Becoming an "Expert": Gendered Positioning, Praise, and Participation in an Activist Community

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Abstract: This paper argues that gendered participation in a community of practice can create an illusion of expertise and learning based on masculine performances of expertise. Looking at a local campaign of the student climate change movement over the course of one year, we analyze participants' interactions and examine how gendered positioning produces "experts". We argue that these experts achieve their expertise not through learning or achieving mastery of the core competencies of the community of practice, but rather by performing dominant forms of masculinity, which are affirmed by other members of the community and recognized as authoritative. We argue that theorizations of situated learning must centre critiques of sociohistorical power relations in order to accommodate for such tendencies.

Introduction

Climate change is a pressing issue, disproportionately impacting low-income communities, communities of colour, and Indigenous peoples (Taylor, 1997). Given the gravity of the situation, we need critical and competent people who actively combat the root causes of climate change. The youth climate movement is actively engaged in this work and in developing the leadership and expertise of the next generation of activists. The experts the climate movement is cultivating believe they know the facts, are willing to act decisively, and speak assertively to stop climate change. The problem is, this group is almost exclusively made up of privileged White men (Goldenberg, 2014). Where are the rest of the experts?

This research asks how gendered forms of participation enable and constrain students' learning and engagement in a climate activist campaign, such that men identify and become identified as experts while women do not (1). In our analysis we overwhelmingly found men were recognized as experts while women's contributions were likely to be dismissed or fail to gain traction. We argue that in this community becoming an expert was deeply tied to behaving in typically-masculine ways. When certain members positioned themselves as authorities through engaging in exclusive talk and taking up space, others came to recognize them as experts. We focus on three forms of interaction: ideas being accepted without discussion, exclusive talk, and affirmation. Through these practices, we see expertise being conflated with dominant masculine forms of participation, making those modes of participation difficult, and sometimes impossible, for women to perform.

Our analysis shows that this process reinforced itself in an ongoing way. As dominant men presented themselves as experts, the rest of the group tended to recognize that "expertise", which reinforced men's views that they were, in fact, more experienced and more qualified. That sense of being more qualified lead them to engage other male participants in exclusive talk, garnering more recognition and blocking other people from participating. They tended to receive praise and encouragement, which we argue further entrenched men's sense of expertise. At the same time, women's contributions received far fewer instances of praise from fewer people, and few women were included in exclusive talk. Women's attempts to contribute were less successful, and the dismissal of women's contributions lead them to be less assertive and withdraw vocally and physically.

We argue that becoming an expert in a community of practice may have less to do with adopting shared practices or acquiring new skills, and more to do with performing masculinity, even in spaces that value social justice and anti-oppression. In the past, communities of practice and situated learning scholars have taken for granted that the learning process involved in becoming a full participant necessitates developing understandings of what the community does, why, and how. We argue that this may not always the case, as participants may become full members based on their socialization and identity performances, regardless of their learning processes, just as other members can be left at the periphery. This raises an important question for situated learning theorists—how do we accommodate for social relations of inequity in communities of practice and how does that impact access to learning and full participation?

Situated learning and communities of practice in a gendered world

Situated learning theory understands learning as a social process of becoming part of a community through adopting its practices (Lave and Wenger 1991, Lave 1996, Contu and Willmott 2003). Learning is an active, ongoing process in which people move into different forms of participation by engaging with the activities, theories, and nuances of the group context. Communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998) are understood as groups of people engaged in collective meaning-making through joint work and mutual engagement with shared repertoires of action. Legitimate peripheral participation describes the process by which new members become proficient at skills and activities within a community of practice and become part of the community, moving from marginality towards mastery of the practices (Lave and Wenger 1991). Within situated learning theories, learning is considered becoming – becoming a type of person, a member of a community, a recognized expert (Lave 1996). This is about identity development at the individual level, but also about the social production of identity, where other participants in a community of practice support (or do not) and acknowledge one's process of development, and through that process, community identity is developed

Just as communities produce identities and are in turn shaped by the identities of their members, gender is socially produced in context. West and Zimmerman (1987) employ the notion of "doing gender" to explain the ways that gender is a socially produced performance rather than a fixed category. Gender is an historical social relation with consistent meaning under patriarchy, yet gender is produced in an ongoing way and is specific to different contexts and groupings – people perform gender in nuanced ways depending on the norms of the space they are in. Crenshaw (1991) argues that gender is always complicated by intersecting identities and social relations. People perform their genders differently depending not only on the space, but also their social location at the intersections of race, colonialism, dis/ability, class, and other relations. This is not to say that people are free to perform their gender(s) in any way they please. Gender is a collective performance and social relation, and gender policing and recognition can constrain people's modes of doing gender.

Communities of practice tend to reproduce dominant social relations (Curnow 2013). Although they can be subverted, gendered practices are often unintentionally part of the modes of participation, and create inequitable spaces within groups. Gender is performed in ways specific to the community, but embedded in the broader patriarchal context. Within a community of practice, if practices reflect the dominant gender relations and performances, some practices will be out of reach for people from different social locations (Hodges, 1998), and for women and trans people in particular. Salminen-Karlsson (2006), Curnow (2013), and Paechter (2003) examine gendered performances and the ways women access full participation in male-dominated communities of practice, arguing that if women are unable to perform or access certain gendered activities, their mastery of the performances and learning are complicated and often limited.

One of the ways people do gender is through positioning themselves and being positioned by others. Positioning refers to the ways people present themselves through their actions, uses of space, ways of speaking, and physical presentation, among other things, and how other people understand those actions and situate people within the community (Holland, Lachiotte, Skinner, and Cain, 2001). Gendered participation in a community of practice is one aspect of how one positions oneself and is positioned by others, and gendered practices are enacted through different modes of positioning.

We are interested in the confluence of these theoretical frameworks – how men doing gender in dominant patriarchal ways of performing masculinity position themselves, and in turn are positioned by others, as experts within a community of practice. We trace how men in an activist community of practice become "experts" through their positioning and examine what they learn, as well as what women in the group learn, as men's performances of expertise are situated as the full practices of the community, making them unattainable or at least uncomfortable for other-gendered people. Bringing these frameworks together shows how gendered performance is disparately valued. Masculine modes of participation are recognized as expert, rendering women's forms of participation less valuable and limiting their access to the full practices of the community.

This analysis troubles the view in situated learning theory that becoming recognized as a full participant in a position of mastery necessarily denotes learning, or vice versa. Situated learning emerged, in part, from studies of apprenticeship, where skill-based competencies were a core part of the practices necessary, in addition to the social performances of the community, in order to become a full participant. However, what is required to become recognized as a full participant may not reflect performances of particular skills or even adopting a shared frame of the philosophies or logic of the community, as has been suggested (Lave and Wenger, 1991). While we agree that learning occurs in communities and is part of the co-navigation of communities and activities, we offer a caveat that learning skills or shifting consciousness may not be required to become a full participant. As we

demonstrate below, participants learned to work together, and men learned, at some level, that it was not only possible, but also advantageous for them to perform dominant forms of masculinity. However, situated learning assumes people's learning will include competencies and performances tied to the relevant subject – in the case of an environmental activist group, the assumption would be that people would become masters through adopting practices of environmentalism, like strategizing, canvassing, or other core techniques of environmental activist communities. We argue that expertise was decoupled from these types of learning. Dominant male speakers moved into full participation not through their mastery of the full practices of the community related to their work, but through their ability to position themselves and perform dominant masculinity in the group. Learning did occur, but expert status and centrality was not available to every participant – women were prevented from becoming recognized as experts or full participants in the community. In order to address this, we must attend to power and sociocultural relations of inequity in order to mitigate the assumptions of expertise and centre instead on learning, rather than enactments of privilege.

Methods

This work is based on an ongoing participatory action research project that examines how student activists learn about race, colonialism, and patriarchy through their involvement in environmental activist campaigns. Data was collected with a Toronto-based campus climate action group. The group of young people came together to fight climate change, primarily through a local campaign that is internationally coordinated. They meet weekly and plan different strategies to engage students. Students are regularly involved in direct actions, social media campaigns, and social events to move forward an environmental activist agenda. Meetings had from 11-27 participants, representing all years in school, (1,2,3,4,5, Law, MA, PhD). Men and women students attended in roughly even numbers and there were no openly trans or other gendered students. Racial and ethnic make-up shifted over the course of the year, but the group remained predominantly White, even as Indigenous, Black, South-Asian, and East Asian students became increasingly involved. The group had three elected leadership positions, one filled by a White woman, the other two by White men. Decision-making was ostensibly done by what they termed "working consensus", but in practice, decisions were not made in a consistent way.

These young people are all committed to the joint work of environmentalism and social justice, though they do not always share understandings of what social justice encompasses. The contradiction between the social justice goals, the rhetoric of the group, and the way their processes play out offers a window into how difficult it is for people to identify the dominant practices of their genders, but also the subsuming nature of the dominant practices of North American society vis a vis gender and patriarchy.

Data collection and analysis

Video was collected at fourteen meetings over the course of the academic year at weekly meetings, resulting in 2,009 minutes of video. Videos lasted from 60-180 minutes, depending on the meeting length. For this analysis, we include only the whole group meetings, and do not include the breakout sessions and report backs, limiting our data to 578 minutes of video. Videos are captured from one to four angles and stacked so that all four streams are visible and can be watched and coded simultaneously.

After video was collected, it was content-logged and pre-coded using preliminary codes based on the research question (including rough tags like race, gender, and colonialism). The first substantial analytic pass of coding was conducted by five women participants from the group, – two White, one South Asian, one East Asian, one Indigenous – and one Black man. We watched segments of videos from across the year together and coded "interesting" segments, asking the broad question of how gender is made salient in our group, discussing every instance someone raised and making extensive notes. After conducting "interesting" coding on three segments from the beginning, middle, and end of the year, we reviewed and consolidated them into codes that were most present in the video we reviewed and in our experiences of the group more broadly. The codes we developed included overlapping talk, exclusive talk, affirmation (vocal and gesture), uptake of ideas, positioning, and recognition. The codes were developed into sub-codes, which are described in the findings. All codes were refined by test coding 10 minutes of two videos and iteratively clarifying the codes.

After qualitatively coding, we embarked on a basic quantitative analysis as a way of demonstrating the patterned participation that participants identified. While there are significant limitations to quantifying interaction and speech acts (Schegloff, 1993), we attempted it as a way of convincing participants that gendered patterns existed and were important to acknowledge. Participants requested this data because they felt it could prove or disprove the claims women in the group were making. We asked participants how much of our total

meeting time we would need to analyze to create a compelling case for the gender-dynamics of the group. Those polled preferred randomly selected segments (to avoid "cherry picking" data) across all of the meetings, rather than extended segments from fewer meetings. To meet their requirements, we used a random number generator to select two segments of five minutes each from 14 videos from all regular weekly meetings and did detailed analysis of each. The samples represent 25% of the meeting video.

Results were compiled to create a basic statistical view of the trends. We compiled instances based on the segments, and ran two tailed t-tests to evaluate confidence in the comparisons we examined. Paired t-tests were selected as the most appropriate because of our small sample size, and their ability to evaluate the statistical significance of a difference between two groups or results. All t-tests, except for one, noted below, demonstrated statistical significance in the patterned difference between men's and women's participation. Paired t-tests demonstrate the existence of a pattern or difference but not its magnitude, so we provide sample means to express the average number of instances of a code, separated out by gender, within each 5 minute segment. Statistical analysis was complemented with ethnographic vignettes drawn from our coding to illustrate the trends. The initial analysis was circulated among the group who developed the codes for feedback, which was incorporated.

Findings

We look at gendered participation and positioning in three ways: the uptake of ideas, exclusive talk, and affirmation. These three aspects of group process show us different yet complementary things about how members of the community positioned themselves as experts and were positioned as experts by other members. Taken together, these show how members positioned themselves in the way they contributed their ideas and had those ideas adopted, sometimes without question. They also show how members positioned themselves as relevant contributors with expert information or opinions, which were jointly discussed by other experts and in the process reinforced the performance of expertise. Finally, they show how other members of the community of practice affirmed contributions, demonstrating that certain members were deserving of praise and encouragement. These three forms of participation demonstrate the processes of members positioning themselves, positioning others as co-experts, and being positioned by other members. The data highlights how these practices were highly gendered and reinforced the idea that men were experts deserving of the space they occupied in the group.

Adopting ideas

The first area we examined was whose ideas were discussed and adopted in the community. We believe this serves as an indicator of whose ideas were valued, whose contributions were centred in the group, and ultimately, who had the authority to set the agenda for the group. Through our coding process, it became clear we needed to attend to a specific form of ideas being taken up, namely the practice of ideas being adopted immediately and without discussion. This was defined as an instance of someone making a proposal for action, either around the internal process of the group or the external strategy, and having it be taken up by the next speaker as a given without further discussion. We argue that this is a distinct indicator of positioning oneself as an expert and of being positioned by the rest of the group as an expert.

Statistical analysis of our coded sample showed that ideas being adopted without discussion was, in fact, a highly gendered practice. There were 58 instances of this occurring in the sample from men participants, and 11 from women, with men's ideas being five times more likely to be adopted without discussion than women's. This is a meaningful act of positioning; it demonstrated how men were understood to be authorities, how men's ideas drove the group's process and strategy, and how men effectively decided what everyone would do. Most significantly, this shows how men had their ideas taken as given, as participants either agreed or acquiesced to the direction of the group that dominant male speakers laid out for them.

One example of how ideas might be adopted without discussion and how that had major repercussions for the campaign happened at a meeting in November. One of the men in leadership had talked to another organizer in Ontario about a strategy they were adopting to stop a major pipeline from being built by filing deputations as part of a consultation process. After explaining the context, he paused and asked, "So is there a general consensus that it's a good way?" He waited 1.76 seconds, received a few nods, and continued, "Ok! Good" and continued to plan the details of the strategy. Though this action had no direct relationship with the goals of the campus campaign, participants spent significant amounts of time in mobilizing around the strategy. This idea, adopted without discussion in a meeting, became the major activity for November and December. While other participants perhaps demonstrated their tacit consent by participating, and shaped the implementation through their engagement, the decision-making process raises questions about what it means for a group when men's ideas

are disproportionately adopted. This was not an isolated incident, but a consistent pattern across the data, suggesting that men's ideas persistently drove the actions of the group.

Exclusive talk

The second area we coded for was exclusive talk. Exclusive talk is defined as an exchange between two or more people but that does not include the majority of meeting participants, despite being part of a larger conversation. Exclusive talk was established through gaze and body positioning directed to the included speakers, explicitly naming the speakers who should participate, or discussing things only certain people had information about. Exclusive talk often happened at higher speeds of exchange, with no or small gaps between turns, and was often marked by a decision made by the participating speakers without opening the question out to the broader audience. We argue that exclusive talk works to establish who is in charge and whose voice is necessary in discussions and decisions, and is one of the key indicators of full participation in the community of practice.

Our coding revealed 46 instances of exclusive talk across our sample, and it was a common practice in the group. We measured instances of exclusive talk that were mixed gender and compared them against instances of exclusive talk that were men to men. While mixed gender was more common at a sample mean of 1.07 instances of exclusive talk per segment, men to men exclusive talk was also prevalent throughout the sample at a sample mean of 0.62 instances per segment. This demonstrates that men are highly likely to be engaged in exclusive talk that does not include women. Men to men and women to women exclusive talk also showed significant difference, with a sample mean for women to women talk of 0.077 instances per segment. In almost every case, men outnumbered women in instances of mixed-gender exclusive talk. Instances of male-dominated exclusive talk, with two or more men to one woman participating, were more than two and a half times more likely to occur than gender balanced (one man to one woman, or two men to two women) exclusive talk (with sample means of 1.11 and 0.42 instances per segment respectively).

Socially speaking, this is highly significant, in that even when women were included in the exclusive talk, it was at much lower levels of participation. It is both a sign of who was entitled to and given license to take up space and also served as a powerful indicator to other members of the group around who is a competent, central, full member. When a conversation could happen on behalf of the whole group but include only a small segment of the group, it signaled to participants of the exclusive talk and those on the periphery whose voices mattered, whose voices were required, and whose were not.

We argue that exclusive talk was one of the major ways full participation and expertise were established. They demonstrate for new members who must be included in discussions and who is unnecessary to include, for whatever reason. The fact that participation in these exclusive talk instances was so skewed based on gender-identity demonstrates how men's participation was affirmed as expert and necessary, while women's was not. During these exchanges, exclusive talk speakers often shared inside information that not everyone had, further demonstrating that their position was one of access and authority, and through their quick exchanges with other knowledgeable colleagues, they affirmed those involved in exclusive talk as co-authorities, while others did not need to be brought up to speed or included in decision making. The population of those not included in exclusive talk included all people of colour, men and women, (2) and most White women, which had the effect of establishing White men as the full participants in the community who were able and entitled to participate in discussions without including women and people of colour in the process.

Affirmations

Finally, we examined the rate at which speakers received affirmations from other members of the group for their speech contributions. We understand affirmation as acts that express agreement, acknowledgment, encouragement, or enthusiasm for what another speaker is contributing. Affirmation was vocal or gesture, and they were often paired. Any time a speaker received a comment during their speech turn that included "yes", "yeah", "yep", "uh huh", "mmhmm", or explicit praise (ie: "that's a great idea") it was coded as vocal affirmation. For gestures, the vast majority of coded instances were nods, from slight nods timed to affirm a speaker's contribution, to large nods with repeated head bobs and often involved the shoulders. We also see hand gestures like pointing, thumbs ups, and applause.

There were 602 instances of affirmation across our sample, averaging 26 instances per segment. We coded these as man to man, man to woman, woman to man, and woman to woman. First we found men received affirmations at almost three times the rate of women, with sample means of 17.7 times per sample segment for men compared to 7.25 times per segment for women. Looking more specifically, we found men gave affirmation

to other men at almost twice the rate of men's affirmation to women, at 9.6 instances per segment compared to 5.3 instances per segment. Women gave praise to men at four times the rate they affirmed women, at 8.2 instances versus 1.9 instances per segment. It is notable that the difference between women's praise of men and men's praise of men is not significant, at t=0.4290, thus we would not assume the rates of affirmation to men by women versus by men are statistically different. On the other hand, men's and women's praise of women is significant; women appear to affirm other women at a rate far less than men do.

After analyzing the data, it became clear that though those are strong trends in the sample, they do not fully account for the positioning dynamics of the group. We identified a pattern in the ways that men received affirmations that seemed distinct from how women received praise. A specific contribution by a man would often receive praise from multiple people, while women received praise from only one, or perhaps two people at a time. We believe receiving widespread praise is a strong indicator of community response and how people in the community position a speaker, so we analyzed affirmations based on the number of affirmation acts per contribution for men and women. The results showed men received affirmation from one speaker almost twice as often as women from one speaker, at sample means of 10.04 compared to 5.25 affirmations per segment. Men received affirmation from two speakers at two and a half times the frequency of women receiving affirmation from two speakers, at sample means of 2 compared to 0.79 affirmations per segment. Men received affirmation from three or more speakers more than six times as often as women receiving affirmation from three or more speakers, at sample means of 1.04 compared to 0.167 affirmations per segment. This shows a clear patterned behavior of men not only receiving more affirmations overall, but also their individual contributions being encouraged and affirmed by a larger segment of people per contribution.

Since men spoke far more frequently and for longer duration, one could argue we should not expect that women would receive validation at comparable rates. However, one factor serves as a control for that skew-- the rate at which men give affirmation to women, a sample mean of 5.3 times per segment. This asserts that there are opportunities for women to receive praise and makes it clear that gendered practices do influence the outcomes, since women only give praise to other women an average of 1.9 times per segment, meaning men are 2.8 times more likely to praise women's contributions than other women are. This raises questions of why women affirm other women differently than men affirm women, while both affirm men's contributions at statistically significant rates.

We found women did not receive praise at the same rates, and most significantly, we found that women hardly ever gave affirmation to other women. While coding the video and recognizing this trend, some of the women participants noted places where they trailed off or abandoned their contribution, and when asked they said they felt like they were "taking up too much space". In the video they were looking for encouragement to keep going or acknowledgement of their ideas (which they said they often gave to other speakers), and when they did not receive it, they assumed other participants disliked their ideas and stopped. For some of them, that experience chilled their participation for the rest of the meeting, resulting in reduced participation.

Affirmations were distinct from the other positioning categories above, in that it is a place for peripheral members to actively position others; while exclusive talk is largely determined by people in positions of mastery, affirmations are given by the larger group. It reinforces and legitimates the participation of those being affirmed by the membership, not just those in positions of mastery. These instances of affirmation were far more often directed at men and included extended series of gestures.

Discussion

These tendencies of small-scale gendered interactions gelled to create an environment that White men did not necessarily identify, but implicitly asserted their expertise as a group. In one exchange at a meeting halfway through the academic year this crystallized in a particularly telling way. A large group of new participants attended the meeting, surprising everyone, and in the attempt to be welcoming to new people, members of the group jockeyed to explain the context of the conversations we were having. Over the course of the first ten minutes in the first meeting of the semester, with 16 women and 9 men in attendance, 4 men spoke a total of 41 times, at a total duration of almost 9 minutes. Two women spoke a total of 20 times, with a total duration of just under one minute. But what we argue is the most revealing was a set of comments made by White men, eight minutes apart, during the beginning of the meeting.

Student 1: Ask us questions. And also, if you have a question you don't think you want to ask in public, just write it down, ask one of the people that talks a lot.

Student 2: If you would really like to come to the retreat, I guess just talk to…any of the people who you see talking a lot.

These statements, combined with a group dynamic in which the men were the people who participated most often and for the longest duration, implicitly advised new members that the men in the room were experts able to help explain things, and guide new members participation. What was also implied was that the women in the room were not expert, not able to answer questions, and not in positions of authority. Though this is just one vignette, it is a pervasive sentiment. Participants identified the most vocal and assertive members of the community of practice as the most central actors, capable of performing the full practices of the community.

This then created a core problem for women to surmount. If the full practices of the community included taking up space the way the White men did and receiving affirmation, other participants are in a bind. Even when women in the group had achieved some level of expertise, it was not recognized – and did not receive affirmation in the same ways men's contributions did. Additionally, the women were unlikely to position themselves as authorities in the same ways, which led to men asserting their expertise over the expertise of those women. Many instances of this exist in our sample, but one specific example is how a White woman reported on her project and then ended with a question. We interpret this question as an invitation to the group to collaborate, rather than seeking specific information or a definitive response. However, one of the men in positions of mastery who frequently positions himself as an authority immediately responded (leaving no gap between the speaker's question and his own answer), answering the question as if it were directed to him and a clarification question, rather than a question to the group about strategic direction. His definitive answer stopped further collaboration and ended the sequence, and served to undermine the woman's credibility as a full member because both the direction she sought for the conversation was squashed and she was assumed to be incapable of answering the question that her male colleague was able to answer immediately and without equivocation.

Examples like these abound in our data and demonstrate that participants' recognition as experts had less to do with their learning and capacity relative to the tasks of the community of activists, and more to do with their gendered modes of participation. In one example of this, we traced the planning process of an important presentation to the university administration. This was considered a high-stakes activity where people needed to be thoroughly prepared and ready to answer questions. In the planning discussions it was taken for granted that three of the White men were qualified and prepared, but when it came to finding additional participants, people were not sure who else was qualified. The planning group talked about needing someone "quick on their feet" who could answer question swiftly, with full confidence. They dismissed the possibility of several women as participants because they were seen as hesitant and the planning team feared the women would give too many qualifying hedges on their statements. The concerns of the planning team in including women in the presentation reflect assumptions that the administration would perceive only masculine performances of leadership as indicative of competence and expertise.

This presentation was the truest test of who had come into the full practices of the group, and the bar that people had to reach was a highly gendered and White mode of engagement. Women's expertise in helping develop or edit the document they were presenting was not valued equally, their ability to organize students was not valued, their reproductive labour in sustaining the group was not valued — the test for expertise was the ability to perform masculinity under pressure when dealing with a powerful group of mostly White men.

Implications

This case provides an example of how White masculine performances can be conflated with expertise in a community of practice and how this process can systematically block women from becoming recognized as central members who are capable of participating fully in the core processes of the community. Becoming recognized as an expert can be as much about how one positions oneself as an authority through demonstrations of masculinity as it is about building competency in relevant skills and modes of participation, and people often give and receive affirmation based on gendered performances. Thus researchers need to be careful about assigning expertise and learning to these processes, which entrench and re-entrench performances of White masculinity rather than modes of participation that are more broadly available to members of a community. In order to accommodate the material and symbolic privilege that some participants bring to communities of practice, situated learning theorists must attend to and theorize the ways that gender, as well as race, colonialism, and other sociohistorical relations of power and inequity, influence interactions and access to full participation. Until we

do, our theories will not have the full analytic power they need to articulate the dynamics of learning and positioning within communities.

This study has implications in the political realm, where these participants worked daily. If men's voices are over-represented and disproportionately affirmed and adopted, what does this mean for the political actions that social movements like the climate movement take up? Our case suggests a few outcomes: the first is that men's leadership will be continually affirmed to the point that they understand themselves as experts. While positioning is usually an implicit process, occasionally they explicitly posit that women in the group are not experts and leaders, or are at least not as qualified as they themselves. This creates a feedback loop for participants of all genders, where men seem to become more confident in their contributions, while women become increasingly withdrawn and less willing to contribute. This also has the impact of shaping the political agenda; where there was contestation over group direction in our data, men's visions prevailed. Social movements need diverse strategies that reflect the experiences of all participants, and the more leadership and expertise is confined to White men, the less able we are to build effective strategy and movements.

Endnotes

(1) In our sample, no participants openly identified as other gendered, and so our discussion centres on cis gendered participants' experiences. We would posit that trans and other gendered people would experience specific but similar forms of gendered discrimination in participation, but it is outside the scope of our data.
(2) The racialized nature of exclusive talk, and many of the other modes of participation is significant and linked to the gendered patterns, and is the subject of a separate, more extensive analysis.

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