

Agribusiness Markets

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Solving for Equity

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Striving for equity: Voices from academe

How far have we come?
Where are we going?



Academics have never been just professionals in their field of expertise. They are also men and women of a particular generation, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, and culture. These realities also shape—to varying degrees—the university world.

This current issue reflects how this world is unfolding. It features the multiple voices of academics who have researched and experienced the struggle for equity on campus.

The first six articles consider the dynamics of gender in academe, with the University of Windsor's Janice Drakich and York University's Penni Stewart leading off with an analysis of the demographic trend toward women graduates and its future implications. Their survey shows that women have not broken through academia's ivy ceiling at the rate their numbers in the undergraduate and graduate ranks—and 40 years of feminist activity on campuses—should produce. The authors worry that with the apparent diminution in employment equity commitment on campuses, the current wave of hiring will not realize its potential of creating a professoriate (and university administration) that reflects women's university participation.

Sandra Acker from the University of Toronto explores the effect of gender on women's ability to reach the highest level of university administration. Her survey of women academic administrators reveals considerable challenges for women but considerable rewards as well—for those

who receive the kind of support that allows them to flourish.

Michelle Webber from Brock University poses the thorny question of the impact of the growth in contingent faculty hiring on women. She describes the effects of the gendering of contingent female faculty, including self-censorship prompted by job insecurity, that leads them to “play it safe” in the classroom about such issues as feminism.

Empathy and understanding are needed on *all* sides

Jo-Anne Dillabough, from the University of British Columbia, asks how and when the traditional models of parenting and working will change to accommodate the needs of working parents now that the stereotypical “unencumbered” male scholar is a vanishing species.

Michael Kaufman, an extensively published writer on gender relations, and Queen's University's Jason Laker look at gender from the masculine side, sensitively describing the complex gender terrain that young men are navigating. Some youths are less successful than others, they say, displaying a wide range of controlling, sexist behaviour. The authors outline ways faculty can help young men with their struggle to learn modern gender relations.

This issue then turns its attention to the realities faced by visible minority faculty and the academic world they have

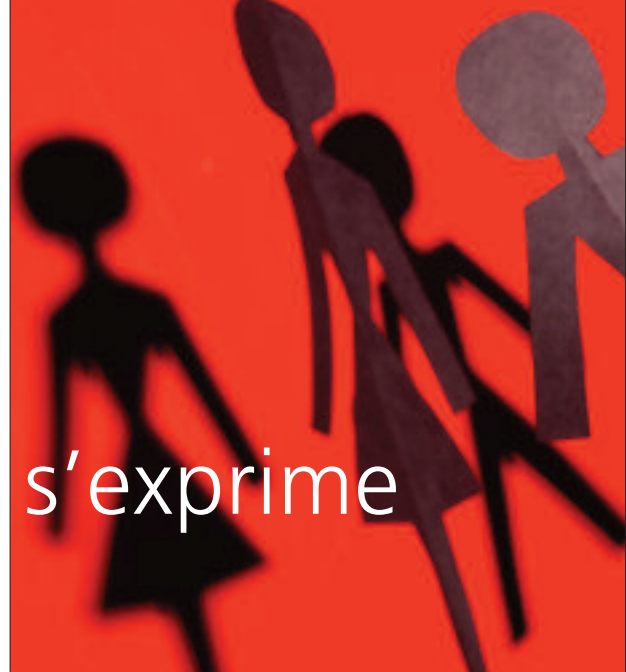
been shaped by and have also shaped. George Elliott Clarke, who has won the Governor-General's literary award for poetry, testifies to his experience as a faculty member and seventh-generation Canadian of African-American and Mi'maq heritage. He argues that diversifying the faculty will make the “humanities look more like humanity.” Taiaiake Alfred bears witness to the realities faced by his fellow Aboriginal faculty members and urges them, as others have done before, to embrace the struggles of their nations as members of the university community. Frances Henry and Carol Tator describe how universities continue to discriminate in hiring and curriculum, both overtly and, more subtly, through a systemic bias against anything that does not conform to a Eurocentric model.

Our book review section features stimulating contributions from faculty working in the area, including Jeffrey Reitz, Linda Burnett, Roxanne Ng, and Glen Jones.

Humour columnist Steven Penfold provides us with a wry look at the challenges of combining a faculty job with parenting young children, as he affectionately recounts his own experiences as an academic father.

Academic Matters editor Mark Rosenfeld closes out the issue with his look at the emotional and intellectual challenges of discussing and debating issues of such sensitivity as gender and race, emphasizing that empathy and understanding are needed on *all* sides if equity initiatives are to be accepted—and enduring. **AM**

Cibler l'équité : Le milieu universitaire s'exprime



Où en sommes-nous? Où allons-nous?

Les universitaires ne sont jamais seulement des professionnels dans leur domaine d'expertise. Ce sont aussi des hommes et des femmes d'une génération, d'une ethnicité, d'une race, d'une orientation sexuelle et d'une culture en particulier. Ces réalités forment aussi, à divers degrés, le milieu universitaire.

Le présent numéro reflète la situation dans ce milieu. Il diffuse les multiples voix des universitaires qui ont fait des recherches sur les efforts visant à obtenir l'équité sur le campus et qui en ont l'expérience.

Les six premiers articles considèrent la dynamique de la problématique homme-femme, en commençant par Janice Drakich de l'Université de Windsor et Penni Stewart de l'Université York qui ont analysé la tendance démographique chez les diplômées et les répercussions à venir. L'enquête révèle que les femmes n'ont pas percé les hautes sphères du milieu universitaire au taux que devrait correspondre au nombre d'étudiantes de premier cycle et de diplômées, même après plus de 40 ans d'activités féministes sur les campus. Voici une préoccupation des auteures : compte tenu de l'engagement envers l'équité en matière d'emploi apparemment à la baisse sur les campus, la vague actuelle d'embauche, malgré son potentiel, ne réussira pas à établir un corps professoral (et une administration universitaire) qui reflète la participation des femmes au milieu universitaire.

Sandra Acker de l'Université de Toronto examine les répercussions de la problématique homme-femme sur la capacité des femmes d'atteindre les plus hauts niveaux de l'administration universitaire. Son enquête auprès des administratrices universitaires révèle les défis considérables

que doivent relever les femmes, mais aussi les expériences très enrichissantes pour celles qui obtiennent le genre de soutien qui leur permet de s'épanouir.

Michelle Webber de l'Université Brock pose une question épineuse : quelles sont les répercussions sur les femmes de l'embauche à la hausse de professeurs occasionnels? Elle décrit les répercussions sur les professeures occasionnelles de la prédominance d'un sexe sur l'autre, y compris l'autocensure que suscite l'insécurité d'emploi, ce qui les incite à « ne pas prendre de chance » en classe au sujet de divers enjeux, notamment, le féminisme.

Jo-Anne Dillabough de l'Université de la Colombie-Britannique demande comment et quand les modèles traditionnels de l'art d'être parent et du travail changeront pour répondre aux besoins des parents travailleurs maintenant que le stéréotype de l'universitaire masculin « dégaï » est en voie de disparition?

Michael Kaufman, auteur largement publié sur les relations entre hommes et femmes, et Jason Laker de l'Université Queen's considèrent la problématique homme-femme d'un point de vue masculin et donnent une description sensibilisée du contexte complexe de la problématique homme-femme où évoluent les jeunes hommes. Des jeunes réussissent mieux que d'autres, disent-ils, et affichent un large éventail de comportements directs et sexistes. Les auteurs décrivent des moyens que les professeurs peuvent appliquer pour aider les jeunes hommes dans leurs efforts, afin d'apprendre les relations modernes entre les sexes.

Nous nous intéressons ensuite dans le présent numéro aux réalités des professeurs des minorités visibles et au milieu universi-

taire qui les a formés et qu'ils ont aussi influencé. George Elliott Clarke, qui a remporté le prix littéraire du gouverneur général pour la poésie, témoigne de son expérience à titre de professeur et de Canadien de la septième génération de descendance Afro-américaine et Mi'maq. Il considère que la diversification des professeurs « humanisera les sciences humaines ». Taiaiake Alfred est témoin des réalités de ses collègues professeurs autochtones et leur demande expressément, comme d'autres l'ont fait auparavant, de soutenir les efforts des leurs à titre de membres de la collectivité universitaire. Frances Henry et Carol Tator précisent que les universités font toujours ouvertement preuve de discrimination aux chapitres de l'embauche et du programme d'études et plus subtilement, par l'intermédiaire d'un parti pris systémique contre tout ce qui n'est pas conforme au modèle eurocentrique.

Notre section de critique d'ouvrages présente des contributions stimulantes de professeurs qui travaillent dans le secteur, y compris Jeffrey Reitz, Linda Burnett, Roxanne Ng et Glen Jones.

Le chroniqueur humoriste Steven Penfold jette un regard narquois sur les défis que doit relever le professeur et le parent de jeunes enfants dans son charmant récit de ses expériences de père et de professeur.

Mark Rosenfeld, rédacteur de *Academic Matters*, conclut le numéro en examinant les défis émotionnels et intellectuels que posent la discussion et le débat sur des enjeux à caractère délicat, par exemple, la problématique homme-femme et la race. Il soutient fermement que « chacun » doit faire preuve d'empathie et de compréhension si nous voulons que les initiatives sur l'équité soient acceptées et perdurent. **AM**

Forty years later, how are

Janice Drakich and Penni Stewart point out that the current hiring wave, the first since the 1960s, could build a professoriate that finally reflects women's participation in academic life.

La majorité des étudiants universitaires au Canada sont des femmes, soit 58 %, mais elles représentent moins du tiers des professeurs à plein temps et seulement 18,1 % des professeurs titulaires. Actuellement, l'embauche de professeurs donne une chance d'établir un corps professoral qui reflète le grand nombre d'étudiantes universitaires, mais seulement la moitié des universités qui ont fait l'objet du sondage engageant des femmes à un taux de 40 % ou plus de toutes les nouvelles personnes embauchées.



Women's representation in Canadian universities as students and professors has been the focus of higher education research and feminist activism in the academy for close to 40 years. The 1970 Royal Commission Report on the Status of Women brought the issue of women's underrepresentation in universities to national attention, highlighting that, in 1967, only 34.2 per cent of full-time undergraduate students were women, fewer than 20 per cent were graduate students. In the same year, only 13.4 per cent of full-time faculty were women.

Universities, not always willingly, responded to employment equity demands with changes to university policies and practices to improve the climate and academic career prospects for women. Over a period of four decades, the number of women in Canadian universities has grown remarkably, both at the undergraduate and graduate student levels, but has moved only glacially in the professoriate. In 2003-2004, women represented 58 per cent of full-time undergraduate students, 48.7 per cent of full-time graduate students, but only 31.7 per cent of full-time faculty. One cannot deny that change has occurred, but numbers are only part of the story. In this article, we report on the representation of women in the academy and examine the gendered landscape of Canadian universities.¹

The percentage of women full-time undergraduate students in the 1960s was smaller than men's, but it reached parity with men in 1988, exceeded men in the next year, and has steadily increased since. In 2004-2005, women were 58 per cent of full-time undergraduate and 49 per cent of graduate students. Women in graduate programs accounted for 53 per cent of master's and 46 per cent of doctoral students.

Women crossed the magical threshold of 50 per cent in 1988 not to accolades but to concerns of equity for men and the feminization of universities. Eighteen years later, women continue to enter universities in large numbers, but their numbers have not produced a significant shift in the gendered structures of the academy, for the distribution of women across undergraduate and graduate programs continues to reflect the historical pattern of gendered disciplines. Women at all levels in the humanities, education, and social and behavioural sciences constitute 66 per cent, 76 per cent, and 62 per cent of students respectively, whereas women in mathematics, computer and information sciences, and architecture, engineering and related technologies represent only 27 per cent and 22 per cent of students enrolled. A 2006 examination by Lesley Andres and Maria Adamuti-Trache of the

university women doing?

gendered nature of university completion patterns over the last 12-15 years by and within disciplinary fields concluded that the large increase in women's university participation and graduation has not been successful in changing substantially the landscape of gender profiles across fields of study and programs.

Historically, women faculty have been relatively excluded from the academy and, particularly, from the higher ranks of the professoriate. In 1960, women constituted 11 per cent of full-time faculty at Canadian universities and accounted for just four per cent of full professors. By the early 1980s, little had changed, as women represented only five per cent of full professors in Canada and 16.8 per cent of all full-time faculty. These patterns of disadvantage persisted throughout the 1980s and 1990s and continue today. The most recent data from Statistics Canada, for the academic year 2004-2005, indicate that 28 per cent of tenured positions, 40 per cent of tenure-track positions, and 45 per cent of non-tenure-track positions are held by women. Only 18.1 per cent of full professors are women, while 34 per cent of associate professors and 41.3 per cent of assistant professors are women. Parity is achieved only at the lower ranks of

academic positions, below assistant professor, with women making up 54.2 per cent of this cohort.

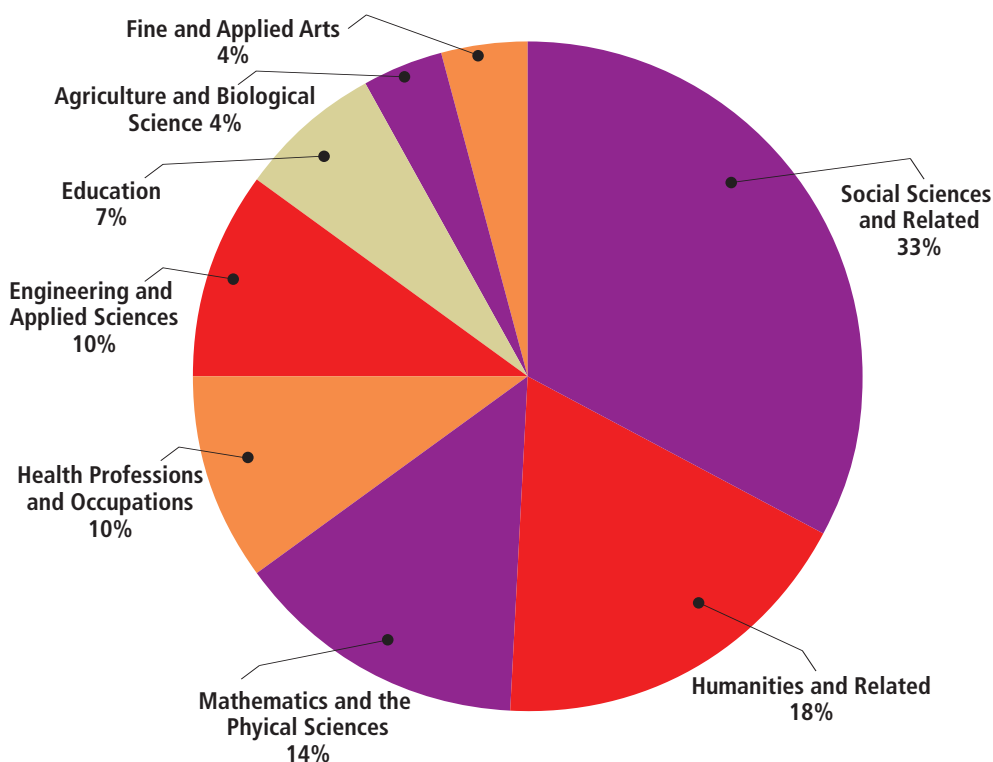
The percentage of women across disciplines, again, mirrors the gendered university. Women in 2003-2004 were 47 per cent of education faculty, 41 per cent of fine and applied arts and humanities faculty, 39 per cent of health professions and occupations faculty, 33 per cent of social science faculty, but only 15 per cent of mathematics and the physical sciences and 11.2 per cent of engineering faculty.

The large increase in women's university participation has not substantially changed gender profiles across fields of study and programs

Tenure and promotion are the most significant rites of passage in a successful academic career. Not surprisingly,

women's increasing presence in the professoriate has prompted examination of the gendered nature of the academic career process. Overwhelmingly, national and international research has demonstrated women's disadvantage in tenure and promotion. Our own longitudinal analysis, with Michael Ornstein, of progression through the ranks for all full-time faculty in

Figure1: Percentage of New Faculty Appointments by Discipline in Ontario Universities, 1999 to 2004



Canadian universities from 1984 to 1999 shows that the rates of promotion from assistant to associate professor differ only slightly between women and men. The median time to promotion is about 0.4 years longer for women than for men. In promotion from associate to full professor, women's disadvantage is much greater: about one year in the median time to promotion. Our data show that virtually all men and women who do not leave their institution are promoted to the level of associate professor. A reasonable inference is that they are also granted tenure. Moreover, there is no evidence of a peak in departures from universities between years five and seven after appointment to assistant professor, which would be suggestive of persons leaving after being denied tenure. There is essentially no difference between women and men in this respect.

Our analysis of promotion to full professor, however, suggests discrimination against women more strongly. In promotion from associate to full professor, women's disadvantage is much greater, growing to about one year in the median time to promotion. The measured cost—a delay of one year relative to men—is meaningful, though we would not say large.

Parity continues to elude academic women. Even taking into account differences in year of appointment, discipline, and institution, women associate professors are clearly less likely than male associates to be promoted to full professor and, where they are promoted, are promoted more slowly. There have been many efforts to ascribe gender differences in tenure and promotion to individual and institutional characteristics, disciplinary cultures, and the academic pipeline.

The difference between men and women in the full professor cohort of 1984 to 1999 can partially be explained by the fact that men were hired earlier than women. We found, however, that gender differences in the promotion rates of faculty members are little affected by either their academic discipline or by the type of institution they work for.

A 2005 study by Karen Grant of women administrators in 92 Canadian uni-

versities found that women's increasing number in the academy has not translated into a surge in the number of women holding leadership positions. Based on her 2004-2005 survey, Grant concluded that women constitute a minority in senior administration. Women held about 30 per cent of administrative positions. Thirty-five per cent of all women in administration held positions as heads, a junior level of administration. The second largest concentration of women was found in the position of director (this included directors of research centres, libraries, and other administrative or academic units) and accounted for 20 per cent of women administrators. At the decanal level, women in dean and associate/assistant dean positions made up only about 26 per cent of the category. As for the most senior levels, there were 64 women.

The profile of women in Canadian universities presented so far describes, on the one hand, the growing presence of women on campuses but, on the other hand, reveals how this feminization has failed to penetrate the still largely male world of academic prestige. Almost 60 per cent of the undergraduate student body is female

Table 1: Rank Order of Percentage of Women Faculty at Ontario Universities, 2004 to 2005¹

Institution	Female	Total	% Female
York University	528	1260	41.90%
Brock University	198	489	40.49%
Wilfrid Laurier University	168	429	39.16%
Nipissing University	45	117	38.46%
Trent University	93	252	36.90%
Ryerson University	216	588	36.73%
Université d'Ottawa	324	912	35.53%
University of Windsor	177	513	34.50%
University of Toronto	642	1935	33.18%
Laurentian University	105	324	32.41%
Queen's University	210	648	32.41%
University of Western Ontario	276	939	29.39%
Carleton University	186	648	28.70%
University of Guelph	219	798	27.44%
McMaster University	177	654	27.06%
University of Waterloo	198	873	22.68%
TOTAL	3762	11379	33.06%

*** See Attached Documents for the Latest Data

and, yet, as we move up the academic prestige ladder the percentage decreases: 49 per cent of graduate students are women, but women make up only 31.7 per cent of faculty and 30 per cent of administrators. Women have made gains in enrolment and appointments even in the most male-entrenched sectors of engineering and science disciplines and are achieving tenure at the same rate as men. Regrettably, however, women continue to be clustered both as students and faculty in feminized disciplines; women faculty are not appointed to the rank of full professor at the same rate or speed as men; and women continue to be underrepresented in senior administrative positions.

Our comparison of today with the 1960s is deliberate, in order to parallel the structural context of universities then and now. The 1960s was a period of unprecedented expansion and reorganization for Canadian education. In that great peak of hiring, during which the total number of full-time faculty grew from about 16,691 in 1967 to 27,112 in 1973, the percentage of women full-time faculty actually fell, from 13.4 per cent to 12.7 per cent. Until recently, this was the most significant opportunity to produce a major change in the composition of faculty in Canadian universities, and we lost it. The post-1999 hiring wave provides Canadian universities with another significant opportunity to restructure and rebuild the professoriate through replacement and growth. In 2000, Leanne Elliott of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada projected that universities would hire between 2,500 to 3,000 faculty yearly to 2010. From 1999 to 2004, Canadian universities appointed 14,583 full-time faculty. Of these appointments, 5,628 or 38.6 per cent were awarded to women. A larger percentage of women was appointed at the rank of assistant professor (67.7 per cent) than men (64.3 per cent), and a smaller percentage of women was

Table 2: New Appointments Awarded to Women in Ontario Universities, 1999 to 2004 ¹

Institution	Full Professor		Associate Professor		Assistant Professor		All Ranks Below Assistant Professor		Totals	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Brock University	3	25.0%	18	54.5%	105	50.0%	42	56.0%	162	50.0%
Wilfrid Laurier University	3	25.0%	3	14.3%	102	47.2%	0	0.0%	42	50.0%
University of Waterloo	6	15.4%	6	10.5%	63	26.6%	60	60.6%	282	49.7%
University of Guelph	9	27.3%	6	22.2%	102	44.2%	3	33.3%	54	46.2%
University of Windsor	3	16.7%	6	20.0%	78	37.1%	36	42.9%	150	45.0%
York University	6	25.0%	24	42.1%	192	49.6%	12	57.1%	54	42.9%
Nipissing University	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	42	53.8%	60	62.5%	147	40.5%
Ryerson University	3	25.0%	21	31.8%	78	41.3%	3	50.0%	120	40.4%
Trent University	0	0.0%	6	50.0%	42	48.3%	24	53.3%	213	39.0%
Carleton University	3	20.0%	12	28.6%	72	35.3%	18	37.5%	123	38.3%
Université d'Ottawa	6	16.7%	18	30.0%	105	36.8%	54	58.1%	210	38.0%
Laurentian University	0	0.0%	6	50.0%	42	43.8%	12	80.0%	123	37.6%
McMaster University	6	13.3%	18	25.0%	165	43.7%	42	56.0%	168	36.4%
University of Western Ontario	6	20.0%	18	37.5%	126	34.4%	24	40.0%	105	35.7%
University of Toronto	6	20.0%	12	33.3%	63	36.2%	12	44.4%	102	35.4%
Queen's University	12	33.3%	15	33.3%	96	40.5%	12	21.1%	84	21.9%
TOTAL	90	22.2%	186	28.3%	1545	40.3%	459	51.0%	2271	39.2%

¹ Statistics Canada: University and College Academic Staff Survey (UCASS)

***See Attached Documents for Latest Data

appointed at the ranks of associate (nine per cent) and full professor (three per cent) than men (15 per cent and nine per cent, respectively). Women exceeded the appointment of men in education (55 per cent), approached parity in the health professions and occupations (49 per cent), the humanities (48 per cent), and in fine and applied arts (47 per cent) but were less than 20 per cent in both engineering and applied sciences (15 per cent) and mathematics and the physical sciences (19 per cent). Surprisingly, only 40 per cent of positions in the social sciences were awarded to women. Given that women have exceeded men in doctoral enrolment and Ph.D.s

awarded in the social sciences since 1997, their underrepresentation in the new appointments is both puzzling and disturbing.

A close-up look at Ontario universities is instructive, and women's share of new appointments is of particular interest. Forty per cent of the available faculty positions in Canada from 1999-2004 were filled in Ontario. An overview of the various disciplines' share of new appointments is presented in Figure 1. Roughly, 62 per cent of the new hires were in the social sciences and humanities disciplines, 24 per cent in the natural sciences and engineering disciplines, and 10 per cent in health disciplines (clinical faculty are not included).

Table 1 ranks Ontario universities by the percentage of

women in full-time faculty in 2004-2005, ranging from a high of 41.9 per cent at York University to a low of 22.7 per cent at the University of Waterloo.


Table 2 shows that only half these universities appointed women at a rate of 40 to 50 per cent of all new hires. Not surprisingly, four of the five medical-doctoral institutions are at the bottom of the pack. Overall 2,271 women (or just 39 per cent of new hires) were appointed.

Canadian universities, midway through this hiring curve, have increased the number of women in their universities. The data presented, however, raise the question of whether the proportion of faculty women hired is adequate to make women visible in traditionally male-dominated areas and to make them more visible in disciplines now dominated by women students. With

employment equity off the radar screens at most universities, we may once again miss out on the opportunity, provided by the current hiring wave, to transform the professoriate. **AM**

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¹ We are acutely aware of the absence of the inclusion of race, class, disability, and ethnicity in this article. To speak only of gender in the 21st century is an anachronism perpetuated by the failure of universities and Statistics Canada to collect these data for faculty and students. The only window available on the diversity in universities is the limited data in the Canadian census.



Breaking through the ivy ceiling: sinking or swimming?

Sandra Acker looks at the challenges women face in academic administration

Une étude des femmes des facultés d'éducation qui sont en position de leadership révèle de nombreux cas de stress, certains à cause de l'équilibre à établir entre le travail et la maison, et d'autres à cause des caractéristiques de l'établissement. Des participantes, en particulier à des postes moins élevés, ont quitté l'administration, mais un petit nombre d'autres ont réussi à se tracer une carrière satisfaisante.

“**W**omen storm ivory towers,” blare the headlines whenever a new female dean is appointed to a male-dominated faculty. Certainly women are much better represented in university leadership ranks than in the past, although a cynic might say that women have been accepted in these positions just as the desirability of being an academic manager declines, given global trends that boost workloads, corporatize institutions, and increase accountability to the level of surveillance.

Typically, new university academic administrators have little relevant experience, minimal training, and unrealistic expectations. Administrators have to learn to tolerate social isolation, loss of former collegiality, new self-images, and criticism. Of course they gain as well: new reference groups, new understandings, and sometimes the ability to make a difference for others. It is arguable that the emotional upheavals of administration is the aspect for which any training and, certainly, prior experience as a faculty member least prepares a new administrator. When the new administrator is already marginalized due to race and gender, the situation can become even more challenging. Yet while some persons in these roles suffer, others flourish. I wondered why.

In an effort to answer my questions about the experiences of women in leadership roles, I conducted semi-structured interviews between 1999 and 2005 with 31 women academic admin-

istrators in three countries, including 12 from Canada. The women were vice-provosts, deans, associate or vice deans, chairs, associate chairs, program coordinators, or research centre directors. All work or worked in a faculty of education. Although specific challenges varied by country and institution, most of the women reported problems and difficulties coping with these positions. Often, there were gendered expectations, as, for example, when “Ursula” reported a tense relationship with a manager: “He was talking to me like a little girl...[then] we had a very difficult committee meeting, where my dean was screaming at me, and suddenly I said, ‘You know, nobody will talk to me this way and ...I went out of the meeting and I stayed two days at home’.” “Wendy” remarked: “I felt like I was the wife to the dean and the mother to the faculty.” She talked about demands on her to be nurturing: “Well, I mean the dean can’t stand to see people cry. So if people knew they were gonna cry, they came to me.”

Participants reported a long list of difficult situations and stressors, many related to increased levels of work, the compliance culture that required endless paperwork and scrutiny, and unanticipated responsibilities for restructuring and downsizing. The need to deal with high levels of interpersonal conflict came as an unwelcome surprise for some. The women also talked frequently about challenges to their identities as scholars and the endless difficulties



of balancing home responsibilities, finding time to replenish their own energy levels, and meeting the voracious work expectations that held them in thrall. Repeatedly, they spoke of a loss of control over their own time, of needing to be in the office for long hours, of the work being generated for them instead of chosen by them, and of the non-stop e-mail that filled their days.

They talked of working 16-hour days and of debilitating fatigue: "It may just be the time of year but I'm exhausted. Like I just find I go home on weekends and I just sleep. I don't do anything" ("Tania"). There is a stark contrast between the freedom of academic life that faculty members have enjoyed in the past and the demands of administration that they are now experiencing. "Victoria" noted, "As an academic, if I didn't get to my e-mail, you know, over two or three days, it wasn't a big deal, right, and [now] I don't have that kind of freedom."

The career point at which these women take up significant administrative responsibilities is relevant to their survival. In education, in particular, academics are often older than the norm, as many have had professional careers as school teachers before entering university work. By the time they come to be recruited for university leadership roles, there is little time left in which they could pursue a third career. If they leave their management responsibilities and return to faculty life, their hard-won knowledge goes with them. Quite a few of the women held jobs like associate chair, deputy head of department, director of teacher education, or other positions that did not actually carry much in the way of compensation either financially or in reduced teaching loads. Typically, these women were among the most discontented and did not plan to stay in administration. The general absence of succession planning or ensuring productive roles for

ex-administrators is likely to have a subtle and negative effect on the university more generally, as the cycle of new recruits sinking or swimming and often, eventually, exiting repeats itself.

Yet the women were not without resources. In quite a few cases, they had materially changed the nature of the responsibility they held by seeking a different position, altering the one they held, changing institutions, or leaving administration altogether. The most successful women found ways to feel pride in their work. After listing the drawbacks of her position, "Wendy" then shifted to a positive assessment: "I felt in lots of ways really empowered, because if I wanted to make things happen, I could do it. I mean it might take its toll on me personally...but I could make it happen, and so I felt that I could make a difference. I could make changes in students' lives and in faculty's lives."

The handful of cases where the women were actually developing a leadership career is instructive. Those women generally came across as more confident and more positive than the others. Almost by definition, they were in the more senior positions—deans or above. That meant that they typically had better administrative support and access to resources, as well as greater power and status within the institution. There are various factors that contributed to their survival, ranging from a positive outlook to good situations, support, recognition, and fit with the institution. For example, "Denise" had held management positions at three universities and was happy with her current post. In the first case, she "learned a lot of hard knocks and hard lessons pretty fast." She built structures and "then my own colleagues saw me as a leader...now there's the headship for the department, well you're the logical one."

She echoes the complaints of other participants when she describes some of the difficulties in that position, but she decided that the way to handle the problem was "to jump onto a bigger stage." She talks about having a sense of confidence, knowing how organizations work, standing up to people, and being a good negotiator. When she was interviewed for her current job, she says, "I saw the fit...it seemed like every-

thing I had done in my career up to that point had prepared me." There were many other illustrations in the interview of conscious thinking and planning in career terms.

"Denise" and other similar women have created a leadership career, something very few of the others were able to do. I would not recommend that every woman academic be encouraged to surmount the challenges of leadership roles—there is too much sacrifice required—yet if we are going to have better universities, we need committed individuals like many of those I interviewed. We seem only at the beginning of providing the supports and rewards and career structures that could make it possible to carve out such a career in a satisfying manner. Recognizing and communicating the emotional dimensions of the roles, as well as closely examining the dysfunctional aspects of leadership, will give us a start on a solution. **AM**

Various factors contributed to women administrators' survival, ranging from a positive outlook to good situations, support, recognition, and fit with the institution

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Les expériences de professeures féministes occasionnelles font l'objet d'un examen dans cet article pour déterminer comment le féminisme peut compliquer leur poste fragile de professeures non permanentes. La matière des cours suscite la tension chez ces professeures dans le climat universitaire actuel de l'assurance de la qualité. Voici un résultat remarqué : les professeures féministes prennent moins de risques pédagogiques. Nous constatons la gestion active des enseignantes pour ne pas offenser les étudiants avec la matière des cours féministes.

Cultivating Miss Congeniality

Michelle Webber describes the insecurities of contingent female faculty and the dilemmas of feminism



Only recently has literature emerged concerning contingent faculty members in Canadian universities. But while comprehensive data are unavailable, we do know, thanks to work by Indhu Rajagopal at York University that the proportion of women who are contingent academic labourers is larger than the proportion of women who occupy secure full-time positions in universities. Contingent academic workers are, in the words of University of Toronto professor Linda Muzzin, a “feminized (and somewhat racialized, though still mostly white) group supporting the still largely white, male academic enterprise.”

Many organizational practices contribute to contingent faculty members’ experiences of university life. This was clearly evident from an investigation I conducted on the social organization of feminist teaching. The contingent faculty members in this project discussed issues similar to those raised in other literature concerning non-permanent faculty: they are asked to teach the large, first-and second-year courses; they rarely teach courses in their areas of specialization; they feel fortunate when given the opportunity to teach the same course twice; they are often spatially marginalized from the departments they teach in (i.e. their offices, if they are lucky enough to have an office, are often locat-

Non-permanent feminist faculty speak about managing their teaching identities to secure non-problematic student evaluations

ed outside of their departments); and their high teaching loads make it difficult to meet the research and publication record needed to secure tenure-track positions.

All these issues are, of course, worth exploring. What I found of particular interest, however, are those contingent faculty members who are feminist (and who teach either in women’s studies or in courses that are cross-listed with women’s studies) and how their feminism complicates their tenuous positions as non-permanent faculty members.

Tension emerges for contingent feminist faculty at the level of course content within the current university climate of quality assurance. One mechanism of quality assurance is the use of anonymous student course evaluations. Faculty members report high anxiety around this evaluation. They are concerned that students will respond negatively to feminist course content and will evaluate these feminist courses as poor. Non-permanent faculty are aware (or at least perceive) that student course evaluations are an important tool used by chairs of departments or other administrators for consideration of future employment. But as a 1997 study argued, indicators on teaching that are pulled from student course evaluations “do not always account for students’ (skeptical and often negative) perceptions of women in positions of intellectual authority.” Further, the same study concluded, women’s concentration in large undergraduate courses, usually at the first-and second-year levels, “puts women’s teaching performance at the mercy of beginning undergraduates, who are often less than ‘fair’ in their assessment of women academics.”

Post-structuralists argue that student course evaluations represent an example of disciplinary technologies that are being uti-

lized in the academy to create docile academic workers. In this case, we can see that these disciplinary technologies work to normalize particular kinds of teaching practices. The faculty members interviewed talk about “watering down” their feminist content in order to sustain more positive teaching evaluations. As Cathy, one of the faculty members I interviewed in my study, shared, “If you have students who just don’t care or don’t like you or whatever, then you get worried about being screwed on your course evaluations.” Students’ negative reaction to feminist content may well affect their overall assessment of a teacher’s abilities.

The non-permanent feminist faculty speak about managing their teaching identities to secure non-problematic evaluations. As one faculty member states, “One of my tactics is to appeal in terms of an identity... to win the Miss Congeniality prize.” They are preoccupied with student reaction and the possibility of obtaining future work in the academy. What is interesting is that it is their desire to include feminist material in their courses that worries them so much. For many students, my study shows, feminist theory is apparently still beyond the boundaries of acceptable or legitimate knowledge. As Stacy, another interviewee, said:

There might be things that would I do differently, teaching things like feminist theory or whatever, if I was tenured. So there’s always the sensation, like one thing when I talk about managing the course so it’s okay for the students and it’s also creating harmony...so you’re not likely to get the worst course evaluations.

In the current regime of quality assurance, faculty members take fewer pedagogical risks. This lack of risk taking is certainly evidenced by the faculty members in my project. It is also likely that faculty members, such as ones surveyed for a 2005 study, “divert or postpone scholarly efforts that reflect feminist values to engage in work they believe will be less risky.”

Departments chairs, who, ideally, should be resources for academics teaching for the first time are also part of this climate of quality assurance via surveillance. One faculty member reported that she worries about students complaining to the chair about her feminist course content. Another faculty member experienced harassment from two male students about “lesbian, male-bashing, feminist” course content. Yet she did not approach the chair of her department for advice (or support) because she was concerned the chair would not defend her course but merely see her as an incompetent course director who should not be hired in the future.

This climate has consequences for feminists in the academy. Contingent faculty choose to present liberal versions of feminist material they think will be palatable to conservative students. As far back as 1991, studies revealed pressure on faculty to present liberal visions of feminist thought, but as the women in this study report, even this liberal feminist material is met with negativity. Presenting liberal material as the only kind of feminist thought, however, has implications for the creation of knowledge and for what kind of feminist thought ends up being presented to students as legitimate. The academic field of women’s studies may be affected as insecurely employed, contingent faculty members alter their pedagogical commitments in order to negotiate their way into the academy. **AM**

Michelle Webber is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at Brock University.

Parenting and working: a model change needed

Jo-Anne Dillabough says the traditional male model of the unencumbered scholar doesn't work anymore

I am a parent and I am an academic. Sometimes I don't know which comes first. Like parenting itself, the academic job never leaves me, and I am left trying to give more than I have. This sounds like railing against my lot. It is not meant to be. I left my largely working-class childhood and inherited maternal training. I got an education and a middle-class job. I walked across the class divide. I accomplished this with the help of my parents, my friends, low tuition fees (it was still the 1980s), a glorious recognition of the changing nature of the "family," the extraordinary patience of my eldest child (he was born while I was a doctoral student), the rise of the women's movement and feminism(s), and a general recognition that even a plumber's daughter ought to have the right to a university education. I count myself extremely lucky. I don't wish to undermine the different forms of work that other parents do, much of which involves far greater sacrifices than any I have ever made. I am thinking of "domestic workers," and workers in care-centres and retirement homes. I am thinking about those women arriving here from war-torn countries and/or who may not speak English as a first language.

But in reflecting upon my own "personal dramas" across the years, it does not feel as if I have been following an easy road. I still remember nursing my youngest son, Pascal, at a meeting for a summer program I was responsible for coordinating while working at the University of Toronto. I was supposed to be on maternity leave at the time, but there was just no one else on hand to do the job. It had to be done and I had to do it. It was part of my duty as an academic and a teacher. This episode was but one among many, a succession of similar contingencies that meant that, in the end, there was no such thing as a "real" maternity leave.

As a researcher, I study the working lives of women in higher education. As a female academic, I live out such a life myself. What I have learned from both experiences is that within the academy the paradoxes of female work and the balance of family life are often hidden, masked, or left unacknowledged in the larger institutional context. Classes often start at 4:30 p.m., departmental orientations are often held on weekends, as are departmen-



Within the academy, the paradoxes of female work and the balance of family life are often hidden

tal retreats. Why do our colleagues support these measures? It is because the university benefits. But for the wider lives of women academics, these institutional benefits are won at huge cost.

Undoubtedly the greatest challenge comes in struggling to incorporate parenting into one's "career-based life space." The idea of taking breaks either to have or care for children stands in the way of a culture which has been historically oriented towards the conditions for achieving male academic success. The traditional model of the independent scholar, autonomous and unencumbered, is a fraught one for any whose goal is to become a learned female in the academy. To embrace this

powerful, inherited image is to inflict high levels of guilt upon women academics who are also parents. Such guilt is expressed in the residual anxiety either that you should not be working in this manner, or that you are somehow undermining the best interests of your children if you do.

For women academics to be "successful" on the university's terms "they have to 'become part of the personality' of the institution." Things will continue in this way unless we build upon the potential for challenging historic models of academic labour.

Drawing upon our lived experiences of work in the academy we need to ask how we seek to change public understandings of women's work and parenting. And what structural changes should we seek to support women in reconciling the demands that fall upon them? Equally important, how can we avoid the kinds of generational

conflicts that operate between women at different levels of the institutional structure as well as between women workers both with and without children? Ultimately we must ask: How do we keep children on our agenda as we work towards improving the working conditions of women's life in the academy? My own children often tell me that they'd like me to work less. I agree. When candid they say I could elect for early retirement? Is 43 a good age for such a request? You tell me. **AM**

Jo-Anne Dillabough is an associate professor in the Department of Education Studies at the University of British Columbia.

Masculinity in the quad

The dominant forms of masculinity are about power and fear, write Michael Kaufman and Jason Laker, and young men are muddling through uncertain gender terrain. But universities can help them



- Two young men go to the movies together and ensure there is an empty seat between them. But the same two will give each other a boisterous hug from time to time.
- A gay man lives in a campus residence, enjoying his experience with straight roommates and floormates without harassment.
- Friends of a male student chide him for refusing to drink a fourth shot, calling him “little girl” and “Mary.”
- A male student is berated by some male and female friends for refusing to wear a white ribbon on December 6.

It is a complex and contradictory time to be a guy on a university campus. Almost 40 years since the modern wave of feminism first arrived on Canadian campuses, the shift has been remarkable: in the ratio of male and female students (and, increasingly, faculty), in the range of courses in women’s and gender studies (and the inclusion of much more content within many disciplines), and in the attention given to issues such as violence against women.

Men arriving on a campus come into an environment where there is an assumption of women’s equality, even if reality doesn’t always match. These men also know they can’t rely on the 8,000-year-old affirmation action policy that once determined they wouldn’t have to compete for jobs with the female half of the planet. These men also tend to have very different expectations about their own career paths compared to a couple of generations ago, in particular, in striking a balance between work and family life. Most enter relationships and will eventually leave university with an assumption they will someday be taking on significant responsibilities (and, in some cases, even primary responsibility) as parents and as individuals who share domestic work.

And yet, for all these changes, a significant minority of male students engage in a range of violent behaviours, including sexu-

al assault and physical violence of a girlfriend; many more engage in forms of controlling behaviour. Far too many young men will not feel comfortable interrupting a misogynist comment or saying something to a friend who is joking about rape. In spite of an acceptance of sexual diversity, homophobia (often in disguised forms) remains alive. In the movies and TV shows they see, in the music they listen to, in the video games they play, there remains a vast edifice of images that celebrate traditional definitions of masculine power and domination. And yet these are images that are constantly contested around them.

Perhaps it’s true of all people, but many men traditionally learned to thrive in patriarchal cultures where their roles and gender relations were clearly defined, and they could focus on working hard to master them. Of course, even when this role was rigidly defined, it wasn’t actually achievable, and it had costs not only to women but, paradoxically, to men as well (in spite of the privileges men enjoyed). Now, there are multiple roles that men can take on, multiple demands, changing expectations, and rules that sometimes seem to change moment to moment.

Even fellow men, and indeed women, differ in how they validate or criticize any given choice or behaviour made by a man. Sadly, it is still a minority of male students who consciously explore this contest of meanings or consciously question the meanings of being male. And yet, part of what is going on all around them, and part of what they are engaging in, is this very challenge. Those young men who do make an effort to confront sexism receive both compliments and criticisms from other men and from women. For many young men we talk to, there is a feeling they just can’t win.

What lies underneath the reluctance to consciously challenge the remaining edifice of oppressive gender relations or to consciously question their own take on masculinity? What gets in the way of challenging sexist words and behaviour? In part, it is the



privileges men still enjoy in a male-dominated society: why buck what seems to work for your half of humanity? But it's much more, and it is the story of what one of us has described as "men's contradictory experiences of power." As much as anything else, it is fear. Fear of not being one of the boys. Fear of breaking what are assumed to be the norms in what men believe. Fear of being ridiculed. Fear of not being a real man. Fear of other men, mediated within all-male environments. Fear that is a constituent part of our dominant forms of masculinity.

Our institutions can play a positive role in helping young men understand, negotiate, and embrace gender equality

This fear explains many of the paradoxes we witness. In spite of the presence of women students as academic equals, in spite of a 40-year-old discourse on women's equality, in spite of the expressed belief among most men that women should be and are equal, in spite of the breakdown of some of the physical taboos among men, many young men still haven't figured out how to shed their armour. They are too scared to take the risk of being genuine with each other. When this does happen, when our brothers are genuine with us, we often miss an opportunity by changing the subject or teasing them. We continue to be afraid of each other, despite wanting—sometimes desperately—to be close. If our fellow men get too close, perhaps they will see through this armour, and we will be exposed as a fraud. The dominant forms of masculinity are about power and fear.

Critiques (by both women and men) of sexist behaviours and oppressive gender relations called on men to question essentialist

notions of masculinity. Such notions influenced us in ways that hurt women through the acceptance of violence, systematic exclusion, and belittling treatment. While giving men comparative advantages and not, in the same sense, being oppressive to men, these notions robbed us of elements of our own humanity as well. Today, young men come to campus with conflicting demands and ideas about masculinity—the new meeting the old. They get confused but still have precious little permission to admit to that confusion. More senior men, whether professors or staff, are not always ready to engage in thoughtful discussion about this topic, having their own confusion to deal with. (Or, where faculty and staff will deal with sexism, such discussions can be abstracted from the lived realities of their lives: while they may well agree that "the personal is political," discussing their own personal engagement and struggles may well seem off limit in an academic context.)

Young men muddle through uncertain times. Faculty and staff can lend a helping hand:

- Those working in student services, residence life, sports, health services, and as academic mentors do well to acknowledge that what passes for certainty among young men is more often a defense against a fear of not making the grade as a man. We must support and encourage the creation of spaces for young men to gain awareness and to learn to challenge both their unacknowledged fears and the extant privileges of males.
- Male professors can learn to take some of the same personal risks as a previous generation of women academics did by finding appropriate ways to be open about our own experiences as men. This can help create safety for male students to explore their own realities.
- Male and female faculty and staff can encourage male students to become active in issues promoting gender equality, challenging homophobia, and challenging men's violence against women. Our point is simple: while most of our male students are not responsible for committing acts of violence or promoting homophobia, we need to encourage all men to take responsibility for ending these affronts to basic human rights, safety, and dignity.
- Male and female professors can encourage and validate the exploration of issues concerning men and masculinity as a valid part of research, not only within gender studies per se, but also as a dimension of all social relations and part of what informs our approaches to a wide range of disciplines, including the natural and applied sciences.

On campuses across Canada, as in communities around the world, the fantastic changes in gender relations can be difficult to negotiate. But more and more men are struggling with these changes. Our institutions can play a positive role in helping young men understand, negotiate, and embrace gender equality and equity, but also embrace changes that will improve not only the lives of women, but will improve their lives as well. **AM**

Michael Kaufman, founder of the White Ribbon Campaign, works internationally as an educator and policy advisor promoting gender equality and working to end violence against women. Jason Laker is associate vice-principal and dean of student affairs at Queen's University, and holds a cross-appointment in women's studies.



Professing blackness

George Elliott Clarke says the struggle is to make the humanities look more like humanity

In May 2006, a *Globe and Mail* book reviewer attacked my latest poetry collection, *Black*, partly on the grounds that, because I'm a tenured professor of English at the University of Toronto and snookered the 2001 Governor-General's Award for Poetry, I cannot pronounce any legitimate quarrel with English letters or state any genuine complaint about racism. The commentary implied that my successes result from my trading on my black identity, that, in effect, I profit by "playing the race card": I'm not a black professional; rather, I'm a professional black—but suspect. My melanin is meretricious; my insurgency is void.

These criticisms echo those I attracted when, as a doctoral student in English at Queen's University, I was informed that my dissertation on African-American and English-Canadian (white-authored) poetry did not merit the same support as that afforded classmates scrutinizing British literature. Indeed, I received much

practice in defending my dissertation—a comparative, post-colonial examination of the aforementioned poetries—because my European-Canadian interlocutors often wondered, fiercely, "Really? You can compare African Americans and white Canadians?"

These critiques stress the marginal position of "blackness." As a cultural identity, set of protocols, and as a poetics, it has not been welcome in Canadian institutions, including the academy, but also not in mass media and pop culture, business, courts, legislatures, and political parties. Black folks are still perceived as automatically alien, naturally un-Canadian, and indelibly *other*.

I acknowledge that Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, a black woman, is the head of state, and that Her Honour the Honourable Mayann Francis, also a black woman, is Nova Scotia's lieutenant-governor. Yet, neither appointment, though they exemplify the virtue of tolerance and the spirit of

multiculturalism, prevents any white Canadian from demanding, anywhere and anytime, "Where are you from?"

Problematically however, this inquiry is never innocent: the presumption is that I cannot be from Canada, that I could not have been born here, that I cannot be a "real" Canadian, that I cannot have a Canadian ancestry that extends back to 1813 (and further, considering my Aboriginal heritage). The proof? My "race," my "accent," my rambunctious laugh, my "musical" poetry....

Worse, still, is the ongoing erasure of African-Canadian history from public consciousness and the perpetual silencing of African-Canadian critique. The aforementioned *Globe and Mail* reviewer attempted just this strategy, hinting that I may not *properly* articulate my specific, *racial* experience *in this country*. (Such is *Verboten*.) Too, my initial, academic critics fretted that my focus on black literature underlined my wasteful attention to woefully inferior works.

(My observation is, unfortunately, correct: At Queen's University in the summer of 1991, a visiting professor informed our Southern U.S. novel class that no African-American writers merited inclusion on his syllabus. [Goodbye, Richard Wright, Alice Walker, Zora Neale Hurston, et al!]) Instead, white authors were posited as the unimpeachable and objective interpreters of black history and culture.)

These realities have elicited my response, scholarly and creative. My move to the southern United States in 1994 to take up a position at Duke University as assistant professor of English and Canadian studies inspired me to re-jig my interests. I began to sketch and colour in the *concept* of African-Canadian literature, serving, thus, to define, highlight, and popularize this field of inquiry.

At Queen's University in the summer of 1991, a visiting professor informed our Southern U.S. novel class that no African-American writers merited inclusion on his syllabus

My foundational labours included chronicling a history and drafting an expansive bibliography of African-Canadian literature (1996), editing an anthology of contemporary writers, *Eyeing the North Star: Directions in African-Canadian Literature* (1997), and announcing, accidentally, a theory of African-American influence on some African-Canadian texts (1996). On the artistic front, I penned an opera libretto and a verse-play, *Beatrice Chancy* (1998, 1999), dealing with the repressed history of African slavery in Nova Scotia, as well as a feature-film screenplay for CBC-TV, *One Heart Broken Into Song* (1999).

My location outside Canada improved my insight into the ways in which "race" and racism operate in this northern Dominion. Strange it was, though, to return home and hear Canadians ask, "How are you coping with all that racism in the South?" I learned to answer, "No problem: I grew up in Halifax."

Accepting a 1999 offer from the University of Toronto to research and teach African-Canadian literature here, I vowed I would never relinquish what the United States of America and Duke University gave me: a voice—I mean—a sense, a style, of empowerment. This fact, plus the lived experience of growing up in African Nova Scotia (Africadia), in the radical 1960s and the progressive 1970s, has equipped me to speak publicly about "race,"



racism, visible minorities in Canada, and attendant, socio-political matters. (I admit it is splendid to possess tenure: it means I can circulate—even broadcast—honest speech and study.)

In terms of my personal treatment as, I believe, the first person of African heritage hired in a tenure-track position in the department of English at the University of Toronto, I cannot cry foul. In 2002, the University of Toronto Press published my *Odysseys Home: Mapping African-Canadian Literature*. In 2003, I was appointed the inaugural E.J. Pratt Professor of Canadian Literature, a title accompanied by an annual, five-figure research grant, and designated for a professor-poet. It is a liberating position: I travel and buy books.

True: because our departmental offerings are mainly half-courses, I have had to justify teaching African-Canadian literature as a full-year, undergraduate course. But this debate has reminded several of us that no university is an island. We live bodily in society. Urban Canada is multicultural: we must deliver courses that reflect this *exciting* reality.

Where we must improve—not only at the University of Toronto—is in diversifying the pools and short-lists of candidates. Visible minorities must be considered *seriously* for teaching "mainstream" Canadian literature as well as the British canon, from Beowulf to Pinter. White privilege, in these areas and others, must end. The ivory tower must become a prism.

When this transformation occurs, we will know, in literary criticism, an expansion of the vistas of reference and an escalation in excellence. Our struggle is to make the humanities look more like humanity. **AM**

George Elliott Clarke teaches English at the University of Toronto. His work-in-progress is a verse play about Pierre Elliott Trudeau, titled "Trudeau: Long March, Shining Path," to be published by Gasparau Press in April 2007.

Contrary to conventional wisdom and common practice in Canadian universities today, “Indigenous academics” are not faculty members who happen to have real or imagined Native ancestry (the two forms are equal under the law, by the way). Being an Indigenous academic, for those of us who are, is a more serious matter that goes beyond glorifying one’s bloodline or tokenizing one’s status as an “aboriginal Canadian.” Indigeneity is a struggle, not a label. And for those of us who work in academia, accepting one’s indigeneity means a constant fight to remain connected to our communities, to live our culture, and to defend our homelands, all the while fulfilling our professional duties inside what is, essentially, a central institution of colonial dominion. It’s a complicated and contentious existence, if it is done properly.

There are many post-colonials among us who believe that universities must change their structures, rules, and cultures to accommodate the new presence of aboriginal people in the heart of whiteness, so to speak. I do not share this view—and not because I disagree that universities are the heart of whiteness!—but mainly because I have come to realize the decolonizing potential of the creative tension of the Indigenous–university dynamic on both persons and collectives. I believe, after 14 years as an academic, that if Indigenous academics are to serve any useful role in helping our people survive and in decolonizing this country, we have to embrace, learn from, and teach about the discordant situation we find ourselves in because it simply reflects the broader reality faced by our people in their confrontations with the established order.

Pacifying our existence as Indigenous academics while the actual state of relations between our peoples remains aggressively colonial would cut us off from the reality of our people, rendering us useless, or worse, fashioning us into tools of white power. In fact, many of us who claim to be “Indigenous academics” do walk in beauty on the peaceful path to irrelevance. But this is putting your *situation* as a university professor before your *identity* as a Native, in effect it means becoming an “academic Indigene,” and that just does not sound right to me.

Our experiences in universities reflect the tensions and dynamics of our relationships as Indigenous peoples interacting with people and institutions in society as a whole: an existence of constant and pervasive struggle to resist assimilation to the values and culture of the larger society. In this, contrary to what is sometimes naively assumed by us and propagated by universities themselves, universities are not safe ground. In fact, they are not even so special or different in any meaningful way from other institutions; they are microcosms of the larger societal struggle. But they are the places where we as academics work—they are our sites of colonialism.

“The university is contentious ground....” This may seem like an obvious point, given the petty controversies and personal conflicts that are facts of life in any academic institution. Indigenous people in universities have for the most part proven unprepared mentally, emotionally, and physically to carry on the struggles of



Indigenizeing the academy? An argument against

Taiaiake Alfred argues that Indigenous faculty should embrace the struggles of their nations within the university



their nations inside academia. Most Indigenous people working in universities are either alienated or escapees from their nations and have for the most part retreated to the university and insulated themselves from any accountability to the conflicts and challenges being faced by their people in the communities. I believe, in our academic politics, that we are not making a courageous stand for the integrity of our nationhood or pride in our Indigenous cultures; rather we are rushing headlong into the mainstream or bourgeois cultural camp. It has become clear that in withdrawing from relevancy and immersing ourselves in the battle for personal gain, or involving ourselves only in disciplinary and academic fights, we are playing assimilation's end-game. The important struggles are not in the low-stakes squabbling over professional recognition, manoeuvring for prestige and status, or scrambling for departmental resources for our programs.

It has become clear that in withdrawing from relevancy and immersing ourselves in the battle for personal gain, or involving ourselves only in disciplinary or academic fights, we are playing assimilation's end game

Given that academe today is such a crucial part of the system of injustices against our nations, Indigenous academics have a responsibility to oppose not only any specific acts of aggression and denial of freedom against themselves and their interests but also the role and function of the university-dwelling colonial power itself. Our people are on the verge of losing an entire way of life, as well as their memory of the histories that not only sustain us as unique cultures but that are also the foundation of the political and economic rights and freedoms that we still do have. All of this is being lost at an astounding rate.

This is where I have always found the most important role for Indigenous academics: as teachers of an empowering and truthful sense of the past and who we are as peoples, and as visionaries of a dignified alternative to the indignity of cultural assimilation and political surrender. In my own work, I have done my best to emulate the greats in this respect, such as the legal and political thinkers Vine Deloria, Jr. and Leroy Little Bear, the anthropologist Beatrice Medicine, and the historian Howard Adams. Their work as scholars and teachers is exemplary in the way they have sought to honour knowledge from traditional cultures, fight for independence in the face of conquest, and denounce and confront false claims of colonial authority and imperial legitimacy.

I have always seen the university as a ground of contention. In this, like many friends and colleagues who are Indigenous academics and who love their people and the land, I am committed to integrating traditional knowledge and bringing an authentic community voice to my work. I do the best I can to abide by a traditional ethic in fulfilling my professional responsibilities. I welcome as necessary the conflicts that emerge with established rules and patterns of authority and conventions of practices. They are signs of movement away from our imperial past. **AM**

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Through a looking glass: enduring racism on the university campus

Frances Henry and Carol Tator describe how the Eurocentric university still discriminates

Racism is deeply embedded in the culture of academia, as reflected in curriculum, pedagogy, hiring, selection and promotion practices, and in the lack of mentoring and support for faculty of colour. The literature we have reviewed¹ and the interviews we have conducted show that many faculty of colour share a remarkable commonality: in the experiences they have had, the barriers they have encountered, the pain and frustration they have endured, and the sense of isolation, marginality, and exclusion from the institutional white culture they have felt.

For despite the claims of equity found in the mission statements and policies of many universities, academics of colour as well as Aboriginal faculty believe that institutions of higher learning remains a zone of whiteness—which reflect the dominance of white, Eurocentric values and exclusions.² Whiteness plays a crucial role in the social construction of racism.

It refers to a collective set of beliefs as well as discursive and social practices that create hierarchy, inferiorization and marginalization, but which appear as normal and natural to most white people. Universities appear not to understand that policies dealing with access, inclusiveness, and equity cannot be achieved without a fundamental change in the culture of the system, meaning a significant shift in values and norms that operate almost invisibly but leave their imprint.

Universities commonly and powerfully resist any but the most cosmetic changes to their core culture. The reputation of the university as a site of liberal ideology allows this, leading to the view that issues of race are isolated and not embedded in the structures and systems operating in the everyday life of the academy. With the exception of a few universities, however, the absence of any substantive, critical assessment of issues related to racism has preserved the status quo.

**Universities commonly and powerfully
resist any but the most cosmetic changes
to their core culture**

First, older, more overt forms of racism continue to occur. One important indicator of this is the under-representation of Aboriginal and people of colour in the system. Although many universities, particularly those in major urban centres, now have a very diverse student body, that diversity is poorly reflected at the level of faculty, especially in the social science and humanities disciplines. At one major Canadian university, for example, nearly half of its student body comes from a variety of diverse backgrounds, yet less than 11 per cent of faculty does—and the majority of these are found in engineering and other sciences.

Secondly, systemic barriers persist within Canadian universities. One such barrier is the curriculum because it validates only particular kinds of knowledge. Eurocentric frameworks, standards, and content are not only often given more resources but also more status, especially when it comes to hiring, promotion, and tenure decisions. Many faculty of colour have argued that only specific types of knowledge are recognized as legitimate, there-

by excluding those that diverge from the Eurocentric norm.³ They refer, for example, to the need to broaden the curriculum to include more emphasis on non-European areas of the world, more courses that focus on racism and other forms of oppression. Furthermore, this ideological framework influences the choice of what courses are designated core curriculum, the selection of curriculum materials, such as required course readings, the mode of organizing workshops and seminars, as well as decisions about visiting lecturers and honorary degrees. Faculty struggles to recentre Aboriginal history, philosophy, and culture and to incorporate anti-racism models of knowledge are often met with resistance and hostility from white students and a lack of support from both colleagues and administration.⁴



These and many other systemic forms of bias and discrimination embedded in the institutional practices and procedures within the academy have a significant impact on career aspirations and mobility, especially for women of colour and Aboriginal women. The tenure process, for one, is viewed as one of the most overt manifestations of the continuing power of white-dominated, male culture. For example, a recent Queen's University report on systemic racism found that more than one half of the white faculty thought the tenure process equitable, whereas only one third of the faculty of colour believed it to be equitable.⁵ Speaking of her own tenure experience, one Aboriginal academic observed that her effort to bring Aboriginal "voices" into the classroom was not valued as a scholarly contribution. Many other women of colour have received responses to research criticized as too political, too ideological, or too rhetorical. Research and writing focusing on community, social action, and social change are often challenged.⁶ Faculty of colour has spoken about expectations and demands that go beyond those made on their white colleagues. They commonly experience demands from minority students wishing to have mentors and role models to whom they can relate, as well as demands from the broader student population seeking their expertise. Their colleagues require speakers on issues of diversity and racism, while administrators need their physical presence on committees to prove that the committee is representative. They also face expectations from their respective communities to support organizational and community development programs.

Narratives written by many of these academics are characterized by self-doubt, apprehension, frustration, and disappointment.⁷ The workplace climate is inhospitable and leads to high levels of stress, physical ill health, and depression. The lack of support from colleagues, chairs of departments, and deans confronted with racism in employment or students' racist behaviour create a sense of isolation and alienation. Some academics of colour talk about the hostility and tension of both white students and colleagues as a minefield through which they constantly have to navigate. Many have suggested that they do not feel safe in the classroom. One professor has observed, "When I teach about racism, the tension in the

room is clear. Unlike in other classes, the students are deathly quiet and still, glaring, hostile, their pens on their desk. They are telling me that they are not willing to learn."⁸ The many myths and misconceptions that are articulated in everyday discourse in the academy on issues related to racism and other forms of discrimination reflect the backlash to efforts by equity-seeking groups to challenge existing power relations, to incorporate new forms of knowledge and new pedagogical models, and to alter the institutional culture of whiteness and male domination. One of the most insidious discourses echoing through the halls of academic institutions, for example, is the taunt of "political correctness." Those who dare to name and challenge their oppressors are transformed into oppressors themselves. Allegations of "reverse racism" then often follow on the heels of "political correctness." And arguments using such language as "accountability," "maintaining standards," and "preserving meritocracy" are also employed as rationales for not addressing critical questions such as: Who controls learning and teaching in the academy? How long do racialized academics have to wait for substantive equality to be achieved? How well are our universities preparing students to live and work in a racially diverse, culturally pluralistic society?

The experiences of racialized students, faculty of colour, and Aboriginal academics across this country reflect the failure of administrative policies, programs, and everyday practices to address racism, to create a more equitable learning and working environment and, above all, to vigorously challenge the "culture of whiteness" still so dominant at most Canadian universities.

Anti-racism models of knowledge production and pedagogy, which emphasize methods and measures to counteract racism and other forms of oppression, have yet to find a place in most universities.⁹ Despite two decades of scholarship documenting the problem and endless recommendations for addressing inequities within academia, there remains huge resistance to change. In the meantime, the profound impact of systemic discrimination and everyday racism continues to mark life for many students and faculty of colour and Aboriginals within Canadian academic institutions. **AM**

Frances Henry is a professor emerita at York University. Carol Tator teaches at York University.

1 See Luther et al., *Seen But Not Heard: Aboriginal Women and Women of Colour in the Academy* (Ottawa: CRIAW-ICREF 2001); Razack, S., *Looking White People in the Eye: Race and Culture in Courtrooms and Classrooms* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); Tastsoglou, E., "Mapping the Unknowable: The Challenges and Rewards of Cultural and Pedagogical Border Crossings," in G. Dei and A. Calliste, eds., *Power, Knowledge and Anti-Racism: A Critical Reader* (Halifax: Fernwood), 98-120.

2 See Kobayashi, A. 2002. "Now You See Them: How You See Them: Women of Colour in Canadian Academia." In *Ivory Towers Feminist Issues: Selected Papers from the WIN Symposia, 2001*. Ottawa: Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada. pp. 44-54.

3 See Wagner, A., "Unsettling the Academy: Working Through the Challenges of Anti-Racist Pedagogy," *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 8 (September 2005): 261-275; Calliste, A., "Anti-Racist Organizing and Resisting in Academia," in G. Dei and A. Calliste, eds., *Power, Knowledge and Anti-Racism: A Critical Reader* (Halifax: Fernwood, 2000), pp. 141-160.

4 Kobayashi, A. 2002 op.cit.

5 Henry, F., *Systemic Racism Towards Faculty of Colour and Aboriginal Faculty* (Queen's University, 2003).

6 Monture-Angus, P. "In the Way of Peace: Confronting Whiteness in the University," in Luther, R. et al, eds, 2nd edition. *Seen But Not Heard: Aboriginal Women and Women of Colour in the Academy* (Ottawa: CRIAW-ICREF, 2003), pp.81-90.

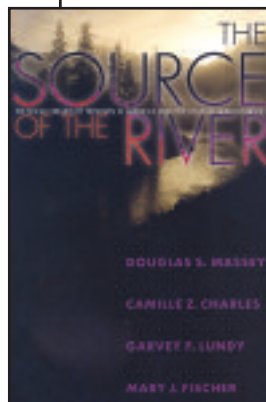
7 See, for example, Ng, R., "Teaching Against the Grain: Contradictions and Possibilities," in R. Ng, P. Staton, and J. Scane, *Anti-Racism, Feminism and Critical Approaches to Education* (Toronto: OISE Press Critical Studies in Education and Culture Series, 1995).

8 Dua, E. and B. Lawrence. 2000. "Challenging White Hegemony in University Classrooms: Whose Canada is It?" *Atlantis* 24(2), pp.105-122.

9 Dei, G. and A. Calliste, eds., *Power, Knowledge, and Anti-Racism Education: A Critical Reader*. Halifax: Fernwood, 2000).

Minority achievement and the university

Reviewed by Jeffrey G. Reitz



The Source of the River: The Social Origins of Freshman at America's Selective Colleges and Universities by Douglas S. Massey, Camille Z. Charles, Garvey F. Lundy, and Mary J. Fischer, (Princeton University Press, 2006, paperback), 283 pp.

Judging from the reported high university attainments of Canadian-born “visible minorities,” one might assume that such students are doing well in Canadian higher education. However, when we look more closely, some unsettling aspects appear. Although rates of university attendance and completion for minorities are high overall, high rates for some groups, such as Chinese, are offset by significantly lower rates for other groups, including blacks and Latin Americans. Further, the representation of racial minorities on university faculties remains low, and educational researchers report instances of racial bias on many campuses. That universities have recognized a problem is evident in their appointment of “race relations” officials. Thus, rosy generalizations could hide less positive experiences for some minority students. While the situation merits attention, however, we have very little information to go on.

In the absence of detailed information for Canada, it may be helpful to consider a study of minorities in American universities by Douglas S. Massey and three colleagues, based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Freshmen conducted in 1999 and 2000. Massey is a well-recognized authority on the topic of race in America. His work on the impact of racial segregation in American cities is definitive. He is sought after for his advice at the highest levels of government. A study by Massey on racial minorities in higher education is worth reading.

Some might say that the U.S. experience in race relations (in education or any other sphere) is not relevant in Canada, pointing to our different history and our multicultural traditions and policies. But such arguments are based on national pride rather than comparative research, and the prevailing rhetoric on Canadian-American

difference in the reception of immigrants does not stand up well in the face of social science evidence. That the United States and Canada may not be creating dramatically contrasting settings for minorities is sometimes a difficult pill for Canadians to swallow, a difficulty experienced first-hand by Massey: in the University of Toronto’s annual S.D. Clark lecture, he put forward the relevance of American race-relations experience for Canada, suggesting that, based on American experience, race relations in Canada will emerge as a more serious problem over time. Although he met with a great deal of criticism from his Canadian audience, this criticism was quickly quieted, with recurring news of violence in relations between police and the black community and the arrests of terrorist suspects in Canada.

Moreover, some of Massey’s findings for U.S. universities reflect what is known to be true in Canada. For example, in both countries, Asian university students experience high success rates, while black students do less well. Although most of the blacks in the United States are members of long-established communities, about one-quarter of the black university students in Massey’s study are the children of immigrants. Given this, what can Massey tell us about the reasons for these group differences?

The National Longitudinal Survey of Freshmen focuses on students in certain American colleges that have made major efforts to recruit the best minority students. This is not a random sample; rather it is targeted to include an historically black college (Howard University), institutions with substantial black student populations (Berkeley, Penn State), those with some blacks, (Yale, Tufts), and those with relatively few (Smith College, Bryn Mawr). It comprises nearly 4,000 interviews, in Fall 1999 and Spring 2000, upon students’

entry, and at the end of their first year.

Although the sample consists of academically-successful students, Massey points out differences in socio-demographic composition. Whites and Asians are from relatively privileged backgrounds; blacks and Latin Americans from more diverse backgrounds. For blacks, the sex ratio is more heavily skewed toward women, and the implications on the social lives of black female students are explored. Families of students in the four groups differ in household composition and in attitudes towards authority and discipline. Neighbourhood contexts and high school experiences differ, as does academic preparation.

The study includes an analysis of academic performance—reflected in grades, failing a course, or dropping a course. Whites and Asians are more successful, Latin Americans and blacks less so. Analysis shows that *all* the background factors make a difference. What is perhaps most interesting is Massey’s attempt to test certain social-psychological hypotheses about minority underachievement. One view suggests an allegedly “adversarial culture” among blacks, by which academic success is seen as “acting white,” a betrayal of group identity. Another is what the authors call “stereotype vulnerability,” which involves a disengagement from academic work out of a fear of living up to negative group stereotypes. The study finds more support for the latter hypothesis than the former.

Whether the experiences of minorities in Canadian institutions differ is a subject one hopes can be examined soon. When it is undertaken, such a study will be greatly influenced by Massey’s work. **AM**

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Searching for the holistic text on equity in higher education



Debating Affirmative Action: Conceptual, Contextual and Comparative Perspectives edited by Aileen McHarg and Donald Nicolson (Blackwell 2006), 192 pp.; *Faculty Diversity: Problems and Solutions* by JoAnn Moody (RoutledgeFalmer 2004), 264 pp.

I teach a graduate course on “Toward an integrated approach in higher education.” I also write on equity in education, focusing on how racism, sexism, and other forms of marginalization operate in the academy. I decided to read these two books, which have little in common, in a self-serving way, to see whether I can adopt them for my course. I have been unable to identify a core text for it since I began offering it in 2002. I am looking for a text or material that addresses the multi-faceted dimension of equity in the context of corporatized post-secondary education. How do we level the playing field in faculty, staff, and student recruitment, in research, and in the classroom when the overall trend is to create more distinction and hierarchy in these institutions? How do gender, race, class, and other dominant-subordinate relations play out in various spaces and settings? How do we disrupt taken-for-granted ways of conducting business in these institutions? How do we address various forms of discrimination and marginalization in a holistic manner philosophically and practically? These are amongst the questions I look at in the course.

Although I find the two books interesting and informative in some ways, I did not find answers to my questions. *Debating Affirmative Action* is a collection of 11 journal articles reprinted from the *British Journal of Law and Society*. The collection deals with legal and philosophical debates around affirmative action, a term that has largely been replaced by the concept of equity (e.g., employment equity) in Canada. Although it purports to be comparative, the focus is on making a case for

affirmative action in Britain. Four of the 11 articles do look at situations in Europe, Canada, and the United States.

The lead article by the editors sets the frame for the collection. It defines the terms commonly used to promote the notion of equality and provides a brief overview of the history of affirmative action in Britain. The core of the chapter outlines three major approaches to affirmative action: reverse discrimination and compensatory justice; non-discrimination and distributive justice; and preferential treatment and social utility. This distinction is useful, since, as the authors point out, there has not been a consensus regarding the most appropriate way of redressing inequality. Many of the articles look at affirmative action in terms of employment; gender issues dominate the discussions.

I am most interested in the two articles that deal with higher education. The article by Lois Billings describes different approaches to widen participation, specifically student admission, for under-represented groups in Britain. She concludes that the measures she examined did not result in affirmative action. Andrew Francis and Iain McDonald look at barriers restricting the participation of disadvantaged groups as part-time law students in Britain. These pieces add to the much needed literature on recruiting minority students on campus.

JoAnn Moody’s book deals specifically with diversity amongst faculty in higher education. Her focus is on “minority groups” versus majority groups, and on the advantages and disadvantages of being minority faculty. The book has three parts.

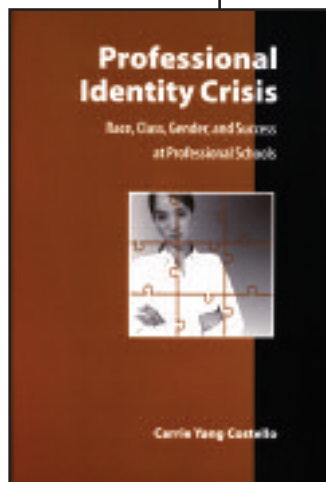
The first part looks at the problems of majority-minority relations; the second part looks at solutions, with concrete discussions of what to do. The final part she titles “items for discussion, analysis and practice.” While this book contains some interesting quotes based on interviews and concrete measures, which the author identifies as good practices and bad practices, I found the lack of a clearly articulated theoretical framework and the prose, some of which is written in point form, distressing in a scholarly text. I am also concerned about her definitive approach to understanding what or who constitutes a minority. For instance, the author states in the conclusion of Chapter 3: “Colonized minorities in the United States include African Americans, Native Hawaiians...” What about those not included in this list? Are they not colonized? Such an approach tends to map people onto the analyst’s classification scheme, rather than looking at the processes whereby certain groups of people are *minoritized* under specific situations.

In the end, I went back to the text that I used last year—Marilee Reimer’s collection entitled *Inside the Corporate U: Women in the Academy Speak Out* (Sumach Press, 2004)—and supplemented it with articles from a variety of other sources. I am disappointed that I can’t find a single text for my purpose. A book that provides a holistic and encompassing approach to equity in higher education remains to be written. **AM**

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Women's equity and the academy

Reviewed by Linda Burnett



Troubling Women's Studies: Pasts, Presents and Possibilities, by Ann Braithwaite, Susan Heald, Susanne Luhmann, and Sharon Rosenberg (Sumach Press, 2004) 258 pp.; *Out of the Ivory Tower: Feminist Research for Social Change*, edited by Andrea Martinez and Meryn Stuart (Sumach Press, 2003) 312 pp.; *The Sista' Network: African- American Women Faculty Successfully Negotiating the Road to Tenure*, by Tuesday L. Cooper (Anker Publishing Company, 2006) 147 pp.; *Professional Identity Crisis: Race, Class, Gender, and Success at Professional Schools*, by Carrie Yang Costello (Vanderbilt University Press, 2005) 264 pp.

In *Troubling Women's Studies*, Ann Braithwaite, Susan Heald, Susanne Luhmann, and Sharon Rosenberg, drawing on responses from other feminist intellectuals, converse, somewhat anxiously, about "the current ambivalent mood" in women's studies, a field they say "appears deeply troubled." But despite their "often uneasy attachments to this field," they "all continue to believe in Women's Studies as a "vitally necessary" intellectual project." Lehman argues that ambivalence is not a "mark of loss." Rather it is "a strategy of preservation, for it allows one to maintain a love for the field and to be critical at the same time."

Where *Troubling Women's Studies* focuses on women's studies as an intellectual project, *Out of the Ivory Tower*, edited by Andrea Martinez and Meryn Stuart, focusses on women's studies in action. Martinez and Stuart's goal was to consolidate feminist research at the University of Ottawa and promote the dissemination of feminist knowledge to a wider audience, with the hope of bridging the gap between the academy and the broader feminist community. Tina O'Toole's "Moving into the Spaces," which points to the importance of history as a basis for lesbian activism, Michelle Mullen's "Feminist Bioethics and Empirical research," which argues that "a concern with the (mal)distribution of power and opportunity within society is central to a feminist bioethics," Carol Andrew's "Women in the Urban Landscape," which looks at gender as a constitutive element in the analysis of

Canadian urban space, and many other essays in this collection make clear the relevance of feminist research to women's political and social activism.

Curious about the degree and extent to which racism, classism, and sexism combine to create barriers for the black woman faculty member when it comes to achieving tenure, Tuesday L. Cooper interviewed African American women engaged in the tenure process in American academe. In *The Sista' Network*, relying on a qualitative, not quantitative, methodology, she presents the voices of these women as a roundtable conversation. Cooper employed "imperfect narrative," a fictional format partly because so much literature about black women faculty, she writes, does not use their own words or their own narratives to interpret their experiences and partly because fiction is sometimes the best way to convey certain truths. One of the truths conveyed in *The Sista' Network* is that black women, with so few role models, are at a disadvantage when it comes to knowing the rules of the game that is tenure. One participant describes this as a new, covert racism: "We treat everybody the same but if I am not in the informal network where information is transmitted, then I don't know and I am not told. And those in power...don't perceive that as deliberate racism....They just say, 'that is how the system works'." Another truth is that in the *Sista' Network*, the relationships between and among professional African-American women that enable them to assist one

another in learning the unwritten rules and protocols of various professions can help these women to negotiate the often lonely and treacherous road to tenure.

Carrie Yang Costello's *Professional Identity Crisis* deals with issues of discrimination within the academy. Costello spent more than 400 hours observing and interviewing first-year students at the Boalt School of Law and the School of Social Welfare at UC Berkeley, in an effort to determine why white males from class-privileged backgrounds do so much better than "nontraditional" students, such as women and people of colour, at professional schools. She determined that neither inappropriate affirmative action nor a conspiracy to discriminate explains the better grades and career outcomes of the class-privileged white men. What does explain it is that discrimination, like the racism Cooper analyses in *The Sista' Network*, is covert. To be successful as professionals, "students must internalize an appropriate professional identity," argues Costello, and the "appropriate" professional identity at professional schools is unmistakably male and WASP. The result is a jarring dissonance, which "distracts" such students from "focusing on their studies."

These works demonstrate that even after 40 years of feminist activity, both within and without the academy, women's equality in the university is far from achieved—or assured. **AM**

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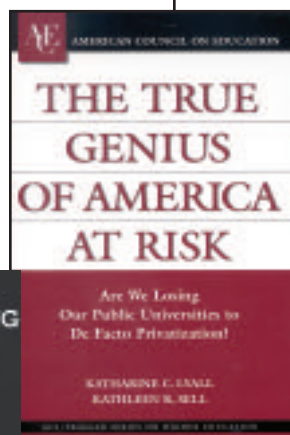
Reasserting a public mission

What does public higher education mean in an age where university education is increasingly described as a private benefit? How do we understand the “public” role of universities in an era of privatization and marketization?

In their recent book *The True Genius of America at Risk*, Katharine Lyall and Kathleen Sell provide a very thoughtful, well-written account of policy trends within the context of American federalism that combine to create what they regard as the “perfect storm” confronting the public university sector in the United States. By focusing attention on higher education policy at the state level, they show how changes in federal-state fiscal arrangements combined with state-level tax reductions and increasing program entitlements combined to squeeze state resources and create a decade-long period of retrenchment in university funding. It all sounds remarkably familiar to this Canadian reader.

The authors identify these problematic trends in the first two chapters, but the core of the book focuses on the possibilities and failures associated with policy experiments that have emerged in an attempt to turn the tide.

This review of state initiatives provides Canadian readers with a cogent reminder of how very different the American higher education policy environment is. Government grants in Colorado are limited under the taxpayer bill of rights, so universities have been awarded “enterprise” status and new funds are channeled through fee-for-service contracts. In a number of states publicly supported institutions, including universities, are subjected to draconian government administrative and procurement procedures that severely limit institutional autonomy, and privatization is increasingly viewed as a mechanism for avoiding state bureaucracy.



The True Genius of America at Risk: Are We Losing Our Public Universities to De Facto Privatization? By Katharine C. Lyall and Kathleen R. Sell (Westport, CT: American Council on Education/ Praeger, 2006), 232 pp., and *Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should be Learning More* by Derek Bok (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 424 pp.

In many respects Lyall and Sell are not trying to solve the problem; they are advocating approaches to living within what they view as a new reality, including redefining state institutions as public purpose universities. Under this model, institutions become defined by their public mission rather than assumptions of public ownership. Their new model is neither revolutionary nor visionary, in fact “public purpose” seems to be synonymous with high accessibility and low aspirations.

In his recent book, *Our Underachieving Colleges*, Derek Bok argues that American universities are doing a good job but that they could be doing better. While Lyall and Sell focus on state-level policy, Bok concentrates on the relationship between what he views as the core objectives of higher education and the undergraduate curriculum. For Bok, universities have a public purpose regardless of their funding source or legal status.

The book begins with three introductory chapters that review the evolution of the undergraduate curriculum, discuss faculty attitudes towards undergraduate education, and articulate what Bok believes are the objectives of a university education. The next eight chapters review research findings and offer suggestions on how to improve student learning related to these objectives, including chapters on learning to communicate, building character, preparing for citizenship, living with diversity, and preparing for a global society.

In many respects the book provides a solid introduction to some key issues asso-

ciated with curriculum reform, and Bok does a very good job at demonstrating how the research literature on teaching and learning in higher education can inform institutional goals and practices. I found the journey stimulating and thought-provoking, even though I sometimes disagreed with both the appropriateness of the destination and the directions Bok provided to get there.

Both books focus attention on the public purpose of the university, but, taken together, they also serve to illuminate the discordance in how this issue is taken up at different levels of the higher education system. Lyall and Sell have a great deal to say about state-level higher education policy, but these debates seem to be almost entirely devoid of references to education processes or student learning. Their “public” university appears to be defined primarily in terms of its responsiveness to state interests in student access, local employment, and economic development.

In contrast, Bok believes that a “public” mission is fundamental to university education. He believes that the quality of the educational experience is enhanced when universities actively engage in serious, ongoing, internal review and appraisal, activities that may actually be stifled by state accountability requirements or performance indicators. **AM**

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HUMOUR MATTERS

I knew I was in trouble when my daughter's third word was "manuscript." Well, it sort of came out like "ban-u-mip," and she might have meant "change me" or "give me cheese," but it sounded like manuscript to me. A child psychologist would probably tell me that what I hear in infant babble reflects my state of mind: my kids could say "blahflem" and I would hear, "I love you, daddy. You are my father, my font of affection, my flower in the meadow that wilts not, even in winter." But sad to say, while Mira lay naked on the living room floor, giggling away and reaching up to grab my nose, forming her tiny mouth into another of her earliest sounds, I was thinking about footnotes.

This is only one of my many paternal failures. But until that point, I truly believed that I was striking a good balance between home and work. This isn't the 1950s. Twenty-first century universities go out of their way to advertise their commitment to helping smooth out work-family conflict: family resource centres have been opened, useful seminars are offered, copious warnings about balance are delivered at new faculty orientations, and older colleagues kindly remind us new scholars that academia is only one part of a life lived.

But as a parent-professor, I have learned two incontrovertible truths. Incontravertible Truth Number One: the best thing about an academic job is the flexible hours. As long as I put in extra hours at night (as I write this column, it's almost 1 AM), I have the daytime luxury of picking my kids up from daycare and school, giving them dinner and baths, and even putting them to bed. When I was growing up, my mother (the family breadwinner) had a long commute to a job with inflexible hours, so I know I am really blessed.

Incontravertible Truth Number Two: the worst thing about an academic job is the flexible hours. As I discovered on the living room carpet, teaching and research can just keep going and going. Work-family "balance" implies separation, a weighing of two distinct spheres, but in my brain, no such distinction exists. Even with my hand in the diaper pail, I'm revising that crappy lecture and writing that unfinished manuscript. Since nobody wants to hear about footnotes over dinner, being a parent-academic is the best way to drive everyone around you nuts.

Maybe when she's 25 and in multiple forms of therapy, my daughter will take comfort in the fact that the complete col-



Mental briefcases and virtual diaper pails: work-life balance revealed

lapse of my work-life balance worked both ways. While I brought university affairs home in my mental briefcase every night, I was also dragging a virtual diaper pail into class. At one point last year, after a particularly lame lecture on economic development in the 1920s, a student approached the front of the lecture hall.

Student: Professor Penfold, do you know that you have an apple sticker on your belt?

Me, looking down: Oh, I guess I do...

Student: 'Cause, like, it's been there for about two months...

Me, looking up: Has it really?

Student: I just thought you'd like to know.

I did want to know, but can you imagine how bored a student has to be to look up from computer solitaire to notice an apple sticker on your belt? I realize that most undergraduates are not excited by discussions of pulp and paper and continentalism, but has anyone before me achieved this astounding level of incoherence?

Well, back on the living room floor, my daughter said "lep-noo" and it got me

thinking about that lecture, work-life balance, and broader issues of equity. I read somewhere that every night of fewer than six hours sleep has the same effect as lowering your IQ one point. Since I'm well into deficit financing on that score, I realized that we all missed the boat on that mandatory retirement debate. Abolish it? No way: how about extending it to the young and exhausted. I mean, U of T would be better off letting octogenarian professors teach until they die and instituting mandatory retirement—say, five years worth—for sleep-deprived 40-year-olds who can't tell footnotes from diapers. Can anyone imagine that an accomplished senior citizen could be less pedagogically effective than an assistant professor who doesn't realize he has an apple sticker on his belt?

Human Resources Canada defines work-life balance as a "state of well being ... that allows [a person] to manage effectively multiple responsibilities at work, at home, and in their community... without grief, stress or negative impact." Sounds like a utopian dream, but maybe that's what Mira meant by "ban-u-mip." **AM**

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Grappling with Equity

EQUITY POLICIES

WITHOUT

CRITICAL

SUPPORT AND

UNDERSTANDING

HAVE A

TENUOUS

EXISTENCE

The issue of equity on university campuses raises a number of critical questions. How is it to be defined? What are the goals and objectives? And how is it to be achieved? The record of equity in academe, as elsewhere, has shown that there have been no simple answers to those questions.

Certainly, there have been advancements over the past four decades. Women now represent more than half of university students in Canada, and the percentage of full-time faculty who are women has almost tripled since the 1960s. Yet, as noted in this issue, women faculty and students are still concentrated in feminized disciplines of study, overrepresented as contingent faculty, and underrepresented as full professors and senior administrators.

Similarly, universities are more racially and ethnically diverse compared to the past. That diversity is more evident in the student body than in the professoriate, particularly on major urban campuses, and is concentrated in certain disciplines of study. There is also in general an underrepresentation of faculty of colour and Aboriginal faculty, as there is faculty and students who come from lower-income families.

Equity, however, goes beyond the issue of representation, and more diversity is not necessarily synonymous with greater equity. The scope of equity concerns embrace university policies, processes and culture regarding hiring, promotion, curricula, academic freedom, and the determination of academic validity, merit, and standards, among other considerations.

These have frequently been emotionally charged issues—all the more so since the issue of equity speaks to the personal and professional identities of faculty—to gender,

race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and to notions of what it is to be an academic in the contemporary university.

To raise concerns about equity and propose changes to the established order of the university world can be profoundly unsettling. It is not surprising that the proponents of change and all those affected often speak in voices that reflect frustration and anger—with the slow pace of substantive change, with the challenge to what is deemed worthy, with the insensitivity to deeply-held beliefs and perceptions.

Meaningful engagement on equity issues in the university community has not been easy.

Yet, the achievement of greater equity cannot be enduring without empathy for

those striving for equity and a general understanding of why greater equity is necessary. Nor can it be enduring if those questioning equity initiatives are not understood and their resistance effectively addressed.

Employment equity, affirmative action, and other equity initiatives have a short lifespan when such understanding and empathy are limited. It then becomes much easier to cast such policies as “reverse discrimination,” “unfair advantage” or “the lowering of standards.” In this, as in many developments, the United States is the harbinger of worrisome trends. Constitutional amendments in four states now prevent public universities from giving preferences to applicants or contractors based on race. Voters in Michigan approved such a ban by a substantial margin last fall, despite evidence that the number of visible minority students enrolled in public universities drops significantly when limitations on affirmative action are approved.

Historically, there has always been resistance to equity initiatives. Their success has depended on a critical mass of support—or at least acceptance once they are in place. Policies without that critical support and understanding, that are seen as simply imposed, have a tenuous existence. Policies with that critical approval and understanding have greater prospects of expanding support.

The struggle for equity is a “contested terrain.” With sensitivity and understanding, however, it can also become the politics of the possible. **AM**

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