

**Romantic Relationships at Work and  
Attributions for the Occupational Success  
of Participants**

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by

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## ABSTRACT

The research on romantic relationships at work was extended in two studies. In Study 1, 102 working people provided information about their experience of organisational romance in New Zealand. The results revealed many similarities to the findings of studies conducted in other countries. In Study 2, in an experiment, 144 students completed the Women as Managers Scale and made attributions for the promotion of stimulus managers who were involved in a workplace romance. As hypothesised, female subjects with more positive attitudes toward women in management tended to attribute the promotion of a female manager to internal factors rather than to external factors. Contrary to predictions, female managers were more favourably evaluated than male managers. However, as expected, there was a tendency for women to be more derogated than men for being romantically involved with a high status partner rather than a low status partner. The results were explained in relation to research on sex biases in evaluation. The implications of the findings for women and the management of organisational romance are discussed.

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

All that matters is love and work

- Sigmund Freud

Usually love and work occupy separate domains in our lives. However, when men and women work together in close proximity, sexual attraction can be a natural outcome. In New Zealand, notable examples of romantic relationships that have developed in the work environment include David Lange and Margaret Pope, Susan Devoy and John Oakley, and Paul Holmes and Hine Elder.

Workplace romances have traditionally been the subject of gossip rather than academic interest. The literature concerning romantic relationships at work is small, and lacking in both theory and methodological rigour. The literature emanates from a variety of sources, including psychology, business studies, sociology, and the popular press.

The influx of women into the work force facilitated interest in sexuality at work. Sexual harassment has received the lion's share of attention, probably because such behaviour has legal implications, as well as negative consequences for the victim. However, workplace romance is probably more common than sexual harassment, and negative effects have also been reported for both the participants and the organisation as a whole.

The present investigation aims to extend the research on romantic relationships at work. Study 1 will involve the administration of a survey to provide information about workplace romance in New Zealand. Study 2 will attempt a more theory-driven approach to the study of romantic relationships at work, with an experiment designed to measure attributions for the promotion of managers who are involved in a workplace romance.

The following introduction will consist of five main sections. First, I will explain why the workplace is a natural environment for the emergence of romantic relationships, and why such relationships are likely to become even more common in the future. Second, the research on romantic relationships at work will be reviewed. In the third section, I will utilise attribution theory to account for the stereotype of women "sleeping their way to the top". In the fourth section, the Women as Managers Scale will be introduced as a possible mediator of attributions. Finally, I will present an overview of the two studies.

## **The Workplace as an Environment for Romance**

The workplace is a natural environment for the occurrence of romantic relationships. Most people spend a great deal of their lives at work and a large proportion of this time may be spent in the company of others. A consistent finding in the field of social psychology is that interacting with another generally stimulates one's liking for that person (e.g., Insko & Wilson, 1977).

Just anticipating interaction with another can boost one's liking for that person (e.g., Darley & Berscheid, 1967). This may occur because people want to believe that they will enjoy the forthcoming interaction. Similarly, when two people are obliged to work together, there is a desire to like the other person in order to make the work environment a pleasant one. For most people it is important to have friendly relations with co-workers.

Moreover, people who work for the same organisation are likely to have much in common, and similarity generally fosters attraction (e.g., Byrne, 1971; Rubin, 1973). There is evidence of a significant relationship between personality type and career choice (e.g., Holland, 1985). Schneider (1987) suggested that the recruitment and selection procedures used by organisations leads to the hiring of people who share many similar personal attributes, even if they do not share the same skills.

Various other characteristics of the workplace may encourage romance. Quinn and Lees (1984) believe that the presence of a hierarchy may mean that a person who holds an influential position within an organisation can appear more attractive than he or she would in other circumstances. The authors also note that people at work tend to be well dressed and on their best behaviour which can help to create a favourable impression on others.

Romantic relationships at work are likely to become more prevalent in the future. First of all, an increasing proportion of the work force is female. In New Zealand, 29.8% of the labour force was female in 1971, but this figure had risen to 40.6% by 1991 (Statistics New Zealand, 1993). Women are also increasingly likely to be found in non-traditional jobs. These trends mean that there is a greater potential for interaction between men and women in the workplace.

Furthermore, the increasing divorce rate and the trend towards postponing or avoiding marriage mean that there are more single employees who may meet romantic partners in the workplace. In New Zealand, the number of divorced and separated people increased by 29.2% and 22.0% respectively from 1986 to 1991, while the population aged 15 years and over increased by only 4.9% (Department of Statistics, 1993). There was also an 11.3% increase in the number of never married persons, while the number of first marriages actually decreased by 2.9%. Men and women marrying for the first time in 1991 were on average 1.2 years older than their counterparts in 1985.

Finally, it is becoming more likely that organisations will provide their employees with social activities and services in an attempt to create a cohesive corporate culture (Dillard, 1987). The work environment is also becoming more important as a social setting because people's involvement with community organisations, churches, and extended families is diminishing (Driscoll & Bova, 1980). In addition, Mainiero (1989) believes that the fear of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases has meant that people are more comfortable in establishing relationships with those they already know well.

## **The Research on Romantic Relationships at Work**

Despite all the factors appearing to facilitate romance in the workplace, there has been little systematic research concerning romantic relationships at work. In her review of the literature on "organizational romances", Mainiero (1986) found only nineteen articles and just two of these were studies involving empirical data. Since Mainiero's review, several empirical studies have been published, but the majority of articles still tend to cite anecdotal evidence or involve only a few case studies.

The more empirically oriented researchers have collected data from subjects concerning their experience of romantic relationships at work by means of mailed questionnaires, telephone surveys, personal interviews, or group-administered questionnaires. Researchers have been interested in establishing the prevalence of organisational romance, company policies and norms on dating between employees, attitudes toward workplace romance, characteristics of romantic relationships at work, motives for entering into an organisational romance, and the consequences of romancing at work.

### ***The Prevalence of Organisational Romance***

In the first empirical study of romantic relationships at work, Quinn (1977) found that 62% of his sample of 211 white-collar employees had known of at least one organisational romance. Anderson and Hunsaker (1985) reported the highest of such figures, with 86% of their sample of 100 white-collar workers having observed a workplace romance. The average number of relationships observed by Anderson and Hunsaker's respondents was two, while Harrison and Lee's (1986) survey of 76 managers revealed a corresponding figure of six.

Dillard and Witteman (1985) found that 29% of their sample of 292 telephone survey respondents had themselves participated in an organisational romance, as compared with 41% of Williams' (1986) survey of 1266 readers of *Venture*. Williams also reported that

men were more likely than women to have been romantically involved with another employee, although no such sex differences have been reported elsewhere.

### ***Company Policies and Norms on Dating between Employees***

Companies tend not to have formal policies concerning organisational romance but may have informal norms that discourage the formation of such relationships. For example, Anderson and Hunsaker (1985) found that only 9% of companies had explicit rules against dating between employees, while 23% of companies had informal norms discouraging romance. A small number of organisations (7%) actually had norms that encouraged romantic relationships between employees.

### ***Attitudes Toward Workplace Romance***

Rapp (1992) reported that a Gallup poll showed that 57% of employed Americans found workplace dating acceptable. Women appear to be more opposed to sexual intimacy in the workplace than men (Powell, 1986), while older people find dating in the workplace less acceptable than their younger counterparts ("Love in the workplace", 1991).

### ***Characteristics of Romantic Relationships at Work***

Research has shown that the partners in a romantic relationship at work tend to differ in rank. For example, Anderson and Hunsaker (1985) found that 62% of their respondents described romances where the male partner was in a higher position than the female partner, whereas 30% of romances involved a man and a woman at the same organisational level.

In Haavio-Mannila, Kauppinen-Toropainen, and Kandolin's (1988) sample of 234 men and women from four occupational groups, young men were more often involved in a workplace romance than older men, while age was not related to women's likelihood of

involvement in a romance. On the other hand, Dillard and Witteman (1985) found that men of all ages were equally likely to engage in a romantic relationship at work, whereas such involvements tended to occur primarily at younger ages for women.

Dillard and Witteman (1985) also reported that the highest proportion of workplace romances occurred in organisations that employed between 20 to 50 persons. Harrison and Lee (1986) are the only researchers to have assessed the duration of organisational romances, with most of their relationships lasting only a matter of months.

### *Motives for Entering into an Organisational Romance*

Quinn (1977) isolated three distinct motives for entering into a romantic relationship at work. First, "love", is described as the sincere desire to find a long-term companion or spouse. Second, the "ego" motive is predominant in individuals who view the relationship as a means to personal rewards, such as excitement or adventure. Third, an individual may enter into an organisational romance for "job-related" reasons, such as advancement or job security. In Anderson and Fisher's (1991) sample of 168 business school graduates, respondents were most likely to attribute a partner in a workplace romance with love motives, while job-related motives were least likely to be used.

Studies have shown that women are more likely than men to be attributed with job-related motives (e.g., Anderson & Hunsaker, 1985; Quinn, 1977). Dillard's (1987) telephone survey of 123 observers of a romance and 84 participants in a romance revealed that observers were more likely than participants to attribute a job-related motive to the female partner. Anderson and Fisher (1991) also reported that women were more likely than men to be attributed with love motives, while men were more likely than women to be attributed with ego motives.

Quinn (1977) correlated the perceived motives of male and female partners and derived three types of relationships. First, "true love" is where both partners are attributed with

love motives. Second, a "fling" is believed to involve both partners being motivated by ego. Third, a "utilitarian" relationship is perceived to consist of a male partner with ego motives and a female partner with job-related motives. Dillard's (1987) subjects also agreed on the existence of a "mutual user" relationship where both partners are attributed with job-related motives. In addition, the complement of Quinn's utilitarian relationship was believed to exist, with the male partner having job-related motives and the female partner having ego motives.

### *The Consequences of Romancing at Work*

Quinn (1977) and Anderson and Hunsaker (1985) reported that a romance in the workplace produced more negative behaviour changes in participants (e.g., lower quality work, preoccupation) than positive behaviour changes (e.g., easier to get along with, more productive). Anderson and Hunsaker also reported more negative behaviour changes for female partners than for male partners. On the other hand, Dillard (1987) found that an organisational romance had no perceived effect on the overall job performance of 64% of males and 48% of females.

Nearly one half of Dillard's (1987) respondents believed that others in the organisation talked about the relationship a great deal or a moderate amount, while only 14% said there was no talk about it. About a quarter (26%) characterised the talk as all or mostly negative, 35% as all or mostly positive, and the remainder (39%) as about half negative and half positive.

Quinn (1977) classified management reaction to organisational romance into three categories: no action, punitive action, and positive action. Studies have shown that managers take no action in the majority of cases (e.g., Anderson & Hunsaker, 1985; Mainiero, 1989). Quinn also found that the female partner was twice as likely to be fired as the male partner.

Anderson and Hunsaker (1985) found that 79% of respondents described workplace romances that had a negative impact on the organisation, while only 21% of romances had a positive impact. Negative effects can include resentment and distorted communications, while positive effects can include increased teamwork and improved productivity. On the other hand, only 17% of Dillard's (1987) relationships were believed to be harmful to the organisation, while 62% of relationships had no impact on the organisation.

Devine and Markiewicz (1990) conducted the only experimental study (to my knowledge) concerning organisational romance. The authors presented 126 business students with hypothetical scenarios and looked at the effects of varying the sex and organisational status of stimulus persons on ratings of performance-related variables, affective variables, consequences for careers, and fellow workers' reactions. The female stimulus person was generally evaluated less favourably than the male stimulus person.

### **Attributions for Success**

Women appear to be more negatively evaluated than men regarding their competence and motives when they become involved in an organisational romance. Some of the women interviewed by Crary (1987) talked about their fear of "the classic accusation that associates a woman's rise in an organization with her sexual activity rather than her competence" (p.36). Research on achievement attributions suggests an explanation for the differential evaluation of men and women who are involved in workplace romances.

Heider (1958) was the first to propose that an individual's level of performance on a task could be attributed to factors within the person or to factors within the environment. Weiner et al. (1971) further postulated that people use four major causal attributions to explain success or failure: ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. These causes can be classified as varying along two dimensions: (a) locus of control (internal or external), and (b) degree of stability (fixed or variable).

There has been considerable interest in whether there are systematic differences in the attributions offered for similar performance by males and females. Researchers have typically focused on only the four basic causes suggested by Weiner et al. (1971). Although there are inconsistencies in the literature, it appears that the success of a male is generally more likely to be attributed to ability, and less likely to be attributed to luck, than the equivalent success of a female (for reviews see Hansen & O'Leary, 1985; Ross & Fletcher, 1985).

The most popular explanation for this finding is the existence of different expectations for the performance of men and women (Deaux, 1976). Expectations for the behaviour of an individual male or female are often derived from stereotyped assumptions about men and women. With regard to achievement-oriented traits, men are thought to be more competent than women (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972; Williams & Best, 1990).

It has been shown that expected outcomes are more likely to be attributed to ability than to luck, while unexpected outcomes are more likely to be attributed to luck than to ability (Feather, 1969; Feather & Simon, 1971). Thus, it follows that the success of a male will tend to be attributed to ability, while the success of a female will tend to be attributed to luck. Likewise, the occupational success of a woman who happens to be involved in an organisational romance may be attributed to the assistance of her partner rather than to her ability or hard work.

### **Attitudes Toward Women as Managers**

As discussed above, sex-role stereotypes appear to be important in determining causal attributions for male and female success. A specific measure of stereotypical attitudes toward women in management is the Women as Managers Scale (WAMS) which was developed by Peters, Terborg, and Taynor (1974).

The psychometric properties of the WAMS are relatively good. Split-half reliability coefficients have consistently been found to be above .90 (e.g., Terborg, Peters, Ilgen, & Smith, 1977; Ware & Cooper-Studebaker, 1989). There is some evidence for the scale's convergent validity (e.g., Dubno, Costas, Cannon, Wankel, & Emin, 1979; Terborg et al., 1977), predictive validity (e.g., Nevill, Stephenson, & Philbrick, 1983; Terborg & Ilgen, 1975), and discriminant validity (Ilgen & Terborg, 1975). The sex of a subject appears to be the only demographic variable to influence WAMS scores<sup>1</sup>.

In order to test whether stereotypes influence causal attributions, Garland and Price (1977) administered the WAMS to male students along with a description of a successful female manager. Individuals with positive attitudes toward women in management tended to attribute the female manager's success to internal factors, that is, ability and effort. Conversely, individuals with negative attitudes toward women in management tended to attribute the female manager's success to external factors, that is, luck and task ease. Similar findings were reported by Stevens and De Nisi (1980) and Garland, Hale, and Burnson (1982).

## **Overview**

The aim of Study 1 was to provide information about organisational romance in New Zealand. At present there are no published empirical data concerning romantic relationships at work in New Zealand. However, in an unpublished study, Arnold (1992) recently conducted a mail survey of 400 companies and 100 individuals. Of the 169 respondents (34% response rate), 95% had observed at least one workplace romance. This latter figure appears high and may be due to a response bias from those who have observed romantic relationships at work.

Some of the findings from overseas studies appear to be inconsistent which may be a result of the time frame in which they were conducted, or the different methodologies or samples used. More descriptive information about romantic relationships at work is needed to help rectify these inconsistencies and provide a base for developing theory.

Study 2 was designed to discover to what factors people attribute the promotion of male and female managers who are involved in a workplace romance with another manager in their company. The Women as Managers Scale was hypothesised to be a possible mediator of attributions concerning the promotion of female managers. This study is only the second piece of experimental research to be conducted in the field of romantic relationships at work.

# STUDY 1

## Introduction

In Study 1, respondents provided information about their experience of organisational romance. Some open-ended questions were included in order to generate some free responses rather than constraining respondents to pre-determined answers. The hypotheses of the study were as follows:

1. Between 62% and 86% of respondents would have observed a romantic relationship in the workplace, while between 29% and 41% of respondents would have participated in such a relationship.
2. Few companies would have formal policies concerning dating between employees, but a larger number would have informal norms discouraging romance.
3. The majority of people would feel that it was acceptable to date in the workplace. More men than women would find workplace dating acceptable. Young people would also believe it was more acceptable to date in the workplace than their older counterparts.
4. The majority of romances would involve the male partner holding a higher level position than the female partner.
5. The female partner would be more likely than the male partner to be attributed with job-related motives.
6. Managers would tend to take no action concerning a workplace romance.

I will also look at the relationship between the demographic characteristics of respondents and the number of organisational romances that they have observed or participated in. The motives of partners will be correlated in order to replicate the findings of Quinn (1977) and Dillard (1987).

In addition, I will compare the responses of participants in a romance with observers of a romance, the responses of male subjects with female subjects, the perceptions of male partners with female partners, the perceptions of relationships between single employees with extra-marital romances, and the perceptions of relationships between partners on the same organisational level with relationships where one partner is in a higher level position.

No specific hypotheses were made concerning the marital status and age of the partners, the number of employees in the workplace, the duration of relationships, the job performance of partners, the amount and the tone of the talk about the relationship, the effects of a workplace romance on other employees, or the overall impact of organisational romance.

## Method

### *Subjects*

One hundred and two working people (56 men and 46 women) from Christchurch participated in the study. The respondents were members of either the Christchurch North Lions Club ( $n = 27$ ), the Rotaract Club of Christchurch West ( $n = 20$ ), the South Christchurch Business and Professional Women's Club ( $n = 17$ ), the National Council of Women ( $n = 12$ ), the Springston Pony Club ( $n = 6$ ), or the Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme at the University of Canterbury ( $n = 20$ ).

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample. The respondents ranged in age from 21 to 70, with a mean age of 43 years ( $SD = 14$  years). The work-related characteristics of the respondents are displayed in Table 2. The sample was diverse with regard to occupation and industry. The number of years that respondents had spent in the work force ranged from 2 to 50, with a mean of 22 years ( $SD = 14$  years).

### *Procedure*

The choice of the subject pool was based on two primary considerations: first, that the sample would reflect the sex distribution of the labour force, and represent a wide range of ages and occupations; and second, that the questionnaires could be administered in a group setting.

One person at each of the selected groups was contacted and the general purpose of the research was explained to them. Permission was obtained to carry out the study during the normal meeting time of the group. In the case of the National Council of Women, the contact person distributed questionnaires during a meeting and stamped, addressed envelopes were provided for returning questionnaires directly to the author. A response rate of 50% was achieved.

Table 1

*Demographic Characteristics of the Sample.*


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Demographic characteristic		
<hr/>		
Sex		
Male	55%	(56)
Female	45%	(46)
Age		
15-24	10%	(10)
25-34	25%	(24)
35-44	15%	(15)
45-54	26%	(25)
55 and over	24%	(24)
Marital status		
Married/de facto	69%	(70)
Single	25%	(25)
Divorced/separated/widowed	7%	(7)
Qualifications		
None	7%	(7)
School	14%	(14)
Post school but no school	14%	(14)
Post school and school	66%	(67)

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*Note.* The *n*'s for each cell are shown in brackets.

Table 2

*Work-Related Characteristics of the Sample.*


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Work-related characteristic		
<b>Occupation (NZSCO)<sup>a</sup></b>		
Legislators, administrators & managers	19%	(18)
Professionals	30%	(28)
Technicians & associate professionals	13%	(12)
Clerks	20%	(19)
Service & sales workers	6%	(6)
Agriculture & fishery workers	3%	(3)
Trade workers	5%	(5)
Plant & machine operators	2%	(2)
Elementary occupations	1%	(1)
<b>Industry (NZSIC)<sup>b</sup></b>		
Agriculture, hunting, forestry & fishing	4%	(4)
Mining & quarrying	0%	(0)
Manufacturing	17%	(16)
Electricity, gas & water	3%	(3)
Building & construction	2%	(2)
Wholesale & retail trade	15%	(14)
Transport, storage & communications	9%	(8)
Business & financial services	18%	(17)
Community, social & personal services	31%	(29)

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*Note.* The *n*'s for each cell are shown in brackets.

<sup>a</sup>New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations, Major Divisions, 1990.

<sup>b</sup>New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification, Major Divisions.

Subjects were told that the data collected would be used for research purposes only, and that all information would be anonymous and confidential. Those subjects who were not currently working were told to use their past experience in the work force as a basis for answering the questionnaire items. The questionnaire took about ten minutes for subjects to complete. Following the completion of the questionnaire, all subjects were debriefed and thanked for their participation. Each group later received a summary of the results of the study.

The respondents were classified into three groups labelled "participants" ( $n = 31$ ), "observers" ( $n = 52$ ), and "non-observers" ( $n = 19$ ). All respondents provided information about themselves, their company's policies and norms concerning dating between employees, their attitudes toward workplace romance, and the number of times that they had observed and participated in an organisational romance. In addition, participants described an organisational romance in which they had been personally involved, while observers gave a third-person account of an organisational romance. Non-observers were directed to the last part of the questionnaire which asked for additional comments about organisational romance.

One hundred and six questionnaires were administered. Four respondents did not answer a majority of the questions and were therefore deleted from the sample, leaving a total of 102. This figure was reduced for some of the analyses due to missing data.

### ***Instrument***

The questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed drawing from prior research and the literature. It was revised after pilot testing. For the purpose of the study, an organisational romance was defined as "a dating relationship between two employees who work for the same company".

The questionnaire contained both fixed response and open-ended items. Some items involved the use of 5-point Likert scales. Response codes were developed for the open-ended questions and the author coded each response. To check the reliability of the coding procedure, a second rater coded the responses. Agreement rates ranging from 77% to 97% were achieved. The data from the author were used in this study.

The first section of the questionnaire focused entirely on the background details of the respondents. These details included: sex, marital status, age, occupation, industry, number of years in the work force, highest school qualification, and educational or job qualifications since leaving school.

Respondents were asked to indicate if their company had either a formal policy or informal norms concerning dating between employees. Space was provided for written descriptions of any policies or norms. Attitudes toward workplace romance were measured by getting respondents to rate how acceptable they thought it was to date in the workplace, using a scale ranging from *totally unacceptable* (1) to *totally acceptable* (5).

Each respondent estimated the number of times in their work life that they had observed and participated in an organisational romance. Those respondents who stated that they had observed or participated in at least one such relationship were asked to answer questions about the romance with which they were most familiar. Respondents first identified whether they had observed or participated in the romance. The following few questions concerned: the difference in organisational level between the two partners, the marital status and age of the two partners, the number of employees in the workplace, and the length of time that the relationship lasted.

Respondents then reported their perceptions of the motives of each partner for entering the relationship, using a typology derived by Quinn (1977). The motives were "love" (sincerity, companionship, marriage), "ego" (excitement, ego satisfaction, adventure, sexual experience), and "job-related" (advancement, security, power, financial rewards). Ratings were made using scales ranging from *not at all important* (1) to *very important* (5).

Similar to Dillard (1987), respondents rated how they perceived the overall job performance of each partner had changed using a scale ranging from *declined* (1) to *improved* (5). Respondents also reported how much other employees in the workplace talked about the romance using a scale ranging from *not at all* (1) to *a great deal* (5). The evaluative tone of this talk was measured using a scale ranging from *all negative* (1) to *all positive* (5).

Two open-ended questions prompted respondents to describe the effects of the romance on other employees in the workplace, and the reaction of management to the romance. Similar to Dillard (1987), respondents were then asked to estimate the overall impact of the relationship on the organisation using a scale ranging from *all negative* (1) to *all positive* (5). The questionnaire ended with a request for additional comments about organisational romance.

## Results

The findings of Study 1 will be presented in six main sections. First, the prevalence of organisational romance will be established. Second, I will report company policies and norms on dating between employees. In the third section, attitudes toward workplace romance will be examined. The fourth section will describe some of the characteristics of romantic relationships at work. Fifth, I will investigate motives for entering into an organisational romance. Finally, the consequences of romancing at work will be covered.

### *The Prevalence of Organisational Romance*

Most (86%) of the respondents had been aware of at least one organisational romance during their work life. The number of relationships that respondents had observed ranged from none to "hundreds". One fifth (20%) of the respondents had been aware of at least ten organisational romances. An average of seven relationships had been observed by each respondent.

The number of organisational romances that respondents had observed was not significantly correlated with the number of years that they had spent in the work force,  $r(92) = .02$ , *n.s.*, or with their age,  $r(91) = .01$ , *n.s.* Men had observed a larger number of relationships ( $M = 9$  romances) than women ( $M = 5$  romances), but this difference was not statistically significant,  $t(94) = 1.51$ , *n.s.*

Over one third (37%) of the respondents admitted that they had been personally involved in an organisational romance during their work life. The number of relationships that respondents had participated in ranged from none to ten. Most (66%) of those respondents who had participated in an organisational romance had only been involved in one such relationship. Each respondent had been a participant in an average of nearly one organisational romance.

A higher proportion of women (46%) than men (30%) reported that they had been involved in an organisational romance, although this difference was not statistically significant,  $z = 1.67$ , *n.s.* Participants in a romance had observed a greater number of relationships ( $M = 14$  romances) than observers of a romance ( $M = 5$  romances),  $t(78) = 2.60$ ,  $p < .05$ .

### ***Company Policies and Norms on Dating between Employees***

None of the respondents believed that their company had a formal policy concerning dating between employees. Most (81%) of the respondents thought that their company had no formal policy, while 19% did not know. Three respondents commented that their company did have a formal policy concerning married persons working together.

Most (84%) of the respondents did not feel that there were any informal norms, rules, or expectations existing in their company concerning dating between employees. However, 11% mentioned norms which either discouraged romance ("frowned upon") or suggested caution ("keep it low key"). Only one respondent felt that norms encouraged romance ("go for it").

In addition, one respondent mentioned an informal rule similar to a formal policy concerning married persons working together, while another respondent noted an informal rule about no "pillow talk". One respondent commented that norms had not developed because so few men were involved in her occupation. Another respondent believed that dating between employees was just an "occupational hazard".

### *Attitudes Toward Workplace Romance*

As expected, over one half (57%) of the respondents believed it was acceptable to date in the workplace. However, a sizable minority (17%) thought romancing at work was unacceptable, while 26% had no strong view either way. Contrary to predictions, women ( $M = 3.54$ ) were just as likely as men ( $M = 3.62$ ) to feel that dating in the workplace was acceptable,  $t(97) = .30$ , *n.s.* Also unexpectedly, the age of the respondents was not significantly correlated with their attitudes toward workplace romance,  $r(94) = -.11$ , *n.s.*

### *Characteristics of Romantic Relationships at Work*

About one half (49%) of the workplace romances were between employees on the same organisational level. A large number (46%) of relationships involved the male partner holding a higher level position than the female partner, while very few (5%) relationships involved the female partner holding a higher level position than the male partner.

The marital status and age of the partners in the organisational romances are displayed in Table 3. Most (75%) of the partners were single. A higher proportion of men (18%) than women (11%) were married or in a de facto relationship, although this difference was not statistically significant,  $z = 1.26$ , *n.s.* One fifth (22%) of the organisational romances could be classified as an extra-marital relationship, where one or both partners were married or in a de facto relationship.

The age of the male partner ranged from 17 to 58, with a mean of 27 years ( $SD = 8$  years). The age of the female partner ranged from 16 to 41, with a mean of 25 years ( $SD = 6$  years). The majority (52%) of those people who became involved in a romantic relationship at work were under the age of 25. The female partner was more likely to be under the age of 25 than the male partner,  $z = 2.77$ ,  $p < .01$ .

Table 3

*The Marital Status and Age of the Partners in an Organisational Romance.*

Characteristic	Sex of partner	
	Male	Female
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married/de facto	18% (15)	11% (9)
Single	73% (61)	77% (62)
Divorced/separated/widowed	8% (7)	12% (10)
<b>Age</b>		
Younger than 25	41% (33)	63% (49)
25 to 30	33% (26)	21% (16)
31 to 39	18% (14)	13% (10)
Older than 39	9% (7)	4% (3)

*Note.* The *n*'s for each cell are shown in brackets.

The length of time that organisational romances lasted ranged from three months to 50 years. Romances were subsequently categorised as either short-term, medium-term, or long-term relationships. Short-term relationships were defined as those lasting six months or less. The duration of medium-term relationships was from seven months to two years, while long-term relationships lasted more than three years and usually involved marriage. Nearly one half (46%) of the organisational romances were long-term relationships. Only one fifth (17%) of romances were short-term relationships, while the remaining 38% were medium-term relationships.

### *Motives for Entering into an Organisational Romance*

Mean ratings of the perceived motives of each partner for entering into the organisational romance are displayed in Table 4. For the female partner, love was viewed as the most important motive ( $M = 3.49$ ), followed by ego ( $M = 3.06$ ), while the job-related motive was least important ( $M = 1.68$ ),  $F(2, 150) = 45.85, p < .0001$ . For the male partner, love and ego were viewed as equally important motives ( $M$ 's = 3.34, and 3.29, respectively), while the job-related motive was least important ( $M = 1.36$ ),  $F(2, 144) = 63.68, p < .0001$ .

Table 4

*Mean Rated Importance of Motives for Entering into an Organisational Romance.*

Group	Motive					
	Love		Ego		Job-related	
Male partner						
Participant	3.41	(29)	3.23	(30)	1.27	(30)
Observer	3.29	(48)	3.32	(47)	1.43	(47)
Female partner						
Participant	3.45	(29)	2.86	(29)	1.17	(29)
Observer	3.52	(50)	3.18	(49)	2.00	(47)

*Note.* All ratings were made on 5-point scales, a higher number indicating more importance. The  $n$ 's for each cell are shown in brackets.

Correlations between the perceived motives of each partner are presented in Table 5. Most organisational romances were believed to be composed of partners with matching motives. Quinn's (1977) true love (male love-female love) and fling (male ego-female ego) relationships were identified, as well as Dillard's (1987) mutual user relationship (male job-female job). Quinn's utilitarian relationship (male ego-female job) was perceived by observers of romances but not by participants in romances.

Table 5

*Correlations between Motives for Entering into an Organisational Romance.*

		Female motive		
Male motive	Love	Ego	Job-related	
Participants ( $n = 29$ )				
Love	.72***	-.24	-.44*	
Ego	-.42*	.79***	.25	
Job-related	-.38*	.24	.86***	
Observers ( $n = 47$ )				
Love	.71***	-.04	-.14	
Ego	-.07	.86***	.44**	
Job-related	-.13	.20	.46**	

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .005$ . \*\*\*  $p < .0001$ .

As expected, job-related motives were more likely to be attributed to the female partner ( $M = 1.68$ ) than to the male partner ( $M = 1.36$ ),  $t(74) = 2.91$ ,  $p < .005$ . The male partner was more likely to be attributed with ego motives ( $M = 3.29$ ) than the female partner ( $M = 3.06$ ),  $t(74) = 2.91$ ,  $p < .005$ . The female partner was just as likely to be attributed with love motives ( $M = 3.49$ ) as the male partner ( $M = 3.34$ ),  $t(74) = 1.75$ , *n.s.*

When the romance was between employees on the same organisational level, there were no differences in the motives attributed to male and female partners. It was only when the male partner held a higher level position than the female partner that job-related motives were more likely for the woman ( $M = 1.97$ ) than for the man ( $M = 1.43$ ),  $t(33) = 3.02$ ,  $p < .005$ , and ego motives were more likely for the man ( $M = 3.49$ ) than for the woman ( $M = 3.23$ ),  $t(33) = 2.05$ ,  $p < .05$ .

Participants in a romance were less likely to attribute the female partner with a job-related motive for entering the relationship ( $M = 1.17$ ) than were observers of a romance ( $M = 2.00$ ),  $t(74) = 3.14$ ,  $p < .005$ . There were no other significant differences between participants and observers in the attribution of motives.

### ***The Consequences of Romancing at Work***

In the majority (59%) of cases the overall job performance of both male and female partners was perceived to remain unchanged when they became involved in an organisational romance. Roughly equal proportions of respondents believed that job performance had improved (22%) or declined (19%).

Over one half (53%) of the respondents believed that other employees in the workplace talked about the relationship a great deal or a moderate amount, while only 11% said "not at all". Participants in a romance under-estimated the amount of talk about the relationship ( $M = 2.83$ ) in comparison to observers of a romance ( $M = 3.64$ ),  $t(78) = 2.89$ ,  $p < .005$ .

Over a third (38%) of respondents characterised the talk generated by the romance as about half negative and half positive. Nearly one third (32%) of respondents believed the talk was mainly negative, while 30% said it was mainly positive. Participants in a romance over-estimated the positive nature of the talk about the relationship ( $M = 3.28$ ) in comparison to observers of a romance ( $M = 2.76$ ),  $t(69) = 2.08$ ,  $p < .05$ . The tone of the talk was believed to be more positive for relationships between single employees ( $M = 3.14$ ) than for extra-marital romances ( $M = 2.14$ ),  $t(69) = 3.51$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Correlations of the perceived motives of partners with the tone of the talk about the relationship revealed that negative talk was associated with ego-motivated males,  $r(67) = -.27$ ,  $p < .05$ , and job-motivated females,  $r(67) = -.38$ ,  $p < .005$ . Positive talk was associated with only love-motivated females,  $r(69) = .38$ ,  $p < .005$ .

The comments that respondents made about the effects of the romance on other employees in the workplace ranged from the negative to the positive. Of those respondents providing comments ( $n = 60$ ), most (42%) indicated that there was no or little effect on co-workers. A fifth (22%) reported negative effects, such as friction, confidential information being leaked, and jealousy. Some romances (17%) generated only surprise or interest, while 14% created positive effects, such as an improvement in social relationships. In three cases the romance was not common knowledge so it had little effect on co-workers.

The comments that respondents made about the reaction of management to the romance ranged from the negative to the positive. Of those respondents providing comments ( $n = 66$ ), the majority (64%) reported that there was no reaction from management. In 15% of cases management took punitive action, such as encouraging one partner to leave or separating the couple. Management was not aware of the romance in several cases (9%). Only some (6%) romances met with a positive reaction. In two cases at least one of the partners was top management.

Over one half (55%) of the workplace romances were perceived to have no impact on the organisation as a whole. Nearly a third (29%) of relationships were thought to have had a positive impact, while 16% had a negative impact. The overall impact of an extra-marital romance was believed to be more negative ( $M = 2.73$ ) than that of a relationship between single employees ( $M = 3.30$ ),  $t(73) = 2.43, p < .05$ .

Over a third of respondents ( $n = 35$ ) used the space available at the end of the questionnaire for comments. Nearly one third (31%) of these respondents indicated that they were in favour of workplace romance, although several qualified this statement ("as long as it doesn't effect work"). On the other hand, 28% believed work and romance did not mix well ("forget it - nothing but hassles"). Some respondents (14%) provided more information about the romance that they had described, while others (8%) made comments about the workplace as a setting for romance ("common interests often attract"). One respondent explained that the nature of their work meant there was no opportunity to observe organisational romance. One respondent believed that extra-marital affairs were more problematic than other workplace romances, while another respondent felt that "flings" caused the most trouble. Finally, one respondent commented that workplace romances needed to be handled on a case by case basis.

## **Discussion**

The following discussion will examine the findings of Study 1 concerning the prevalence of organisational romance, company policies and norms on dating between employees, attitudes toward workplace romance, characteristics of romantic relationships at work, motives for entering into an organisational romance, and the consequences of romancing at work.

### ***The Prevalence of Organisational Romance***

As expected, most respondents had observed at least one romantic relationship at work, and over a third of respondents had themselves participated in such a relationship. An average of seven organisational romances had been observed by each respondent. As in studies conducted in other countries, workplace romance in New Zealand appears to be a common phenomenon.

Participants in a romance had observed a greater number of relationships than observers of a romance. This finding may be explained by Quinn's (1977) suggestion that the presence of romantic relationships in the workplace can encourage others to become similarly involved. Alternatively, participants may over-estimate the number of relationships that they have observed in order to legitimise their own involvements.

### ***Company Policies and Norms on Dating between Employees***

None of the respondents believed that their company had a formal policy concerning dating between employees. New Zealand companies tend to have policies concerning only married couples working together. "Anti-fraternisation" policies appear to be more common in the United States, which may be a result of the more complex legal system.

Similar to the findings of other studies, informal norms, rules, or expectations tended to discourage romance. These norms have probably developed to avoid the difficulties associated with romantic relationships in the workplace.

### *Attitudes Toward Workplace Romance*

As hypothesised, respondents generally accepted romancing in the workplace. Contrary to predictions, women were no more negative about workplace romance than men. Also unexpectedly, older respondents were no more conservative about dating between employees than younger respondents. These findings may be explained by the fact that a large number of respondents had met their spouse in the workplace, which could have legitimised romancing at work.

### *Characteristics of Romantic Relationships at Work*

About one half of the workplace romances were between employees on the same organisational level. Other studies have shown that the partners tend to differ in rank (e.g., Anderson & Hunsaker, 1985; Quinn, 1977). The present study's finding may reflect the increasing number of women in the work force. However, as previously reported, very few relationships involved the female partner holding a higher level position than the male partner.

The majority of both male and female partners were under the age of 25. Thus, no support was found for findings concerning the two sexes differing in their likelihood of involvement in a romance as a function of age (e.g., Dillard & Witteman, 1985; Haavio-Mannila et al., 1988). However, the female partner was more likely than the male partner to be under the age of 25.

One fifth of the relationships could be classified as an extra-marital romance. This finding may reflect the increasing number of marriage breakdowns and the increasing acceptability of extra-marital activity. No other studies have assessed the prevalence of extra-marital workplace romance.

Nearly one half of the organisational romances were long-term relationships, while only one fifth were short-term relationships. This result conflicts with Harrison and Lee's (1986) finding that most relationships were of short duration. However, some authors have suggested that workplace romances involve more long-term commitment than they used to (e.g., Collins, 1983; Kennedy, 1985).

### *Motives for Entering into an Organisational Romance*

Similar to other studies, women were more likely than men to be attributed with job-related motives, while men were more likely than women to be attributed with ego motives. However, when the romance was between employees on the same organisational level, there were no differences in the motives attributed to male and female partners. Thus, the sex differences noted in other studies may have been a result of the fact that the majority of relationships involved the male partner holding a higher level position than the female partner.

Most organisational romances were believed to be composed of partners with similar motives. Quinn's (1977) utilitarian relationship (male ego-female job) was perceived by observers of romances but not by participants in romances. Observers were also more likely than participants to believe that the female partner was motivated by job-related reasons. Participants may have more accurate information about the motives of each partner or they may be unwilling to admit the existence of job-related motives. Participants may also be more likely than observers to over-estimate the similarity of motives between partners.

### *The Consequences of Romancing at Work*

As found by Dillard (1987), the majority of the workplace romances had no perceived effect on the job performance of partners. Perhaps studies which provide subjects with specific behaviour changes that are predominantly negative elicit high frequencies of agreement with negative behaviour changes as a result of demand characteristics (e.g., Anderson & Hunsaker, 1985; Quinn, 1977).

Participants in a romance under-estimated the amount of talk about the relationship, and over-estimated the positive nature of the talk, in comparison to observers of a romance. As Dillard (1987) suggested, these findings probably reflect the fact that participants are usually not aware of most of the gossip, especially the more negative talk.

The tone of the talk was perceived to be more positive for relationships between single employees than for extra-marital romances. This finding may reflect the moral judgements of respondents. Williams (1986) found that while 71% of his respondents believed that romantic relationships between unmarried employees were acceptable, nearly as many (68%) disapproved of extra-marital affairs.

Negative talk was associated with ego-motivated males and job-motivated females, while positive talk was associated only with love-motivated females. Thus, Quinn's (1977) utilitarian relationship appears to generate the most negative reaction from respondents.

Nearly one half of the organisational romances were viewed as having had no or little other effect on co-workers, while only 22% had negative outcomes and 14% had positive outcomes. The impact of a relationship on the work group does not seem to be as negative as suggested by other studies (e.g., Anderson & Hunsaker, 1985). Similar to other studies, management generally took no action concerning a relationship, and punitive action was more common than positive action.

As found by Dillard (1987), the majority of the workplace romances were perceived to have no impact on the organisation as a whole. The overall impact of an extra-marital romance was believed to be more negative than that of a relationship between single employees. This latter finding probably again reflects the moral judgements of respondents.

## STUDY 2

### Introduction

In Study 2, subjects first completed the Women as Managers Scale (WAMS) and then read hypothetical scenarios where a participant in an organisational romance is promoted. Attributions for the promotion were measured by getting subjects to rate their perceived cause(s) for the promotion on three dimensions. The first dimension measured to what extent the promotion was caused by the stimulus person's ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics. The second dimension concerned how much the stimulus person's partner influenced the promotion decision, while the third dimension measured to what extent the promotion was caused by luck or other external factors.

I expected that the stereotype of a woman "sleeping her way to the top" would mean that the promotion of a female stimulus person would be more likely than the promotion of a male stimulus person to be attributed to the partner's influence. I also predicted that the promotion of a female stimulus person would be less likely than the promotion of a male stimulus person to be attributed to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics. Conversely, the promotion would be more likely to be attributed to luck or other external factors when the stimulus person was female rather than male.

However, Mainiero (1986) argues that studies investigating romantic relationships at work should take into account the organisational status of the two partners (whether the same or different). Women may be perceived to have been helped by their partner because women are generally more likely to be the lower level participant in an organisational romance. Therefore, I independently manipulated the effects of the sex of

the stimulus person and the organisational status of the partner; that is, the stimulus person was either a male or female low level manager, and their partner was either in a low or high level management position.

I predicted that the promotion of a stimulus person would be less likely to be attributed to the partner's influence when the partner was of low rather than high organisational status. Conversely, the promotion would be more likely to be attributed to the stimulus person's ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, when the partner was of low rather than high organisational status. No predictions were made concerning the effect of the organisational status of the partner on attributions to luck or other external factors.

However, it seems plausible that the pervasiveness of the stereotype of a woman "sleeping her way to the top" would lead to an interaction effect between the sex of the stimulus person and the organisational status of the partner. Namely, when the stimulus person was male, there would be no significant difference in the attributions offered depending on whether the partner was of low or high organisational status. On the other hand, when the stimulus person was female, the promotion would be more likely to be attributed to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and less likely to be attributed to partner influence, when the partner was of low rather than high organisational status.

In addition, I hypothesised that subjects with positive attitudes toward women as managers would tend to attribute the promotion of a female manager to internal factors rather than to external factors. More specifically, when subjects rated female managers, there would be a significant positive correlation between WAMS scores and attributions to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and significant negative correlations between WAMS scores and attributions to partner influence, and between WAMS scores and attributions to luck or other external factors.

I expected that attitudes toward women as managers would have no influence on the attributions made about the promotion of a male manager. More specifically, when subjects rated male managers, there would be no significant correlations between WAMS scores and attribution ratings.

Most, if not all, studies using the WAMS have shown that the attitudes of female subjects toward women managers are more positive than the attitudes of male subjects (e.g., Garland et al., 1982; Garland & Price, 1977; Stevens & DeNisi, 1980; Terborg et al., 1977; Ware & Cooper-Studebaker, 1989). Therefore, I predicted that the female subjects in the present study would have a significantly higher mean WAMS score than the male subjects.

### *Summary*

The hypotheses of Study 2 were as follows:

1. The promotion of a female manager, as compared to a male manager, would be less likely to be attributed to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and more likely to be attributed to partner influence and to luck or other external factors.
2. When the partner was of high rather than low organisational status, the promotion of a stimulus manager would be less likely to be attributed to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and more likely to be attributed to partner influence.
3. Attributions for the promotion of a male manager would not vary depending on whether the partner was of low or high organisational status. On the other hand, the promotion of a female manager would be less likely to be attributed to ability,

hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and more likely to be attributed to partner influence when the partner was of high rather than low organisational status.

4. For the promotion of a female manager, WAMS scores would be positively correlated with attributions to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and negatively correlated with attributions to partner influence and attributions to luck or other external factors.
5. For the promotion of a male manager, WAMS scores would not be correlated with attribution ratings.
6. The mean WAMS score of the female subjects would be higher than the mean WAMS score of the male subjects.

## **Method**

### *Overview and Design*

Subjects first completed the Women as Managers Scale (WAMS) and then read two descriptions of a low level manager who was promoted. In one description the stimulus person was romantically involved with another low level manager, while in the other description the romantic partner was a high level manager. Subjects rated how responsible three causal factors were for the promotion of the stimulus person: (a) ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics; (b) the influence of the partner; and (c) luck or other external factors. The experiment used a  $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$  (Sex of Subject  $\times$  Sex of Manager  $\times$  Order of Presentation  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) design, with repeated measures on the last factor. The dependent variables were the three attribution ratings.

### *Subjects*

One hundred and forty-four students (72 men and 72 women) were recruited from the University of Canterbury. Participants were offered the chance to win a lottery prize (\$100).

### *Procedure*

Subjects were run through the procedure in small groups ranging in size from one to seven, with each session randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions. Subjects were told that the experiment was concerned with the kinds of impressions people form of managers. Subjects were also assured that the data collected would be used for research purposes only, and that all information would be anonymous and confidential.

All subjects first completed the WAMS (Appendix B). Subjects then read two descriptions of a manager in a large company. All of the stimulus persons were said to be in low level management positions and were very much in love with another manager. Subsequently, all stimulus persons received a promotion.

Each pair of descriptions featured stimulus persons of the same sex. This was done to avoid the possibility of sensitising subjects to the purpose of the study, which could have increased the potential for demand characteristics.

Each description was followed by a brief questionnaire that was developed drawing from prior research and revised after pilot testing. Following the completion of the dependent measures, all subjects were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

### ***Women As Managers Scale***

The WAMS was developed by Peters, Terborg, and Taynor (1974) to measure attitudes toward women in management. Subjects rate their agreement or disagreement to 21 statements using 7-point Likert scales ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). Eleven items are worded to portray women as managers favourably and ten items are worded to describe women managers unfavourably. Scores can range from 21 to 147, with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes toward women as managers.

### ***Experimental Manipulations***

*Sex of Manager.* The sex of each stimulus person was manipulated by stating the name of the manager and by the gender of pronouns. Half of the male subjects and half of the female subjects received descriptions about male managers, and the remaining subjects received descriptions about female managers.

*Organisational Status of Partner.* In one of the two descriptions, the stimulus person's partner was portrayed as being in a low level management position. The other description portrayed the stimulus person's partner as being in a high level management position.

*Order of Presentation.* The order of presentation of the two descriptions was systematically varied so that half of the male subjects and half of the female subjects first read a description where the stimulus person's partner was portrayed as being in a low level management position. The remaining subjects first read a description where the stimulus person's partner was portrayed as being in a high level management position.

The description of the male (female) stimulus person who was in love with a low level manager was as follows:

Peter (Debbie) is working in a low level management position in a large company. Susan (Steven) is also working in a low level management position in the same company. Peter (Debbie) and Susan (Steven) are very much in love with each other. Peter (Debbie) is promoted.

The description of the male (female) stimulus person who was in love with a high level manager was as follows:

Michael (Lisa) is working in a low level management position in a large company. Pauline (Gary) is working in a high level management position in the same company. Michael (Lisa) and Pauline (Gary) are very much in love with each other. Michael (Lisa) is promoted.

### *Dependent Measures*

After reading each description, subjects were asked to indicate how responsible they believed each of the following was in accounting for the stimulus person's promotion: (a) the stimulus person's ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics; (b) the influence of the stimulus person's partner; and (c) luck or other external factors. Ratings were made using 7-point Likert scales, ranging from *not at all* (1) to *very much* (7). The four versions of the description followed by the dependent measures can be found in Appendix C.

## Results

The findings of Study 2 will be presented in two main sections. First, the causal attribution ratings in the different experimental conditions will be analysed. Second, the relationship between attitudes toward women as managers and causal attribution ratings will be examined.

### *Causal Attribution Ratings*

Data were analysed separately for each of the three attribution dimensions with  $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$  (Sex of Subject  $\times$  Sex of Manager  $\times$  Order of Presentation<sup>1</sup>  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) analyses of variance, with repeated measures on the last factor.

#### *Attributions to Ability, Hard Work, or Other Internal Personality Characteristics*

Mean ratings of the first attribution dimension are presented in Table 6. Subjects generally attributed the promotion of a manager, to a large extent, to the manager's ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics ( $M = 5.73$ ).

Contrary to predictions, subjects were more likely to attribute the promotion of a female manager to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics ( $M = 6.17$ ) than the promotion of a male manager ( $M = 5.28$ ),  $F(1, 136) = 29.13, p < .0001$ .

As hypothesised, subjects viewed ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics as more responsible for the promotion of a manager who was romantically involved with a partner of low organisational status ( $M = 5.95$ ) as compared to a partner of high organisational status ( $M = 5.51$ ),  $F(1, 136) = 25.17, p < .0001$ .

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<sup>1</sup>Three significant results were obtained involving this factor but they did not alter the interpretation of the other results so they will not be discussed further.

Table 6

*Mean Rated Importance of Ability, Hard Work, or Other Internal Personality Characteristics as a Function of Sex of Subject, Sex of Manager, and Organisational Status of Partner.*

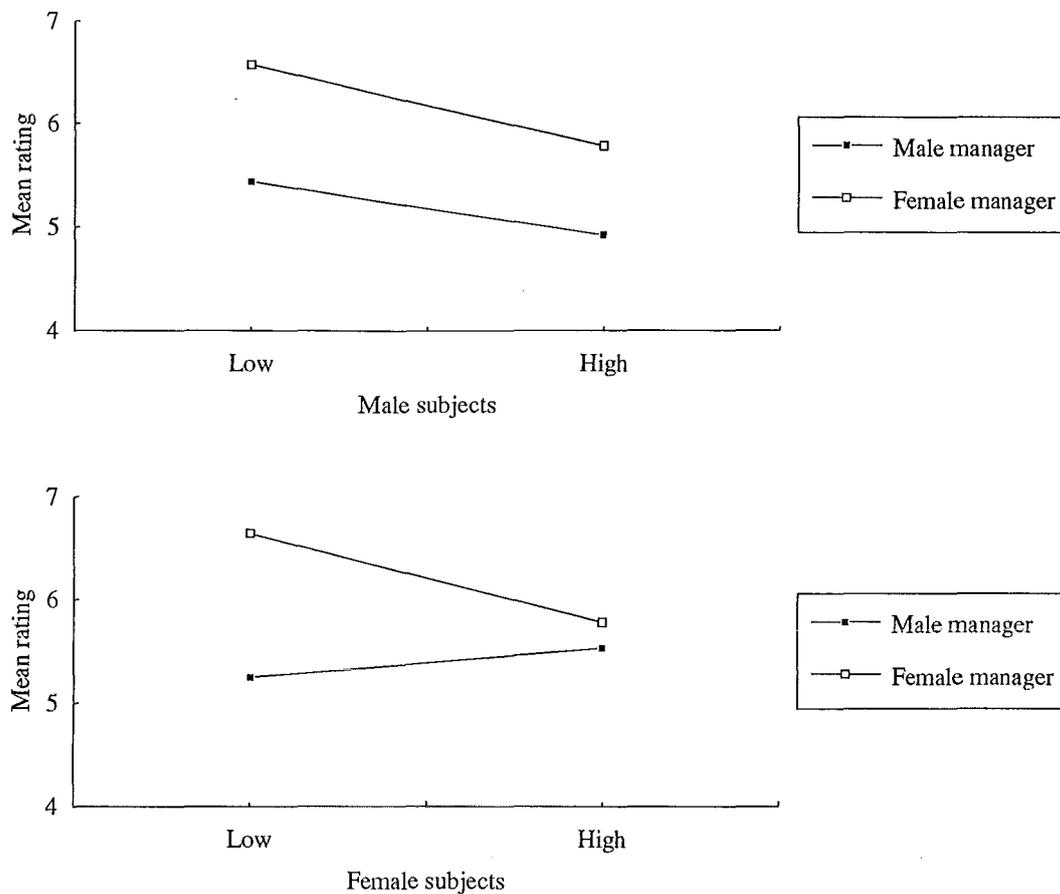
Group <sup>a</sup>	Organisational status of partner			
	Low		High	
Male subjects				
Male manager	5.44	(1.16)	4.92	(1.59)
Female manager	6.47	(0.74)	5.81	(1.04)
Female subjects				
Male manager	5.25	(1.30)	5.53	(1.34)
Female manager	6.64	(0.54)	5.78	(1.27)

*Note.* All ratings were made on 7-point scales, a higher number indicating more importance. The *SD*'s for each cell are shown in brackets.

<sup>a</sup> $n=36$  for each group.

The expected two-way (Sex of Manager  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) interaction was significant,  $F(1, 136) = 13.01, p < .0005$ . However, this result was qualified by a significant three-way (Sex of Subject  $\times$  Sex of Manager  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) interaction,  $F(1, 136) = 7.97, p < .01$ . For ease of interpretation, Figure 1 shows this interaction as 2 two-way (Sex of Manager  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) interactions, one for male subjects and one for female subjects. Separate analyses of the data for male and female subjects revealed that the predicted two-way (Sex of Manager  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) interaction was significant for female subjects,  $F(1, 70) = 17.47, p < .0001$ , but not for male subjects,  $F(1, 70) = .37, n.s.$

Figure 1. Mean rated importance of ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics as a function of sex of subject, sex of manager, and organisational status of partner.



As hypothesised, for the female subjects, planned comparisons revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male managers depending on whether they were romantically involved with a low status partner or a high status partner,  $t(35) = 1.38, n.s.$ ; whereas, female managers were more likely to have their promotion attributed to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics when they were romantically involved with a low status partner rather than a high status partner,  $t(35) = 4.70, p < .0001$ .

However, for the male subjects, planned comparisons revealed that both male and female managers were more likely to have their promotion attributed to ability, hard work, or

other internal personality characteristics when they were romantically involved with a low status partner rather than a high status partner,  $t(35) = 2.73$ ,  $p < .01$ ;  $t(35) = 5.58$ ,  $p < .0001$ .

### *Attributions to Partner Influence*

Mean ratings of the second attribution dimension are presented in Table 7. Subjects generally attributed the promotion of a manager, to some extent, to the influence of the manager's romantic partner ( $M = 2.92$ ).

Table 7

*Mean Rated Importance of Partner Influence as a Function of Sex of Subject, Sex of Manager, and Organisational Status of Partner.*

Group <sup>a</sup>	Organisational status of partner			
	Low		High	
Male subjects				
Male manager	2.81	(1.82)	3.83	(1.80)
Female manager	2.00	(1.37)	3.56	(1.46)
Female subjects				
Male manager	2.58	(1.68)	3.56	(1.70)
Female manager	1.67	(1.12)	3.33	(1.60)

*Note.* All ratings were made on 7-point scales, a higher number indicating more importance. The *SD*'s for each cell are shown in brackets.

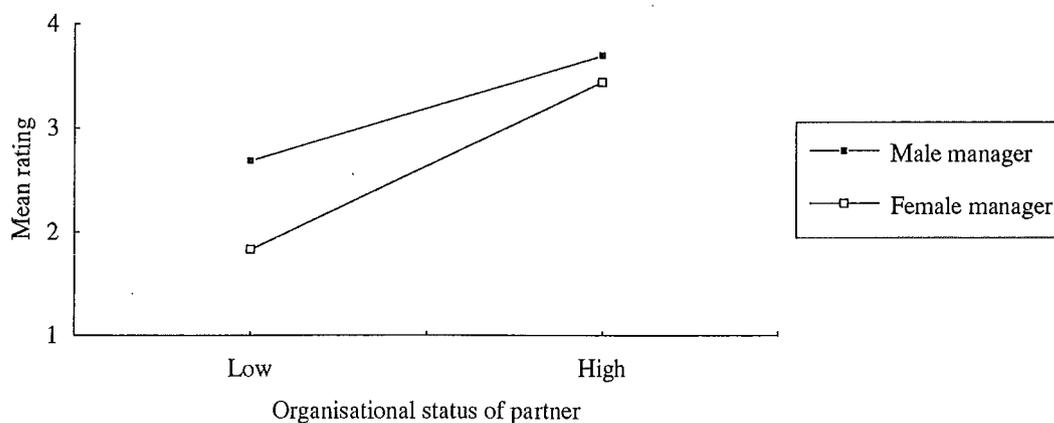
<sup>a</sup> $n=36$  for each group.

Contrary to predictions, subjects were more likely to attribute the promotion of a male manager to the influence of the romantic partner ( $M = 3.19$ ) than the promotion of a female manager ( $M = 2.64$ ),  $F(1, 136) = 7.68, p < .01$ .

As hypothesised, subjects viewed partner influence as more responsible for the promotion of a manager who was romantically involved with a partner of high organisational status ( $M = 3.57$ ) as compared to a partner of low organisational status ( $M = 2.26$ ),  $F(1, 136) = 67.03, p < .0001$ .

The expected two-way (Sex of Manager  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) interaction was marginally significant,  $F(1, 136) = 3.67, p < .06$ . This interaction is displayed in Figure 2. The interaction was in the predicted direction; namely, I expected that the organisational status of the partner would have a larger effect on the attributions made about the female manager than the male manager. However, planned comparisons revealed that both male and female managers were less likely to have their promotion attributed to partner influence when they were romantically involved with a low status partner ( $M$ 's = 2.69, and 1.83, respectively) rather than a high status partner ( $M$ 's = 3.69, and 3.44, respectively),  $t(71) = 4.06, p < .0001$ ;  $t(71) = 8.12, p < .0001$ .

Figure 2. Mean rated importance of partner influence as a function of sex of manager and organisational status of partner.



*Attributions to Luck or Other External Factors*

Mean ratings of the third attribution dimension are presented in Table 8. Subjects generally attributed the promotion of a manager, to some extent, to luck or other external factors ( $M = 3.32$ ).

As previously, contrary to predictions, subjects were more likely to attribute the promotion of a male manager to luck or other external factors ( $M = 3.58$ ) than the promotion of a female manager ( $M = 3.06$ ),  $F(1, 136) = 4.75, p < .05$ .

Table 8

*Mean Rated Importance of Luck or Other External Factors as a Function of Sex of Subject, Sex of Manager, and Organisational Status of Partner.*

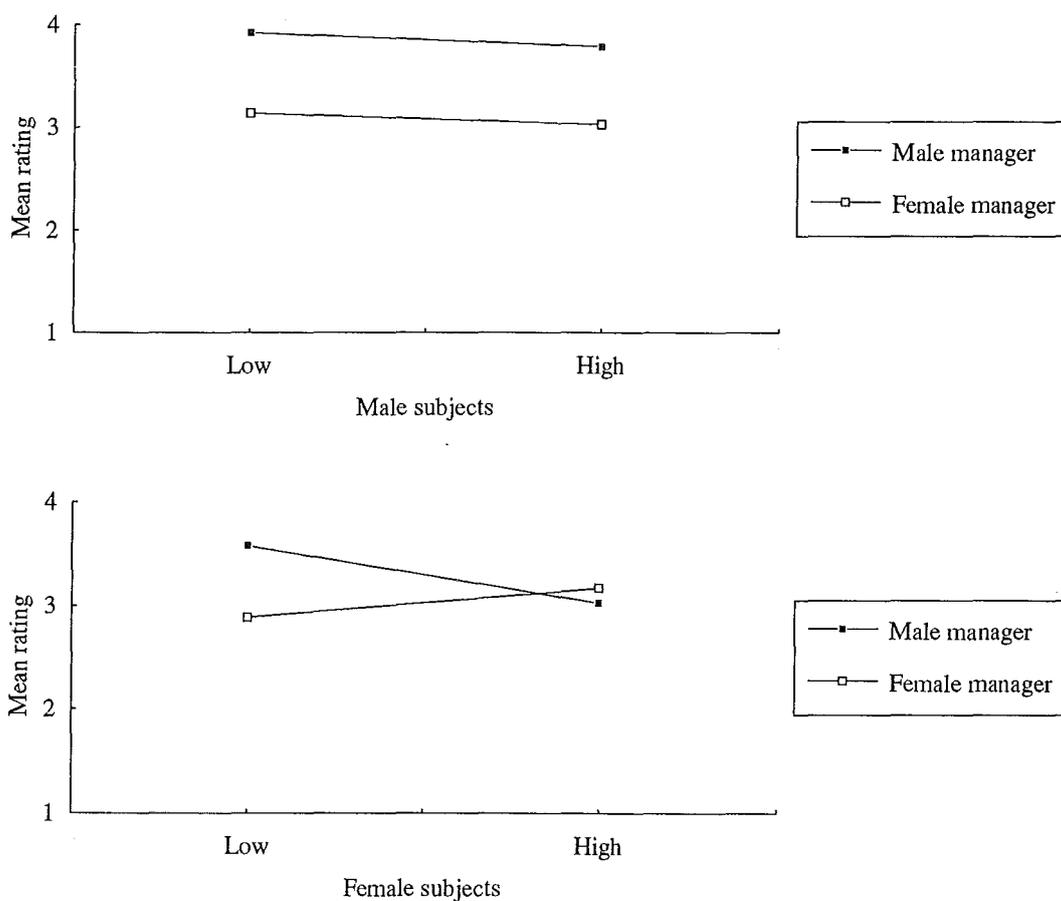
Group <sup>a</sup>	Organisational status of partner			
	Low		High	
Male subjects				
Male manager	3.92	(1.54)	3.78	(1.66)
Female manager	3.14	(1.57)	3.03	(1.48)
Female subjects				
Male manager	3.58	(1.65)	3.03	(1.36)
Female manager	2.89	(1.41)	3.17	(1.50)

*Note.* All ratings were made on 7-point scales, a higher number indicating more importance. The *SD*'s for each cell are shown in brackets.

<sup>a</sup> $n=36$  for each group.

The two-way (Sex of Manager  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) interaction was significant,  $F(1, 136) = 5.79, p < .05$ . However, this result was again qualified by a significant three-way (Sex of Subject  $\times$  Sex of Manager  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) interaction,  $F(1, 136) = 5.06, p < .05$ . For ease of interpretation, Figure 3 shows this interaction as 2 two-way (Sex of Manager  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) interactions, one for male subjects and one for female subjects. Separate analyses of the data for male and female subjects revealed that the two-way (Sex of Manager  $\times$  Organisational Status of Partner) interaction was significant for female subjects,  $F(1, 70) = 10.16, p < .005$ , but not for male subjects,  $F(1, 70) = .01, n.s.$

Figure 3. Mean rated importance of luck or other external factors as a function of sex of subject, sex of manager, and organisational status of partner.



For the female subjects, planned comparisons revealed that male managers were more likely to have their promotion attributed to luck or other external factors when they were romantically involved with a low status partner rather than a high status partner  $t(35) = 2.45, p < .05$ ; whereas, female managers were less likely to have their promotion attributed to luck or other external factors when they were romantically involved with a low status partner rather than a high status partner  $t(35) = 2.14, p < .05$ .

However, for the male subjects, planned comparisons revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of both male and female managers depending on whether they were romantically involved with a low status partner or a high status partner,  $t(35) = 0.74, n.s.$ ;  $t(35) = 0.35, n.s.$

### *Women As Managers Scale*

Scores on the WAMS ranged from 57 to 147, with a mean of 128.08 ( $SD = 14.27$ ), indicating generally favourable attitudes toward women in management. As predicted, female subjects expressed significantly more favourable attitudes toward women as managers ( $M = 133.24$ ) than did male subjects ( $M = 122.92$ ),  $t(142) = 4.64, p < .0001$ .

Table 9 displays Pearson product-moment correlations between WAMS scores and attributions to each of the three causal factors for subjects who rated female managers<sup>2</sup>. As expected, female subjects with more positive attitudes toward women as managers made stronger attributions to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and weaker attributions to partner influence for the promotion of a female manager. However, WAMS scores were not significantly correlated with female subjects' attributions to luck or other external factors, and for male subjects, none of the correlations between WAMS scores and attribution ratings were significant.

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<sup>2</sup>Correlations were also carried out separately for each repeated measure (Organisational Status of Partner). These analyses produced similar results to the ones reported here.

Table 9

*Correlations between WAMS Scores and Attributions to Three Causal Factors for the Promotion of a Female Manager.*

Factor	Sex of subject	
	Male	Female
Ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics	.23	.46**
Partner influence	.04	-.35*
Luck or other external factors	-.00	.14

*Note.*  $n=36$  for all correlations. Significance levels were calculated using 2-tailed tests.

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Table 10 displays Pearson product-moment correlations between WAMS scores and attributions to each of the three causal factors for subjects who rated male managers. As expected, for female subjects, none of the correlations between WAMS scores and attribution ratings were significant, and for male subjects, WAMS scores were not significantly correlated with attributions to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, or with attributions to partner influence. However, male subjects with more positive attitudes toward women as managers made weaker attributions to luck or other external factors for the promotion of a male manager.

Table 10

*Correlations between WAMS Scores and Attributions to Three Causal Factors for the Promotion of a Male Manager.*

Factor	Sex of subject	
	Male	Female
Ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics	-.12	.01
Partner influence	-.24	-.19
Luck or other external factors	-.45**	.02

*Note.*  $n=36$  for all correlations. Significance levels were calculated using 2-tailed tests.

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

## Discussion

The following discussion will be presented in three main sections. First, I will summarise the results of Study 2. Second, the findings concerning the causal attribution ratings will be explained in relation to research on sex biases in evaluations. Third, I will examine the relationship between the Women as Managers Scale (WAMS) and causal attribution ratings.

### *Summary of Results*

As hypothesised, when the partner was of low rather than high organisational status, the promotion of a stimulus manager was more likely to be attributed to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and less likely to be attributed to partner influence. Contrary to predictions, the promotion of a female manager, as compared to a male manager, was more likely to be attributed to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and less likely to be attributed to partner influence and to luck or other external factors. However, as expected, there was a tendency for female managers to be more derogated than male managers for being romantically involved with a partner of high rather than low organisational status. This finding was stronger for female subjects than for male subjects.

As predicted, female subjects had more positive attitudes toward women as managers than male subjects. Female subjects with more positive attitudes toward women as managers made stronger attributions to ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics, and weaker attributions to partner influence, for the promotion of a female manager. Contrary to predictions, male subjects with more positive attitudes toward women as managers made weaker attributions to luck or other external factors for the promotion of a male manager.

### *Sex Bias in Evaluations*

The causal attribution ratings in the present study suggest that women are evaluated more favourably than men. On the other hand, research documenting the impact of sex on the evaluation of an individual's performance has shown a general tendency for men to be evaluated more favourably than women (for reviews see Heilman, 1983; Nieva & Gutek, 1980). However, some studies have shown no evidence of any sex bias in evaluation (e.g., Hall & Hall, 1976; Kaufman & Shikiar, 1985), and in yet other studies, women are rated more favourably than men (e.g., Kryger & Shikiar, 1978; Tsui & Gutek, 1984).

More recent research has sought to identify the conditions under which women are undervalued, equally valued, or overvalued relative to men (e.g., Heilman, Martell, & Simon, 1988; Martell, 1991; Pazy, 1992). Heilman (1983) suggested that when stereotypes are not operative, women may be judged more effective than similar performing men, perhaps because of all the forces assumed to have worked against them.

In the present study, the student subjects had very positive attitudes toward women managers. Furthermore, considerable attention has been given in recent years to the lack of women in management and the difficulties they face there. Thus, the combination of a lack of negative stereotypes about women as managers, and an awareness of the problems women encounter in management, may have led to female managers being more positively evaluated than male managers.

Some support for this reasoning can be found in a study by Nevill et al. (1983) who provided bank managers with job applications to evaluate. Managers with WAMS scores in the top third gave higher ratings to the female applicant in comparison to the male applicant on knowledge and motivation. Conversely, managers with WAMS scores in the bottom third gave lower ratings to the female applicant in comparison to the male

applicant on knowledge, motivation, and probability of further promotion. The authors did not report mean WAMS scores but managers who scored in the top third may well have resembled the subjects in the present study.

Although the present study provides mainly evidence of a pro-female bias, there was a tendency for female managers to be more derogated than male managers for being romantically involved with a partner of high rather than low organisational status. This finding appears to support the existence of a stereotype concerning women "sleeping their way to the top". Surprisingly, this stereotype appeared to be stronger for the female subjects than for the male subjects.

In addition, the finding that the promotion of a female manager was less likely to be attributed to partner influence than the promotion of a male manager may reflect a different kind of stereotype about women. Women are generally believed to become "starry-eyed" and sentimental when involved in a romantic relationship, whereas men are hardhearted and rational (Rubin, Peplau, & Hill, 1981). Women are also characterised as "sensitive" and "soft-hearted" (Williams & Best, 1990). These stereotypes may mean that a female partner is perceived to be more likely than a male partner to show favouritism towards the stimulus person.

### *Women As Managers Scale*

The results provided some support for the hypothesis that subjects with positive attitudes toward women as managers would tend to attribute the promotion of a female manager to internal factors rather than to external factors. However, these findings were applicable only to the female subjects. In contrast, Stevens and DeNisi (1980) and Garland et al. (1982) found that WAMS scores were correlated with attribution ratings for the male subjects but not for the female subjects.

Stevens and DeNisi (1980) explained their findings by the low variances obtained for female subjects' attribution ratings and WAMS scores. This factor, known as a restriction of range problem, tends to push correlations down. However, in the present study, the variances for the attribution ratings were not significantly different between male and female subjects, and the WAMS variances were actually higher for male subjects than for female subjects.

The relationship between attitudes and behaviour has been shown to be mediated by several factors (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Myers, 1993). In the present study, attitudes toward women as managers may have been a more central attitude for the female subjects than for the male subjects which would have strengthened the relationship between attitudes toward women as managers and causal attribution ratings for the female subjects.

Support was found for the prediction that attitudes toward women as managers would not be related to causal attributions for the promotion of a male manager. However, unexpectedly, male subjects with more positive attitudes toward women managers made weaker attributions to luck or other external factors for the promotion of a male manager. This finding is hard to explain but perhaps males with positive attitudes toward women in management are themselves more achievement-oriented and, therefore, they are less likely to explain male success in terms of luck or other external factors.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

The following discussion will be presented in four main sections. First, the implications of the findings for women will be examined. Second, the management of organisational romance will be discussed. Third, I will consider the limitations of the two studies and make suggestions for future research. Finally, I will draw some conclusions.

### **Implications for Women**

Various authors have warned that a romantic relationship at work hurts the career of the female partner to a greater extent than that of the male partner (e.g., Kennedy, 1992; Rapp, 1992). However, the present research suggests that women are only more negatively evaluated than men when the partner is of higher organisational status. For example, in Study 1, differences in attributed motivations were only found when the male partner was of higher organisational status than the female partner. Study 2 also revealed a tendency for women to be more derogated than men for being involved with a high status partner rather than a low status partner.

Thus, women would be advised to think carefully before becoming romantically involved with a partner of higher organisational status. Interestingly, Study 1 revealed a larger proportion of relationships between partners of the same organisational level than previously reported. Kennedy (1992) also claimed that more partners with equal status were dating. If relationships between partners of the same organisational level become increasingly common, sex differences in the evaluation of participants may eventually disappear.

The most negative gossip was associated with ego-motivated males and job-motivated females. This reflects the negative stereotype of women "sleeping their way to the top". However, Gutek's (1985) telephone surveys of over 400 men and 800 women found relatively little evidence that women routinely or even occasionally use their sexuality to try to gain some organisational goal. Gutek suggested that the stereotype of women exploiting their sexuality to gain favouritism or power developed because women are assumed to be the "carriers" of sexuality. Among the characteristics assumed by many to be associated with femaleness are "sexy", "affectionate", and "attractive" (Williams & Best, 1990). On the other hand, the stereotype of men revolves around the dimension of competence.

Surprisingly, the female students in Study 2 were more likely than the male students to derogate female managers for being romantically involved with a high status partner rather than a low status partner. This may reflect the "Queen Bee syndrome" (Staines, Travis, & Jayaratne, 1974) where women have been socialised to view each other as rivals and therefore tend to discriminate against other women. In a similar vein, Mathison (1986) found that women were more likely than men to negatively view an assertive woman.

Powell (1986) found that female business students were more opposed to sexual intimacy in the workplace than male business students. He explained this finding by the fact that women have generally been the ones to suffer when a workplace romance becomes common knowledge. However, the women in Study 1 were no more negative about workplace romance than the men. New Zealand women may not be as aware of the problems associated with such relationships as American women, where some cases have received national attention (e.g., "Mary and Bill," 1980). Alternatively, a large number of respondents in Study 1 had only been involved in one organisational romance and this relationship had developed into marriage. Thus, the workplace may be viewed by New Zealand women as a legitimate arena for meeting a future spouse.

## The Management of Organisational Romance

In Study 1, none of the companies had a formal policy concerning dating between employees, and the majority of managers took no action concerning a workplace romance. Management tends to be reluctant to interfere in their employees' personal relationships, even when an organisational romance is affecting the work group. Although many employers have written guidelines for dealing with sexual harassment, there are no comparable guidelines for workplace romance.

Many American business writers offer advice to management on developing policies concerning organisational romance. Collins (1983) recommended that the lower level participant leave the organisation, while Mead (1980) argued that taboos against sexual involvements at work are necessary for men and women to work together effectively. These appear to be extreme positions that ignore the possible positive consequences of workplace romance, such as increased loyalty and commitment to the organisation.

If management becomes excessively concerned with preventing intimacy from developing, this may restrict the development of close working relationships. This is especially important for mentoring relationships where restricting the friendship role can reduce the learning of the protegee (Ragins, 1989). Mentoring relationships have been found to be significant factors in career development, organisational success, and career satisfaction.

Management should generally only intervene when the relationship obviously interferes with the performance of the participants or the work group. The results of Study 1 indicate that most organisational romances are perceived to have little impact on co-workers or on the job performance of partners. However, it might be helpful for management to provide training for employees in handling romantic relationships at work, perhaps as part of an orientation program. Management training could also involve a session on dealing with romance between employees.

## **Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

In Study 1, the representativeness of the sample was limited, in that it was not a random sample. However, a larger number of female respondents were sampled than in previous studies (e.g., Anderson & Hunsaker, 1985; Quinn, 1977), and the sample also reflected a wide range of ages and occupations. The administration of the survey in a group setting also achieved a higher response rate than reported for telephone surveys (e.g., Dillard & Witteman, 1985), personal interviews (e.g., Quinn, 1977), or mailed questionnaires (e.g., Arnold, 1992).

The perceptions of observers concerning the partners in an organisational romance may not be accurate, but these perceptions are important in that they will determine reactions to the relationship. For example, an individual who is believed to be motivated by love will be treated differently than an individual who is believed to be motivated by job-related reasons. The perceptions of participants may also have been distorted in order to present themselves and their partner in a favourable light.

In Study 2, subjects were supplied with pre-determined causes. Further research could utilise a greater number of pre-determined causes and also self-generated attributions. In addition, changing attitudes toward women managers appear to be making the Women as Managers Scale inadequate in discriminating amongst respondents. Only two subjects scored below the mid-point of the scale.

## **Conclusions**

The results of the two studies extended the research on romantic relationships at work. Study 1 provided descriptive information about organisational romance in New Zealand. Organisational romance in New Zealand appears to bear many similarities to the same phenomenon in other countries. Study 2 utilised an experimental design to measure

attributions for the promotion of managers involved in a workplace romance. Women seem to be more derogated than men for being romantically involved with a partner of high rather than low organisational status. This research represents the start of a more methodical approach to the study of romantic relationships at work. Workplace romance appears to be a common occurrence that merits further investigation.

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## APPENDIX A

### Organisational Romance Survey

## Organizational Romance: A Survey

This survey is concerned with your experience of 'organizational romance', which is defined as a dating relationship between two employees who work for the *same* company.

### Background Details

Sex (please tick):                     Male                     Female

Marital Status:                     Single  
     Married/De Facto  
     Divorced/Separated/Widowed

Age (please state): .....

Occupation: .....

Industry: .....

Number of years in work force: .....

Highest *school* qualification (tick only *one*):

- No school qualification
- School Certificate in one or more subjects
- Sixth Form Certificate or University Entrance in one or more subjects
- Higher School Certificate or Higher Leaving Certificate
- University Bursary or Scholarship
- Other, please specify.....

Educational or job qualifications since leaving school (tick one or more):

- No qualifications since leaving school
- Trade Certificate or Advanced Trade Certificate
- Nursing Certificate or Diploma
- New Zealand Certificate or Diploma
- Technicians Certificate
- Teachers Certificate or Diploma
- University Certificate or Diploma below Bachelor level
- Bachelors Degree
- Postgraduate Degree, Certificate or Diploma
- Other, please specify .....

## Questions

1. Does your company have a *formal* policy on dating between employees?

Yes                       No                       Don't Know

If you answered 'Yes', what is this policy? .....

.....

.....

.....

2. Are there any *informal* norms, rules, or expectations concerning dating between employees?

Yes                       No

If you answered 'Yes', how would you describe them? .....

.....

.....

.....

3. Do you think that it is *acceptable* to date in the workplace (circle the appropriate number)?

*Totally unacceptable*      1      2      3      4      5                      *Totally acceptable*

4. How *many* times in your work life have you been aware of *other* employees being involved in an organizational romance? .....

5. How *many* times in your work life have *you* been involved in an organizational romance? .....

If you have *never* been aware of *or* involved in an organizational romance, please proceed to question 23. Otherwise, please think about the organizational romance with which you are most familiar and answer the following questions.

6. Were you a participant in or an observer of this organizational romance?

Participant       Observer

7. Were the participants in the romance on the same *organizational level* or was the male or female of higher standing?

Same Level     Male Higher     Female Higher

8. What was the *marital status* of the *male* participant?

Single     Married/De Facto     Divorced/Separated/Widowed

9. What was the *marital status* of the *female* participant?

Single     Married/De Facto     Divorced/Separated/Widowed

10. What was the approximate *age* of the *male* participant? .....

11. What was the approximate *age* of the *female* participant? .....

12. How *many* employees were there in the workplace? .....

13. For what length of *time* did the relationship last? .....

14. In *your* opinion, how important were each of the following *motivations* for the *male* participant when he entered the relationship:

Love (sincerity, companionship, marriage)

*Not at all important*    1    2    3    4    5    *Very important*

Ego (excitement, ego satisfaction, adventure, sexual experience)

*Not at all important*    1    2    3    4    5    *Very important*

Job-related (advancement, security, power, financial rewards)

*Not at all important*    1    2    3    4    5    *Very important*

15. In *your* opinion, how important were each of the following *motivations* for the *female* participant when she entered the relationship:

Love (sincerity, companionship, marriage)

*Not at all important*    1    2    3    4    5    *Very important*

Ego (excitement, ego satisfaction, adventure, sexual experience)

*Not at all important*    1    2    3    4    5    *Very important*

Job-related (advancement, security, power, financial rewards)  
*Not at all important*      1    2    3    4    5                      *Very important*

16. In your opinion, in what way did the overall *job performance* of the *male* participant change when he became involved in the relationship?

*Declined*                      1    2    3    4    5                      *Improved*

17. In your opinion, in what way did the overall *job performance* of the *female* participant change when she became involved in the relationship?

*Declined*                      1    2    3    4    5                      *Improved*

18. How much did *other employees* in the workplace *talk* about the romance?

*Not at all*                      1    2    3    4    5                      *A great deal*

19. What was the *tone* of this talk?

*All negative*                      1    2    3    4    5                      *All positive*

20. In what other ways did the romance have an effect on other employees in the workplace? .....

.....

.....

21. How did *management* react to the romance? .....

.....

.....

22. In your opinion, what was the *overall impact* of the relationship on the organization?

*All negative*                      1    2    3    4    5                      *All positive*

23. Please note any additional comments you would like to make about organizational romance in general .....

.....

.....

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Women as Managers Scale**

## Women As Managers Scale

**Instructions:** The following items are an attempt to assess the attitudes you have about women in management. The best answer to each statement is your honest *personal opinion*. The statements cover many different and opposing points of view; you may find yourself agreeing strongly with some of the statements, disagreeing just as strongly with others, and perhaps uncertain about others. Whether you agree or disagree with any statement, you can be sure that many people feel the same way you do.

Using the numbers from 1 to 7 on the rating scale, indicate your personal opinion about each statement by circling the appropriate number.

**Rating Scale:**

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Slightly Disagree
- 4 = Neither Disagree nor Agree
- 5 = Slightly Agree
- 6 = Agree
- 7 = Strongly Agree

It is less desirable for women than for men to have a job that requires responsibility.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Women have the objectivity required to evaluate business situations properly.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Challenging work is more important to men than it is to women.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Men and women should be given equal opportunity for participation in management training programs.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Women have the capability to acquire the necessary skills to be successful managers.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On average, women managers are less capable of contributing to an organization's overall goals than are men.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
It is not acceptable for women to assume leadership roles as often as men.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
The business community should accept women in key management positions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Society should regard work by female managers as valuable as work by male managers.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
It is acceptable for women to compete with men for top executive positions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
The possibility of pregnancy does not make women less desirable employees than men.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Women would no more allow their emotions to influence their managerial behaviour than would men.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Problems associated with menstruation should not make women less desirable than men as employees.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
To be a successful executive, a woman does not have to sacrifice some of her femininity.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
On average, a woman who stays at home all the time with her children is a better mother than a woman who works outside the home at least part-time.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Women are less capable of learning mathematical and mechanical skills than are men.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Women are not ambitious enough to be successful in the business world.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Women cannot be assertive in business situations that demand it.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Women possess the self-confidence required of a good leader.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Women are not competitive enough to be successful in the business world.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Women cannot be aggressive in business situations that demand it.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

## APPENDIX C

### Attribution Ratings

## Instructions

This is a study which requires your imagination. You are going to read about people in different situations and I am interested in what you think about them. After reading a description, take a few minutes to visualize the people involved. There is not much information, but imagine what the people might be like, or think of some people you know in a similar situation. Then, answer the questions. There are no right or wrong answers. Just rely on your first impressions, and feel free to give whatever answers you think are most appropriate.

*Michael is working in a low level management position in a large company. Pauline is working in a high level management position in the same company. Michael and Pauline are very much in love with each other. Michael is promoted.*

I would now like you to think about Michael's promotion and the reasons for it. I want you to keep in mind these reasons and answer some questions.

Circle **one** number for each of the following questions to indicate your answer. Please note, that you can circle **any** number along the rating scale when answering - the labels at each end of the scale are for your guidance only.

### Answer all questions

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **Michael's ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics** contributed towards his promotion?

*Not at all*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Very much*

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **Pauline** influenced the actual promotion decision in favour of Michael?

*Not at all*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Very much*

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **luck or other external factors** contributed towards Michael's promotion?

*Not at all*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Very much*

*Lisa is working in a low level management position in a large company. Gary is working in a high level management position in the same company. Lisa and Gary are very much in love with each other. Lisa is promoted.*

I would now like you to think about Lisa's promotion and the reasons for it. I want you to keep in mind these reasons and answer some questions.

Circle **one** number for each of the following questions to indicate your answer. Please note, that you can circle **any** number along the rating scale when answering - the labels at each end of the scale are for your guidance only.

### Answer all questions

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **Lisa's ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics** contributed towards her promotion?

*Not at all*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Very much*

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **Gary** influenced the actual promotion decision in favour of Lisa?

*Not at all*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Very much*

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **luck or other external factors** contributed towards Lisa's promotion?

*Not at all*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Very much*

*Debbie is working in a low level management position in a large company. Steven is also working in a low level management position in the same company. Debbie and Steven are very much in love with each other. Debbie is promoted.*

I would now like you to think about Debbie's promotion and the reasons for it. I want you to keep in mind these reasons and answer some questions.

Circle **one** number for each of the following questions to indicate your answer. Please note, that you can circle **any** number along the rating scale when answering - the labels at each end of the scale are for your guidance only.

### Answer all questions

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **Debbie's ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics** contributed towards her promotion?

*Not at all*      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      *Very much*

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **Steven** influenced the actual promotion decision in favour of Debbie?

*Not at all*      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      *Very much*

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **luck or other external factors** contributed towards Debbie's promotion?

*Not at all*      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      *Very much*

*Peter is working in a low level management position in a large company. Susan is also working in a low level management position in the same company. Peter and Susan are very much in love with each other. Peter is promoted.*

I would now like you to think about Peter's promotion and the reasons for it. I want you to keep in mind these reasons and answer some questions.

Circle **one** number for each of the following questions to indicate your answer. Please note, that you can circle **any** number along the rating scale when answering - the labels at each end of the scale are for your guidance only.

### Answer all questions

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **Peter's ability, hard work, or other internal personality characteristics** contributed towards his promotion?

*Not at all*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Very much*

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **Susan** influenced the actual promotion decision in favour of Peter?

*Not at all*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Very much*

In a situation like this, to what extent do you think **luck or other external factors** contributed towards Peter's promotion?

*Not at all*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Very much*