



*II International Conference on  
Community Psychology  
(Lisboa, June 4-6-2008)*

**★ WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND  
COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY:  
AN EMPOWERING ALLIANCE  
FOR VISIONING AND  
IMPLEMENTING PERSONAL  
AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

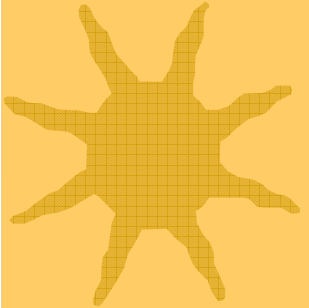
DONATA FRANCESCATO PROFESSOR OF COMMUNITY  
PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY LASAPIENZA ROME ITALY  
email [donata.francescato@uniroma1.it](mailto:donata.francescato@uniroma1.it)



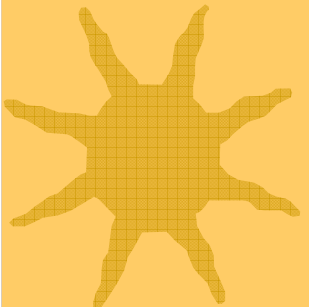


## *SHARED HISTORICAL ROOTS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY AND II. WAVE FEMINISM (LATE 60s EARLY 70s)*

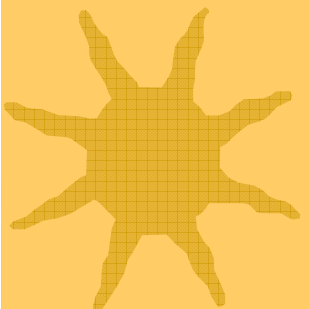
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- ★ 40 years personal experiences as a psychologist and women's movements (wm) activist



- ★ Professional evolution: experimental; clinical; community psychology –political psychology mass media internet



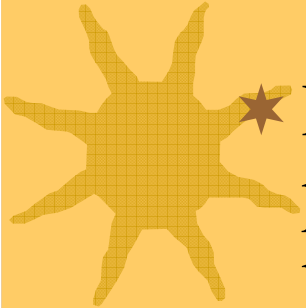
- ★ Consciousness raising groups, women's studies groups in the Usa, feminist magazine (Effe) 72-82 in italy, women and politics network

- ★ Strong need to integrate better the two pathways

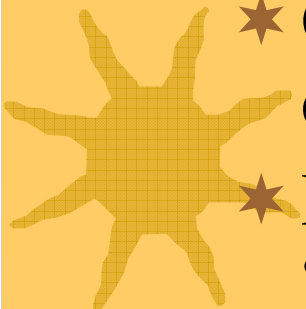


## *SHARED THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTS: THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL FRAMING PROBLEMS IN RELATIONAL AND COLLECTIVE PERSPECTIVES*

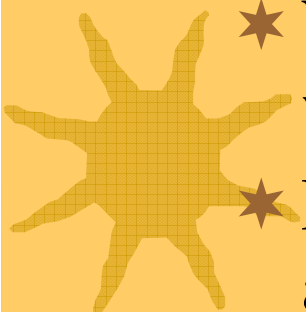
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★ Redstocking 1971 critique of individual psychotherapy as way to “privatize” women’s problems.



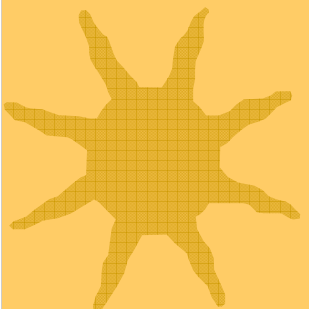
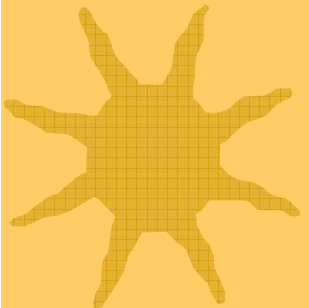
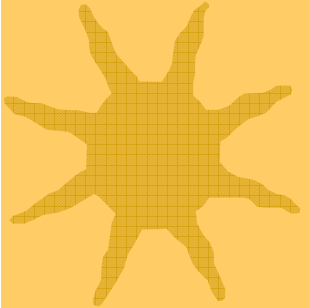
★ Chessler (1971) Marriage and Psychotherapy encourages women to speak rather than act



★ Need to see connections between individual “choices” and gender stereotypes

★ Wyckhoff (1971) three levels of oppression: in women’s heads, in intimate relations and in society

★ Nelson and Prilleltensky (2005) Personal, relational and collective ecological levels of oppression



## *WHAT DO CP AND WM HAVE IN COMMON? GOALS*

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- ★ The pursuit of liberation and wellbeing for all oppressed groups
- ★ The understanding that the core of oppression is power inequality
- ★ Power inequalities are “not natural” but historical and manmade
- ★ Power inequalities cannot be changed by individuals only but by collective struggles



*WHAT DO CP AND WM HAVE IN COMMON?  
OPPOSITION TO DOMINANT  
"MASCULINIZED" VALUES*



★ **ADAM & DERBER (2008)**

*competitiveness, or a desire to get ahead of others; aggression, or the need to maintain a tough demeanor; individualism, including the belief that everyone should make decisions based on what is best for them; and a belief that violence is a necessary tool to solve problems, or that fighting can be the best way to right a wrong”*



## WHAT DO CP AND WM HAVE IN COMMON? A PREFERENCE FOR “FEMINIZED” VALUES



- ★ *Cooperation*, such as working together with others for a common good; *empathy*, or the ability to understand and be sensitive to what other people are feeling; *an appreciation for equality*, including the belief that everyone is entitled certain rights, a preference *for non violent solutions to conflicts* and a belief that fighting only causes more problems; and *community*, or the feeling that everyone is part of something bigger
- ★ Schwartz & Rubel (2006) gender differences: men higher power, stimulation, hedonism, achievement and self-direction, women higher benevolence and universalism values



## *SHARED THEORETICAL CRITIQUES OF BLAMING THE VICTIM IDEOLOGIES*



★ Bond et al. 2000, Mulvey 1988, Mulvey et al. 2000 Freire 2000 Kelly 1990 Montero 1998, 2007, Grindley & Turner 2005) Both CP and WM stress the importance of going beyond traditional clinical individual based approaches, of giving voice to minorities, emarginated individuals and value subjectivity. Problems viewed as multidimensional, involving interaction between individuals, small groups, organisations, local communities, macro and virtual communities.



## *WOMEN'S CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING GROUPS: A TOOL TO REDISCOVER in CP?*

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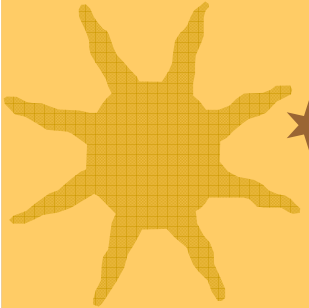
- As prototype of conscientization processes that situate personal problems in the context of larger political and structural forces
- Create ties and promote mutual help among group members and promote individual and collective changes



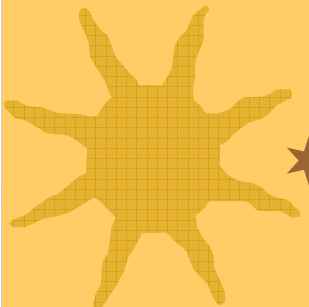
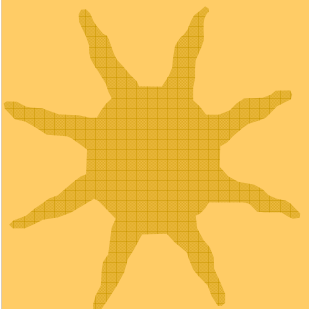
## *CP AND WM GIVE A CRUCIAL ROLE TO MINORITY NARRATIVES TO PROMOTE CULTURAL CHANGE UNDERMINING STEREOTYPICAL DOMINANT NARRATIVES*

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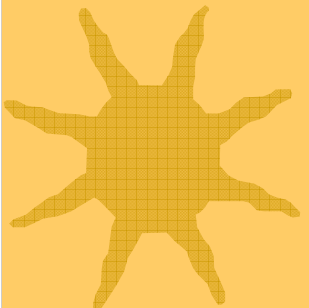
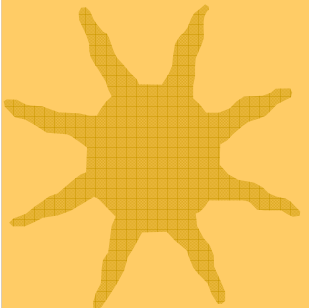
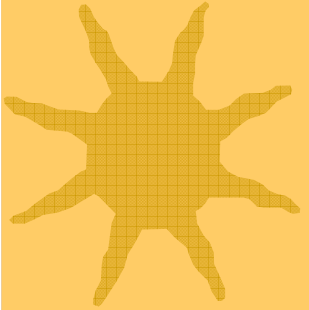


- ★ Value qualitative research (Bond et al. 2000, Gavey et al. 2001) CP and feminist psychology adopt postmodern, poststructuralists and social constructionism epistemologies that can challenge the dominant positivist paradigm of value-free, objective, measurement-focused research. Emphasis on contextualized understanding of people in contexts, multi-level, multi-method approaches, reflexivity and action orientation





## *FOCUS ON BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE EMPOWERMENT PROCESSES FOR LIBERATION*



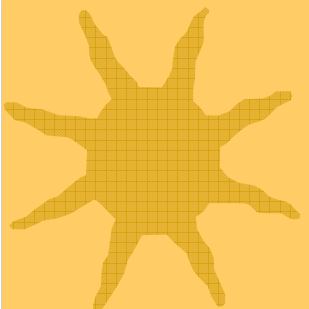
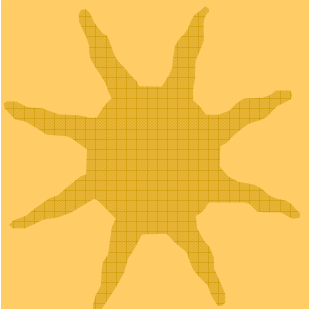
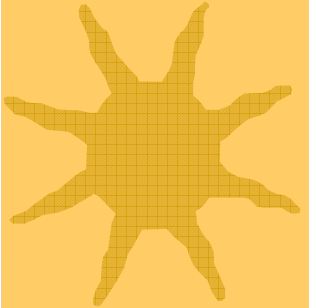
★ CP Hopefulness that change is thinkable, individuals' efficacy increased through participation, sociopolitical awareness of link between individual liberation and collective struggles obtained by increasing capacity to read power dynamics of contexts, to perceive obstacles and opportunities. Violence on women reinterpreted within historical gender inequalities and liberation theory frameworks.





## *FOCUS ON BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE EMPOWERMENTS PROCESSES : FROM EQUAL RIGHTS TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES*

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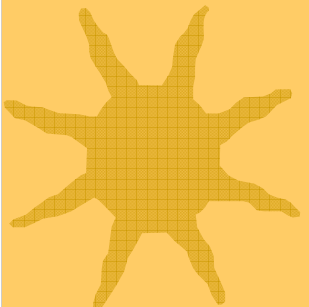
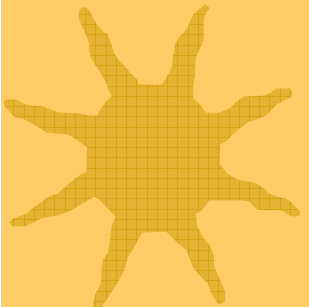
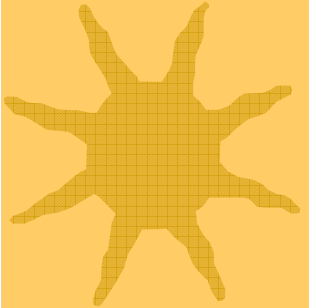


- ★ WM:developing awareness of how growing up sexist society where complementary gender stereotypes still prevalent, may have influenced educational, occupational and sexual individual choices. How personal change difficult to obtain and need to unite with other women and other oppressed minorities to obtain legal, economic social and cultural resources to promote power redistribution. Empowerment training workshops, ( Bruscaaglioni 2000, Francescato et al. 2004). Diversity Management Best Practices European Unions.



*WHAT HAVE CP AND WM ACHIEVED IN  
THE LAST DECADES?  
QUITE A LOT AND STILL TOO LITTLE*

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- ★ Feminist and CP values have become majority values among most female citizens and strong male minority (Adam & Derber 2008) but political, financial and cultural power structures still uphold masculine values and are run by males elites
- ★ Need to study powerful elites more



*WOMEN AND MINORITIES HAVE  
OVERCOME MANY STRUCTURAL AND  
INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS*

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- ★ Gains obtained through women's efforts (education; hard work) and anti sexist legislations and positive action programs with support of egalitarian males





## *CONTESTED THEORIES WHICH FAVOR STATUS QUO MAINTAINANCE*

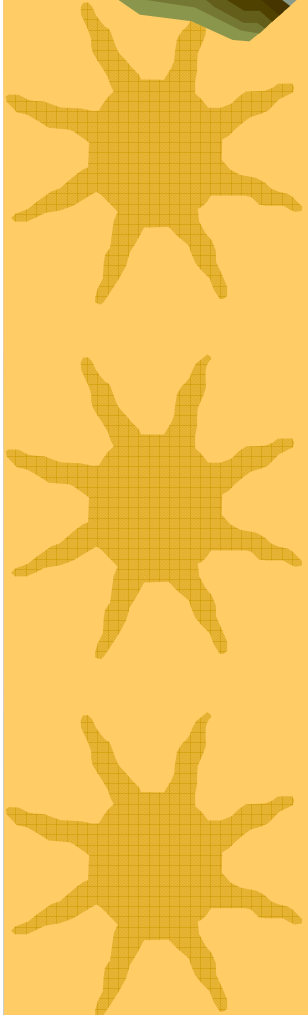


- ★ Both CP and WM criticize theories and political ideologies that accept as natural the social dominance of some groups- over others.
- ★ Much research on stereotypes and prejudice formation and reduction but social dominance, psychobiological and genetic gender differences theories get academic and press support



## *GENDERED VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL SEGREGATIONS STILL PREVAIL IN THE WORLD AND WITHIN COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY*

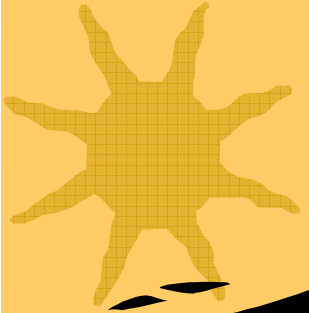
- ★ Scarcity of women in leadership positions in most professions (Eagly & Carli 2007), in political parliaments ( mean 17%, range 0 to 48% ipu 2008), predominance of men in CP research, teaching, leadership, publications and of women in frontline practioners (Gridley & Turner 2005)





## *FEMINISM AND COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY STILL MARGINAL*

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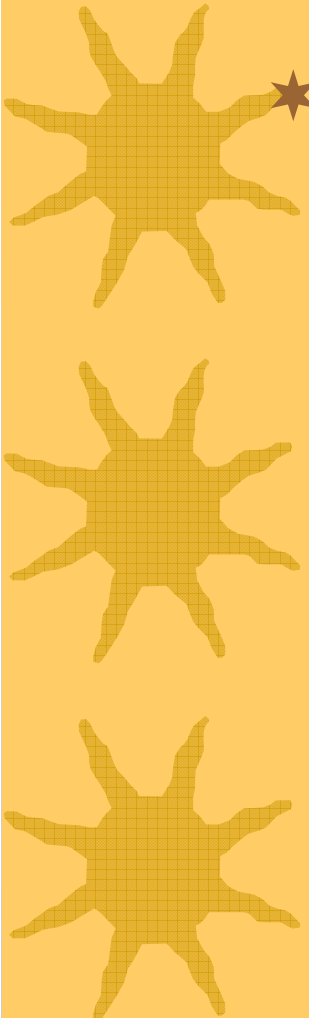
- ★ CP MINORITY STATUS WITHIN ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
- ★ MINORITY STATUS OF WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING ROLES
- ★ NEED FOR WOMEN TO PROMOTE THEIR POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT AND PLACE WOMEN WITH FEMINIZED VALUES IN POLITICAL OFFICE





## *WHAT ARE MAIN OBSTACLES FOR WOMEN IN POLITICS*

### *PERSISTING GENDER GAPS :*

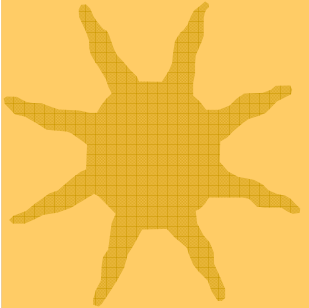


★ MEN men follow public affairs more, have more political knowledge, higher political self-efficacy and empowerment, and are more often activists in political parties or movements ((Dolan, Deckman and Swers 2006, Stokes 2005, Matland and Montgomery 2003). are encouraged to run for public office and more women, even in the top tier of professional accomplishment tend not to consider themselves qualified to run for political office (Fox and Lawless 2004). Contrasting results emerge on political ambition (Carrol 1985, Costantini 1990, Duerst-Lahti 1998).

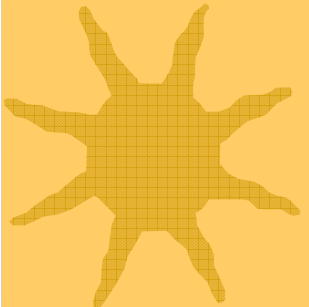


## *GLASSCEILING OR LABYRINTHS? WHY SO FEW WOMEN AND MINORITIES AT THE TOP?*

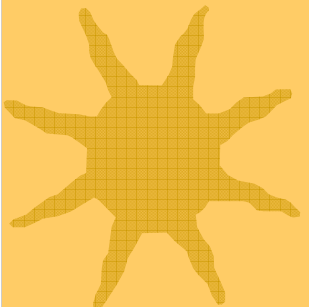
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★ Vastly popular glassceiling hypothesis: women encounter most obstacles near the top Eagly and Carli (2007) maintain obstacles along the way labyrinth hypothesis.



★ Francescato et al. (in press) found strong support for the labyrinth hypothesis with local and national women politicians strong policy implications





## *WHY "REVOLVING DOOR SYNDROME" IS HIGHER WITH WOMEN POLITICIANS*



- ★ Powerful men keep women out of electoral lists (Lowenduski 2002, 2005), or place them in the lower, unelectable places (Bledsoe & Herring 1990; Carrol 1994, Mateo Diaz 2005). put other trusted males into strategic political posts (Thomas 2002), marginalize elected politicians not sharing vital information (Francescato and Sorace 2006), verbally intimidating and interrupting them even when they chair a meeting (Kathelene 1994).



## *MORE STUDIES NEEDED BUT SOME DOCUMENT MALE GATEKEEPING*



- ★ Male politicians make negative comments about the femininity of assertive female colleagues (Rudman 1998 Carli and Om-Shipna 2000), relegate them to health, education, equal opportunities and welfare committees (ASDO 2006), and devalue their achievements attributing them to luck (Heilman 2001). Men also resent women who are successful in politics, especially if they are wives and mothers (Sala 2003)



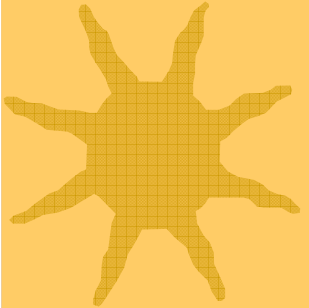
## *CONCILIATING WE CAN BUT MASS MEDIA ACCESS VERY DIFFICULT*

- ★ Media theorists have shown that women politicians receive both less coverage and less favorable media representation in most western countries particularly in national competitions. They are less present in talk show and news programs, and are portrayed as less likely to succeed. There are more comments on their physical appearance, and on their private lives, and less on their policy positions. ( Caciagli and Corbetta 2001, Dolan, Deckman and Swears 2006, Ondercin and Weloch 2005, Kahn Palmer and Simon 2006) In our research both local and national politicians put difficult media access as their major difficulties, far above conciliating family and work.

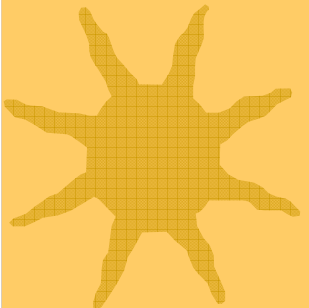


## *NEED TO DISCOVER WHAT HELPS WOMEN POLITICIANS TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES AND HOW TO MOTIVATE*

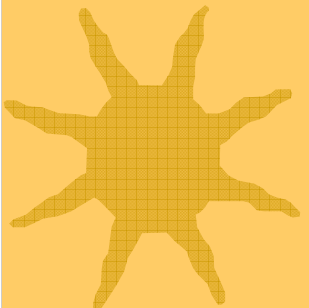
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- ★ More women and men with feminized values including community psychologists to run for political office at all levels



- ★ Not much is known about what personal qualities and environmental supports women politicians need to both to remain in politics once elected and to be able to reach top political positions upholding their convictions and values (Stevens 2007). We have started to interview women activists of parties and movements, local and national politicians.





## *GRADUAL REEDUCATION OF MEN STILL GREAT CHALLENGE!!!*

- ★ Men have higher SDO than women (Pratto 2004) even in extreme leftists groups (Mebane et al. 2008) how do we persuade at least some of them to change?
- ★ Community psychologists need to study more the influence of internet and other mass media on people's values and possibly use the net more
- ★ Put community psychology ideas and experience on You Tube and My Face and Second Life to reach more males and the younger generations who are avid net travelers.