



*(...) What if women led the world? And what if women occupied all leading positions in the company and had decision-making power? Alternate histories can be used to promote diversity and inclusion policies (...)*

# Alternate history as a tool to reduce bias in organizations

LIBRARIAS  
HYPOTHESIS  
HISTORIA  
PERIODICAL

C M Montaudon-Tomas <sup>1,a</sup>, A Amsler <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> | Business School, UPAEP University, Mexico

<sup>2</sup> | Independent consultant, Mexico

<sup>a</sup> | Author to whom any correspondence should be addressed: [cynthiamaria.montaudon@upaep.mx](mailto:cynthiamaria.montaudon@upaep.mx)

---

Submitted: 18 April 2023

Revised: 12 August 2023

Accepted: 30 October 2023

Published: 31 October 2023

DOI: [https://doi.org/  
10.34626/2184-9978/  
2023\\_vol3\\_n1\\_774](https://doi.org/10.34626/2184-9978/2023_vol3_n1_774)

This is an open-access article  
under the CC-BY license

([http://creativecommons.org/  
licenses/by/3.0/pt/legalcode](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/pt/legalcode))

**Abstract.** This article describes the potential use of alternate histories in business to promote diversity and equality in organizations. Gender bias and the different barriers that women experience in the workplace are included, as well as the way in which alternate histories can be created as an answer to the following questions: What if women led the world? And what if women occupied all leading positions in the company and had decision-making power? Alternate histories can be used to promote diversity and inclusion policies based on other minorities or marginalized groups beyond women to create plausible scenarios for more humane and integrative workplaces.

---

Keywords: Gender bias, Barriers, Diversity, Inclusion, Alternate histories.

## 1. Introduction

In general terms, alternate history is a “what if” approach concerned with “what might have happened if some nodal event in history had not occurred or had turned out differently” [1]. It involves pasts that could have happened instead of what actually did [2]. “In playing with the past’s historicity, alternate histories have often sparked controversy” [3]. As a result, they are often dismissed as ineffectual.

Nevertheless, “despite the overtly political agendas that often underlie alternative histories, practitioners, and defenders of counterfactual history have forcefully argued that its primary goal is not that of criticizing or praising the past but, rather, that of understanding it better” [4]; and therefore understanding the present better as well.

This “presentist” nature of alternate histories allows for a more complete vision of the evolving character of historical events or conditions in society’s collective memory [5]. Through alternate history, thinking about what never happened or what could have been instead, people can better understand the memory of what did and how things came to be. Questioning the past allows evaluating what difference the presence or absence of a specific condition would have made to the phenomenon that is being studied [6].

In this sense, considering what would have happened if various contrary-to-fact elements had taken place has various psychological effects, the primary one being that thinking about counterfactuals broadens the mind [7]. Through alternative history, worlds open up, history is not static, and anything is possible [8]. Rethinking and changing the past can help people understand what is wrong with the present. Exploring alternatives that may have affected other groups instead of those historically marginalized can make the need for change more evident [9].

When thinking about issues of gender in society, the focus is usually on discrimination, the missed

opportunities, or the challenges faced by women. Flipping the conversation to focus on gender privilege “allows a fresh angle and outlook to gender differences in the workplace” [10] by thinking about the additional advantages that are gained and what would happen if those advantages were taken away or did not exist at all.

Men often benefit from gender inequalities in business, as they face less competition and are able to advance more quickly, while women may be victims of workplace discrimination, which hinders their progress. This fresh perspective on gender dynamics can help create a more equitable environment for all genders in the corporate world [10].

This article plays with the idea of an alternate history of gender discrimination, turning minorities into majorities and vice versa, with the aim of promoting change through understanding the inequalities faced by women in the workplace and creating empathy by building an imagined world where women’s qualities and talents have a proper stage to shine [11]. This alternate history example could be used to turn the tables on other types of injustices and obstacles faced by diverse groups in an effort to promote change, also highlighting elements that are sometimes overlooked.

## 2. Background: The problem with gender bias, disparities, and discrimination in the workplace

Gender bias in organizations is a frequent concern, although it is a problem that has been prevalent for centuries. Unconscious gender bias refers to automatic mental associations influenced by gender-related traditions, norms, culture, and personal experiences, which can lead to unintentional preconceptions with negative connotations [12]. These subconscious associations facilitate rapid gender-based judgments and reinforce gender stereotypes.

Gender bias becomes evident when individuals face unjust disadvantages or undeserved advantages due to their gender [13]. The assumption that achieving gender balance in industries will naturally reduce bias and close gender gaps has been challenged by recent insights [14]. In the business realm, women continue to deal with the adverse effects of gender bias, primarily manifested in terms of wages, opportunities, and interactions with others [13]. The mere inclusion of women in the workforce doesn't inherently transform organizational structures and systems that inherently favor men [14].

The International Labour Organization Bureau for Employers' Activities conducted a survey focusing on barriers to women's leadership. Results show discrimination and unconscious gender bias are significant barriers for women, with social gender roles ranking as the second most-cited obstacle, followed by stereotypes against women and inherent gender bias in recruitment and advancement processes [12].

Unconscious bias also influences how employers perceive potential hires who are parents. A study comparing equally qualified candidates revealed that mothers were notably less likely to be recommended for hiring, and when they were recommended, they received starting yearly salaries approximately \$11,000 lower than equally qualified childless women [12]. In contrast, fathers did not face such penalties and were offered higher salaries than childless men [12].

Despite notable advancements, gender inequalities persist across social and economic domains. Ingrained in social institutions, these discriminations perpetuate gender disparities in education, employment, and health and hinder the progress toward a rights-based societal transformation [15]. In the United States, around 42% of working women report experiencing gender-based discrimination in their jobs [16].

One of the most significant gender gaps exists in income, with 25% of working women noting

earning less than their male counterparts for equivalent work [16]. Furthermore, on a global scale, women occupy just 25% of management positions [15]. Discrepancies are also observed in perceptions of competence, as 23% of employed women feel they have been treated as less competent due to their gender, compared to 6% of men [16]. Educational attainment also influences experiences of discrimination among women in an unfair way. Highly educated women, including those with postgraduate degrees, report higher rates of workplace gender discrimination than their less educated counterparts [16].

Considering that approximately 40% of women and girls reside in countries characterized by high or very high levels of discrimination [17], it is a very important issue that needs to be addressed by organizations worldwide. An alternate world is needed, hence the value of alternate histories.

## 2.1 The three M's of female employees.

The innate biological experiences that most women encounter throughout life are the same; menstruation, maternity, and menopause (the three M's). The first cycle begins between ages 8 to 15 [18], while the final cycle, menopause, can begin anywhere between the ages of 45 to 55 and last up to 14 years [19]. Through every step of the biological life-cycle of a woman, prejudices are placed on them. For example, the pre-menstrual cycle is seen as a time when women become overly emotional, angry, and depressed. A study done over the course of 70 days found that, while women reported having more fluctuations in their overall mood than men, there was no actual difference between the fluctuations of either group [20]; however, the stereotype has continued to persist in modern society. The taboo nature of discussing the three m's in the workplace has created a detrimental setting for women to attempt ascending the corporate ladder, placing them

at a clear disadvantage to their male counterparts [21]. Seeing as the three m's begin before the age of the average new worker, which is between ages 15 and 25, and last until the final years of the average person's career [22], women are unable to escape the unjust prejudice placed on them, either knowingly or unknowingly, at every step of their professional career.

Gender disparities persist in high-level positions, with a notable imbalance in the number of women who aspire to such roles and those who are able to attain them. Despite women's ambitions and qualifications, they continue to face barriers that hinder their progress, including implicit biases, limited access to networks, and systemic discrimination. This issue is commonly referred to as the glass ceiling. Women often encounter a lack of support compared to their male counterparts when seeking high-level positions, ranging from mentorship opportunities to sponsorship and advocacy. Even when women do break through these barriers and ascend to positions of power, they often feel isolated, as men tend to receive more support in their roles. With a lack of support comes the challenge of discussing personal matters in the workplace, which can further exacerbate their sense of isolation [23].

While not discussed as frequently as the glass ceiling, the glass cliff has the potential to be more damaging to people's perception of women in the workplace and shares many similarities in the way that it makes minority figures in corporate environments feel. The glass cliff refers to a precarious situation in which a woman, or any other minority figure, is placed in a position of leadership where the situation is less than desirable [24]. Oftentimes, this situation can result in the termination of the leadership position as a result of damage caused prior to their appointment. In a way, the woman can be seen as a scapegoat of sorts, resulting in people seeing them as inferior or incapable. This allows for the stereotypes forced onto women to persist.

Another relevant notion is the glass labyrinth, which helps explain difficulties that women face in their careers, which are less linear than those of their male counterparts and that are crossed by their one vital cycle [25]. The glass labyrinth presents a scenario in which obstacles appear at every turn because men and women are judged differently, starting with the information they post on their CVs and the first interviews due to unequal demands and constant barriers, and it becomes more difficult to find their way through an ever-growing maze. The main difference with regard to the glass ceiling is that this is not an impenetrable barrier but a series of constraints that take time and courage to crack [26]. The good news is that more women are actually getting through, although the labyrinth continues to form with every obstacle put in their path, which creates a challenging road ahead [27].

Addressing these disparities and providing equitable support and opportunities for women at all stages of their careers is crucial to achieve gender equality in leadership roles and creating inclusive work environments [28].

Biases like these are common in the workplace and are supported by dominant stereotypes, which over time, have become norms. This explains the reasons why the world around us functions in specific ways. We have become accustomed to certain biases that have become ingrained in society. Sometimes the merit or worth of certain people is not being questioned, but we tend to follow stereotypes that somehow "fit." In the workplace, such stereotypes blind us from the important skills and talents of different people, including women. Performance evaluations of women in the workplace are frequently polarized, ignoring valuable skills and traits by making unfair comparisons with others, especially males.

Interesting examples have been presented by García-Valenzuela and Jiménez-Jiménez [25], who have suggested that women apply for a job when

they meet 80–85% of the requirements while men do it with only 65% compliance. Men tend to trust other characteristics that can compensate for the missing requirements. Even with fewer criteria being met, men are more likely to get the same job than women.

When trying to educate employees in inclusive leadership, the Catalyst model [25] becomes essential. It is based on four behaviors: bravery, humility, responsibility, and empowerment. These elements can be used as directives in writing alternative histories based on gender to highlight special skills and traits of women in the workplace.

Gender studies have shown that women possess important skills and traits that are valued in the workplace, although there does not seem to be common agreement on how many important feminine skills and traits there are, nor their relative importance or value. A content analysis of the most important publications on the Web of Science and Scopus in March 2023 yielded the following 20, which are qualities needed in the workplace:

1. Empathy
2. Optimism
3. Passion
4. Compassion
5. Caring/caregiving
6. Teamwork/team spirit
7. Collaboration
8. Relationship building
9. Listening skills
10. Persuasion
11. Generosity
12. Intuition
13. Inspiring and uplifting/ motivating
14. Mediating skills
15. Patience
16. Organizing and planning
17. Multitasking
18. Grace with grit
19. Creativity

## 20. Perseverance/resilience

### 2.2 The value of alternate history in dealing with bias and discrimination

Alternate history explores the past not just for the sake of it but to use it instrumentally to comment on the state of the contemporary world. When authors speculate on the past, they are actually passing judgment about how they perceive the present [29] in a way that either idealizes the current state of events by showing how everything could have been worse or criticizes it by proposing a better past or just a different one that makes people rethink what is wrong with the current one [3].

Alternate history emerges as a discourse that directly responds to and challenges preexisting forms of discourse, representing resistance to prevailing political, colonial, patriarchal, and other oppressive structures [30]. In this sense, alternate history can be used as a way to approach issues in society through creative stories, opening almost limitless horizons and options [31].

Exercising analytical thinking through a creative method such as alternative history provides people with an opportunity to play with their knowledge and imagination to approach issues. Alternate history brings about multiple perspectives, and it can be a practice that fosters the open-mindedness it takes to discuss varying identities [31]. It is a window to understand a different reality, something that might help shape future events and even be used as a mental exercise.

“Storytelling and innovation should exist symbiotically through acts of experimentation and creation. They can be mutually beneficial to one another, influence our organizational culture and help us build the worlds we wish existed. Instead of an afterthought, let’s bring innovation to the forefront of how these stories are being told — highlighting the complex, in-between, and

incomplete stories that our organizations need to tell and hear” [32]. In reducing unconscious bias against minorities, alternate history provides fresh perspectives into an unknown that could be very positive.

Gender has been analyzed from the perspective of alternate history before. In 2017 an article published by the Guardian called *What if women ruled the world?*, different interviews with comedians, writers, politicians, and CEOs are presented to try to understand whether a world ruled by women would be fairer after millennia of injustices [33]. Some of the answers led to an alternate future in which societies would be better because there would be less violence and instability and more peace since men kill more people than women and perform more violent acts. Wealth would quite possibly be better distributed since women are generally less interested in accumulating money and power. Furthermore, women would no longer be the victims; there would be fewer sexual attacks and no catcalling, although reproductive health and maternity would still be an issue. There would also be a change in the presumption that there will always be someone at home to deal with all the problems.

A performance called *What if Women Ruled the World?* developed by Yael Bartana [34], an Israeli multimedia artist, has addressed the same topic by showing a round table that resembles a War room – but is called the Peace Room – in which actors and a rotating cast of experts need to make proposals to stop a nuclear catastrophe, based on positive human skills and the fact that a matriarchy would produce a more harmonious society.

### 3. Material and methods

Strategies for the use of alternate history in reducing gender bias have been collected from consulting sessions and the available literature. Developing alternate histories as part of consulting activities

requires very few materials that are available in all organizations. The most important resources are openness and imagination.

Specific questions and ideas can be set forward, for instance, writing alternate histories about what the male glass ceiling might look like in a woman’s world, the glass labyrinth, or how it would feel to be on a glass cliff. Other ideas might stem from specific movements in the recruitment process: unconscious bias against males for being too aggressive and competitive and for not being kind or caring enough. The emphasis can change based on specific organizational culture or climate situations, creating novel alternative histories each time. In creating the alternative histories, specific skills and traits of women in the workplace can be selected based on specific organizational purposes.

### 4. Proposal for application: Using alternate history to change perceptions about gender bias

For this particular way of using alternative histories, plausible alternative history is used as a guideline. Changing gender bias towards males is a minor event with big repercussions. Alternate history is a valuable tool to change perceptions about different discrimination biases in the workplace, including gender. In this sense, alternate history can be integrated into diversity-training programs. “Diversity-training programs alone will not overcome conscious and unconscious biases. But they can raise awareness and trigger reflection on what may be more effective ways to change processes and organizational structures that lead to bias” [35].

“Storytelling uses words and images to bring ideas and concepts to life. While stories can be used to feed the imagination, storytelling also has value in managing change and transformation. Businesses can use narrative storytelling techniques to illustrate the importance of an initiative, explain

product value, or spell out the reasoning behind critical organizational change decisions” [36].

An interesting approach is to create an alternate history in which gender quotas and women’s participation in decision-making processes is reversed. Groups are asked to develop an alternative history in which positions currently filled by men would be filled by women. Groups are then encouraged to develop an outcome of a credible and plausible alternate history narrative. What would the workplace look like if roles were reversed? What would higher female participation do to the organization?

Using alternate history methods to raise awareness of gender differences in the workplace and promote change can be an effective way to engage people in discussions about gender inequality and its impact. Building and sharing an alternate history of gender discrimination can involve the following steps:

1. Research and analyze gender disparities in the workplace: Before creating an alternate history scenario, it is essential to understand the current state of gender inequality in the workplace. Research and analyze data on the gender pay gap, representation of women in leadership positions, and discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

2. Develop an alternate history scenario: Based on the research phase, use storytelling techniques to create an alternate history scenario that explores what the workplace might have looked like if gender stereotypes and inequality stemming from them had been reversed. This scenario should highlight the disparities and challenges that men would face in this context and provide a thought-provoking comparison to the current reality.

3. Promote dialogue: Encourage the participants to engage in discussions about the alternate history scenario and how it relates to their own experiences in the workplace.

4. Strive for change: Use the discussions to

create a call to action for promoting change in the workplace. This could involve advocating for policies that address gender disparities, providing resources and training for employers and employees, or supporting initiatives that promote gender equality.

A brief example is presented below.

In this alternate history, the dynamics of gender quotas and women’s participation in decision-making processes have taken a unique turn, with men facing the challenges that women have historically encountered. As men strive for equality in the workplace, the world of work undergoes a significant transformation.

In this reversed reality, workplaces experience a shift in power dynamics, prompting a reevaluation of traditional gender roles. Men find themselves advocating for their rights to equal representation and opportunities in decision-making positions. This change ushers in a broader understanding of the importance of diversity and inclusion, driving organizations to value a more comprehensive range of perspectives.

Women’s gender-specific traits, often overshadowed by societal norms, now come to the forefront. Empathy, collaboration, and effective communication, typically associated with women, become integral in organizational success. Companies harness these traits to create more supportive work environments, nurturing employee well-being and fostering a sense of unity. These traits also prove crucial in conflict resolution and team cohesion, enhancing workplace relationships and overall productivity [37].

As women take the lead, efficiency and competitiveness flourish. This brings about a balance of viewpoints, stimulating innovation and creativity [38]. Research has shown that diverse teams make better decisions and develop more innovative solutions, which now becomes the cornerstone of corporate strategies [39]. Companies leverage this diversity to tap into untapped markets, enhance



product development, and connect with a broader consumer base.

The decision-making process itself becomes more participatory and inclusive [40]. Collaborative leadership models emerge as people embrace a more inclusive approach to leadership, seeking input from all members of the team. Transparent communication and a shared sense of purpose lead to better engagement and alignment within organizations [41]. The emphasis on listening and valuing differing perspectives helps to address challenges more effectively and implement solutions that benefit the entire workforce.

In this world, women rise to occupy a majority of leadership positions. They bring their unique leadership traits to the forefront, such as empathy, emotional intelligence, and a focus on long-term sustainable growth. Organizations embrace these qualities, fostering a culture of understanding and support that resonates throughout all levels of the corporate ladder.

With women leading the way, the workplace becomes a realm of collaboration, growth, and empowerment. Leadership decisions prioritize the well-being of employees, work-life balance, and a commitment to social responsibility. This ethos translates into stronger corporate social responsibility initiatives, as women leaders champion causes that align with their values and those of their organizations.

In this alternate history, the reversal of gender quotas and women's participation in decision-making processes ushers in a world where diversity, inclusivity, and empathy drive workplace dynamics [37]. Women's unique leadership traits reshape organizational structures, propelling companies toward unprecedented levels of productivity, profitability, competitiveness, and social responsibility [42]. (Post, Lokshin & Boone, 2021).

## 5. Solutions and Recommendations

It is important to give the same opportunities to underrepresented groups and individuals. By using alternate histories, it is possible to acknowledge their value and to understand that, in the end, we are all human beings with the same dignity and should have the same opportunities. It is essential to understand the underlying consequences of privileges and that trying to shift the balance towards women does not create discriminatory practices against the rest of the collectives. Quotas, targets, and other organizational policies should be made as positive actions and not as positive discrimination. One of the key benefits of using alternative histories to address diversity issues is making biases visible.

## 6. Future Perspectives

The use of alternate history in promoting workplace diversity and fairness in the workplace has been growing in recent years. "It is likely that alternate history will continue to gain prominence and respectability" [23], which will probably further its use in different settings. This type of exercise can be used to educate against other types of biases, for instance, specific religions, races, etc. Further research could include empirical studies to evaluate the impact of this kind of method to promote change.

## 7. Conclusions

Alternate histories introduce a creative element into critical inquiry, encouraging participants to consider and develop alternative interpretations. Reconstituting history in this way encourages people to reframe problems and be critical of assumptions, question interpretations, identify and empathize with challenges faced by others, and develop coherent narratives [43].

A workplace culture where gender inequality is reversed would look vastly different from our

current reality. The proposed application of alternate history presented in this article can help highlight the importance of striving for gender equality and ensuring that all individuals have equal access to resources and opportunities in the workplace and beyond. Building alternate histories where situations are the complete opposite of what they are in reality makes differences more visible and helps challenge the status quo creating empathy.

Reflecting on the past can offer insights for projecting into the future. This can involve creating “critical fictions” that enable consideration of alternative scenarios that might not otherwise be explored. One benefit of using alternate history is that it supports both research and deductive reasoning skills, challenging assumptions about the inevitability of history and highlighting the significance of human agency [43]. This can encourage participants to think critically about the forces that shape historical events and the importance of action and intervention.

Furthermore, alternate history in the context of this article can help identify social issues and analyze the ethical consequences of decision-making. By incorporating alternate history into the discussion of issues such as inequality, organizations can provide members with a powerful tool for playing with the past, reflecting on the present, and reimagining the future.

## Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the University of Porto, especially Professor Ana de Silveira Moura, for the opportunity to explore alternate histories of the workplace and think about the possibilities of what could have been and what could be in order to promote a shift towards fairer and more diverse organizations.

## References

- [1] Quinion M 2002 Allohistory *World Wide Words* <http://www.worldwidewords.org/turnsofphrase/tp-all1.htm> (Accessed 18 June 2023).
- [2] Crowley J 2022 Simon Stålenhag’s Alternate Histories *Boston Review* <https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/simon-stalenhags-alternate-histories/> (Accessed 12 July 2023).
- [3] Rosenfeld G 2019. Why alternate histories have overtaken pop culture *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/02/20/why-alternate-histories-have-overtaken-pop-culture/> (Accessed 12 July 2023).
- [4] Tambolo L 2014 Pliability and resistance. Feyerabendian insights into sophisticated realism *European Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 4 197–213. DOI: 10.1007/s13194-014-0082-9.
- [5] Rosenfeld G 2002 Why do we ask “what if?” Reflections on the Function of alternate history *History and Theory* 41 90–103.
- [6] Elster J 1978 *Logic and Society: Contradictions and possible worlds* (New York: Wiley).
- [7] Nolan D 2013 Why historians (and everyone else) should care about counterfactuals. *Philosophical Studies* 163 317–335. DOI: 10.1007/s11098-011-9817-z
- [8] Morton A 2013 *Alternative History...What if women were in charge?* Books By Women <http://booksbywomen.org/alternative-history-what-if-women-were-in-charge-by-alison-morton/> (Accessed 12 June 2023).
- [9] Montaudon Tomas C M, and Amsler A 2022 Use of alternate histories in benchmarking: Building better business *Hypothesis Historia Periodical* 2 1-14. DOI: 10.34626/2184-9978\_2022\_2\_1.
- [10] Krienko A 2022 What if we flipped the conversation from gender discrimination to gender privilege? *LSE*. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2022/03/17/what-if-we-flipped-the-conversation-from-gender-discrimination-to->

- gender-privilege/ (Accessed 12 July 2023).
- [11] Zallis S 2018 How To Own Your Feminine Strengths At Work *Forbes Magazine*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/shelleyzalis/2018/10/18/how-to-own-your-feminine-strengths-at-work/?sh=660c7cea5aa7> (Accessed 23 July 2023).
- [12] International Labour Organization 2017 Research note: Breaking barriers: Unconscious gender bias in the workplace. [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_dialogue/--act\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_601276.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/--act_emp/documents/publication/wcms_601276.pdf) (Accessed 3 May 2023).
- [13] St. Catherine University 2022 Gender Bias in the Workplace: Bridging the Gap for Women in Business. [https://www.stkate.edu/academics/women-in-leadership-degrees/blog/gender-bias-in-the-workplace#:~:text=Gender%20bias%20exists%20when%20a,advantages\)%20because%20of%20their%20gender](https://www.stkate.edu/academics/women-in-leadership-degrees/blog/gender-bias-in-the-workplace#:~:text=Gender%20bias%20exists%20when%20a,advantages)%20because%20of%20their%20gender) (Accessed 12 June 2023).
- [14] Diahl A, Stephenson A L and Dzubinski L M 2022 Against Women Persists in Female-Dominated Workplaces *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2022/03/research-how-bias-against-women-persists-in-female-dominated-workplaces> (Accessed 11 July 2023).
- [15] OECD 2023 Gender discrimination in social norms: Measuring the invisible. <https://www.oecd.org/stories/gender/social-norms-and-gender-discrimination/> (Accessed 11 July 2023).
- [16] Parker K and Funk C 2017 Gender discrimination comes in many forms for today's working women Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2017/12/14/gender-discrimination-comes-in-many-forms-for-todays-working-women/> (Accessed 12 June 2023).
- [17] OECD 2023 Gender equality in times of crisis: SIGI 2023 Global report. <https://www.oecd.org/stories/gender/social-norms-and-gender-discrimination/sigi/> (Accessed 9 August 2023).
- [18] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2021. Your menstrual cycle. <https://www.womenshealth.gov/menstrual-cycle/your-menstrual-cycle> (Accessed 3 May 2023).
- [19] National Institute on Aging 2021 What is menopause? <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-menopause> (Accessed 2 May 2023).
- [20] McFarlane J, Martin C L, Williams T M 1988 Mood fluctuations: women versus men and menstrual versus other cycles *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 12(2) , 201–223. DOI: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.1988.tb00937.x
- [21] Grandey A Gabriel A King E 2019 Tackling taboo topics: A review of the three ms in working women's lives *Journal of Management*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0149206319857144> (Accessed 23 July 2023).
- [22] Social Security Administration ND Normal retirement age. <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/progdata/nra.html> (Accessed 9 June 2023).
- [23] Gonzales M 2022. The glass ceiling: woman and barriers to leadership *Society for Human Resource Management*. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/behavioral-competencies/global-and-cultural-effectiveness/pages/women-and-barriers-to-leadership.aspx> (Accessed 9 August 2023).
- [24] Oakes K 2022 The invisible danger of the 'glass cliff' *BBC*. <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20220204-the-danger-of-the-glass-cliff-for-women-and-people-of-colour> (Accessed 3 May 2023).
- [25] García-Valenzuela, M Jiménez-Jiménez, 2019 Héroes de la diversidad. Por qué las organizaciones necesitan apostar por la inclusión. Barcelona Gestión 2000.
- [26] Stimpson M 2021 Women in the Workforce: The Shift from Glass-Ceiling to Labyrinth of Leadership HS Handshake. <https://handshake.co/2021/03/15/women-in-the-workforce-the-shift-from-glass-ceiling-to-labyrinth-of-leadership/> (Accessed 11 June 2023).

- [27] Santovec M L 2010 Women's Metaphor: From 'Glass Ceiling To 'Labyrinth' *Women in Higher Education*, 19(12), 1-2.
- [28] McKinsey (2022). Women in the Workplace 2022. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/women-in-the-workplace> (Accessed 3 May 2023).
- [29] Rodwell G 2013 Whose History? Engaging History Students through Historical Fiction. (Australia: University of Adelaide Press).
- [30] Ali A 2011 Salman Rushdie's Grimus as an Alternative History. *The Criterion: An International Journal in English* 2(2). <https://www.the-criterion.com/V2/n2/Ali.pdf> (Accessed 12 July 2023).
- [31] Parameswari Latif A 2019 Multiperspectivity the through Alternative History in the Classroom (Master's dissertation: University of Massachusetts Boston) [https://scholarworks.umb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1585&context=masters\\_theses](https://scholarworks.umb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1585&context=masters_theses) (Accessed 3 May 2023).
- [32] Christiano A and Sheehan M 2023 Storytelling in the Wild. United Nations Refugee Agency <https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/storytelling-in-the-wild-a-guide-for-culture-shifting-storytelling-in-natural-settings/> (Accessed 3 May 2023).
- [33] Rustin S Gibson H and Jusuf H 2017. Interview. What if women rule the world? *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/jul/05/what-if-women-ruled-the-world> (Accessed 3 May 2023).
- [34] Goldman A J 2018 Imagining a world ruled by women *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/24/arts/what-if-women-ruled-the-world-volksbuehne.html> (Accessed 11 June 2023).
- [35] Gino F 2014 Ending Gender Discrimination Requires More than a Training Program *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2014/10/ending-gender-discrimination-requires-more-than-a-training-program> (Accessed 11 June 2023).
- [36] Leeman R 2018 Change Management and Storytelling *LinkedIn* <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/change-management-storytelling-ron-leeman/> (Accessed 12 July 2023).
- [37] Maiorescu R D 2016 Crisis Management at General Motors and Toyota: An Analysis of Gender-Specific Communication and Media Coverage *Public Relations Review* 42 556-563. DOI: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2016.03.011
- [38] Blake-Beard S Shapiro M and Ingols C 2020 Feminine? Masculine? Androgynous leadership as a necessity in COVID-19 *Gender in Management: An International Journal* 35(7-8), 607-617. DOI: 10.1108/GM-07-2020-0222
- [39] Novotney A 2023 Women leaders make work better. Here's the science behind how to promote them *American Psychological Association*. <https://www.apa.org/topics/women-girls/female-leaders-make-work-better> (Accessed 12 July 2023).
- [40] Faizan R Nair S L S and Haque A U 2018 The effectiveness of feminine and masculine leadership styles in relation to contrasting gender's performances *Polish Journal of Management Studies* 17(1) 78-92. DOI: 10.17512/pjms.2018.17.1.07
- [41] Appelbaum S Audet L and Miller J 2003 Gender and Leadership? Leadership and Gender? A Journey Through the Landscape of Theories *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 24 43-51. DOI: 10.1108/01437730310457320
- [42] Post C Lokshin B and Boone C 2021 Research: Adding Women to the C-Suite Changes How Companies Think *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2021/04/research-adding-women-to-the-c-suite-changes-how-companies-think> (Accessed 9 August 2023).
- [43] Waite N 2016 Learning Design Histories for Design Futures: Speculative Histories and Reflective *Practice Modes of Criticism* <https://modesofcriticism.org/learning-design-histories-for-design-futures/> (Accessed 9 August 2023).