

Gender Games: Practical Tools for Gender Analysis

Suzanne Clisby

Goldsmiths, University of London, UK
E-mail: S.Clisby@gold.ac.uk

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ABSTRACT In this practical methodological piece I provide an illustration of what form gender analysis training might take. This is an example of training that I have devised and employed in various ways and formats in my work with a range of NGOs and non-statutory organisations in the UK. I offer this overview merely to allow readers to see what gender analysis training might look like, and how it might be planned for a one day training delivery. There are multiple ways one might construct and organise gender analysis training depending on the specific needs and particular remit of a given client. Here I provide one example of such training that focuses particularly on engaging clients in reflecting on their own processes of gendering, how their own gendered positionalities and intersectional identities influence and affect their lived experiences, attitudes towards others and normative understandings of gender roles, responsibilities and, ultimately of power.

INTRODUCTION

This piece is not intended to be read as a theoretical or analytical article, rather both as a practical toolkit and as complementary to Endersstein's article (2017, this issue) exploring some of the dynamics of gender analysis training in Europe. Here I provide one illustrative example of what form gender analysis training might take. This is an example of training that I have devised and employed in my work with a range of NGOs and non-statutory organisations in the UK. I offer this example here merely to allow readers to see what one form of gender analysis training might look like, and how it might be planned for a one day training delivery. There are many and multifarious forms of such training, and each tends to be, and indeed should be, tailored to meet the specific needs of the organisation with whom one is working.

In this instance, the emphasis was not on equalities legislature or policy frameworks, which is often the remit of such training, rather the NGO in question specifically requested that I focus on training that would facilitate their own personal exploration of processes of gendering. Thus, my remit was to provide space and guidance to enable NGO workers to talk together and explore their own gendered positionalities, how their lived experiences of their gendered

beings and understandings of normative gender roles and responsibilities had affected and continued to affect their identities and practice or praxis. The background to this bespoke training was that some of the women in the working environment did not feel that some of their male colleagues understood the significance of their gender or the extent to which their intersectional identities shaped their life experiences. There was a feeling among female staff that issues of differential gender roles, responsibilities and ultimately, of power, were not fully appreciated and understood by all, particularly male, staff. My role was to work with all the staff over the course of a single day – a time constraint we had to work within as this was all they were able to commit to – and engage them in small group working to facilitate their reflection on processes of gendering. In order to alleviate the limited timeframe on the day, each participant was provided with a tasksheet of exercises to complete at home prior to the training workshops. What follows then is an overview of the gender analysis training handbook provided to each participant. This handbook, and the workshops conducted throughout the training are underpinned by the 'homework' tasks that were given to the NGO staff two weeks prior to the training day. Staff were asked to consider and complete the exercises and bring notes and reflections on these with them to the training day. These pre-

paratory exercises are provided in full at the end of the training day overview in this article.

Gender Analysis Training Schedule

- 10.00-10.15: Welcome and introductions
- 10.15-10.30: Aims and scope of the training day
- 10.30-10.50: Introduction: Key concepts and issues
 - ◆ Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into everyday practice
 - ◆ Interrogating ourselves: recognising our biases
 - ◆ Gender analysis: key concepts
 - ◆ Why gender (still) matters
- 10.50-12.00: Workshop I: *Bringing it home: Gender analysis and situated knowing*
 - ◆ Collecting gender data: Gender analysis diary exercise
 - ◆ Plenary
 - ◆ Reflection
- 12.00-1.00 Lunch Break
- 1.00-2.20: Workshop II: *Applying a gender analysis*
 - ◆ Analysing our gendered lives
 - ◆ Plenary
 - ◆ Reflection
- 2.20-3.30: Conclusion
 - ◆ Identifying good practice and enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion in your workplace
 - ◆ Plenary
 - ◆ Reflection and feedback

10.00-10.15: Introductions and Welcome 10.15-10.30: Aims and Scope of the Training day

The aim of the training day is to introduce you to some gender analysis concepts and techniques that you can then apply both in your personal lives and working practices. By the end of today you should have be able to:

- i. Understand and apply a gender analysis to your lives
- ii. Bring an intersectional gender analysis into your practice
- iii. Have an opportunity to consider equality, diversity and inclusion in your workplace

During this training day I want you to reflect on the following questions:

1. How are you constructed as a gendered being and how do you present and perform your gender identity?

2. How has or does your gendered identity affect the ways other people behave or have behaved towards you?
3. How do you think your (intersectional) gendered identity affects how society perceives you, and what is expected of you?
4. How has/does that (intersectional) gendered identity affect your choices and behaviours at points through your lifecourse?
5. How does your (intersectional) gender identity influence how you work with other people and how they work with you?
6. What assumptions and biases do you carry with you and how might these affect your relationships and working practices?

Ground Rules

1. In the following exercises and discussions do not reveal anything you feel is too personal or sensitive. Families and people's lives generally can be difficult. This is not meant to be upsetting or breach personal confidences. You decide what you are willing to talk about and what you are not.
2. Be respectful of other people's views and opinions.
3. Give everyone space to speak and listen to what people are saying.
4. This is not a confidential forum, it is a workplace, so *do not* reveal anything that you do not want someone else to know about.

10.30-10.50: Introduction: Key Concepts and Issues (20 minutes)

Today's training is about providing you with gender analysis tools and techniques, to help you to develop your gendered consciousness and become enhanced *situated knowers* (as I explain further below). This is just a starting point and we are merely touching the surface, but the exercises you are being asked to participate in will provide you with the tools to take your gender analysis forward into the future.

Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into Everyday Practice

The training today is not a standard Equality, Diversity and Inclusion approach, rather it is Gender Analysis Training, focused on exploring gendered identity positions. However, one leads

into reflections and on and supports good practice in the other so it is useful to think about this training within the framework of EDI. There are lots of available materials and guides online about Equality and Diversity practices and policies. Very briefly, under the UK 2010 Equality Act organisations must:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and understand what this means in terms of protected characteristics, which are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Interrogating Ourselves: Recognising Our (Unconscious) Biases

Throughout the day I will also be asking you to think about your own prejudices, assumptions and biases that you carry around with you. These are often unconscious and entrenched attitudes and stereotypes that we learn as we grow through our lives. We all have them, even though we might not like to admit it. Today is not about forcing confessions of sexism, racism or homophobia, or about accusing anyone of prejudicial attitudes, but it is about trying to make you think and reflect on your assumptions and biases. It is good practice to get into the habit of questioning your assumptions and whether they are based on fact or stereotypes. This can help us to try to ensure that we really behave in a fair and inclusive way towards everyone.

Gender Analysis: Key Concepts

While today we are talking about ‘gender’ analysis, it is important to remember that this is shorthand for *intersectional* gender analysis.

What and Who is a ‘Situated Knower’?

We are all situated knowers. Being a situated knower is a term used in gender theory as a way to understand that we have our own particular identity positions, based on who we are

and how we see the world. Our ‘situatedness’ is important as it influences our ‘knowledge’ – how we interpret the world around us and how we perceive those who inhabit it. We should also recognise that we are experts on our own lives, with our own agency, and that our situated knowledge is valuable. It is often the case that only particularly situated people (for example, white, male, well-educated, wealthier) have valuable knowledge. This is of course not true, and a key starting point for gender analysts is to recognise the value of all people’s knowledges.

What is Intersectionality?

Intersectionality refers to the ways that our identities are comprised of and our lives are influenced by intersecting elements – our gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, disability, class, age, and so on. As with our gender identity, it is important to think about how a person’s *intersectional* identity influences our life chances, poses barriers to opportunity, affects how we understand and see the world, and also how we are in turn treated by society and other people.

What Do We Understand by Gender?

Our starting point is to understand that *gender is a social construct*. There is nothing fixed about how we understand or perform our gender although there are many socio-cultural messages we learn from birth that might suggest otherwise. We are all aware of the gender stereotypes that might lead us to think, for example, that boys are better at spatial awareness and girls are better at language acquisition, and that these differences are biologically based. The fact is, however, that human brains are plastic, malleable machines that are very good at adapting through repeated learning and practice to become better at whatever it is they are being trained to do. So, for example, if you give girls dolls to care for through play from an early age, they might learn to be caring and be more likely to learn that girls should desire motherhood, and along the way they will probably acquire language skills through role play with their dolls. If you give boys building sets to play with they may well understand the implicit gendered message, learning that boys are the builders of worlds, and may acquire good spatial awareness in the process. People are undoubtedly differ-

ent – but these differences are not based on fixed biological gender binaries.

Why Gender (Still) Matters

Gender matters because we still live in a world in which gender remains a foundational binary distinction. We live in a world in which some people are perceived to be more deserving of power and authority than others, some people are paid more than others, and some people are expected to care more than others for and about other people. Ultimately we still live in a highly gendered world in which men are given more power *qua* men than women *qua* women, as we can see from the following examples:

Politics

Formal politics is still largely a man's world, and this in itself inhibits women's entry and participation. Politics continues to be seen as a 'male space' (Clisby 2005: 27; Centre for Women and Democracy 2013). The House of Commons in the UK, for example, has historically been likened to a gentlemen's club, famous for having a shooting range but no crèche, a barbers but no hairdressers and far too few women's toilets (Clisby and Holdsworth 2016: 24). According to the UK Democratic Audit in 2012, 'both Houses of Parliament are essentially white, male, middle-aged, well-educated and comparatively wealthy assemblies'. It remains the case that seventy-eighty percent of UK politicians are male, over ninety percent of these men are white' (Wilks-Heeg et al. 2012: n.p.). In 2017, the Democratic Audit revealed a slightly more positive picture, stating that '[w]omen are now more present and visible than ever before in UK politics and public life. However, the pace of change is slow, and men continue to dominate the most senior roles across the board. Furthermore, it seems debatable whether institutional culture and attitudes are evolving as rapidly in Britain as elsewhere. Between 2007 and 2016 the UK slipped from 13th to 20th in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index. If gender imbalances are to be tackled effectively and in a lasting manner, a much more holistic approach is required' (Campion 2017: n.p.).

Education

Gender segregation in education continues with girls and boys still being channelled through

entrenched stereotyping into different subject choices along traditional gender lines. This then feeds forward into gender differences in future career choices and options. For example, the overwhelming majority of students studying languages are female, the overwhelming majority of students studying computing are male. Vocational training remains even more highly segregated – over ninety percent of early years care and education and hairdressing apprentices are women, while men constitute almost 100 percent of apprentices in construction, engineering and in the motor industry (Clisby and Holdsworth 2016: 25). As Hutchinson et al. (2011: v) found in their analysis of UK education and careers guidance, '[d]ata on young people's educational choices reveals marked differences by gender, ethnic group, disability and social class. Gendered choices are apparent even at GCSE and become more marked at A-level and into higher education. Of particular note is the persistent under-representation of female participation in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects, which deprives women of many high-skilled and well-paid job opportunities'.

Employment

Gender segregation in paid employment persists. Women continue to be concentrated in low-paid gender stereotyped and often part-time jobs, a fact which is linked backwards to subject 'choice' at school and forwards to lower paid and less secure employment. Women still represent approximately eighty percent of workers in health and social care sectors, almost hundred percent of those in childcare, ninety-five percent of receptionists, and almost eighty percent of cleaners. At the other end of the pay and status scale, only just over ten percent of senior police officers and the judiciary are female, while over eighty percent of directors and chief executives and over seventy percent of private sector managers are male (Clisby and Holdsworth 2016: 26). 'Women's' jobs are still accorded lower status and lower pay than 'men's' jobs. The gender pay gap persists despite equal pay legislation and has for many years hovered around twenty percent for full time work and rises to an almost forty percent pay gap for part time work. This means that women are being paid between twenty to forty percent less than men in Britain

today (Fawcett, 2013: 14). This is in part explained by the fact that, despite being illegal, those in part time work are more than twice as likely than their full time counterparts to be paid less than the minimum wage. When we consider that women make up around seventy-five percent of part time workers and over sixty percent of those on low pay we can see how this pay gap is both stark and so starkly gendered (Fawcett 2013: 14; Clisby and Holdsworth 2016: 27).

Home

The home continues to be a site of discrimination. As feminist historian Sheila Rowbotham commented “[t]he irony behind the idyllic happy family as a place of repose is the consumption of female labour power” (1973: 67). Her comment made almost four decades ago still rings true today. Women continue to perform and take responsibility for most of the reproductive work, emotional labour and caring work. Women also do most of the community management work, which refers to the work that is done building and maintaining both kin and non-kin networks. This work is of critical importance for the maintenance of the social fabric of human societies, but is unpaid, often invisible and overlooked.

Gender-based Violence and Violence against Women and Girls

GBV and VAWG are simultaneously the most overt yet also insidious and pernicious forms of gender-based discrimination worldwide. While not negating the seriousness of violence against men, it remains the case that globally sexual and domestic abuse is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men against women and girls. To provide just two statistics: thirty-eight percent of murders of women are committed by a male intimate partner (WHO 2017: 1) and almost 1 billion women will experience intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime (World Bank 2017: 1). In the UK one in four women report experiencing gender-based, sexual or domestic violence in their lifetime and national statistics repeatedly indicate that on average two women are killed every week by a male partner or former partner, indeed over half of homicides against women are committed by a partner or ex-partner (Refuge 2017: 1).

These are just some of the reasons why the gender binary remains the most fundamental source of disadvantage and discrimination

worldwide. Gender is not the only source of discrimination of course, which is why we need to bring an *intersectional gender analysis* to our lives and practices.

10.50– 12.00: Workshop I: Bringing it Home: Gender Analysis and Situated Knowing

Collecting Gender Data: Gender Analysis Diary Exercise (30 minutes)

Working in groups of 4:

- ◆ One person should guide the conversation, asking key questions (see below).
- ◆ One person should make notes of the key points from the conversation.
- ◆ One person should be prepared to feedback key points to the plenary group.
- ◆ Allowing each person time to speak, discuss your daily life routines and gender analyses of these routines with one another based on the notes you have brought with you and following the guidance provided in the tasksheet (included at the end of this article).
- ◆ Select 4-6 key points to provide a 5 minute feedback to the plenary group.

In your analysis and feedback consider:

- a. Do you notice any patterns in your daily life routines that suggest your actions and behaviours are influenced by your (intersectional) gender identity, gender roles and responsibilities?
- b. Were you able to categorise your activities into reproductive, productive, community management labour and leisure time? Do you see any emerging (gendered) patterns or issues here?

Plenary (30 minutes)

- ◆ Feedback and discussion

Reflection (10 minutes)

- ◆ How did this exercise make you feel, make you think?
- ◆ What stereotypes, assumptions and biases might you carry with you?
- ◆ What did you learn from this exercise? (for example, about yourself, your relations with and attitudes towards others, the roles you play at home and work?)

- ♦ How might you apply these tools in your working practices? (for example, to foster good working relations, to instil good practice in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion?)

12.00– 1.00: Lunch Break

1.00– 2.20: Workshop II: Applying a Gender Analysis

Analysing Our Gendered Lives (40 minutes)

Working in groups of 4:

- ♦ Allowing each person time to speak, have a conversation about how your lives have been and are (intersectionally) ‘gendered’.
- ♦ One person should guide the conversation, asking key questions (see below).
- ♦ One person should make notes of the key points from the conversation.
- ♦ One person should be prepared to feedback key points to the plenary group.
- ♦ As a group, select 4-6 interesting points made during your conversation about your gendered experience, for example, relating to family life, schooling, or careers, what patterns, themes or issues have emerged?
- ♦ Summarise these points and agree what you want to feedback to the plenary group.
- ♦ Use the following questions as a guide for your conversation. You will not have time to address every question today but you could reflect on these individually later.

Thinking through Different Stages of Your Lives, Consider These Broad Questions:

- ♦ How are you constructed as a gendered being, how do you present and perform your gender identity?
- ♦ How has/does your gender identity affect(ed) the ways other people behave or have behaved towards you?
- ♦ How do you think your intersectional gender identity affects how society perceives you, and what is expected of you?
- ♦ How has/does your intersectional gender identity affect(ed) your choices and behaviours at points through your lifecourse?
- ♦ How does your intersectional gender identity influence how you work with other people and how they work with you?
- ♦ What assumptions and biases do you carry with you and how might these affect your relationships and working practices?

To Make Sense of the Above Questions, Consider the Following Themes and Questions Below as Examples of What You Might Think About:

Thinking About the Family You Grew Up in:

- ♦ What was the main source of household income? Who worked in paid employment? Who earned the most?
- ♦ Who did the housework? How was this divided up?
- ♦ If you have siblings who grew up with you, were they brothers/sisters? Did you have different toys, different clothes? Did your parent(s) have different expectations of you in terms of behaviour, chores, future ambitions?

Schooling

- ♦ What were your favourite subjects/ activities?
- ♦ Do you think you were encouraged to enjoy certain subjects, games, or sports more than others?
- ♦ Do you think you were expected to behave in certain ways as a boy/girl?
- ♦ What were your best subjects? What subjects didn’t you like?
- ♦ Do you feel you had any particularly gendered experiences as a boy/girl at school?

Career Choices, Aspirations and Family Life Through Your Life course

- ♦ Why do you think you do the work that you do now?
- ♦ Did you (do you) aspire to do anything else?
- ♦ What kind of family did you expect to live in as an adult and what kind of family do you live in now?
- ♦ What (gendered) expectations do you (even subconsciously) place on different members of your family?
- ♦ Consider the intersections of your identity, what parts of your identity are important at different times and in different situations?
- ♦ How might your intersectional gender identity change or be perceived differently through your lifecourse?
- ♦ What do you think would be the biggest difference in your life had you been brought up with a different gender/identity?

Plenary (30 minutes)

- ◆ Feedback and discussion

Reflection (10 minutes)

- ◆ How did this exercise make you feel, make you think?
- ◆ What stereotypes, assumptions and biases might you carry with you?
- ◆ What did you learn from this exercise? (for example, about yourself, your relations with and attitudes towards others, the roles you play at home and work?)
- ◆ How might you apply these tools in your working practices? (for example, to foster good working relations, to instil good practice in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion?)

2.20 – 3.00: Conclusion***Identifying Good Practice and Enhancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Your Workplace (20 minutes)***

In groups of 4:

- ◆ Identify 3 good practices that promote equality, diversity and inclusion and foster good relations within your workplace and between colleagues.
- ◆ Identify 3 things that could be changed that would improve the quality of your working lives, enhance relationships among staff and among staff and service users.
- ◆ Be prepared to feedback your points to the plenary.

Plenary (20 minutes)

- ◆ Feedback and discussion.
- ◆ How could you take these techniques and ideas forward into your workplace and practice?

Preparatory Work: Gender Analysis Task Sheet

- ◆ In preparation for the Gender Analysis Training Workshop in which you are participating, please complete the following exercises at home prior to the training day and bring your results with you in the form of notes and prompts for yourself as these will form the basis of one of the workshop sessions.

Your results and notes will not be circulated to other participants, what you write is confidential to you, but you will be asked to talk through some of the key themes and issues arising from these gender analysis exercises in small groups during the training day.

The following exercises are about raising your own gender awareness of your daily lives, about understanding yourself as a 'situated knower'. Being a 'situated knower' is a term used within Gender Studies, drawing on the work of Donna Haraway (1988), as a way to understand that we have our own particular identity positions, based on who we are and how we see the world. Our 'situatedness' is important as it influences our 'knowledge' - how we interpret the world and perceive those who inhabit it. We should also recognise that we are experts on our own lives, with our own agency, and that our situated knowledge is valuable. Bringing your gender analysis 'home' through these exercises provides a critical starting point to facilitate the application of a gender analysis to other people and contexts.

Gender Analysis 'Homework' Exercises***1. Gender Analysis Diary Exercise***

On one day: Write a gender analysis diary that considers:

- Your daily life routine – from the time you get up, note down the tasks you do throughout the day, the roles you play, the responsibilities you have for the duration of the day until you retire for the night.
- Bring your own gender analysis to this account:
 - Think through why you do the activities, and have roles and responsibilities you have listed in your daily account.
 - Consider how your intersectional gender identity might influence your actions. Intersectionality, drawing on the initial work of Crenshaw (1989), refers to the ways that our identities are comprised of and our lives are influenced by intersecting elements – for example combining our gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, class, age.
 - Ask yourself - would I do these things any differently (or at all) if I were a of a different intersectional gender identity?

2. Categorise Your Day's Activities Into:

- i. *Reproductive labour* (this is any unpaid activity or work that supports your household or family – including caring roles, cleaning, cooking, household management etc.).
- ii. *Productive labour* (this is any activity or work that is paid or at least recognised as work and seen as directly contributing to the economy of yourself/your household).
- iii. *Community management work* (this is any activity or labour that supports wider social networks – examples include voluntary work, helping friends or wider kin networks, managing intra-personal relations, buying gifts, sending birthday and Christmas cards, lending or sharing resources with family/friends/neighbours. This is unpaid labour that is often gendered, often unrecognised yet vital for social cohesion).
- iv. *Leisure time* (here seen as any time you are completely 'free' to do what you want and relax, enjoy yourself, engage in leisure and pleasure activities for *yourself*).

3. Apply Your Gender Analysis to Your Daily Life, Work, Roles and Responsibilities, and Consider Your Place on Your Life Course:

Calculate roughly what percentage of your time is taken up by each of these categories of labour/leisure on a daily or more general basis, for example, on a weekly basis, and make some notes about this. Now apply a gender analysis to your life and identity more broadly, by asking yourself the following questions and make notes for yourself about these:

- i. How do you think your gender identity affects the kinds of work you, what roles and responsibilities you have in your life and how much leisure time you have access to?
- ii. How do you think your place within your lifecourse (where you are right now in your life path) affects the kinds of work you do, what roles and responsibilities you have in your life and how much leisure time you have access to?
- iii. Think about how these roles, your work, and responsibilities have changed in the past and might change into the future over your lifecourse.

- iv. In what ways do you think your roles, the expectations placed on you by others, and placed on you by yourself, and the kinds of work you do, the status and recognition of that labour, and your access to leisure time might be different if you had a different gender (or other intersectional) identity?

4. Finally

Bring your gender analysis diary exercise notes and the notes you have made from your reflections on your life roles and identity with you to the gender analysis workshop. You will not be asked to circulate your notes, these are private notes providing prompts for yourself, but you will be asked to talk to the themes and issues raised through these exercises.

CONCLUSION

In this article I have provided an overview of one way of conducting gender analysis within an organisation with small groups of staff. This is based on training I have devised and delivered in the UK in a range of workplaces and environments. These exercises are not a replacement for a detailed exploration of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies in national or local contexts, rather, they are complementary to the critical understanding that all organisations should develop of their own policies and practices. These gender analysis exercises and workshops facilitate an individual and collective understanding of the ways in which processes of intersectional gendering impact on our individual lives, beliefs, behaviours and ways of seeing the worlds we inhabit. These exercises can be challenging and must be applied with care, sensitivity and with a solid ethical approach. Asking people in a workplace setting to talk in small groups about their personal lives can be risky and so must be delivered with extreme sensitivity, caution and reflexivity rather than as a blueprint approach. It may not be at all appropriate for some people in some settings. Nevertheless, in my experience of working with diverse groups, I have always found these exercises provide the foundations of valuable and important discussion, as ways of bringing staff together, and of sharing stories in positive ways

that engender greater understandings of the situated knowledges and lived (intersectionally gendered) experiences of people's lives. From this foundation comes a far greater and more productive understanding of why we need equality, diversity and inclusion policies and practices.

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