



Disrupting the Culture of Silence: Confronting Gender Inequality and Making Change in Higher Education

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“What distinguishes this book are the engaging narratives and compelling contemporary research woven throughout the volume that will resonate with many readers, but the editors and authors do not stop with this important knowledge. Through real-life narratives, case studies, resources, tools, and action steps that build off of each other in an intentional manner, readers may transform this knowledge into action where they can work to make change on their own campuses and in their professional and personal lives. As such, the editors and authors walk readers through the complexities of gender inequity in higher education including the intersectionality of gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, motherhood, eldercare, academic jobs, contra-power harassment, trauma, mobbing, action strategies, and numerous other issues. [This] is an important book that contains the various components a facilitator, administrator, or faculty member might intentionally combine to use in provost and dean training seminars, faculty workshops, courses, reading circles, and multiple venues across campuses and professional associations.”

--Penny A. Pasque, Associate Professor , Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Women’s and Gender Studies, Center for Social Justice, University of Oklahoma

What do women academics classify as challenging, inequitable, or “hostile” work environments and experiences? How do these vary by women’s race/ethnicity, rank, sexual orientation, or other social locations?

How do academic cultures and organizational structures work independently and in tandem to foster or challenge such work climates?

What actions can institutions and individuals—independently and collectively—take toward equity in the academy?

Despite tremendous progress toward gender equality and equity in institutions of higher education, deep patterns of discrimination against women in the academy persist. From the “chilly climate” to the “old boys’ club,” women academics must navigate structures and cultures that continue to marginalize, penalize, and undermine their success.

This book is a “tool kit” for advancing greater gender equality and equity in higher education. It presents the latest research on issues of concern to them, and to anyone interested in a more equitable academy. It documents the challenging, sometimes hostile experiences of women academics through feminist analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, including narratives from women of different races and ethnicities across disciplines, ranks, and university types.

The contributors’ research draws upon the experiences of women academics including those with under-examined identities such as lesbian, feminist, married or unmarried, and contingent faculty. And, it offers new perspectives on persistent issues such as family policies, pay and promotion inequalities, and disproportionate service burdens. The editors provide case studies of women who have encountered antagonistic workplaces, and offer action steps, best practices, and more than 100 online resources for individuals navigating similar situations.

Beyond women in academe, this book is for their allies and for administrators interested in changing the climates, cultures, and policies that allow gender inequality to exist on their campuses, and to researchers/scholars investigating these phenomena. It aims to disrupt complacency amongst those who claim that things are “better” or “good enough” and to provide readers with strategies and resources to counter barriers created by culture, climate, or institutional structures.

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Pablo Cook:

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