

Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEW ESSAY: AGAINST ALL ODDS—THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Aisenberg, Nadya, and Mona Harrington. *Women of Academe: Outsiders in the Sacred Grove.* Amherst, Mass.: Univ. of Massachusetts Pr., 1988. 207p. \$10.95 (ISBN 0-87023-607-5). LC 87-30067.

Dagg, Anne Innis, and Patricia J. Thompson. *MisEducation: Women & Canadian Universities.* Toronto: OISE Press, 1988. 135p. \$15.95 (ISBN 0-7744-0318-7). LC 88-93660.

Educating the Majority: Women Challenge Tradition in Higher Education. Ed. by Carol S. Pearson and others. New York: American Council on Education and Macmillan, 1989. 491p. \$24.95 (ISBN 0-02-924810-8). LC 88-31508.

Empowering Women: Leadership Development Strategies on Campus. Ed. by Mary Ann Danowitz Sagaria. New Directions for Student Services, no.44. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988. 109p. \$12.95 (ISBN 1-55542-897-5). LC 85-644751.

Katz, Montana, and Veronica Vieland. *Get Smart: A Woman's Guide to Equality on Campus.* New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1988. 163p. \$9.95 (ISBN 0-935312-87-0). LC 88-21450.

Simeone, Angela. *Academic Women: Working Towards Equality.* South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin & Garvey, 1987. 161p. \$10.95 (ISBN 0-89789-114-7). LC 86-26436.

Although approximately 65 percent of academic librarians are women, the low status they hold relative to their male col-

leagues is well documented in recent literature. These women operate in two cultures—the culture of the academic library and of the college or university. Their status is determined by the values, norms, politics, and economics of both the library and its parent institution. The six books reviewed here provide us with an opportunity to look at the larger context of women in academia. Many of the issues discussed are relevant to women librarians as well as to other predominately female professional groups on campus.

All of these books are concerned with the status of academic women, and they appeared only months apart; five of the six were published in a one-and-a-half-year period. This cluster of titles is evidence of a new movement to focus attention on the condition of women's education, an area which has largely been ignored in the major higher education reports of the 1980s. The authors of these books are part of an effort to document discriminatory practices which affect both women students and faculty and to make sex equity a top priority in higher education. These authors are not writing in isolation; they draw on a number of the same sources, such as the work of Carol Gilligan and Jessie Bernard, and they are aware of one another's work. Two of the 1988 titles refer to Simeone's *Academic Women*, which was published one year earlier.

The appearance of a cluster of titles on educational equity may be explained by the complex interaction of social, demo-

graphic, and economic factors. A number of the women editors, authors, and contributors associated with these works, as well as the women who are their subjects, fit a similar demographic profile. Born just after the war, these first baby boomers grew up in a prosperous, optimistic time and attended college and graduate school in the late 1960s and 1970s. As young adults, they experienced the radical politics and social activism that characterized the 1960s. The civil rights movement and the women's movement influenced them to believe in their individual potential and resist the limitations of prevailing sex role stereotypes. However, women who received their Ph.D.s in the 1970s had difficulty finding teaching positions due to a shrinking higher education job market; those fortunate enough to find positions were not universally welcomed to campus. Top administrators and senior faculty (largely male) held conservative views about appropriate roles for women, and local campus practices often favored male faculty. Instead of being strictly merit-based, decisions on hiring, promotion, and tenure were influenced by "old-boy" networks and campus politics.

Now in their forties, these women have either made it or not in terms of earning tenure, the traditional measure of academic success. Against all odds, some of these women have been successful in getting tenured positions. Others now work in low-status part-time or non-tenure track positions because they failed to get tenure or were never fortunate enough to hold a tenure-track position. Still others pursue their work independently with support from informal networks and alternative organizations such as the Alliance of Independent Scholars. A significant number of the authors and subjects of these books belong to this generation of academic women. They have reached a reflective stage in their lives, and they are ready to share their stories.

Academic Women and MisEducation. These two titles analyze the progress of women towards equality in American and Canadian universities respectively. Although both concentrate on relatively recent history, *Academic Women* covers a

longer period of time, from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s. It also focuses primarily on women faculty, while *MisEducation* discusses the status of women students and staff as well.

In both the United States and Canada, the number of women undergraduates is about equal to that of men, and women receive about 30% of the doctoral degrees awarded. In spite of the growing number of women receiving Ph.D. degrees, they have not made proportionate gains in terms of their representation within faculty ranks. In the United States, women hold only 27.5% of all faculty positions (Simeone, p.29), and in Canada an even lower 17% (Dagg and Thompson, p.65). In spite of a growing pool of qualified women in both countries and in spite of affirmative action programs, the percentage of faculty who are women has not changed significantly in the last two decades.

The findings of these two books are remarkably similar; considered together, they document the status of women in higher education throughout North America. Women are more likely than men to be employed at low-status institutions such as two-year colleges, and they hold a higher share of positions which are part-time or nontenure track. Women are clustered in the lower faculty ranks, where they have been for many years. In the United States, the percentage of women at full professor rank remained nearly constant for more than twenty years; it stood at 9.5% in 1958-59 and at 9.7% in 1981-82 (Simeone, p.33). The salaries of women faculty have lagged behind those of men for many years. Both books provide salary differential figures for the early 1980s which can be compared; in the United States, women faculty earned 83% of men's salaries (Simeone, p.32) and in Canada women earn only 80% (Dagg and Thompson, p.74). Even more disheartening are the studies cited by author Simeone which show that the longer female faculty have been employed, the smaller their salary is likely to be compared to their male colleagues. According to Simeone, this salary pattern demonstrates "... the cumulative effects of dis-

crimination, as discrimination against women early in their careers is perpetuated and magnified as their careers progress" (Simeone, p.32).

Both of these works discuss previous research conducted on the status of women faculty. While *MisEducation* lacks an index, *Academic Women* includes one and can be used to find information on specific studies. It is no surprise when the authors of both works reach the same conclusion: women continue to lag behind men on all measures of formal status, including hiring, rank, tenure, and salary. Drawing from published studies and statistical digests, the authors present convincing evidence that sex discrimination, both blatant and subtle, is responsible for the differentials in these measures. Simeone effectively refutes the theory that the lower status of women can be explained by the market's reaction to choices women make about their careers, for example, interruptions for childbearing. She writes "... even when women do all the right things, they are rewarded less than men. In study after study, when measures such as scholarly productivity, administrative experiences, degree held, and years of experience are held constant, there is still a gap between women and men" (Simeone, p.37).

To women students and faculty, discrimination manifests itself in many ways. Through interviews and correspondence, the authors of these two books have discovered what are the most troublesome obstacles to equality:

- the tracking of women students into traditionally female disciplines (home economics) or academic support departments (libraries);
- the lack of female professors as role models and counselors, particularly in the sciences;
- the dismissal by mainstream academics of research topics of interest to women, for example, social equality for women;
- the exclusion of women from collaborative activities that promote upward mobility, such as group research projects and grant-writing teams;
- the failure to apply objective criteria in hiring and promotion;

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- the lack of institutional support for child-care leave, day care, and other programs which would enable women to combine family and career responsibilities; and
- the lack of campus-based financial aid resources which are flexible enough to meet the special needs of women students.

The publication of *Academic Women* (1987) and *MisEducation* (1988) provides a unique opportunity to review the status of women academics in the United States and Canada at nearly the same point in time. Although the books' findings are very similar, they are quite different in tone. Simeone's voice is more neutral, and her arguments for equality are patient and persuasive enough to win over even readers without feminist sympathies. In *MisEducation*, Dagg and Thompson reveal more of their own experiences with discriminatory treatment. Their narrative voice is emotionally intense, impatient, and at times bitter. In comparing these two works, the examples of discrimination from Canadian campuses are more blatant than those from United States campuses. Perhaps the Canadian authors sound bitter because they have suffered more; sex discrimination in Canadian academic life may be more virulent and pervasive than it is in the United States.

Women of Academe: Outsiders in the Sacred Grove. This work, hereafter referred to as *Outsiders*, is remarkable for a number of reasons. First, although it is jointly authored, it is an elegantly written, seamless collaboration. Secondly, in spite of the difficulties of analyzing over sixty interview transcripts to identify shared experiences, the resulting work is neatly and logically constructed around seven chapters on themes recurring in the interviews. The first set of interviews was held with women who had been deflected from their expected academic career paths; the second set consisted of interviews with tenured women faculty. The interviewees were chosen to represent many different types of institutions.

From their analysis, the authors conclude that women entering the academic profession have a unique set of experi-

ences, different from men. Women begin their careers with a disadvantage. In addition to facing the expected job-related challenges, they must also struggle against entrenched social norms which cast them in subordinate, supportive roles in their private and public lives. Beginning in the 1960s, a new political and social order began to emerge which was committed to individual equality and to equal rights and opportunities for both women and men. However, the enlightened beliefs of this new order now co-exist with the old norms, which have not been displaced and are still powerful:

. . . as women rise in the professions, they are stymied at a certain level by the remaining force of the old social norms that in the past barred women from public life generally. The old norms buttressed the division of responsibility—public roles for men, private for women—with a variety of assumptions about male and female natures, drawing natural connections between given proclivities and given roles. Women's identity was located in the body and emotions, men's in the mind. Women gave birth, suckled infants, nursed the sick, cleaned homes, cooked meals, provided sympathy, enchantment, inspiration. Men learned, calculated, bought, sold, built, fought, wrote, painted, philosophized (Aisenberg and Harrington, p.4).

As women commit to an academic career, they focus their professional goals and set out to acquire the necessary training and credentials. Simultaneous with this process of professionalization, women also undergo a process of transformation, defined as ". . . an intellectual and emotional process whereby women acquire a new identity, transcending the limitations of the identity defined by the old norms" (Aisenberg, p.20). As women master the great ideas and concepts of a discipline and incorporate them into their thoughts and values, they are empowered and transformed by the learning process. However, the authors point out the risks of being blindly devoted to one's subject matter or intensely absorbed by inner change. These preoccupations can divert attention from the need to concentrate on the practical requirements of the profession which are necessary for success such as grants, prizes, fellowships, and pub-

lished articles. Once the authors have established that the education of women not only professionalizes but also *transforms* identity, they describe the different stages of the transformation process. The development of this model is one of the most important contributions of *Outsiders*.

The authors of *Outsiders* and of *Academic Women* base part of their research on personal interviews. Through these works we hear the voices of women scholars from all disciplines who have struggled to build professional careers in a hostile academic world. One set of voices stands out from the rest in a powerful and disturbing way. These are the voices of women who received their doctorates in the 1970s during a period of recession in the higher education market. With the advent of the women's movement, this was also a period of great social change, and young women scholars developed high expectations about being accepted into the professoriate, which was overwhelmingly male. Instead, they discovered that even in the academy, traditional attitudes about sex roles do not change overnight. In graduate school and in their first academic posi-

tions, it was soon apparent that financial resources, mentoring relationships, and collaborative activities were largely directed to young male faculty. This generation of women scholars started out their academic careers with great expectations, earned their Ph.D.s in spite of blatant discriminatory practices, and then were stunned to discover they were shut out of a tight job market.

Get Smart and Empowering Women. While *Outsiders* is concerned with women pursuing faculty careers, these two works are primarily concerned with women students. Both acknowledge that women in traditional academic environments face obstacles to equal educational opportunity. Their main purpose is to describe strategies which circumvent these obstacles and allow women to reach their full potential as leaders on campus, in professional circles, and in society. *Get Smart* is a basic guide which advises college women how to recognize and respond to sex stereotyping and discrimination as well as other gender-related problems which they may encounter. Issues such as how women can gain an equal voice in class-



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room interactions and how they can compete effectively with male students for campus employment opportunities are covered. These issues are reduced to their basic elements and treated in brief, simply written chapters with titles like "Get Smart Course 101: The Classroom: Making It Work for You." The authors are particularly successful in describing for students how to use a methodical step-by-step approach to resolve problems relating to sexual harassment or discriminatory practices. *Get Smart* is an easy-to-read handbook which will appeal primarily to undergraduates and is likely to sell well in college bookstores.

The second title, *Empowering Women*, is a work of greater complexity and substance. It is an edited collection of papers which describe a variety of strategies and programs for enhancing the leadership development of women students. Underlying the leadership development models which are presented is the premise that women experience the world differently than men; they have different expectations, values, concerns, and ways of knowing. Therefore women faculty and administrators are uniquely qualified to foster leadership development in women students, and they have a special responsibility to do so. This shared perspective helps the professionals to establish personal rapport with the students and to design effective programs for them.

Several contributors emphasize the importance of going beyond formal programs which teach leadership skills. The variety of activities on campus provides a host of opportunities to encourage leadership development in women students. Faculty and staff who advise student groups are in a unique position to involve women in leadership experiences such as editing a publication or serving as an officer of a student organization. Structured experiences like these give women students a chance to learn how to make decisions, solve problems, resolve conflicts, and master other skills associated with leadership. Also, when established academic women are involved in student-centered activities, they serve as highly visible role models for participating students.

Although the quality of the collected papers is uniformly good, the one on generative leadership is especially strong. This approach relies on collaboration among members of a group in order to identify and accomplish goals. The word *generative* signifies the commitment to fostering freedom of expression, creativity, and self-esteem in others. A central premise is that shared decision-making is valuable as a learning process and is likely to enhance outcomes. The authors view leadership as "an abundant potential resource to be cultivated and enacted in multiple roles and contexts" (Sagaria, p.16). Leadership is not a zero-sum game, with clearly defined leaders and followers. Leadership can be cultivated simultaneously in oneself and in others. Although this model and others are described specifically to encourage the leadership development of women on campus, they could be successfully applied in other settings as well. In business, generative leadership could be introduced to a work group to modify a strict hierarchical structure and foster leadership and creativity among targeted staff such as project directors.

Educating the Majority. The central theme of this work is that women are not currently well-served by American higher education, even though they outnumber men in bachelor's and master's degree programs. The theme serves as an organizing principle for the twenty-nine commissioned papers which are included. The papers are divided into four major sections: "Understanding Women's Diversity and Commonalities," "Learning Environments Shaped by Women," "Reconceptualizing the Ways We Think and Teach," and "Transforming the Institution." Although attitudes about women's education became more enlightened in the 1970s and 1980s, the editors point out that no national education report has addressed the needs of women students. *Educating the Majority* now fills that gap. It reveals how women students have been left out of the mainstream of academic life and challenges institutions to completely rethink the traditional, male-oriented assumptions which have shaped the curriculum and guided research and teaching activities.

Of the six titles reviewed here, *Educating the Majority* is the most ambitious in terms of scope, and it succeeds very well as a comprehensive sourcebook on how to achieve educational equity for women in higher education. A staggering number and variety of resources which can be used to promote equity are described, including books, manuals, project reports, literature reviews, journals, newsletters, self-study instruments, exemplary programs, exercises, strategies, data banks, agencies, and associations. Many of these are included in a valuable list of resources which is appended. The extensive reference lists which follow many of the chapters constitute another useful feature.

This title recognizes the extent to which feminist scholarship has blossomed over the past twenty years. It documents and pays tribute to the number and quality of the publications which resulted from teaching and research on women since 1970. Although contributors do suggest specific institutional strategies to meet the needs of women students, they represent a small number of the potential alternatives. Campuses committed to educational equity now face the challenge of integrating this wealth of scholarship into a transformed academy which offers greater opportunities for both women and men.

Educating the Majority is a worthy addition to the well-respected American Council on Education/Macmillan Series in Higher Education. There are, however, two editorial problems which are occasionally distracting to the reader: the lack of a uniform style for the references following chapters and a liberal sprinkling of typographical errors, which one hopes will be corrected in later editions. Overall, though, this is an impressive work of extraordinary breadth which examines nearly every aspect of academic life as it pertains to women.

The final chapter is a new agenda on the future of women in higher education developed by the American Council on Education (ACE). There are fifteen recommendations, ranging from the general "Provide a supportive campus climate for women" (p.447) to the specific "Appoint

a high-level person whose formal responsibilities include advocacy for women on campus" (p.455). The agenda calls on each campus to rethink how it operates relative to women and men, recognize diversity, and take direct action to insure educational equity. Since it appears in the last of these six books to be published, the agenda serves as a culminating statement for this period of the educational equity movement. ACE has also issued the agenda as a separate special report entitled *The New Agenda of Women for Higher Education*, which is available from the association.

In the works reviewed which draw on interviews, there are a number of vivid, personal accounts of women struggling to build academic careers. The accounts are compelling, and they will strike a powerful chord in readers who are of the same academic generation or who have had similar experiences as students or faculty. As these histories are analyzed by the authors or by the subjects themselves, we readers relate them to our own career histories and begin to understand how they developed. With this new insight comes the realization that prevailing social norms and traditional sex role expectations limited our options and shaped our choices. We are disabused of the notion that we actively chose to study and work in feminized, low-status disciplines such as home economics, social work, and librarianship; we now understand that as women, we were tracked into disciplines considered appropriate for us.

We recall the conflicts that threatened our academic careers like landmines buried on a campus common, and we remember the difficult choices that we faced:

- we loved our mothers, who were proud of our intelligence and predicted we would marry (not become) college professors.
- we respected our fathers who sent us to college and counseled us to add a typing class "just in case."
- we watched our brothers being groomed to join the family firm.
- we agonized about enrolling in the best graduate program in our field versus a lesser one closer to our boyfriend's campus.

- we debated whether to have children before our Ph.D.s, after our Ph.D.s, or not at all.
- we earned tenure but burned out trying to balance our academic career and family responsibilities.
- we earned tenure but sacrificed personal relationships for job mobility and remained single.

- we failed to get tenure and became independent scholars.

We have not "got it all." But we haven't given up, and thanks to this fine group of new titles, the odds of having it all are improving.—Susan Klingberg, *Head of the Education and Social Science Library and Associate Professor of Library Administration, University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign.*

BOOK REVIEWS

Metcalfe, Keyes DeWitt. *My Harvard Library Years, 1937-1955: A Sequel to Random Recollections of an Anachronism.* Ed. by Edwin E. Williams. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard College Library, 1988. 285p. \$25 (ISBN 0-074-59600-5).

This is a year of momentous anniversaries: ACRL and this journal reached fifty and in Cincinnati we celebrated a century of progress. The year 1989 also marks the centennial of Keyes Metcalfe's birth. Born in Elyria and educated on the playing fields of Oberlin (and in the library), this son of Ohio made an indelible mark on the profession literally throughout the country. By his own reckoning, Metcalfe traveled the equivalent of eighty times around the globe (p.206) on more than 550 consulting assignments after his "retirement" in 1955. Now, five years after his death, Metcalfe is known chiefly for his work with library buildings which he distilled into his magisterial *Planning Academic and Research Library Buildings* (1965). But he was very far from one-dimensional; with the publication of *My Harvard Library Years*, we can appreciate more fully this indefatigable giant of the profession.

In *Random Recollections of an Anachronism* (1980), the first of a projected three volumes, Metcalfe described his background and activities to 1937 when he left the New York Public Library to become director of the Harvard University Library and librarian of Harvard College. Related more "quietly and plainly"—as President Pusey observed of Metcalfe's style (p.269)—than the sometimes rollicking first vol-

ume, *My Harvard Library Years* stands well independently as an account of Metcalfe's activities during 18 years at our largest university library.

Metcalfe had strong views about library administration. He believed that—all things being equal—a librarian in most cases better administers a library (p.267), and he tried to advance the preparation of librarians for administration. In explaining his interactions with "Three Librarians of Congress" (Archibald MacLeish, Luther Evans, and L. Quincy Mumford) and his own successor at Harvard, Paul Buck (former provost and dean of the faculty of arts and sciences), Metcalfe makes clear that for him, the correct test is that of *effectiveness* in particular circumstances: the right things have to be done at the right time and sometimes the person to do them is not a trained librarian. This issue still exercises us and Metcalfe's admonitions should be considered seriously.

Metcalfe himself began his administration by learning and then using the academic context of the Harvard libraries at both personal and structural levels, and then, of course, by assembling an exceptional staff. To meet increasing demands by users and make the most of limited finances and space, Metcalfe sought solutions chiefly through cooperation with other libraries. The theme of cooperation pervades this volume, in fact. At Harvard he felicitously labeled this "coordinated decentralization" (p.112), a philosophy and mode of action he extended to the region and nation (first by creating the New