



FEMALE LEADERSHIP AT TROOP LEVEL
The Opinions of Current Leaders

Irwin E. Heide
District Commissioner
District Five
Blue Ridge Council
Greenville, S.C.

Purpose: The overall viewpoint of current male leaders regarding the role of female leaders. The project is intended to show the feelings of leaders, primarily at the troop level, with regard to females in a parallel role with a male in running a troop.

Methods: The methods of obtaining the information necessary for this project was to send out a questionnaire to current troop leaders and current council leaders. The questionnaire contained six pertinent questions along with a cover letter. Attached is a copy of the cover letter and questionnaire. Forty-nine letters and questionnaires were sent out. Thirty-two replies were received, approximately 65%.

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After receiving the replies to the questionnaire regarding female leaders at the troop level, the following conclusions were made.

Question 1. Do you approve of female scout leaders in Boy Scouts?

Of the thirty-two replies, six answered "Yes", nineteen answered "No" and seven replied with comments or reservations.

All of the seven replies without a specific "Yes" or "No" were of the nature of not as Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster; two were very definite that it would only be acceptable if absolutely no male leaders were available; two were only as committee members and merit badge counselors; one was acceptable for only non-outdoor activities; one was only on a very limited basis.

Question 2: What is your opinion of male and female leaders in a troop who are not husband and wife?

There were twenty-two "No" and six "Yes" answers to this question. Four answered with a comment and several added comments to their Yes or No. Some of the comments were as follows:

Committee members only for females.

Gender differences and/or opinions could cause conflict.

I do not approve of females in a troop with or without husbands.

Do not approve or agree. It is a moral issue with me.

Always room for problems.

No problem as long as the leaders (male and female) have a vested interest in the success of the troop and conduct themselves accordingly.

I would be concerned as to what outsiders would think of scouting's leadership and the example set. Most people will assume the worst. This could hurt the

program overall. It's not what you are that matters as much as what you appear to be.

Question 3: What is your opinion of female leaders on over-night camping trips?

Of the thirty-two replies, there was a very definite "No" from twenty-six, only three "Yes" answers and three "Maybe's". Some of the more explicit comments expressed on this particular question were:

In separate tents and as long as two females are on the trip and tent together.

This is not the place for them.

Definitely not - next we would be required to take girl scouts (ages 10 to 18) on trips with the boys. Then I would quit. We would be known as PSA - "Person Scouts of America". There are not facilities (showers, latrines, etc.) on a sexually segregated basis. It has not happened to me yet. It would provide some difficult situations logistically.

Question 4: Do you think that spouses of leaders would object to members of the opposite sex going on overnight camping trips?

Again, the "Yes" replies were strongest, with twenty-seven; only one "No" and some had reservations. Some of the additional comments were as follows:

Depends on the trust between married couples.

Overall inappropriate.

If one time there is a problem, the boys would end up paying for it and be the real losers.

If the adult leaders live by the "Scout Law" as we teach it, there should be no reason for concern. Yet, I am sure some spouses would object.

Mine would!

Yes! They may not indicate so but they do.

Stay away from that except when there is more than one female.

Question 5: Do you approve/disapprove of female leaders in the Order of the Arrow?

Twenty-four replies were "No" and only four were "Yes". Four replies were open. Some of the comments in regard to this question are as follows:

Change regulations and requirements to cover both sexes equally.

The "Order of the Arrow" was not designed for women.

Since I am not an OA member, I cannot comment.

Disapprove because this is a boy's organization.

There are risks having to do with ordeal practices and campers being left by themselves in deep woods settings. The liability to scouting and risks to females suggests that either females should not be allowed to go through ordeals and be Arrowmen, or the ordeal should be altered but be just as difficult.

Question 6: How do you think a female leader would stand up as a "Role Model" for the scouts as compared to a male leader?

Four replies said a female could be a "Role Model", twenty-six said "No" and two had in-between answers. Again, there was a variety of comments on this question. A sample of some of these comments follows:

Boys need a male role model. This was one of the objectives of scouts from the start. The female would not qualify as a role model in the true meaning of the word definitions. The scouts may be able to look up to the female for leadership qualities and organization.

Not as well as a male because she is limited to what she can do and the way she see's things. Would a boy turn to a man or a woman in the presence of his peers? I believe he would turn to the male leader.

Weakens concept of moving from "Webelo's" and "Cubs" into scouts for young

adults. Why not combine girl and boy scouts and sell popcorn covered cookies.

Not as a role model. As a mother, great.

In non-outdoor activities they could be a plus.

Assuming the scouts are all male, I can't see a woman being a role model to the young men.

The results of the survey among current male leaders in Boy Scouting seems to be overwhelmingly against female leaders, particularly as Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters. The only exceptions to this would be if absolutely no male leader was available.

The idea of male and female leaders who are not married to each other got a negative response. But here there were several comments favoring the idea for indoor activities only. Most of the responses deemed it inadvisable for outdoor and camping activities. The question of female leaders on overnight camping trips was definitely rejected and those few whose replies were "Yes", had reservations and restrictions.

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On the subject of spouse objections to female leaders, the responses indicated that there would be very definite objections. In some instances, there could be a loss of male leadership.

The Order of the Arrow question brought a majority of "No" responses. Most felt that the Order of the Arrow regulations and requirements would have to be changed to accomodate females and this could and would defeat the purpose of the order.

As a Role Model for boy scouts, the majority of the current leaders felt it would be impossible for a female to fill this part. The feeling was that the purpose of boy scouting was to provide the boys training by a male person.

As a result of this survey among the current leaders in Boy Scouting, my conclusions are that having female leadership would not be in the best interest of the boys. It could definitely hurt the program and could lead to the loss of current male leaders. Although some females could effectively fill the position of leader, it is felt that the Scouting program is not quite ready for the equality of the sexes in it's leadership programs.

Dear Fellow Scouters:

I am working on my thesis for Commissioner College. I have chosen as my project, the "Pro's and Con's of Female Leaders in Boy Scout Troops.

In order to complete this project, I would appreciate your assistance in answering the attached questionnaire and returning it to me within the next week. No names will be used in the thesis so you need not sign the questionnaire when returning it.

Thank you for your help.



Bud Heide
35 South Del Norte Road
Greenville, South Carolina 29615

READER APPROVAL

1.

2. *Fred Justice*

3. *George E. Aiken*

PRO'S AND CON'S OF FEMALE SCOUT LEADERS

1. Do you approve of female scout leaders in Boy Scout troops?
2. What is your opinion of female and male leaders in a troop who are not husband and wife?
3. What is your opinion of female leaders on overnight camping trips?
4. Do you think that spouses of leaders would object to members of the opposite sex going on overnight camping trips?
5. Do you approve/disapprove of female leaders in the Order of the Arrow?
6. How do you think a female leader would stand up as a "Role Model" for the scouts as compared to a male leader?