribed and constructed identities of women to their experiences and representations of forest employment. I began by establishing the existence of vertical employment segregation by gender and Aboriginality in Canada's forest sector in 2001. This inequality rendered Aboriginal peoples and non-Aboriginal women more likely to be employed in less stable and lower paid forest jobs. I followed this by showing that how women were positioned in the workplace related to their social identities and how their representations of their identities as workers shaped their representations of organizational practices of diversity management and restructuring. Last, I argued that organizational discourses of restructuring were helping to shape women's understandings of their work identities.

These results contribute to three general conclusions. First, they corroborate research that advocates that more attention needs to be given to the differences among women working in male-dominated industries. In my study women occupied different subject positions in forest workplaces in the Northern Prairies related to whether or not they are Aboriginal, the nature of their employment contracts, and to their subjective orientation towards work. Second, results show that these different subject positions impacted how women represented themselves in talk as well as the discourses that they drew upon to represent organizational practices. And third, women's talk demonstrated that production of discourses within corporations is underwritten by an ideological imperative to re-shape labour relations and worker identities to more flexible and individualized forms. I first present these conclusions, then I consider the potential for alternative forms of forest industry organization and I conclude by considering potential areas of future research.

Differences among women

All three papers demonstrate how women's experiences of forest work are heterogeneous. Results of the analysis of employment segregation in forestry demonstrated that both gender and Aboriginal identity were related to forest employment. Although both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal women were over represented in clerical occupations relative to non-

Aboriginal and Aboriginal men, when these groups were compared to one another, Aboriginal women were over represented in woods-based industries relative to non-Aboriginal women who were over represented in manufacturing industries. People working in woods-based industries such as support activities for forestry and gathering of forest products had lower mean earnings and less job stability than people working in manufacturing employment where non-Aboriginal women were over-represented (including industry sub-sectors such as veneer, plywood, engineered wood product manufacturing, sawmills and wood preservation and pulp, paper and paperboard mills). This pattern of segregation is consistent with both the history of Aboriginal participation in seasonal forest sector jobs and with discourses that characterize Aboriginal people as belonging in the bush and not in industrial manufacturing work (Dunk 1994; High 1996; Barron 1997).

Similar constructions of Aboriginal people as unwilling and unqualified workers in forest processing surfaced in white women's representations of the MNFC's practices to increase the inclusion of Aboriginal workers. In their talk, white women categorized Aboriginal people as deficient workers and as needing help. These constructions impacted Aboriginal women's experiences of corporate diversity practices. Not only did Aboriginal women's direct experiences of diversity management differ from white women's experiences, but Aboriginal women's experiences were also structured by white women's negative representations of Aboriginal inclusion.

Differences among women were not reducible to those between Aboriginal and white women workers, however. Women's experiences also differed according to whether they were unionized employees or represented by individual employment contracts, and according to how they subjectively constructed their work histories. Women who were unionized experienced diversity management differently from managers and professional workers, since the collective agreement restricted the extent to which the company could implement diversity management initiatives. In talk about organizational restructuring, women's talk was less directly linked to social identities; there were no observable differences between the talk of Aboriginal women and that of white women. Instead, the extent of vulnerability that women experienced in the face of workplace restructuring was related to whether they positioned themselves as capable and flexible workers or sought identifications within more traditional conceptualizations of mill work.

Difference and discourses of change

The social and work identities of women affected the discourses that women drew on to talk about workplace change. The discourses that women drew on to discuss the MNFC's diversity management practices were related to their social identities as white or Aboriginal, and to whether they were unionized or represented by individualized employment contracts. White women in individualized employment contracts reproduced the MNFC's dominant discourse of diversity management that emphasized individualized flexibility and productivity. White women represented by collective agreements drew on union discourse of worker equality to position the inclusion of women as the removal of discrimination or inequality. Aboriginal women drew on their personal experiences of feeling tokenized by co-workers and employers to criticize diversity management practices.

Unlike portrayals of diversity management practices, women's representations of economic restructuring were not clearly related to Aboriginality or class. Instead, the discourses that women drew on to talk about organizational restructuring were related to women's self-presentations as workers related to combinations of personality and situated experience. Women who presented orientations towards work that valued mobility, flexibility, and individual choice drew on discourse that legitimized organizational restructuring throughout their interviews using techniques of rationalization and normalization. Alternatively, women with orientations towards work that valued work ideals associated with traditional mill work drew on discourse that delegitimized organizational restructuring.

Political significance

Women's talk about their experiences of diversity management and economic restructuring indicated that corporate discourses of diversity management and organizational restructuring were not politically neutral. Corroborating critical research on organizational change and management practice, this research demonstrates how a MNFC's implementation of diversity management and organizational restructuring was underwritten by an ideology of liberal individualism (Humphries and Grice 1995; Woodhams and Danieli 2000; Hirsch and De_Soucey 2006). In particular, these practices acted as both material and rhetorical tools used

by the MNFC to help shape worker's constructions of self-identity, controlling workers from the inside (Alvesson and Willmot 2002). This study also supports the notion that the regulatory power of an organization over the identities of individuals is not absolute. Workers have agency, and identifications with prior established work arrangements and understandings can be a form of resistance to organizational change requiring an identity shift (Ezzamel et al. 2001; Alvesson and Willmot 2002; Symon 2005).

In the male dominated workplace environment of forest processing work, we might have expected women to support workplace change that professed to support the inclusion of white and Aboriginal women. Yet, women's talk about diversity management practices highlighted that a discourse of diversity founded in the individualization of workers and the superficial recognition of difference can not bring about true inclusion or empowerment for marginalized workers. The talk of Aboriginal women and of white unionized women did not reproduce the company's diversity discourse. Instead the talk of Aboriginal women resisted the dominant discourse of diversity by constructing an alternative understanding of firm practices to increase Aboriginal participation drawing on their experiences as Aboriginal workers. Similarly, white unionized women were critical of aspects of diversity management that they thought would weaken worker collectivity, and re-framed other practices within a discourse of worker equality. And, although non-unionized women reproduced dominant diversity management discourse, this reproduction was contradicted by their personal experiences working at the firm. Since the company's diversity management discourse situated its understanding of worker difference within a framework of individualistic, flexible and productive worker identities, it was antagonistic to broader power structures essential to an incorporation of difference that would provide real benefit to marginalized workers.

Women's talk about organizational restructuring suggested that restructuring was having a disciplining effect, compelling workers to change their work identity. Restructuring can be understood as a mechanism to change work identities by requiring that workers adapt to changing work conditions, and by promoting a discourse of capital flight to heighten the job insecurity of workers (Jonas 1996). In the context of this study, women resisted dominant discourses of economic restructuring through the presentation of values associated with traditional mill work. Alternatively, women who reproduced dominant discourses of economic restructuring did so through the presentation of work identities valuing flexibility, mobility and

an individualized approach to empowerment. Results suggest that changes in the structures of forestry work are being accompanied by parallel shifts in work identities.

Policy implications

Women workers' perceptions of company practices questioned the capacity of Canada's current structure of forest industry ownership and management to provide secure employment to all groups in forest communities. Despite the public ownership of Canada's forests (93%, 77% of which is owned by provincial governments), workers in the forest industry have little control over their livelihoods. Rather, the recent trend of increasing foreign ownership, export dependence and consolidation in the forest industry (Foreign Direct Investment in Canada's forest sector has been rising since the 1980s), has further distanced residents of forest hinterlands from control over the industry and the forest (CFS 2006; Laaksonen-Craig 2004).

The lack of genuine interest of the MNFC in either the inclusion of Aboriginal peoples and women or in the long term sustainability of communities is hardly surprising. Repeated evidence has shown that trends of internationalization and concentration in the forest sector and the absentee ownership that accompanies these trends results has negative repercussions on the well being of forest workers and communities (for example see: Marchak 1983; Freudenburg 1992; Prudham 1998). In Canada, forest policies have historically resulted from barter between provincial governments and large industry that trade timber for employment in hinterland regions and wood royalties. Government strategies to ensure employment have involved limiting the export of raw materials (such as logs), and making the allocation of long term leases to timber contingent on investment in forest product manufacturing operations (Delcourt and Wilson 1998). From the outset, however, this exchange rendered local communities dependent on external capital and on the ability of provincial and national governments to accurately and successfully represent their interests. The more recent coupling of increasing internationalization and industry concentration with more flexible workplace practices has, however, heightened the vulnerability of forest communities to capital flight. Forest companies, similar to firms in other sectors, have increasingly become responsive to short term fluctuations in share values. The resulting worker vulnerability has helped to facilitate the implementation new forms of worker control that seek to individualize employment relationships, decreasing worker collectivity and

job security. The impact of changing structures of work is heightened in forest communities where employment options pale in numbers and quality compared to more diversified centres.

The national forest policy of Canada's largest union representing pulp and paper workers, the Communications Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP), describes the vulnerability of forest workers to large scale mobile capital that operates on the basis of short term share values rather than long term sustainability:

...They are giant corporations that use the forest to extract maximum profits and their time horizons are short. The owners of our industry have no interest in the long term health or even existence of our communities and the jobs that sustain them. They have eliminated thousands of our jobs, sending many communities into decline.(2000; 2)

As a solution, the CEP proposed a more stringent regulatory environment whereby governments increase the jobs to harvest ratio for long term leases, ban log exports, and increase investment in value added industries. If governments are aiming to attract large scale investment, however, they are limited in the extent of regulatory guidelines that they can impose, particularly in an environment of long term wood product prices and increasing international competition. As evidence, the recent downturn in pulp and paper and the subsequent closure of mills across the country led the Canadian Forest Service to title its most recent State of Canada's Forests report: *Competition and Industry*, and to include a focus on how to improve the forest business environment by attracting investment.

Forest industry groups argue that the industry consolidation is imperative for Canada's forest sector to remain competitive in international markets. From the perspective of the Forest Products Association of Canada consolidation will provide corporations with:

The industry's future competitiveness will depend on its ability to maintain and increase its position in the U.S. market and to compete in the emerging high-growth markets abroad...

...In this environment, size matters – and Canadian companies are small by international standards... Consolidation can provide critical competitive advantages, such as increased efficiency; asset, product, or geographic differentiation; and lower capital costs. (2005; 1)

From this viewpoint, economies of scale will increase the competitive ability of Canada's forest sector by: enabling increased flexibility and rationalization that will lower production costs,

decreasing investment risk through diversification, lowering the cost of capital and increasing market access by increasing the scope of production. Yet assessing the benefits and costs of large-scale industrial forestry are not as straight forward as presented above. Gale and Gale (2006) have outlined a myriad of costs of industrial forestry that are not included in traditional cost accounting such as the costs "...of government subsidies, investment, community dependence, the maintenance of public order and to First Nations"(140; 2006). A heightened understanding of the social and environmental costs of large- scale industrial forestry, has led governments, Aboriginal organizations and community groups and researchers to look for alternatives to large-scale industrial forestry.

Two alternatives that have been proposed to large-scale industrial forestry arrangements are community forestry and Aboriginal forestry³⁴. Here I briefly consider their potential to provide more secure employment opportunities. A wide variety of definitions exist for community forestry, however the two critical elements to defining community forestry are: community control over forest management, and the attempt to retain benefits from the forest in local communities instead of allowing them to accrue to shareholders (Teitelbaum et al. 2006). In addition community forestry often also includes mandates to manage forests for multiple uses (not only timber) and to ensure environmental sustainability. In terms of employment, community forestry has the potential to increase job stability and the incorporation of marginalized groups of workers into forest employment if these are identified by the participating communities as beneficial outcomes. There are limitations to the applicability of this model however. Given the small size and often limited capital of many community forests, community forestry often has limited capacity to compete with mainstream products in the global forest industry (McIlveen 2004). There are some examples of community forestry projects that have become self-sufficient, however these have typically been in cases where community forests have either been able to develop products serving niche markets or have concentrated on forest harvesting and regeneration and not on employment in forest product manufacturing (McIlveen 2004; Teitelbaum et al. 2006). In addition, projects often rely on external funding, at least initially, and due to their limited budgets, often rely on volunteers and

³⁴ Employee buyouts are also a way to increase local and worker control in the forest industry and mitigate capital flight. For a discussion on the similarities between employee buyouts and community forestry (see: Krogman and Beckley 2002).

community support which may be difficult to sustain over a long period of time. Despite the challenges of community forestry, it offers a more socially sustainable vision of forestry. In addition, some of the challenges to community forestry could be mitigated through policy changes favouring community forests such as increasing the size of land tenures allocated to community forestry, reducing industrial tenures, providing reduced stumpage fees on Crown land and favouring forests that engaged in multiple forest uses when allocating timber licenses.

Similar to community forestry, Aboriginal forestry is also often small scale and intended to provide benefits to specific communities, however in this case it is First Nations or other Aboriginal communities. Also similar to community forestry, is the presence of an environmental component in many understandings of Aboriginal forestry. For example, Parsons and Prest define Aboriginal forestry as "...the application of sustainable forest land use practices learned over time that incorporates the respectful interaction between the forest and Aboriginal people of today for the benefit of generations unborn"(2003; 780). In practice, however, Aboriginal forestry has often used to define any form of forestry that involves partnerships or full control by Aboriginal groups in terms of forest management or ownership (Curran and M'Gonigle 1999). The aim of providing benefits to Aboriginal communities favours both the safeguarding of forests' ecological integrity to support traditional uses and the provision of stable employment opportunities for Aboriginal peoples. However, as is the case with community forestry, structural obstacles make ideal conceptualizations difficult to achieve. While in some cases Aboriginal groups have gained access rights to significant tracts of forests, their tenure structures have typically followed the traditional industrial model neglecting traditional harvest uses; in some cases this has resulted in pitting pro-development community members against those who desire to maintain traditional livelihoods. And, since Aboriginal groups rarely have the capital to invest in large forest processing facilities, they often need to enter into arrangements with industry partners who follow mainstream forest the industry development patterns of non-Aboriginal forestry both in terms of employment and ecosystem management (Curran and M'Gonigle 1999).

Both community forestry and Aboriginal forestry offer alternatives to the present model of industrial forestry. To the extent that each of these types of forestry desire to compete in international forest products markets they will face constraints to remaining viable. Despite the

constraints there are several examples of community and Aboriginal forestry that have been successful in increasing the benefits to and the influence of, local communities.

Future research directions

The conclusions of my thesis point to several research areas where more additional inquiry would be contribute to the understanding of employment process. These areas include both descriptive research that would be of empirical importance and research that would contribute to theoretical developments in economic geography.

Drawing on the conclusions from the first paper on employment segregation, it would be beneficial to explore causes of employment segregation by Aboriginal identity in the forest sector. Interviews with Aboriginal peoples living in or around communities with forest industries would increase our understanding of the importance of supply side variables to employment outcomes. These interviews could be complemented by interviews with employers across a range of forest industry sub-sectors to examine demand side factors influencing employment segregation by Aboriginal identity. From a geographical perspective, it would be interesting to apply spatial mismatch theory to Aboriginal peoples to determine the degree to which location of residence inhibits employment in better paid forms of employment. Spatial mismatch theory arose in the United States to explain and ameliorate differential employment outcomes of African American people compared to the non-African American population (Kain 2004; Howell-Moroney 2005). The theory proposes that discrimination in the housing market that restricted the residential choices of African American people resulted in restricted employment since jobs that were increasingly moving to the suburbs were not accessible to African American people living in the inner city because of long travel times. As a result of discrimination in the housing market, there would be crowding of the low skilled labour market in inner city areas which would push down wages. While the significance of spatial mismatch in explaining employment outcomes is disputed, (Browne 2001), there are some indications that space might be structuring differential employment outcomes for Aboriginal peoples. First Nations living on reserve typically have different patterns of occupational segregation and poorer employment outcomes than First Nations living in urban centres (Lautard 1982; Gitter and Reagan 2002). In addition, Aboriginal people are over represented in primary industry

employment which is often located in rural areas where there are higher concentrations of Aboriginal people (Lautard 1982).

The results of my second manuscript propose that diversity programmes initiated by corporations are not able to fully empower marginalized workers because a corporation's primary interest is in increasing profit. Since unions are also able to shape discourses of identity and inclusion in the workplace, research that helps unions to design and implement anti-racist programming among their memberships has the potential to further the interests of marginalized groups of workers in ways that are consistent with maintaining worker control in the workplace through collective bargaining. While ample research has been directed at union strategies to increase the participation and representation of women, little similar work has been done concerning Aboriginal peoples (Briskin and McDermott 1993; White 1993; Pocock 1997; Fonow 2003). This area of inquiry would make both an empirical and a theoretical contribution.

Last, my third manuscript which examines the relationship between women's work identities and economic restructuring brings insights from critical management literature into the examination of the social construction of identity in place. This research could be further developed by examining how these linkages are related to processes of institutionalization and how processes of institutionalization operate over space and in different types of industries. Questions that could be addressed include: how are discourses emanating from centralized human resource management strategies in multinational companies impact the construction of identity of social actors in different spatial locations? And what situations offer a greater scope for resistance?

In conclusion, this study contributes to our understanding of women's experiences in forestry and to how women's experiences and constructions of identity are connected to the production of discourse. Women's talk also provided insights into the ideological underpinnings of organizational practices and discourse and how these are linked to changing work identities. Limitations to my analysis included my inability to examine gender comparatively since I was unable to interview male workers. Moreover, the tenuous political environment for forestry in the region at the time the study made it difficult to get information from local union leaders and from the company. Additional information would have provided me with a better understanding of the production of discourses within the mills examined. Despite these shortcomings, my hope

is that this research helps to voice the viewpoints and concerns of two groups that are marginalized in the forest sector: white and Aboriginal women.

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