

Man's Creative World?

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Why Are Senior Roles In The Creative Industry Male Dominant

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Introduction

I have noticed that the majority of my peers, in Communication Design, are female. This became more evident while I was in Germany, as an Erasmus Student, as the same imbalance occurred. At the *Graphic Design Festival Scotland* event, over the last two years, I recognised that the majority of the speakers and mentors were men. I began to question why this might be the case; where had all the female graduates gone and why were they not represented in leading roles? This phenomenon is not just within the Design Industry but also seen within the general workforce such as in business, science, technology and politics.

This dissertation investigates why there seems to be a lack of women in senior roles within Design and what the possible impediments could be that prevent women from progressing further in their career path. This dissertation also aims to explore and analyse what is being done about gender inequality, and I will seek to clarify, through my research, how businesses, organisations and agencies apply these types of programs and campaigns to try and improve the work females within industry experience.

I intend to engage personally in this question of inequality by organising an event celebrating and highlighting inspiring women within the Creative Industry. I hope that my interactions will raise awareness amongst the creative community, and those in business, about gender inequality as well as encouraging discussions about how creatives can showcase more women in design.

And Is Anything Being Done About It?

Chapter 1

The Socialisation Of Women & The Impact On Their Careers

I have discussed my event and dissertation subject with professionals and students within the Design sector considering why women are a minority in the workplace. A study by Hewlett Packard found that women would only apply for a job if they acquired 100% of the requirements despite men applying for jobs obtaining just 60% of the requirements (Mohr 2014, Kay and Shipman 2014). Analysing this, there seems to be a sense of 'perfectionism' that women are wedged into which reduces their opportunities for jobs and themselves. I would like to look into this topic and find a possible explanation to where this perfectionist attitude came from as well as why some women seem to lack confidence in themselves.

Saujani (2016) reveals in her *Ted Talk*, "Teach Girls Bravery, Not Perfection", the journey of founding *Girls Who Code* in 2013; to motivate girls to persevere within challenges rather than



Figure 1



Figure 2

giving into defeat. A teacher in Saujani's programme discussed a student who had tried writing code but chose not to show anything to her tutor. Therefore, the students did not allow herself to be held accountable for her mistakes. Saujani (2016) proposes that this is due to girls being afraid to admit their imperfections. She continues reasoning that girls from the program felt they would appear weak if they do not understand and would avoid seeking assistance (Saujani 2016). This shows the impact that this perfectionist ideology has on young girls.

This qualitative, inductive style of research would seem to suggest that girls are quick to accept defeat rather than taking up challenges and accepting difficulty. By taking on these valuable lessons, they will be better equipped when challenges

arrive (Saujani 2016). Saujani's findings also demonstrate that this continued defeatist style of behaviour could produce a negative mind-set which may affect the girl's future.

This behaviour could affect how these girls engage with their careers, steering themselves unconsciously away from senior positions for they believe they are not capable to fulfil the role. This can suggest why there is a lack of women in the Creative Industry and workforce as they may feel they are not prepared emphasising the destroying effects of the perfectionist ideology (Maher 2019).

I also believe that there are very few female role models highlighted in senior roles which can suggest a possible reason why girls are less likely to have confidence to

try senior roles. Some women stay content in their current position which I think is unfortunate. Women should be encouraged to have goals and to step out of their comfort-zone rather than avoid challenges because they fear what could happen.

The *Women's Leadership Network (WLN)* (WLN cited by Thomson 2009) found "of those polled, 72 per cent admitted to being worried that they would not be up to the job of principal or that they might fail - just over half the respondents were concerned about the level of responsibility that came with the role." Acknowledging that over half of the women lacked self-belief and felt they were not up to the liabilities of the job is, in my view, rather shocking. Alan Thomson (2009) did qualitative research concerning the paradigm

regarding the lack of women in senior positions within teaching and found that the females in these positions decided to apply due to seeing and hearing about other women's experiences and stories in the roles. This defines that once women are aware of the work done by those around them, they feel more confident to try achieving similar goals. This could be done by emphasising more women in these senior roles so that it encourages more females to apply and gain confidence in themselves, fulfilling their potential (Maher 2019).

Being critical of these findings show that women are capable of gaining senior positions, however, it is their lack of self-belief in the interview (Cartner cited by Thomson 2009) and few leaders with supportive styles of leadership that may reduce women's desire to go for these positions (Thomson 2009). I believe that this is not the only reason, but patriarchy has shaped and adapted many individuals' perspectives and opinions. *Girlguiding's* report (2018) found that girls, between 7-21 years old, are less likely to speak about issues. The report found some of these girls believed they would not be taken seriously and had a lack of confidence to speak out (Girlguiding 2018). These views can result in situations like the *Glass Ceiling* which is very harmful to women's confidence and progression in their careers.

Girlguiding's (2018) report stated that a girl, between 7-10 years old, specified, "some jobs are only for boys". This statement defines a belief that young females are affected by what they witness in society, so much so, that it could dictate which jobs they target. In my opinion, this research proposes that if girls viewed more gender equality in careers and in the media (as our heavy use of social media impacts our society), it may prevent girls from thinking negatively about which occupation they aim for. Celebrating more women within areas of Design could provide girls an interest in the sector and with a goal as they witness someone, they appreciate complete their target.

It is with this firmly in my mind, that I am motivated to curate an event to promote inspiring women in Design for my main project. The event offers an insight into a number of successful Scottish women in the Creative Industry who have founded their own agency or business which I hope will encourage more female creatives and students to be more ambitious in possible career paths.

Figure 1: Reshma Saujani, 2019

Figure 2: Girls Who Code Logo, 2019

CONFIDENCE
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Chapter 2.1

The Importance Of Equality & Adapting From A Patriarchy Society

If we observe history, men were more privileged than women. Before and during the World Wars, patriarchy was fully commended within Britain which made progression for women in work very difficult. The effects of our heavy patriarchy history still leave a majority of careers today unequally paid as well as many with unconscious bias towards women. Today, more men still engage in paid work than women (ONS 2018) but there has been a decrease in families only having one provider (47% in 1975 to 27% in 2015 (Roantree and Vira 2018)), which would have been typical in patriarchy. The Institute for Fiscal Studies concluded employed parents have increased from 49% in 1975 to 68% in 2015 (Roantree and Vira 2018). This research evidence concludes that more children are seeing both parents in paid work, therefore, perceptions of the 'stay-at-home mum' as the family custom previously acknowledged within a patriarchy society, is not as applicable in this current generation.

Despite the increase of women at work, women in Design still have difficulty with inequality concerning pay, opportunities and being outnumbered in the workforce (Figure 3) (Design Council 2018, ONS 2018).

Two thirds of women in Executive, CEO and Director positions are over 45 years old (American Express 2018, Pay Scale 2018) and *Lean In* (Thomas et al. 2018) found that for every 100 male managers promoted, 79 women are hired managers. Due to this, men hold 62% of manager positions compared to women holding 38%. *American Express* (2018) stated that a possible reason for women being in these roles so late in their careers is due to the barriers from their early years of work (I believe due to patriarchy) which have subsequently prevented opportunities for senior roles. I considered the age 45 and above and noticed that a majority of women at this point may have children that are at an age where they do not need as much support. This suggests that the mother is able to work full-time allowing her to progress further into a senior position; that is, if they are offered.

Gender: 78% of the UK's design workforce is male. This is higher than the percentage of men in the wider UK workforce (53%). This is also despite women making up 63% of all students studying creative arts and design courses at university. The overall ratio is skewed by the male dominated subsectors of product and industrial design (95%), digital design (85%), and architecture and built environment (80%). Even when employed in design, women earn less. For example in the multidisciplinary design subsector, women working as product, clothing and related designers earn 18.3% less than men in that subsector despite making up nearly two-thirds of that design subsector (64%). Women are also less likely than men to be in senior roles, with only 17% of design managers being female.

Figure 4

Industrial Strategy Creative Industries Sector Deal

Creative Industries employee characteristics
Expressed as percentage total of the sector

	Female	BAME	No degree	Less advantaged	Outside London
Advertising & marketing	45	12	37	10	51
Architecture	36	*7	28	*3	73
Crafts	-	*13	-	*14	-
Design (product, graphic & fashion)	43	9	49	9	75
Film, TV, video, radio & photo	37	11	44	14	62
IT, software & comp. services	22	18	36	3	73
Museums, galleries & libraries	66	*7	-	23	-
Music, performing & visual arts	47	7	37	11	66
Publishing	47	12	37	12	62
Total Creative Industries	37	13	38	8	68
Total UK Economy	47	12	66	33	83

Legend: Above UK industry average by 2+ points (dark grey), Within +/-2% of UK industry average (medium grey), Below UK industry average by 2+ points (light grey)

Source: DCMS and Nesta (2017)

Figure 3

Considering working women, very few jobs pay females more than men; even less careers ensure equal pay (ONS 2018). Female Advertising Accounting Managers and Creative Directors earn 12.7% less than men and they hold 43% of the full-time jobs within this sector (ONS 2018). Delving deeper, women working full time as Graphic Designers earn 7.3% less than men and hold 24% of these jobs, whereas, female Graphic Designers working part-time are paid 4.6% less than men (ONS 2018). The findings demonstrate these women working full-time are more likely to experience pay gap problems than part-time workers. This could be due to the fact that more women work part-time than men (ONS 2018). The reason for this could be because it provides more time flexibility that can make child care easier for mothers (Working Forward 2018). This suggests that mothers may struggle in senior positions, due to strains and lack of flexibility that come with such the role.

These assembled facts conclude that there are more men in senior positions which may suggest that some women do not necessarily desire these senior roles due to not wanting to lead. Considering inequality, one may even need to analyse society's impact on paradigms in gender characteristics within children. By observing behaviours from a young age, it shows how society can affect children within activities such as play.

Lever (1976) and Best (1983) found that boys gravitated towards games that were; "highly complex, competitive, rule infused, large in size and goal directed, whereas girls played in small, intimate groups; engaged in similar, independent activities; and focused on enjoying themselves more than on winning" (cited in Adler, Adler and Kless 1992 p170).

Reflecting on this finding, the results indicate that girls can be attracted to a relaxed style of play that does not seem to practice challenges, leading, competitive or goal driven roles which can be seen in senior positions as Lever (1976) and Best (1983) continue to explain in their research. The games young girls are drawn to do not encourage skills that could help prepare

DESPITE WOMEN EARNING MORE BACHELOR'S DEGREES THAN MEN, THEY ARE LESS LIKELY TO BE HIRED INTO ENTRY-LEVEL JOBS

them for future challenges (Borman and Frankel cited in Adler, Kless, and Adler 1992) which can result in many girls not attempting activities they believe they will not be good at. This emphasises Saujani's, *Girls Who Code*, programme and the importance of challenging girls so the learn how to pull through difficult situations which will benefit them in the future.

From this, the findings provide a possible understanding as to why more men may display confidence and approval towards challenges compared to women. Males might have more experience in problem solving, failing and achieving due to their past involvements which may have built up their confidence in difficult situations (Borman and Frankel cited in Adler, Kless, and Adler 1992).

Confidence plays a huge part in where we end up and if women do not have the drive for high positions, shortages of women in influential roles, within the Design industry, will continue. Nevertheless, some women do not have the desire to grow in the ranking because it is not in their nature (as highlighted by Lever (1976), Best (1983) and Adler, Adler and Kless (1992) research) but I believe confidence is not the only factor that affects the lack of women in senior roles. There are women that want to lead and there should be more opportunities or flexible hours to allow this. Due to socialization and unconscious bias's that exist, it is difficult for women to receive these roles (Working Forward 2018).

Working Forward (2018) provided a case study with *Co-operatives UK* which found evidence to support the importance of wording job descriptions to engage more women to apply. They interviewed a woman named Wendy Carter (Figure 5) who recently succeeded in her application for Head of Media and Communications at *Co-operatives UK*. She stated that a major factor in applying for the job was that the occupation was advertised as flexible. This gave her more confidence to enquire about time flexibility in the interview, however she stated she would not have felt as comfortable raising it if it was not advertised in the job description (Wilthew 2018). Confidence can be an issue resulting in women not being chosen for senior roles, however *Lean In* (Thomas et al. 2018) concluded that despite women earning more bachelor's degrees than men, they are less likely to be hired into entry-level jobs. The above research illustrates that women like Wendy Carter had the qualifications for senior careers, but it was her confidence, knowing that the job would be flexible that prompted her to apply for the opportunity that was provided.

Recognising that women tend to avoid full-time or senior positions suggests that there are not enough opportunities or encouragement for women to apply to leading roles. This could be due to society's previous patriarchy which have affected the number of women in these roles. It could also be due to women not desiring or confident enough to explore these possibilities. This synthesis also demonstrates that the current working methods and job descriptions may need to adapt to enable more women to work to a schedule that is more time flexible and enables the

best chances for females to grow within the workforce, if desired. Due to the absent awareness of women in senior roles, there are fewer role models in the Creative Industry that many can be encouraged by. Eighty eight percent of young female creatives believe that there are few female role models (Creative Equals 2019). I think there needs to be more done to encourage more females to try senior roles so there can be an increase in diversity within the workplace, however this can only be done if leading positions and opportunities are more accessible to women.



Figure 3: GOV.UK 2018 p.58
Figure 4: Design Council 2018 p.17
Figure 5: Wendy Carter, 2019

Chapter 2.2

Opportunities From Relationships



“[men] can make it difficult for women to progress unless these men, at the top, are aware of the gender imbalance and are actively taking steps to solve it...”

Figure 6

Figure 6 : Fee Sheal, 2018
Figure 7 : Lean In Circle Logo, 2018
Figure 8 : Lean In Logo, 2018

Arulampalam, Alison and Bryan (2007) and Xiu and Gunderson (2014) believe the reason for few females working in industry is simply that women are not given an opportunity to receive promotions.

Lean In's (2018) report displays an important platform for women that helps them to express their experiences of discrimination as well as conveying the importance of relationships within the work place.

“Employees who interact regularly with senior leaders are more likely to ask for and receive promotions, stay at their companies and aspire to be leaders” (Thomas et al. 2018 p14).

As Thomas et al. (2018) explains, the importance of relationships can affect whether an individual receives a promotion or remains in their position at work. Establishing these relations may be awkward for women due to the fact that a majority of their bosses are men. Individuals of the same gender find it easier to bond (Maccoby 1990) so it seems hardly surprising that men receive more promotions than women (Thomas et al. 2018). Thus, resulting in 49% of female workers never having had an informal conversation with a senior leader due to the fact they are male (Thomas et al. 2018).

Lean In (2018) wanted to improve this situation as they acknowledged the importance of relationships within the workplace so created *“Lean In Circles”*. This is a small group that meet together to build relationships and also share skills with one another. They have seen many benefits, for example workers, *“are more likely to be happy in their job, more likely to believe that they have an equal chance to grow and develop, and more likely to think their company is doing what it takes to improve gender diversity”* (Thomas et al. 2018 p55).

As the findings have demonstrated, these groups successfully encourage individuals to mix and network with one another providing better relationships in the workplace. The groups create an open environment for all workers, providing female workers comfort asking about flexibility, an increase in pay or promotion opportunities.

Building upon the importance of relationships, Fee Sheal (2018), Media Designer and leader of *Ladies, Wine and Design Edinburgh* stated that one core reason as to why women make up less than 50% of the creative workforce (Design Council 2018) is due to the lack of females or individuals aware of gender inequality in senior roles. She states: *“[men] can make it difficult for women to progress unless these men, at the top, are aware of the gender imbalance and are actively taking steps to solve it... Things like unconscious bias, hiring people who look like you, all play a factor in building up the men at the top of our sector and making it more and more difficult for women to reach the top.”* (Sheal 2018). It is evident that being in the minority within the workplace can seem more challenging when one considers that perhaps men in senior roles may not see a problem in the Creative Industry concerning gender inequality as they have not experienced it. For example, the unequal Gender Pay Gap is unlikely to have been experienced by a man. This highlights the importance discussions with male bosses and employees are as they emphasise the problems that many women face that may not be acknowledged.



Figure 7 ▲
Figure 8 ▼



Chapter 2.3

Gender Pay Gap & Theories

Many have decided to research further into the impact of the Gender Pay Gap and how this has affected the workplace. Paradigm theories such as the 'Glass Ceiling', 'Leaky Pipelines' and the 'Sticky Floor' have all contributed towards the unequal pay arguments (Bishu and Alkadry 2017).

The 'Glass Ceiling' is a phrase used to illustrate the 'artificial barrier' based on gender bias (Martin 1991) that many women face when applying for any role (Bishu and Alkadry 2017). The outcomes from inequality include lower income and occupational status compared to male equivalents in the job (Bishu and Alkadry 2017). Due to the 'Glass Ceiling', the results place women in a disadvantage accessing management roles or similar (Bishu and Alkadry 2017). This would seem to be borne out in the evidence presented in this research.

The 'Leaky Pipeline' (Zeng cited in Bishu and Alkadry 2017) is another illustration used to define difficulties females face in the workplace and progression to senior management roles. Zeng (cited in Bishu and Alkadry 2017) explains that women and ethnic individuals in various points of their career endure inconveniences and end up leaving before attaining senior positions. Many reflect on this theory and consider where and how these 'leaks' begin so they can prevent it from happening. From my research, I think the 'leaks' could be caused by the current working methods no longer being feasible for mothers and so many leave and enter part-time as the time is more flexible. However, working part-time results in many women missing senior role opportunities as the positions tend to be full-time and pressured which can be difficult for mothers to manage especially while having young children.

The 'Sticky floor' theory (Cotter et al. cited in Bishu and Alkadry 2017) is used to clarify women's lack of opportunities and ability to grow within the workplace. Women become stuck in, lower echelon positions which diminishes their chance of entering senior roles or receiving increased pay rates (Cotter et al. cited in Bishu and Alkadry 2017). This makes female's growth in pay and senior positions within their sector very difficult.

These theories provide understandings as to why women struggle to increase wages or positions; perhaps these workers are automatically denied promotions that could lead to senior roles due to working part-time (Cotter et al. cited in Bishu and Alkadry 2017) or simply the fact they lack the skills or experience needed to progress (Cotter et al. cited in Bishu and Alkadry 2017). These issues are manipulated by the industry they work in as well as the pay they receive from their organisation (Arulampalam, Alison and Bryan cited in Bishu and Alkadry 2017, Xiu and Gunderson 2014). This concludes that organisations may have the power to prevent the 'Glass Ceiling' and other similar issues from happening and provide women opportunities to gain the experience they need to progress. The 'Glass Ceiling' begins to break due to previous perceptions changing. This happens as more women talk about the barriers faced; not just in their companies but with their communities enhancing society's awareness of gender inequality.

There are many reasons why there is a lack of women in the Creative Industry. From analysing my research findings, it seems evident to me that some of the issues are due to few understanding the difficulties faced by women, illustrated by the 'Glass Ceiling', 'Leaky Pipelines' and 'Sticky Floors' and very few men are aware which slows down the increase of female representation in the workplace and in the Creative Industry.

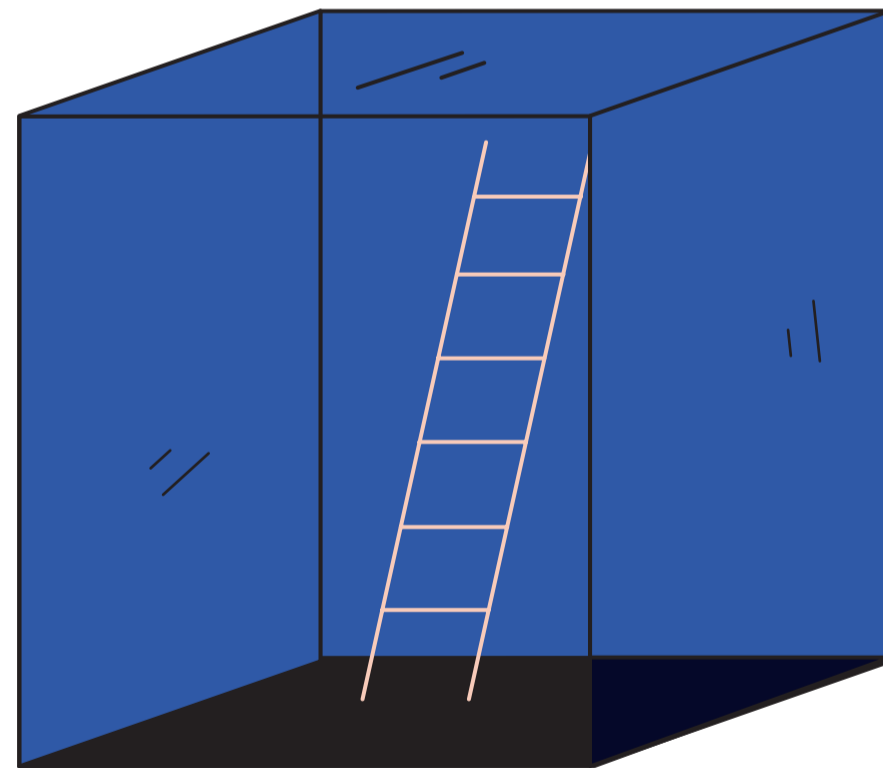


Figure 9: Glass Ceiling Illustration, 2018

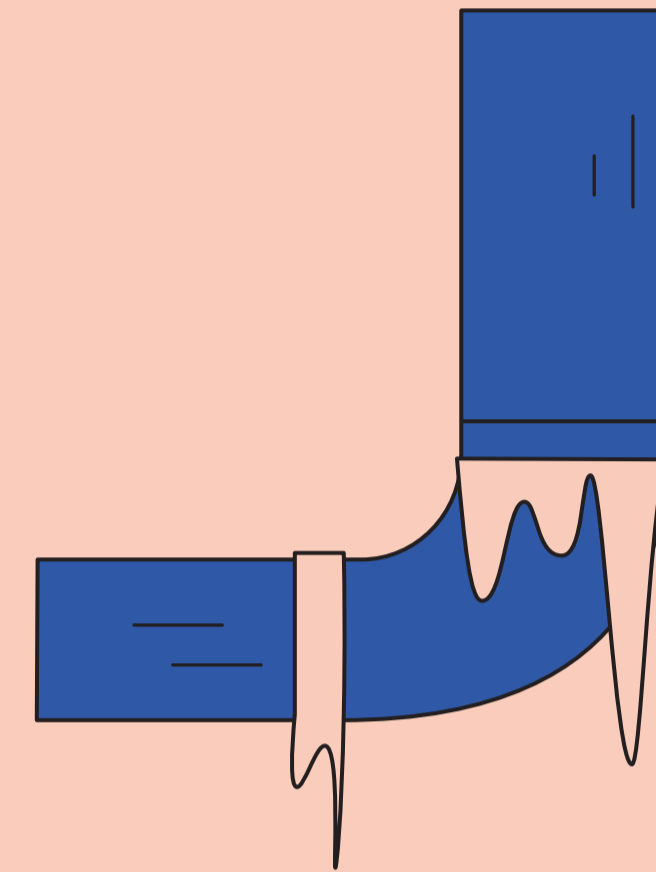


Figure 10: Leaky Pipelines, 2018

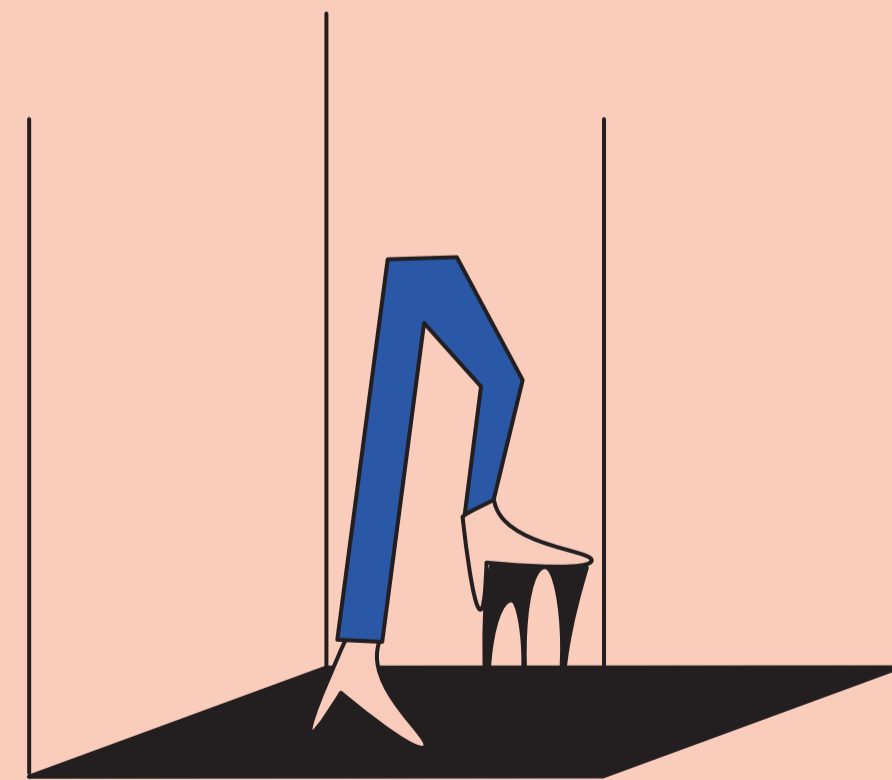


Figure 11: Sticky Floor Illustration, 2018

Chapter 3.1

Women in Industry and Maternity Leave



SUPPORTING PREGNANT WOMEN AND NEW PARENTS AT WORK



Figure 12

As my research has shown, having children can affect working women and what career positions they work in. Many women are creating their own businesses as they can manage when they work and what they do (Maher 2019).

A report commissioned by *American Express* (2018) found women who own their own businesses in America increased 58% while all businesses increased only 12% from 2007 to 2018. In Aberdeen, there are 88 female led businesses with a turn-over of £1 million to £250 million which is the fourth biggest amount in the UK (Founder4Schools 2018). This suggests Aberdeen may have encouraged many women to create businesses as females witness and know many like themselves leading which may encourage them to do the same.

I know one woman in Aberdeen that has recently created her own business and also has a child. She decided to create a business so that she could work in her own way as well as earn more money alongside of her current career as a Graphic Designer. She stated that working full-time was difficult while having a child and now works part-time. For mothers across the UK, working part-time is a recurring theme, and due to this, returning to work after maternity leave can be difficult (Equality and Human Rights Commission- EHRC, 2018).

Just over half (51%) of employers stated there is occasional resentment among employees towards women expecting or those on maternity leave (EHRC 2018). I believe this may be due to some employees witnessing women that struggle once they come back to work which may affect the company's performance. Almost half of employers believe it is acceptable to ask if a female applicant is planning to have children during the recruitment process (EHRC 2018) but many have questioned whether this is appropriate or even necessary. Expecting children in the future is not necessarily the first thing a woman, or even a man, considers when applying for jobs nonetheless it is believed that women are seen as liable because their maternity leave is longer compared to men (Topping 2018).

Fee Sheal discusses her experience; "I was once asked in a meeting with a potential employer if I had any thoughts on having children any time soon (it was a very casual first-time meeting). He followed this by explaining his wife had just gone on maternity leave and he never considered that would be something he would have to deal with if he hired a woman. In fairness, I had never considered my reproductive choices would be of relevance to my employer but there you go" (Sheal 2018). Reflecting upon this response, it is evident that asking about children can be extremely intrusive to

Figure 14

the applicant which questions whether this is truly acceptable or necessary. It is also thought-provoking to notice that the employer had begun to consider the impact of pregnancy as he was experiencing it.

During my interview with Natalie Maher (2019) she discussed the 'daughter effect' which helps to illustrate the barriers women face. Putting the subject into a personal context allowed the men, especially those with children, to understand and realise that there was an unconscious bias towards women (Maher 2019). Just as a father desire their daughter to achieve her best, the same type of attitude should be had when acknowledging bias', which reduces barriers enabling more women to progress (Maher 2019). This demonstrates that you can gain a better understanding from situations that are experienced as it influences the way you view topics and issues especially in this case (GBDE 2016).

Sheryl Sandberg (2013) discusses her difficulty while she was pregnant and working in one of the top senior roles in *Google*. She realised that it was difficult to find parking spaces close to the office while pregnant so discussed this with the *Google* founders, who are male. They were shocked to realise, as was Sandberg, that they had never considered bringing reserved parking for pregnant employees before. "The other pregnant women must have suffered in silence, not wanting to ask for special treatment. Or maybe they lacked confidence or seniority to demand that the problem be fixed. Having one pregnant woman at the top... made the difference" (Sandberg 2013 p.4). This evidence supports the importance of good relationships in the workplace as it is evident, she felt comfortable to state her issue to her colleagues. Better communication and relationships also provide a better working environment for colleagues. It also aids bosses and employees' better understandings about how they can provide assistance to expecting mothers.

This example also indicates the employer did not have to deal with the maternity leave or his pregnant colleague; they provided support to assist the pregnant colleague rather than dismiss her and her needs. However, her experience

contradicts the idea that women become "unreliable" (Topping 2018) during and after having a child which determines that companies should realise that by aiding their pregnant colleagues, they provide a more stable and beneficial environment which would encourage the female employee to stay in the company. Unfortunately, this example is not the case in most areas of industry (EHRC 2018).

Many women leave their occupations as EHRC (2018) states; "around one in nine mothers (11%) reported that they were either dismissed; made compulsorily redundant, where others in their workplace were not; or treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their job; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 54,000 mothers a year."

EHRC (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2018) launched *Working Forward*, a campaign that aims to improve the issue explained above. *Working Forward* encourage companies to sign pledges that promise to treat all workers, especially female and pregnant employees fairly and with support (Topping 2018). The results of this campaign have been very beneficial in assisting parents to have flexible working hours (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2018). *BT Group* had signed the pledges by *Working Forward* and the results are: "[BT Group's] return rate for women after maternity leave is almost 86% compared with the national average of 77%," (Allera cited in EHRC website 2018). This validates the importance of introducing programmes like *Working Forward*, especially to the Creative Industry, so that it encourages more women to enter and stay in the creative sector. Similar programmes also enable mothers to work more flexibly allowing them to manage child care.

When considering the Creative Industry, it is demanding, fast paced and pressured. If many women feel that they cannot work in the Creative Industry due to difficult working method, this makes it challenging for mothers to manage child care. Many work from home so that it is easier to manage child care. However, they do not have interactions with colleagues in the workplace, reducing gender diversity. For some that do go back to work after maternity

leave experience a change in how they are treated (EHRC, 2018); hours are not flexible which can bring an automatic disadvantage attempting to receive promotions or applying to senior roles as many aim for part-time positions due to the flexible time available.

As more women work part-time, they are left in a 'sticky floor' situation as opportunities to grow are limited. It is evident that this situation affects many women in the creative industry as a minority of women work full-time (Design Council 2018).



Figure 13

Figure 12: Companies led by women with a turnover of £1 million to £250 million, Founder4School, 2018, p.13
Figure 13: Working Forward Logo, 2018
Figure 14: Sheryl Sandberg, 2018

Chapter 3.2

The Importance Of Diversity In The Workplace



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17

As I observe the importance of diversity in the Creative Industry, I can see that it is a very hard industry to get a job in both due to the competitive market and as a woman (Sheal 2018, Myerscough 2018) as the industry is male dominant. In the *Design Council's* (2010) research, it states that almost 70% of Scottish and UK in-house agencies employ less than 5 designers. The source continues stating that under a third of Design businesses in Scotland recruited only one designer in that year (Design Council 2010). However, since 2010 the numbers of jobs in the field are increasing. There were 1.69 million people employed within Design in 2016 which is an increase of 6% from 2014 (Design Council 2018).

It is exciting to observe the increasing opportunities to work in the Design Industry in recent years, but women are still the minority (Design Council 2018).

There is a huge difference between students and the industry as 63% of Design students are female yet 22% of the total Design industry are female (Figure 4) (Design Council 2018). The *Design Council* (2018) found that in the UK, the average designer is male, white and between 35-44 years old which has not changed since the *Design Council* study in 2010. These men have power to bring more opportunities to diversify their workplace but if they are not aware of the barriers that women face then nothing can be done to improve female experiences within the workplace.

Gender awareness programmes such as *MARC* (Men Advocating Real Change) have been placed in businesses and companies in order to continue to reduce unconscious biases and to raise awareness of gender inequality in the workplace. A case study carried out by *Proctor & Gamble (P&G)* shows the beneficial outcome of *MARC* program by *Catalyst* (Thomas et al. 2018). The program service provides information about common biases faced by women as well as encouraging a better partnership across genders in the workplace. The results were very promising; more than 950 senior *P&G* leaders completed a *MARC* Leaders workshop and 96% of male participants acknowledged they had more privileges than women, compared to

70% beforehand (Thomas et al. 2018). All male participants stated they have a responsibility of diversity and inclusion and will try to be proactive against their bias thoughts (Thomas et al. 2018). This demonstrates that these programs do benefit and raise awareness as well as observe how individuals can be aware of their behaviour, which can reduce paradigms such as the '*Glass Ceiling*', '*Sticky Floor*' and '*Leaky Pipeline*'. Despite this, it is easier said than done so hopefully the participants in this programme stand by their word.

It is important to have diversity as each individual can bring something new due to their background and experiences from gender, age and culture. Ninety one percent of companies would like to see greater diversity within their workforce (GBDE 2016) as it encourages varied applicants as well as benefitting companies and businesses work which is highlighted in *P&G's* case study. It also increases networking and leads to distinctive, powerful and new creative ideas (Design Council 2018). Nick Hirst from *Adam & Eve* said; "*There are likely to be more unconnected things in a room full of different people, than in a room full of the same people*" (GBDE 2016 p.22) which emphasises the importance of diversity in the workplace.

"*Equality is now not only a problem for women, it's actually an industry drawback and it's keeping design from diversifying*" (Mackenzie 2018).

Fee Sheal mentioned in our interview there is a lack of women in the Digital and Media Industry and emphasises the importance of having a mixed group of individuals working on a project. "*In the same way that design teams should be mixed (in gender, background, ethnicity etc) so you don't end up with things like this [Figure 15], so should production teams. I constantly joke with my male colleague who is currently working on a project with absolutely no female designers/ developers/project managers that they're going to inadvertently design something in the shape of a tampon, and no one will notice*" (Sheal 2018).

This chapter concludes that by providing more awareness of the importance of gender diversity

in workplaces, we can aid the growth of women in the Creative Industry as well as closing the gender gap. The *Working Forward* campaign believe that their program has increased the number of women working due to many company's commitments to pledges (supplied by the *Working Forward* program) as well as increasing female chances of development and stability in their careers, especially when they return after maternity leave (Working Forward 2018). It is evident that more are becoming proactive to gender diversity as the number of women in the creative industries has boosted 42% compared to 17% amongst men since 2010 (Design Council 2018) which improves experiences at work and creativity.

"EQUALITY IS NOW NOT ONLY A PROBLEM FOR WOMEN, IT'S ACTUALLY AN INDUSTRY DRAWBACK AND IT'S KEEPING DESIGN FROM DIVERSIFYING"

CHAPTER 4.1

What Is Being Done?

Many in the Creative Industry have acknowledged the lack of women especially within senior roles. These creatives have decided to find ways to increase female representation in the industry as well as encourage more to enter into the sector and senior roles.

There are many creative agencies that are dedicated to women like *Kerning the Gap*, founded by Natalie Maher. The collective campaign organises events which encourage and support female leaders as well as organising events and workshops by designers and creatives to inspire more women to “squeeze through the [gender] gap,” (Maher 2018). Maher (2018) discusses that when she worked in the agency *Good*, there were more women than men working there. However, she noticed that the more promotions she gained, the less women she witnessed in similar positions which is why she founded *Kerning the Gap* (Maher 2018). The results from the events she has organised have enabled more women to feel confident as well as feel more prepared gaining more skills and confidence to aim for senior positions (Maher 2019). Maher concluded in my interview the most rewarding part of *Kerning the Gap* is being part of the progressive change in increasing women’s representation and confidence in senior positions and in the work force (Maher 2019).

Ladies, Wine and Design (LWD) do similar work in the Creative Industry for women. They provide a creative community that meet

regularly throughout the year to network and collaborate in workshops and events. *LWD* was created by Jessica Walsh, a very influential designer in the Design industry. She is notorious for her ambitious work and willingness to break taboos within culture and in Design. She also works closely with Stefan Sagmeister who is notorious for his extreme creativity.

Walsh acknowledged that women in the Creative Industry lacked support and encouragement towards their female companions. She believed that this was due to the slim chance’s women have of success compared to men. Walsh (2018) experienced and witnessed jealousy and little support from her female companions while working and desired to create an environment that elevated women and aids one another. *LWD* was launched in New York, March 2016, and has now spread across the world, in over 200 cities (Walsh 2018).

LWD has provided opportunities for women aspiring to be and working in the Creative Industry by offering, “mentorship circles, portfolio reviews, talks and creative meet-ups” (Walsh 2018). *LWD* present resources online that highlight questions that are asked about women in the creative industry such as “What can I do to help change the number [of women in industry]”. *LWD*’s (2018) website also discusses ‘mansplaining’, ‘maninterrupting’, ‘gaslighting’ and ‘bropropriating’ which explain certain actions that some men use to assert their dominance over women.

Creative Scotland (2017) are using the *Diversity Act* (introduced in 2010) to improve the gender balance. *Creative Scotland* stated in their Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Mainstreaming report that they have identified the need to improve a new approach to incorporate EDI equally across *Creative Scotland* and their application process (Creative Scotland 2017). “We wanted to clearly articulate how equalities are essential to delivery of all five stated ambitions in *Creative Scotland*’s 10-year plan, ‘Unlocking Potential, Embracing Ambition’. And we wanted to establish procedures and develop staff knowledge and skills to ensure a mainstreamed approach across all areas of our work,” (Creative Scotland 2017 p.13). *Creative Scotland* intend to be more inclusive of women as well as adapting how gender inequality is within the Creative Industry and businesses due to their further awareness of the difficulties women, in industry, face.

Throughout my research, I found a majority of the work being done to reduce gender inequality was done by women. However, I did find one male designer that also wanted to highlight this issue. Eike König (Figure 23), one of Germany’s biggest Graphic Design influencers, has created an event that celebrates the women in the design sector. *HfG Offenbach, After School Club (ASC)* was created by König (cited in Bourton 2018) who recently decided to do something different by inviting women that had “broader ideas of gender fluidity,” to run the workshops. He realised and questioned the obvious lack

of women represented at events and workshops for, “no good reason,” (König cited in Bourton 2018) and decided to dedicate this special *ASC* to the female creatives he was inspired by. The students that attended the week-long workshop were encouraged and felt they were in a safe space amongst the female lecturers (Bourton 2018). I feel this may be due to the ‘nurturing nature’ that women tend to display more than men (Lever 1976 and Best 1983).

The realisation that I could only find one man that highlighted gender inequality, in my opinion, suggests that many males in the Creative Industry may not consider the power they have in reducing gender related issues or even feel the importance to stress the situation. Despite this, it is encouraging to see that a well-known designer like König is doing his part in provoking discussion around this topic to a larger audience and I hope more consider how they can help reduce the gender gap.

Doing events like this is not about women over-powering men, but it is about making full use of all creatives by providing opportunities and routes equally to men and women to grow (Jourová cited in Boffey 2017). Just as Bourton (2018) highlights, the women did not attend because of their gender but because of their expertise that König provided a platform to show with *ASC*.

The work being done by campaigns and agencies are gradually educating more people about the gender bias that exists and are looking for ways to combat it. This will potentially lead to a more diverse and fairer workplace that aims to provide more balanced experiences for all employees, especially women.



Figure 23



Figure 18



Figure 19

Women in over 170 countries have joined the Lean In community

Members meet in small groups called Lean In Circles about once a month to support each other and learn new skills. They talk openly about their ambitions and encourage each other to take on new challenges. Together, they are going further and standing up for equality.

Start a Circle

Join a Circle or learn more

Figure 20



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Figure 21



Figure 22

- Figure 18: Kerning the Gap Logo, 2019
- Figure 19: Ladies, Wine and Design Lips Icon, 2019
- Figure 20: Lean In Circle Site, 2019
- Figure 21: Creative Scotland Logo, 2019
- Figure 22: After School Club Logo, 2019
- Figure 23: Eike König, Clemens Poloczek, 2016



CHAPTER 4.2

My Studio Project

My main project this year is to organise an event, inviting women from the Design industry to discuss how they got to where they are today. By doing so, I hope my event will encourage and inspire students and female creatives to not fear their future but to be ambitious and to make a difference in the Creative Industry and in Aberdeen. I have invited many Scottish and Aberdonian women whom I find inspiring to emphasise Scotland's potential to grow in the Creative Industry, especially in Design, as there seems to be very little Design events or Designers highlighted and celebrated in Aberdeen.

The female speakers come from different backgrounds; some are Creative Directors, freelancers or own businesses. The event is not just to raise awareness of female designers and creatives but to encourage more people to consider what they can do to grow and support women to win awards, to bring change and to provide and create more opportunities to place spotlights on creative females. It celebrates how far they have come as well as emphasising how much further we, collectively, can go. The talented leaders will also provide leadership tips and discuss their current and previous projects.

To facilitate this event, I have worked closely with *Look Again Aberdeen*, in collaboration with the *University of Aberdeen*. I have gained skills and confidence in business as well as management and working within the Creative Industry, engaging with inspiring individuals who have influenced me on my own journey. This experience has also offered exciting opportunities to connect with designers and creatives across the UK that I would never have spoken to before. Even though some were unable to attend, many expressed their support towards the event and believed gender inequality is an important topic that needs to be discussed and amplified to raise awareness. The organising and preparation of the event has revealed the complications that can be faced in creativity as well as the frustrations felt by female creatives concerning inequality in senior roles.

Hearing the responses to the event were really encouraging. Some of the 83 individuals that attended my event told me that they were inspired and so impressed by the variety of women that spoke. Another stated how the speakers had given her motivation to step out of her comfort zone and consider traveling to find more opportunities to improve her creative practice and to try new things. These responses were exactly what I wanted to hear which made me feel very pleased that my actions had influenced so many people to try something new and to be more ambitious rather than accept their current positions and not consider what more they could achieve.

◀ Figure 24: Design Your Future, Creative PechaKucha Evening Poster 2019, Meghan Doran, 2018.

Figure 25: Eventbrite Image: Design Your Future, Creative PechaKucha Night 2019, Meghan Doran, 2018.
 Figure 26: DYF, Guest 1, Meghan Doran, 2018.
 Figure 27: DYF, Date, Meghan Doran, 2018.
 Figure 28: DYF, Guest 2, Meghan Doran, 2018.
 Figure 29 - 36: Design Your Future: Creative PechaKucha Evening, Sean Steen, 2019. ▶



Figure 25



Figure 29



Figure 26

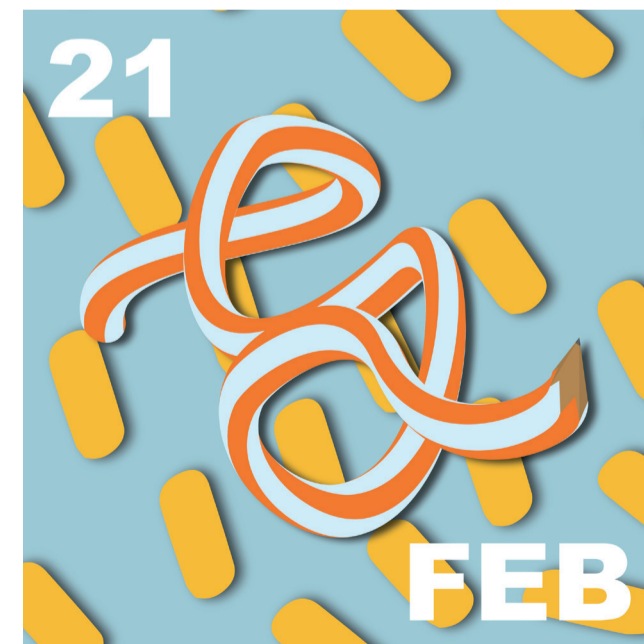


Figure 27



Figure 28



Figure 30



Figure 31



Figure 33



Figure 34



Figure 35



Figure 36

Why Are Senior Roles In The Creative Industry Male Dominant

Conclusion Finally, But Not Quite

Throughout this dissertation, research has brought to the forefront the difficulties faced by women in the Creative Industry. I have discovered many reasons for the apparent lack of females in the Design Industry concerning unconscious bias from patriarchy, lack of confidence, opportunities, awareness and role models.

The fact that there are very little women in senior roles may be a reason as to why there is minimal growth and little emphasis on female representation across the Design Industry. As a result of very few women in the influential roles, it is no surprise that we see a lack of awareness towards the gender inequality issues affecting women. Little is done to address these problems as the males dominating the higher roles may be unaware of these issues faced by women. Despite this, campaigns and women in the Creative Industry are raising awareness of the '*Glass Ceiling*', the '*Sticky Floor*' and the '*Leaky Pipeline*'. This work is evident from my research that these situations have been influenced by our patriarchy history.

As more become aware of their previous bias thoughts, the more opportunities women have in breaking the '*Glass Ceiling*' and chances to create a diverse workforce. Patriarchy may have had an impact on children which has affected many individuals' attitudes, shaping our culture and society's future. Despite this, our society is changing, and we now have a far greater focus on considering women, work and career opportunities.

Due to these changes, we recognise that 'working 9 till 5' might not be feasible in today's society. Acknowledging that women are different to men and some females may not desire senior roles or working full-time can suggest another cause for the minimal female representation in the workforce and in senior roles. In order to prevent this, more jobs in

senior positions could be tailored to fit a flexible working method, so this enables more women (especially parents) to feel confident applying. These workers are also more likely to stay in the job and are happier, resulting in more receiving promotions and pay rises due to creating better relationships across the workplace.

The more women that are highlighted in their roles provides more individuals with role models for emerging creatives that can aspire to follow in their steps. Many individuals that attended my event stated that they felt very inspired to step out of their comfort zones after hearing the women that spoke. This was reassuring to me as I found that role models really can make a difference in people's aims and desires and I hope that I can continue to provide a platform for more creatives to shine and to be recognised for their talent.

The Creative Industry is gradually improving as the number of women working in the industry has increased, however, statistics still state that less than half of the total workforce are female. Women still face a gender pay gap which is enough evidence to demonstrate that female creatives do not have the same opportunities compared to their male colleagues. The creative women that I have contacted believe the lack of women in the Creative Industry is a problem (Sheal 2018, Myerscough 2018, Maher 2019). The fact that the *Design Council* and *Creative Scotland* have concluded that they have a desire to change the gender inequality is not enough. Creative Directors, individuals in senior positions and event organisers within the Creative Industry can be influential in highlighting more female creatives. This raises more awareness through-out industry but also for the future generation of designers who will hugely benefit from learning about how they can improve and diversify the Creative Industry further.

And Is Anything Being Done About It?

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Appendices 1

Fee Sheal Interview: 30th October 2018

Are many female creatives, you know from your time at university, currently working in the Creative Industries? If not, what type of jobs do they occupy?

A good majority of them are, now, yeah. From my close group at university (about 8 of us) one took a couple of years out, did some freelance work as she was travelling but is now back in Scotland working for an agency. Another in the group just stepped completely out of the design world and now works at a vet's surgery down south. As for my graduating class, I think most of us are either working as designers or in the industry in some form (photography/different design discipline etc).

What factors do you believe could be a reason for the lack of women in the Creative Industries?

I think there's a distinction to be made here. There are a lot of women in the Creative Industries in general. There are a lot of graduating designers and a lot of women who work as freelance designers. I think the biggest statistic is the lack of women in the top/senior roles in the industry. That's where the problem is because that's where the decisions are made!

I'd say there are a few reasons... It can be difficult for women to get back into the industry after taking time out as our industry moves very quickly and often taking time out isn't an easy option. Women are often the primary childcare in a household and so moving to freelance work is often an easier option for working mums. That's not to say there aren't any kick-ass women working at the top of their game and raising a family - there definitely are - but it's a small majority.

As I mentioned before, there are a lot more men in senior roles which can be intimidating and can make it difficult for women to progress unless these men at the top are aware of the gender imbalance and are actively taking steps to solve it. Things like unconscious bias, hiring people who look like you all play a factor in building up the men at the top of our sector and making it more and more difficult for women to reach the top.

Have you ever experienced a colleague/employer/client treat you differently due to your gender?

Absolutely. I used to work as a designer for a construction consultancy and had a colleague who would send me out for coffees and ask me to take notes in meetings when clients were there. It's fair to say I could be coming to my own conclusions here, but he never seemed to ask any of my (more junior) male colleagues. When a new female member of staff joined just as I was leaving, he began asking her to do the same.

I was once asked in a meeting with a potential employer if I had any thoughts on having children any time soon (it was a very casual first-time meeting). He followed this by explaining his wife had just gone on maternity leave and he never considered that would be something he would have to deal with if he hired a woman. In fairness, I had never considered my reproductive choices would be of relevance to my employer but there you go!

Within the Digital and Media sector that you work in, do you notice there is a gender imbalance and if so, do you believe it is a problem that needs to be addressed?

Yes, definitely. I know very few female motion graphic designers and very few female videographers. It's definitely something that needs to be addressed. In the same way that design teams should be mixed (in gender, background, ethnicity etc) so you don't end up with things like this, so should production teams. I constantly joke with my male colleague who is currently working on a project with absolutely no female designers/developers/project managers that they're going to inadvertently design something in the shape of a tampon, and no one will notice haha

Does the lack of women within the Creative Industry bother you as a creator?

Yes. I think it's unfair and there's a whole half of our population that isn't being listened to or represented.

Why did you decide to become a part of Ladies, Wine and Design?

In March of 2016 Jessica Walsh launched LWD in New York. She put out an open call to say if you wanted to start a chapter to get in touch. I'd be (quite honestly) fan-girling her for years and so sent off an email and didn't really expect much of it. A few days later I was given the website and branding materials and sent on my way!

I never really knew what I was getting in to, or how important it would become to me and the work that I do. I'm really proud of the community I've built in Edinburgh and the way we're starting to shape conversations around the gender balance in the industry.

What topics come up the most in discussions about the creative industries with female designers? What type of responses have you received from male designers about the gender imbalance within the Creative Industry?

A lot of the conversations are around how we can close the gap. I very rarely hear conversations with other female designers who see the industry any differently or in any way close to being equal. That could, however be because the majority of designers I know/speak to are in the same sector of the industry. I do think there are probably more women in the craft industry.

I've had mixed conversations with male designers. I often get "but I know loads of women in the industry" or "The agency I work at has loads of women". It's often not until you help them realise that often agencies with a higher number of female employees are hiring women in client services roles and not as designers. There's always a discussion to be had. Sometimes it's constructive, sometimes it's not. I've been lucky that no one has ever been aggressive or particularly rude, but I know that's not always the case.

What pros and cons have come participating in LWD?

Pros -

- I've met an incredible bunch of women from all walks of life
- I genuinely feel like I'm doing my part to help balance out our industry
- I've helped women who wouldn't normally go to networking events feel a part of something
- I've watched women come together, hire each other, become friends and collaborate on projects
- I've met a fantastic bunch of women who run the other chapters around the world

Cons -

- It can be stressful running events/finding funding/securing speakers
- The hangovers

Morag Myerseough Interview: 26th November 2018

Are many female creatives, you know from your time at university, currently working in the Creative Industries? If not, what type of jobs do they occupy?

I graduated in 1986 — BA St Martins and 1988 MA RCA

I have not kept in touch with all the women on my two courses. As far as I know most of them worked in the creative industry and some teaching, I am not sure if they are all still all working.

What factors do you believe could be a reason for the lack of women in (high positions) the Creative Industries?

The past —being almost totally run by men. Thankfully this is changing.

Have you ever experienced a colleague/employer/client treat you differently due to your gender?

Not recently. Maybe in the past but we were conditioned not to notice it so much — 'as men were men!'.

Within your creative sector that you work in, do you notice there is a gender imbalance and if so, do you believe it is a problem that needs to be addressed?

The higher you go with what you do especially at my age (54) there are less and less women.

But I think it is being addressed and changing.

More and more younger women are in higher positions.

More and More women are running things.

Does the lack of women within the Creative Industry bother you as a creator?

I believe in equality and so I am aiming for equal men and women. So yes, it does.

Natalie Maher Interview: 12th February 2019

Ellen Forsyth and I arranged a call to discuss Kerning The Gap. Here are the questions that were asked along with noted responses Maher said:

Are you still in contact with your female friends from university? If so, where are they now? Are they in similar high positions like yourself and did they move into the creative industry?

Many are in leadership roles as well as being mothers. She had a really strong group of determined friends that inspired her to do what she's doing today. Some friends from peer groups have grown in their positions at work.

Why did you create Kerning The Gap?

Wanted to challenge male perceptions as well as help reduce the gender inequality gap in industry.

What have the results been from the work and resources provided by Kerning The Gap?

Men want to help and be aware but they need awakening. More women leave the programme with more confidence as well as applying for senior roles. Changing people's attitudes and seeing the benefits come from it. Teaching people about how they can be good leaders and colleagues in the workplace to benefit themselves and their colleagues. Diversifying the workplace has provided many benefits for women and parents working and well as bringing conversations about how colleagues are outside and inside of work and how their business/workplace can help.

What is the most rewarding parts of doing Kerning The Gap?

Being a part of the change, "the awakening" and realisation of what women face. Bringing change to many people's lives and championing and highlighting the gifted women in industry and supporting them.

Why do you think there are a lack of women in senior positions?

Women and men are getting burned out from working and some decide to then move to another less intense occupation. They also think if they are getting burned out in their current jobs that they wouldn't want to go for a senior role because it would be even harder. We need to create new working methods that don't burn workers out.

Lack of understanding or encouragement to go for senior roles, to be reminded that they can do the job because they do have the skills. They shouldn't wait for someone to tell them they can, they should just know and do it.

What are your future plans?

Growing Kerning The Gap further across the UK. Plans to move to Scotland in Glasgow/Edinburgh soon.

Appendices 1 Continued

Email with Anna Wilthew from Working Forward; Equality and Human Rights Commission

I contacted Working Forward with this email:
9th January 2019

“Dear Sir/Madam,

I am currently writing my dissertation on Women in the Creative Industry and I found your report about Equality in the Workplace. It included the Working Forward Campaign and I was wondering if you could provide further information about the benefits that have come from this campaign?

*-Do you have any statistical evidence that demonstrates the Campaign is improving workplaces and workers experiences (especially women's)?
-Do you believe that your campaign has improved women's chances of getting a job as well as staying in their job for longer/coming back after maternity leave?*

Thank you for your time and I hope you have a lovely evening,

*Kind regards,
Meghan”*

I was then forwarded Anna Wilthew and this was her response:
15th January 2019

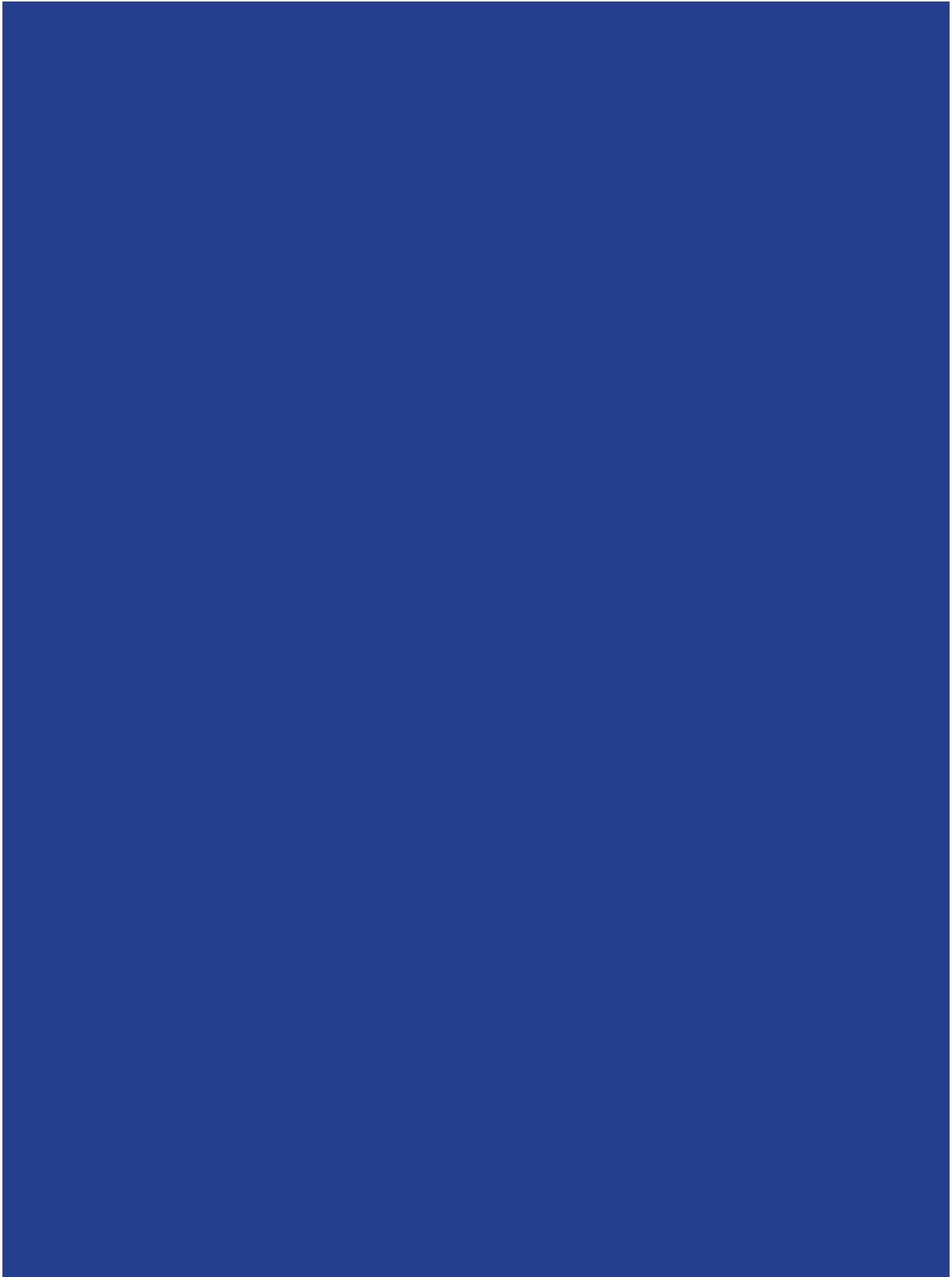
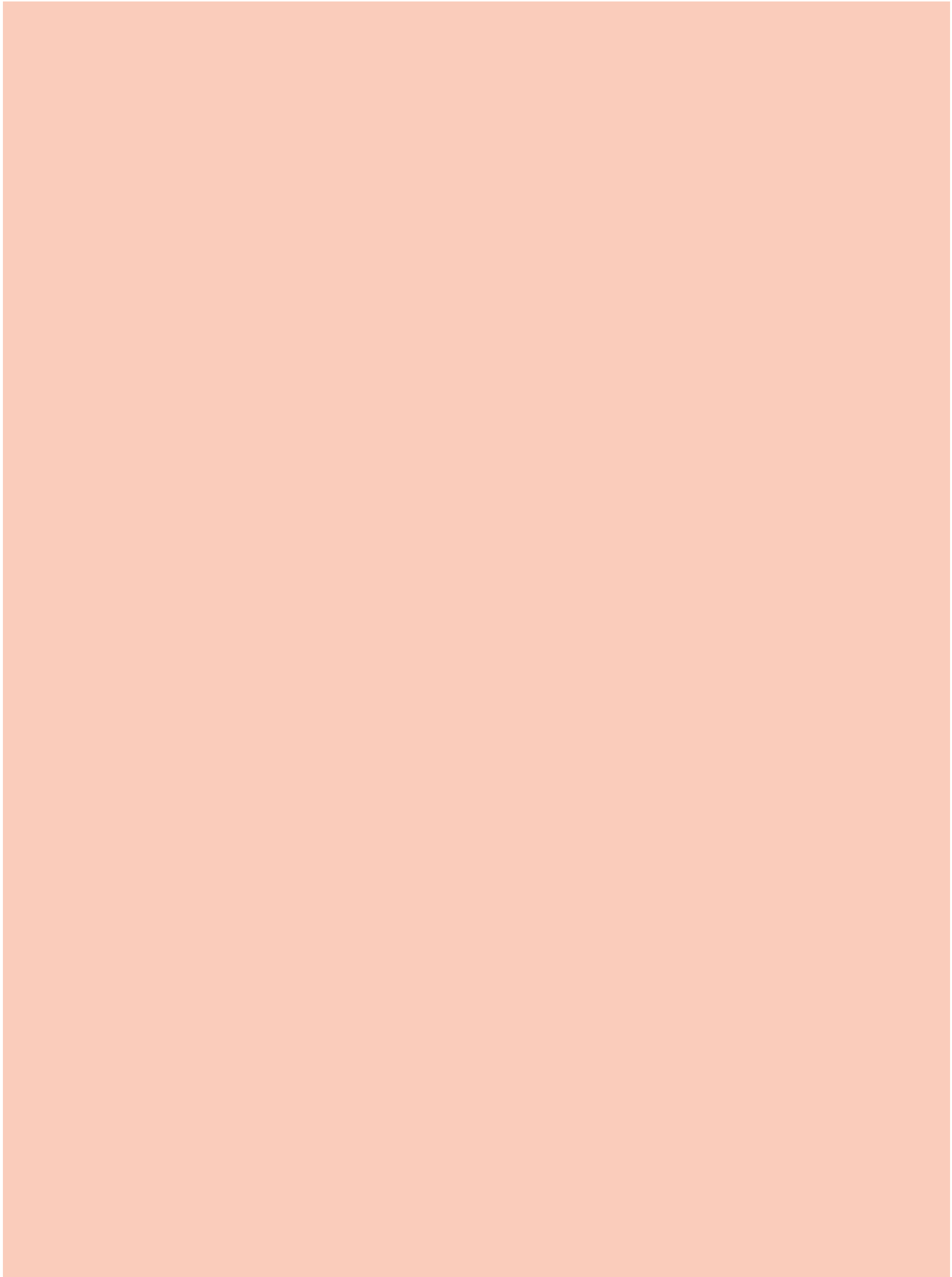
*“Meghan
Thank you for your enquiry. Until last week I was the Working Forward Project Manager. We have received a considerable amount of qualitative feedback indicating the positive benefits of organisational membership of Working Forward. We currently have 435 members which reach 1.8million employees. I therefore do believe that with member organisations the initiative has increased the likelihood of women remaining in their jobs post maternity leave and some organisation have also made themselves more attractive to female applicants, particularly mothers. For example, one-member organisation instigated a parent's network following attendance at a Working Forward Event and another organisation now offers flexible working from the point of hire by removing any qualifying period prior to an employee being eligible to submit a flexible working request. I have included the case study I wrote on the later.*

We are currently going through a pre-planned review period during which time we have commissioned an external evaluation of Working Forward. This report is due at the end of March and unfortunately at the moment I am therefore unable to share any preliminary findings with you. It will potentially include much of the statistical evidence you are perhaps needing.

I apologise for not being able to be more helpful at this stage, but can I suggest you re-contact me at the end of March and I will request an evaluation report that we are able to publish externally. You can also sign the pledge as an individual and annotate that you are a research student so that we do not add you to our membership figures per say, whilst this is not what it is designed for the resources, we offer may help you with your dissertation.

If there is anything, I can help you with in the meantime please do contact me again.

*Anna Wilthew
Senior Associate – Inquiries and Investigation Team
Equality and Human Rights Commission | Manchester”*



meghan doran communication design