

Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Glazer-Raymo, Judith (Ed.) (2008). *Unfinished Agendas: New and Continuing Gender Challenges in Higher Education*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. Pages: 299. Price: \$25.00 USD (paper).

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This book considers women's progress in American higher education in the current millennium by analyzing the intensification of issues confronting women in and outside the academy. It offers a sequel to Glazer-Raymo's publication *Shattering the Myths: Women in Academe* (1999) which reviewed women's progress since the 1970s in gaining access to programs, professions and positions formerly closed to them but cautioned that much remained to be accomplished in promoting gender and racial equality in the academy. Notwithstanding women's majority status as students in American higher education institutions, gender disparities continue in hiring, promotion, tenure, compensation, named chairs, grants and senior-level appointments. Further, women hold the majority of insecure appointments including part-time and non tenure-track appointments.

Written in the wake of the retreat from affirmative action, the corporatization of the university, and the backlash against women's rights, Glazer-Raymo's *Unfinished Agendas* calls to women in leadership to put forth a more inclusive agenda, 'a contrasting vision framed more broadly in the context of economic and social justice'(p. xi). This edited collection contains 11 chapters and an epilogue from 17 senior and junior scholars and administrators (male and female) engaged in the study of higher education. It covers a wide spectrum of content areas and methodologies drawing upon both qualitative and quantitative data. Together the intergenerational and interdisciplinary contributions focus on the unfinished work and the mounting external and institutional challenges that threaten women's progress in the academy, analyzing the impact of gender on women faculty and administrators from a variety of perspectives.

A brief summary cannot do justice to the range and depth of content and analyses provided by the collection of authors. Judith Glazer-Raymo's opening chapter provides the overarching framework for the collection. It is a persuasive and comprehensive account of gender disparities in higher education.

This chapter draws upon national statistical enrolment data and employment trends, and reviews key legal and policy decisions and challenges relating to affirmative action, Title VII and Title IX that have advanced or eroded women's progress in the American academy across many fronts since the early 1970s. Glazer-Raymo closes the chapter documenting the resurgence of feminist activism in postsecondary education, identifying key commissions and initiatives as well as the response of the academy to the Cambridge controversies.

Chapter 2, chapter 10 and chapter 11 consider how the multiple identities (race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, and sexual orientation) and choices women make in their personal and professional lives affect their experiences in the academy. Ropers-Huilman (chapter 2) draws upon her personal experience within a critical race feminist perspective to construct the 'dance of identities.' Turner (chapter 10) focuses on first generation faculty and senior administrators of colour identifying the impact of race, ethnicity, social class and national origin. Ward and Wolf-Wendel (chapter 11), using a liberal post-structural lens, draw upon rich interviews conducted with female faculty at 120 institutions that discuss balancing institutional demands against parenting. These chapters illustrate the complexities and contradictions of being a woman professor in a privileged position in the academy and society at the same time experiencing the limitation of choices as a woman faculty member and parent.

Chapter 3 offers a glimpse of women research faculty at mid-career within a social construction of knowledge frame. The chapter's concern is barriers women experience accessing meaningful forms of work especially as related to the creation of scholarly knowledge. The authors analyze factors in higher education that distance women faculty from their 'core scholarly learning.' The data in this chapter is derived from a larger longitudinal study of male and female professors' learning and development in early post-tenure at four American major research universities (p. 59). Although the writing in this chapter is uneven it offers powerful stories of post-tenure women professors being pulled away from their scholarly work in order to do institutional service or to manage research projects including tasks for which they were unprepared and unsupported.

Chapter 4 is especially strong in its theoretical framing, substantive content and its analysis. In this chapter Metcalfe and Slaughter explore the effects of the market on women faculty in a case study of a large multi campus research university. Masterfully combining academic capitalism theory with 3rd wave feminist theories that see gender as fluid and relational, the authors consider the impact of 'resource-driven behaviour' on gender identities. The nuanced analysis considers 'the intersections of gender, organizational location and market hegemonies' (p. 81) considering both the difference among women while keeping women's relational position to men in focus. The authors argue persuasively that academic capitalism creates conditions that allow men in higher education to 'recapture some of the historical privilege they have derived from higher education.'(p. 81) At the same time they acknowledge that academic capitalism may be a vehicle for the advancement of *some* women

[my emphasis] to the extent that they can succeed in this rational, competitive, individualistic realm, but that the concept itself is embedded in competition and precludes equity.

The influence of external environments is also taken up in chapter six which considers the quality and accountability movement that has engulfed education across the globe. Ann Martinez Alemán examines the role that gender plays in defining quality and effectiveness in undergraduate teaching. In chapter 5, Stage and Hubbard take another tack and identify the factors that contribute to women's success in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields relying upon disaggregated data to determine which institutions produce high numbers of women baccalaureates going onto doctorates in science and math. Women's work experiences as presidents, chancellors and trustees are represented in chapter 7 and 8. Bornstein (chapter 7), a former college president herself, examines the career trajectory of women in senior-level positions while Glazer-Raymo (chapter 8) looks at the increased presence of women trustees in professional, political and corporate contexts. Chapter 9 is the only chapter that focuses exclusively on the community college context. In this chapter Shaw, Callahan and LeChasseur illustrate dramatically the contrast of institutional cultures between the community colleges and the research universities documenting differences in scarce resources, heavy workloads, and inadequate facilities illuminating the impact on gender.

Throughout the collection the context of the scholarship is American. No reference or analysis is made of women in Canadian higher education or in any other jurisdiction. I have a small quibble with some of the contributions that appear oblivious to their exclusive American-centric context and analyses. In itself this exclusive focus would not be problematic and is indeed necessary to boundary the collection. Moreover many of the trends and issues presented could apply to other jurisdictions. But an acknowledgment that the experiences and trends described in the book emanate exclusively from American women in American universities and are limited to this single cultural context would orient the international reader.

There are a number of welcome inclusions in this collection. As a collection the works take up the complexity and multifaceted nature of gender and women's work teasing out the gendered nature of women's experiences in the academy. The diversity among the chapters in terms of content, organization and style is refreshing. By using various feminist standpoints, multiple perspectives are drawn upon. The collection has much to offer and makes a valuable contribution to the literature on women in higher education, offering both current research as well as proposals for meeting on-going gender challenges in higher education. All of the chapters turn their conclusions toward implications for practice and research providing a balance of issues against solutions. Consequently while the primary audience for this book may be students and scholars of higher education, institutional policy-makers would also benefit from the analyses and recommendations. ♣