

Advancing Women's Status: Analyzing Predominant Change Strategies

AS SET FORTH IN THE SECOND CHAPTER, multiple lenses of feminist theory have evolved over time in response to a central question: How do we eliminate sex or gender inequity? More recently, this question has been broadened to acknowledge and incorporate the fluidity of identity formations and identity-based oppression such as racism and homophobia. As such, feminist theories provide valuable lenses for anyone committed to understanding equity issues. Although a few exceptions exist, however, scholarly articles or committee reports seldom articulate the feminist frame(s) in which their perspectives are grounded. In fact, as Hart's analysis (2006) reveals, research that is explicitly feminist is underrepresented in mainstream higher education academic journals. In her examination of three key journals in the field (*Journal of Higher Education*, *Review of Higher Education*, and *Research in Higher Education*) between 1990 and 2002, she found fewer than ten articles to be explicitly grounded in feminist research. Despite the relative absence of research that articulates feminist lenses in use, a growing number of researchers in higher education describe their research as feminist and engage in investigations related to gender equity and women's status. In summarizing the implications of their findings, these researchers typically suggest strategies to accelerate the pace of change. Recommendations for advancing the status of women are also found in unpublished committee and task force reports available from college and university Web sites.

In their chapter, "Improving Gender Equity in Postsecondary Education," Cooper and others (cited in Klein and others, 2007) provide a helpful overview of predominant change strategies employed to advance women's status in higher

education at the turn of the twenty-first century. As well, numerous articles and edited collections provide in-depth examinations of particular problems and suggested remedies (see, for example, Dean, Bracken, and Allen, 2009). This chapter builds on and extends these other reports by making more explicit connections between feminist theories and predominant approaches to advancing equity in the context of higher education.

Organizing Schemes

The reductive nature of any categorizing scheme can obscure underlying complexity. The potential damage in oversimplification can be seen when claims of gender equity based on aggregate data alone fail to account for nuances related to women's location in the prestige hierarchies or differential treatment based on gender. Oversimplification is also problematic when the range of issues and differences among women resulting from race, social class, and other identity formations is collapsed into the category "women's issues" and framed by those with the most privilege in a particular context.

Exhibit 2 displays women's status indicators in higher education, with a few caveats. First it should be noted that a particular change strategy, like policy development, can cut across multiple feminist frames. Also, it is important to recognize the degree to which some barriers to success, like faculty tenure processes for instance, may differ by institutional type and discipline. Most of the identified barriers or problems are common to all institutional types such as the gender segregation of disciplines as in the "feminized fields" of nursing, education, and social work and the male-dominated fields in the physical sciences and engineering, and the balancing acts between work and family. Some problems, however, may be more relevant to a particular type of institution such as the predominant role of externally funded research at doctoral-granting institutions.

Exhibit 2 compares differences among key feminist frames and their implications for enhancing women's status in higher education. It distinguishes between feminist frames that are highlighted by the underlying problems understood to manifest in the context of higher education. In other words, as reviewed in the second chapter, differences in approaches to enhancing

EXHIBIT 2

Women's Status Indicators in Higher Education: Problems and Change Strategies in Multiple Feminist Frames

<i>FRAME</i>	<i>PROBLEM</i>	<i>MANIFESTATION in higher education</i>	<i>GOAL for change</i>	<i>EXAMPLE STRATEGIES</i>
Liberal	Gender inequality	Discrimination in admissions, hiring, or promotion Gender segregation Not enough women in pool Not enough women in pipeline	Equality of opportunity	Antidiscrimination policies Improve: Recruitment Mentoring Professional Development Commissions Task forces Focus on civility Affirmative Action Women's centers Women's colleges Women's studies Women across the Curriculum Grants for research on women
Radical	Patriarchy	Male control of higher education and hence women who participate in it Hierarchies that privilege masculine norms, standards, structures, processes	Dismantle patriarchy	Recognize and develop alternatives to capitalist and marketplace-driven academia Flatten hierarchies Job sharing Cooperatives Unions Collaborative leadership and learning
Socialist	Privileging corporate and industrial sectors	Marketplace values Corporatization Capitalism and patriarchy are inextricably linked; therefore, the marketplace model inevitably advantages men more than women Curricula to produce workers	Dismantle mutually reinforcing systems of capitalism and patriarchy	

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EXHIBIT 2 (Continued)

FRAME	PROBLEM	MANIFESTATION in higher education	GOAL for change	EXAMPLE STRATEGIES
Multicultural/Global and Postcolonial	Patriarchy, Racism, and Imperialism	Imperialist and Eurocentric structures and practices advantage whites and men. A focus on patriarchy alone is insufficient	Dismantle mutually reinforcing systems of patriarchy, racism, and imperialism	Draw on similar strategies of other frames with intersectionality as an added lens for developing more inclusive approaches Implement pedagogies that help dismantle racism, sexism, and other forms of identity oppression Value indigenous ways of knowing
Ecofeminist	Patriarchy is linked with domination of nature	Logic of domination undergirds structures and practices in higher education and results in lack of reverence for Earth and nonhuman life Manifested in the privileging of efficiency and progress at expense of women and the Earth	Value identity differences Transform knowledge and practice Change power-over approaches Dismantle patriarchal structures that support systems of domination	Nurture alternative programs and practices that affirm and value women, nature, and all living things Shift to more Earth-centered approaches like sustainability

Psychological (Care-focused)	Devaluing the feminine	<p>Problems exist because male domination has failed to acknowledge the value in women's innate strengths to build connections and seek collaboration and consensus</p> <p>Relatedly, problems also exist because of gender stereotypes that advantage men in structures and processes that privilege masculine qualities over feminine</p>	Feminine is valued as highly as the masculine	<p>Value women's ways of leadership, teaching, learning, and research</p> <p>Promote connectedness and connected knowing</p> <p>Create more collaborative team approaches and inclusive decision-making processes</p>
Postmodern Poststructural and Third Wave	Regimes of truth	<p>Dominant discourses sustain assumptions that support patriarchy, capitalism, heterosexism, racism, and hence make imperialist and other practices of domination appear "natural"</p> <p>Discriminatory practices are slow to change because change strategies are formulated within dominant discourses</p>	<p>Scholarship provides a means of dismantling regimes of truth</p> <p>Produce knowledge and practices that challenge stability of "the autonomous subject" and "truths"</p>	<p>Identify dominant discourses shaping strategies and consider unintended consequences</p> <p>Promote alternative discourses as ways of making meaning</p> <p>Promote ways of knowing, learning, and working that allow for fluidity, ambiguity and contradiction</p>

Source: Tong, 2009.

women's status reflect divergent views about the nature of inequity. For example, if the root problem is understood through the lens of gender inequality primarily (liberal feminism), the proposed remedies differ dramatically from remedies conceived through the lens of socialist feminism. Similarly, although liberal and radical strands of feminist thought share in valuing women and striving to enhance their status, the central focus on justice, equality, and fairness for liberal feminists reflects the predominant view that institutions are flawed but can be fixed through improved institutional mechanisms like better policies and enforcement of those policies to achieve equality of opportunity. In contrast, the root problem for radical feminists is the patriarchal nature of the institution itself (not simply flawed practices or policies). Thus, when applied to the context of higher education, the central focus for radical feminists is dismantling patriarchal attitudes, structures, and practices supporting the enterprise of higher education and its institutions.

Although the academy is not necessarily the central focus of any of these schools of thought, as a microcosm of society with great potential to shape social change it is often a key venue of and for feminist theorizing. With this backdrop in mind, an overview of predominant strategies most commonly employed to enhance women's status in higher education follows.

Enhancing Gender Equity

Strategies to promote gender equity and elevate women's status are numerous, and an in-depth examination of each is beyond the scope of this monograph. A review of the predominant types of strategies and research related to them is provided in this chapter, however. Strategies are provisionally organized according to the following themes: (1) activism, organizing, and women's networking; (2) policy-focused strategies; (3) mentoring; (4) augmenting institutional infrastructures; (5) leadership development; (6) altering organizational norms and practices; and (7) curriculum transformation, including women's studies, feminist epistemology, and women-focused research centers.

A review of predominant change strategies reveals interconnections between the categories of access, representation, and campus climate. For instance, Title IX policy and its enforcement were developed to ameliorate discriminatory

practices and environments inhibiting equality of education opportunities for girls and women. So although Title IX might be considered a strategy to promote access and representation primarily, it is also a mechanism for improving campus climates, assuming that increased participation of women in higher education will in turn yield more hospitable campus climates. The vast majority of strategies included in this chapter are not necessarily new in the context of higher education. A brief overview of each is sufficient to describe them and illustrate the feminist frames predominant in shaping the strategy and/or scholarship related to it.

Activism, Organizing, and Networking

Most if not all strategies employed to advance women's status in higher education have emerged from women's formal and informal (grassroots) activism. To the extent this activism focuses on foregrounding or advancing the principles of (1) acknowledging women's contributions to the world; (2) acknowledging that sex and gender inequity exists; and (3) working to change sex and gender inequity, the activism can be understood as feminist in nature. Often behind the scenes, feminist activism in higher education, like other arenas, employs both formal mechanisms (policy, task forces, commissions) and grassroots approaches (networking) and has served as a backdrop to policy initiatives, formal changes to the university infrastructure; efforts to shift norms and cultural values; development of women's centers and women-focused curricula and pedagogies; and funding of research by and about women.

Formal mechanisms of feminist activism in higher education are typically conceptualized in the reform-oriented liberal feminist frame with a focus on justice, rights, and fairness where existing college and university structures and processes are employed as a means of change (Glazer-Raymo, 1999). As depicted in Exhibits 1 and 2, some examples of predominant approaches conceptualized in a liberal feminist frame include policy initiatives, professional development programs, mentoring, task forces, and commissions on the status of women. Often precariously situated and at times critiqued as a diversion, policy-focused groups like women's commissions are formulated in the formal structures of the university (they are often "the president's commission on the status of women"). Yet at the same time, they challenge formal structures as

they gather data and develop recommendations designed to dismantle discriminatory policies and practices of the institution (Allan, 2003, 2008).

In contrast to formal types of organizing and activism among women in higher education, grassroots activism occurs when individuals without formal positions of authority are interested in and pursue organizational changes that often challenge the status quo of the institution. Grassroots leadership is defined in social movement literature as “the stimulation of social change or the challenge of the status quo by those who lack formal authority, delegated power, or institutionalized methods for doing so” (Wilson, 1973, p. 32). Unlike formal activist mechanisms, the institution or its formal leadership does not officially sanction grassroots approaches. Grassroots feminist activism occurs across constituencies and manifests in a range of ways. Grassroots activism is often linked to formal activism by virtue of the issues and people involved. Grassroots activism is more likely to be conceptualized from perspectives that depart from the traditional liberal feminist approaches. When conceptualized in a radical frame, feminist activism focuses on resisting and uprooting patriarchal thinking and practices that oppress women. That is, radical feminists in the academy are more likely to prioritize issues related to strengthening women-focused programs, centers, and knowledge and helping women gain power through control of their bodies, including their sexuality and reproduction. Examples of these types of feminist activism can be seen in Take Back the Night marches protesting sexual violence on campus and feminist faculty who gather informally to support each other’s work and to advance scholarship by and about women.

A number of activist, organizing, and networking strategies to enhance the status of women in higher education extend beyond a single institution and incorporate both formal and grassroots activism. An example is the *Women in Higher Education* (WHE) newsletter. Nearing its twentieth year of publication, the monthly, independent, practitioners news journal (both print and online) with a readership of approximately twelve thousand per month (M. D. Wenniger, personal communication, May 7, 2010) is designed to help women understand how gender affects their success in the male-dominated world of higher education and “to enlighten, encourage, empower, and enrage women on campus by sharing problems and solutions” (*Women in Higher Education*, 2010).

The WHE newsletter summarizes recent scholarship, policy, and news briefs related to women and gender equity; features interviews with women leaders and researchers studying women's status; and includes a section called "career connections" where readers can peruse announcements for college and university job openings. Although the newsletter focuses on many formal strategies for advancing women's status and describes its primary goal as seeking to "increase the number of women in campus leadership" (*Women in Higher Education*, 2010), the strategy itself can be characterized as grassroots in nature as it is independently produced (not affiliated with any college or university) and was "started when the editor received a small inheritance from a great aunt who was a milliner in the 1920s, and who would have been described today as a radical feminist" (*Women in Higher Education*, 2010).

An example of a more formal mechanism of women's organizing and networking across postsecondary institutions is the Program on the Status and Education of Women, established by Bernice (Bunny) Sandler in 1970. An arm of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), the program continues to provide support to postsecondary women faculty, administrators, and students through programs and publications, including *Campus Women Lead, On Campus with Women* (a free online newsletter), and a series of reports on women of color in the academy (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2010). Similarly, the Office of Women in Higher Education, initiated in 1973 with the American Council on Education, continues to be a key source of information about women and leadership roles in higher education by hosting forums and summits (such as the Women of Color Summit in 2008) with a focus on leadership (American Council on Education, Office of Women in Higher Education, 2010). The Committee on Women in the Academic Profession (Committee W) of the American Association of University Professors is another formal group established to formulate policy statements and provide resources and reports relative to women faculty, including such issues as pay equity, work and family balance, sexual harassment, and discrimination. Numerous other formally organized groups exist, many of which began as grassroots initiatives but currently continue as formal offices, programs, or committees of established professional associations, collective bargaining groups, and policy-oriented councils and associations.

A powerful example of activist efforts in a single institution is the work by Radcliffe alumnae to promote gender equity at Harvard University over the past two decades. Catalyzed in 1988 at the reunion of the Radcliffe class of 1953 where formal discussion revolved around the question “Is Harvard as sexist today as it was when we were students?” an ad hoc group and subsequent steering committees, including the class of 1958 alumnae, focused on equity of women at Harvard. After assessing the status and determining the climate for women at Harvard was uneven and hostile in some places, the alumnae networks took it on themselves to influence change, noting that unlike other stakeholders, alumnae are in the unique position of being able to “raise a ruckus without fear of repercussions” and characterizing themselves as “pesky little gnats that wouldn’t go away” (S. G. Cook, 2008, p. 1). For instance, one of the first strategies the group employed was initiating a not-for-profit organization called the Committee for the Equality of Women at Harvard, recruiting alumnae members and donations to support their efforts. When Harvard administrators showed “little interest” in their mission, the committee decided to hold its \$1.6 million in contributions in escrow until “Harvard committed to increasing opportunities for women scholars” (S. G. Cook, 2008, p. 2). Other initiatives of the alumnae group included producing comprehensive reports on the status of women at Harvard, establishing junior fellowships for women faculty, donating \$75,000 to start a formal mentoring program for women faculty, supporting campaigns to combat sexual harassment, and opening a campus women’s center (S. G. Cook, 2008). In describing the experience of their activism, Radcliffe alumnae reported that progress felt “glacial” but they were buoyed by “the joy of making common cause with women. They fortified each other. They built friendships and had energizing conversations” (S. G. Cook, 2008, p. 2).

Policy

Public policy initiatives (such as federal legislation) have been a cornerstone of efforts to advance women’s status in society and in the context of higher education. Throughout the history of U.S. higher education, external policies have shaped a vast array of opportunities and experiences for women working and studying in postsecondary institutions, including student

admissions, financial aid, faculty recruitment, compensation, and promotion (see Exhibit 3).

Conceptualized in a liberal feminist frame, public policy initiatives with a direct impact on women's participation in U.S. education include the Nineteenth Amendment (suffrage) passed in 1920 and a series of policy initiatives passed in the 1960s and 1970s reviewed in the first chapter. An extensive historical account of sociopolitical forces shaping U.S. women's movements since 1960 is provided in Davis (1999), which details complexities inherent in the passage of many legislative landmarks, including those with direct implications for higher education like the Equal Pay Act and Title IX. In *Women and Public Policy: A Revolution in Progress*, Conway, Ahern, and Steuernagel (1999) provide a concise summary of policy initiatives and challenges associated with their implementation. From a global feminist perspective, Stromquist (2007) provides a helpful overview of educational policy initiatives related to gender equity.

Specific to higher education, Adair and colleagues (2002) provide helpful reviews of key policy initiatives and legal issues in Martínez Alemán and Renn's *Women in Higher Education: An Encyclopedia*. Glazer-Raymo (1999, 2007, 2008b) has written extensively about public and institutional policies shaping women's status in higher education. Her detailed examinations of policy mechanisms include analyses of affirmative action and Title IX. More recently, her analysis of forces shaping public policy draws attention to the "ungendering" of equity policies (2007, 2008a) evidenced by federal strategies of "threatened reversals of anti-bias and affirmative action statutes and regulations." In light of these troubling trends, Glazer-Raymo (2007) points to the need to "reaffirm a women's rights agenda" (p. 174).

Few would argue that women in higher education have benefited and continue to benefit greatly from the implementation and enforcement of antidiscrimination and equal opportunity policy initiatives. These initiatives have had a particularly positive impact for white women, especially in the areas of access and representation as students and faculty, increased participation in athletics among undergraduate women, and the improvement of campus climate as a result of institutional policies related to sexual harassment developed to comply with Title VII and Title IX. Taken together, gender equality policies have dramatically shifted women's access to and participation in higher

EXHIBIT 3**Key Policy Initiatives Shaping Women's Status in Higher Education**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Policy</i>	<i>Focus</i>
1963	Equal Pay Act Amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act	Prohibited employers from discriminating in payment of wages based on sex among those performing essentially on equal work jobs requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility under similar working conditions.
1964	Civil Rights Act	Among other provisions, prohibited employment discrimination by programs and activities receiving federal funding based on race, religion, sex, or national origin in employment (did not include sex discrimination in educational programs).
1967	Executive Order 11246, as amended by President L. Johnson	Extended equal employment/affirmative action requirements of federal contractors to women.
1972	Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972	Prohibits sex discrimination in educational programs and activities receiving federal funds.
	Amendment to Equal Pay Act	Extended coverage to academic personnel.
1974	Women's Educational Equity Act	Created series of programs to promote educational equity.
1975	Public Health Services Act	Prohibited gender discrimination in admission of students to federally funded health services training programs.
1976	Vocational Education Act Amendment	Required states receiving federal funding for vocational programs to reduce barriers caused by gender bias.

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EXHIBIT 3 (Continued)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Policy</i>	<i>Focus</i>
1978	Pregnancy Discrimination Act	Made it illegal to fire or otherwise discriminate against women because they are pregnant.
1984	<i>Grove City v. Bell</i> , 465 U.S. 555 (1984)	Supreme Court ruling limited civil rights laws applying to federal aid recipients only to the specific program directly receiving the aid (financial aid office rather than the full institution).
1987/ 1988	Civil Rights Restoration Act	Clarified Congress's intent to apply laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds and their subcontractors to include all programs and activities of the organization—reversing effects of <i>Grove City</i> ruling.
1993	Family and Medical Leave Act	Allowed up to twelve weeks unpaid time off of job to recover from illness, care for new child, or ill family members without penalty of losing job.

education, compared with the days when it was legal to refuse admission to women because they were female. Nevertheless, problems remain, including threats to these gains through unenforced agency regulations, court decisions, and public perception that gender equity has been achieved, rendering relevant laws and policies obsolete (Glazer-Raymo, 2008a). Further, the fact that extant policies have not yet resolved the problems related to inequitable representation of and inhospitable climates for women serves as evidence of the need to strengthen what exists rather than allow further erosion (Glazer Raymo, 2007, 2008a). Relatedly, some feminist scholars have argued that traditional modes of policy and policy analysis carry inherent masculine and white biases, limiting their effectiveness altogether (Bacchi, 1999; Bensimon and Marshall, 1997; Pillow, 2003).

Calling for an expansion of predominant frameworks of policy analysis in the context of higher education, Bensimon and Marshall (1997, 2000, 2003) argue for the use of feminist and critical policy perspectives. Recent scholarship from both critical and poststructural feminist perspectives suggests established methods of policy analysis fall short because they typically proceed from an acceptance of policy problems and tend not to analyze the assumptions undergirding the articulation of those problems (Bacchi, 1999; Ball, 1990, 1994; Blackmore, 1999; Marshall, 1999, 2000; Pillow, 1997, 2003; Scheurich, 1994; Stone, 2002). For example, Hawkesworth (1988, 1994) surveys feminist policy studies and points out that such approaches examine the “seldom scrutinized beliefs concerning the nature of facts and values, the powers of reason, the structure of science, and the possibilities for scientific knowledge—beliefs so widely accepted by practitioners in the field that they are no longer perceived as issues” (1988, p. 2). Allan, Iverson, and Ropers-Huilman’s collection (2010) highlights research about policy-related issues in higher education through the lens of feminist poststructuralism. For instance, Hart and Hubbard (2010) found that policies intended to support low-income students had the unintended consequence of reinforcing status hierarchies linked to social class.

In sum, contemporary feminist policy perspectives foreground power dynamics related to gender and other identity categories such as race, sexual identity, and social class and examine how they are implicated in policy (see, for example, Blackmore, 1999; Collins, 1991; Fraser, 1989; Fraser and Gordon, 1994; Hawkesworth, 1994; Pillow, 2003; Smith, 1990; Williams, 1991, 1997; Winston and Bane, 1993). Feminist policy analysis has historically emphasized ways in which policy produces uneven effects for men and women. Further, feminist policy analysts in general, and especially those from poststructural perspectives, work to illuminate ways in which power operates through policy by drawing attention to hidden assumptions or policy silences and unintended consequences of policy practices (Allan, 2003, 2008; Bacchi, 1999; Blackmore, 1999; De Castell and Bryson, 1997; Fine, 1988; Pillow, 1997, 2003; Stone, 2002). For example, my research on women’s commission policy documents reveals that policy efforts to enhance women’s representation in male-dominated arenas of the institution cast women in the position of supplicants or “outsiders” petitioning to enter male domains (for example, by hiring

more women; Allan, 2008). In contrast, more recent policy-related recommendations in postsecondary institutions focus more on the deficiencies in the environment that are not conducive to a balance between work and family for either women or men and hence impede work life satisfaction for many.

Mentoring

Across time and venue, recommendations to advance the status of women on campuses abound with recommendations for enhanced mentoring and professional development for women across nearly all constituent groups, especially faculty and administrators (Allan, 2008; Dean, 2009). Mentoring and professional development are typically suggested as promising means of increasing women's access to and participation in arenas where they are underrepresented. Mentoring is promoted as a means of helping women enhance their qualifications like faculty publication records and external funding successes (Dean, 2009). It is also argued that mentoring and targeted professional development can help resolve the pipeline and glass ceiling challenges, especially in the STEM fields and senior leadership (Dean, 2009; S. V. Rosser, 2004). Despite predominance as an accepted strategy, feminists themselves often question the merits of such programs. For instance, it can be argued that by placing the burden on women to seek mentoring or on institutions to provide mentoring for women, such programs may unintentionally frame inequity as an outcome of women's deficiency rather than an outcome of structural or institutional barriers that impede their advancement despite having the requisite qualifications.

In general, a mentor is someone who provides guidance, support, knowledge, and opportunities for a time period deemed helpful to the protégé, with such assistance generally occurring during a time of transition (Wasburn, 2007). More specifically, mentors help to "professionally socialize protégés in the customs, demands, and expectations of organizational and professional cultures" and serve as resources, role models, and opportunity makers (Dean, 2009, p. 130). Numerous scholars consider mentoring vital to career advancement for women and lack of mentoring to be a barrier to their advancement.

Mentoring is most often viewed as an informal process where mentors and protégés come together spontaneously. Seeing the potential value in these kinds

of relationships, however, mentoring programs have been instituted in post-secondary institutions. Although formal mentoring programs—those where a third party catalyzes or organizes the mentoring relationship—have been implemented, some evidence suggests they are less effective than informal or spontaneous mentoring relationships (Wasburn, 2007).

Formally organized mentoring programs generally take one of several approaches, including grooming, networking, and strategic collaboration (Wasburn, 2007). Conceptualized in a liberal feminist frame, “grooming mentoring,” the most common form, involves a dyadic relationship between a mentor and a protégé and is fraught with potential difficulties because to a large extent, the success of the grooming approach relies largely on the personalities of those involved. Further, grooming types of mentoring approaches have been critiqued for reinscribing hierarchical power dynamics (Altman, 2007; McGuire and Reger, 2003; Wasburn, 2007). In contrast, peer or networking mentoring is conceptualized as a nonhierarchical arrangement with a focus on community building, which may imply more radical and socialist feminist influences. For example, McGuire and Reger (2003) describe a model of feminist comentoring that “challenges masculinist values of hierarchy [and] competition and fosters an equal balance of power between participants while integrating emotion and valuing familial and personal needs” (p. 54). From a poststructural perspective, Iverson (2005, 2007), recommends chaotic mentoring relationships as a means of promoting mentoring that disrupts traditional hierarchical models and holds potential to make alternative discourses more visible, thereby disrupting dominant and entrenched male-oriented conceptualizations of leadership.

Although numerous advocates of gender equity highlight the value of learning from mentors and role models, Valian’s research (1999) drawing on the social psychology of gender schemas suggests caution with regard to some types of mentoring. In particular, she contends that role models (the kind of mentoring most reflected by the grooming model) as a means of promoting equitable practices will be ineffective because most figures (women who have achieved high levels of influence and positional power) who are put forth for women to emulate are exceptional cases, as they typically achieved success, not only by merit, but also through other forms of social and material capital.

As well, she asserts that this type of mentoring can send a message that women at lower levels of the organizational hierarchy simply need to “try harder” and do more of the right things so they too will advance. Although role models to spur aspirations may be valuable, the emphasis on these kinds of remedies tends to eclipse structural and dispositional barriers; Valian contends that “women should of course strive for excellence and persevere in the face of failure. But their individual efforts cannot undo the gender schemas that stand in their way” (1999, p. 330).

Scholarship on mentoring also reveals that most formalized programs are designed for those in the early stages of their career. In the case of faculty, however, mentoring may be equally important for women who are later in their careers. For instance, posttenure mentoring may help to rectify the problem of “stalled out” careers for women who plateau at the associate professor level.

Leadership

Related to the goals of mentoring, increasing the numbers of women in the administrative and executive leadership of institutions remains a key goal toward enhancing women’s status in higher education. Support for initiatives designed to accomplish this goal emerge from several feminist frames. A liberal feminist frame argues that simply increasing the representation of women in such positions marks progress toward equality of opportunity. Further, when considered from the lens of psychological feminism, it is assumed most women will take different approaches to leadership. For instance, it is not uncommon to hear women described as naturally more collaborative than their male counterparts. Given this premise, it is argued that increasing the representation of women in leadership roles will in turn shift cultural norms and promote more hospitable climates. A related and important outcome of these and multicultural feminist perspectives is that increasing numbers of diverse women in leadership roles will also help enhance aspirations of girls and women who do not currently see themselves reflected in the leadership share.

Mentoring and professional development are considered key strategies for increasing the numbers of women in senior leadership. According to research examining career advancement in higher education, a mentor’s tutoring and advocacy can be a valuable asset for career mobility (Dean, 2009; Sagaria and

Rychener, 2002) and can help protégés build networking skills. As more institutions employ private search firms to assist them in hiring senior administrators, networks have become increasingly vital for those aspiring to executive roles. These firms increasingly rely on referrals and informal networks to identify and recommend candidates. For women and men of color, these networks may be more of a liability than for white men, who are more likely to belong to the networks of those making hiring decisions (Sagaria and Rychener, 2002).

Leadership and professional development programs often include one-to-one mentoring as a component but are also focused on building networks and skills needed to provide aspiring leaders with requisite qualifications and experience. Some programs are housed in a single institution or state system of higher education, while others draw from a national audience. Some of the most widely recognized leadership development opportunities for women seeking executive roles in higher education include Bryn Mawr's Higher Education Resource Services (HERS), focused on improving the status of women in middle and executive levels of higher education administration; the American Council on Education's fellows program; the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Management Development Program; and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities's Millennium Leadership Initiative (designed specifically to strengthen preparation of those traditionally underrepresented in executive leadership roles; Turner and Kappes, 2009).

Turner and Kappes (2009) identify twenty-one institutes or programs that provide training or development for individuals aspiring to leadership positions in postsecondary institutions. Four of them are national programs specifically focused on women: HERS, the Center for Women and Leadership Faculty Fellows at Loyola University in Chicago, the Alice Manicur Women's Symposium sponsored by NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education), and the National Institute for Leadership Development. The National Hispana Leadership Institute is the only program focused on women of color (Turner and Kappes, 2009, pp. 173–180). The cost and time commitment involved in such programs range widely, reflecting differences in scope and prestige. For example, the ACE Fellows program involves a year-long placement with a program fee of \$7,500 plus a \$14,000 professional

development budget shared by the nominating institution. In contrast, the NASPA program involves a \$625 fee for a one-week full-time commitment (Turner and Kappes, 2009).

Leadership development programs are commonly believed to be an important mechanism for improving women's status in higher education. For example, over the first forty years of the ACE Fellows program (serving approximately thirty-five individuals per year), more than three hundred fellows have become chief executive officers, one thousand have served as provosts or vice presidents, and more than eleven hundred have served as deans (American Council on Education, 2005). Yet, less than 5 percent of those participants were women of color (Turner and Kappes, 2009). A survey of these ACE women of color alumnae (Turner and Kappes, 2009) revealed numerous perceived benefits of the program, including networking opportunities and participating in workshops and seminars focused on specific skills (such as strategic planning). Despite the inclusion of women of color as program speakers, however, some participants in the Fellows program found that issues specific to race and equality were trivialized and that the program was "merely cloning the existing white male and female leadership styles that will produce the same result: few women of color at the helm" (Turner and Kappes, 2009, p. 165).

Responding to issues related to women of color specifically, the ACE Office of Women in Higher Education has sponsored two Women of Color summits (2006 and 2008) in addition to its national and regional leadership development and networking programs for women in general (American Council on Education, 2010). In addition, ACE recently launched the Spectrum Initiative, a national agenda with a key goal to "broaden and strengthen the leadership pipeline for women and racial/ethnic minority administrators and prepare them for senior leadership positions in higher education" (American Council on Education, 2010).

In addition to mentoring and formal training and development programs and institutes, other related strategies for promoting women in higher education leadership include learning from the advice of women who have attained these positions (see, for example, Bornstein, 2008; D. Cook, 2008; Moses, 2009), career mapping or intentional career planning (Moses, 2009; Santovec, 2007),

promoting self-efficacy (Sloma-Williams, McDade, Richman, and Morahan, 2009), institutionalizing policies that enable women to manage both work and family (such as child-care facilities and flexible work schedules), increasing the number of women in the senior faculty pipeline and promoting them earlier, doing more to include women on search teams and as serious candidates (Bornstein, 2008), and involving an advocate with poststructural feminist perspectives for disrupting dominant discourses that support narrow and predominantly masculine views of what counts as credible leadership (Gordon, Iverson, and Allan, 2010).

Augmenting Infrastructures and Organizational Norms

Strategies for enhancing women's status and influence have also included approaches that advocate greater inclusion of women in formal administrative and leadership positions of the institution as well as the augmentation of existing institutional structures and practices. With a focus on reforming established institutional structures and related processes, these approaches are clearly conceptualized in a liberal feminist frame. Early examples include the establishment of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action Offices (catalyzed by policy) and more recently, the trend of assigning diversity and gender equity responsibilities to a high-level administrator like a vice president or vice provost—or ensuring that the EEO director reports directly to the institution's chief executive.

Generally speaking, a major responsibility of these offices and their administrators is to ensure compliance with institutional and public antidiscrimination policies. In addition, such offices can help to preserve institutional memory by serving as a repository of data gathered over the years—as opposed to such data's being dispersed throughout campus as task force and women's commission chairs come and go. Often these offices provide programmatic functions such as training and awareness related to campus climate. Further, a common function of the administrators serving in these programs is to follow up on discrimination complaints related to hiring, firing, salary, and identity-based harassment, including sexual harassment.

The establishment of campus women's centers is another approach to augmenting the extant institutional infrastructure. Largely focused on serving the

needs of students, such centers date back to the 1960s women's movement and typically provide a physical space for women to assemble formally and informally. As well, they typically offer a venue for programmatic initiatives with an emphasis on women and women's contributions. Additionally, such centers may help organize formal and informal mentoring programs and professional development opportunities and serve as vehicles for grassroots organizing of professional staff and faculty women.

It could be argued that virtually all institutionalized programs to support gender equity or enforce antidiscrimination policies can be traced to influences of women's grassroots activism. An ongoing tension among feminists, however, is whether institutionalized programs can be as effective as grassroots initiatives or those positioned against the formal organizational hierarchy. Yet many feminists argue that positional power or formal authority (in the organization) is precisely what is needed to advance change. Numerous feminist women remain ambivalent, acknowledging the legitimacy of both perspectives and seeing their role and the role of women's centers and commissions as "within yet against" the institution (Allan, 2008).

The Women's Place at the Ohio State University is an example of an effort that became institutionalized in 2000 to coalesce initiatives of both formal and grassroots groups that had been working consistently for more than two decades to improve the climate for women (Ohio State University, 2010). The director of the office holds the title of associate provost, suggesting its place in the organizational hierarchy; the office's mission is to serve as "a catalyst for institutional change to expand opportunities for women's growth, leadership and power in an inclusive supportive and safe university environment" (Ohio State University, 2010). The work of the Women's Place includes leadership development programs, lectures focused on women or women's contributions, status-of-women reports, and a graduate women's network. Although many colleges and universities have offices, committees, task forces, or other programs that work toward similar goals, a great degree of variability is apparent in the stability, funding, and prestige of such initiatives.

Remediating gender-based salary inequities serves as another example of strategies that work to alter aspects of the formal infrastructure of postsecondary institutions. Although the Equal Pay Act of 1963 mandated equal pay

for equal work, the wage gap persists, with women earning roughly 75 to 77 percent of what their male counterparts earn (Drago, 2010). In the context of postsecondary education, salaries are determined by a range of factors, including rank, educational attainment and qualifications, experience, and type of institution (that is, research-intensive institutions tend to pay higher salaries). Research specific to recently hired faculty confirms a wage gap for women faculty that is unexplained by other factors (Porter, Toutkoushian, and Moore, 2008). More specifically, female faculty members earn significantly less (4 to 6 percent) than their male counterparts in comparable ranks and institutions.

Recommendations to remedy gender-based salary inequity have evolved over time in light of research findings and in response to legal challenges and outcomes of litigation over gender-based pay inequity and pay discrimination. When gender-based pay inequities are found, salary adjustments can be made both across the board and individually (Eckes and Toutkoushian, 2006). Other strategies for salary inequity focus on prevention by examining pay differentials at time of hiring. Approaches that view gender bias as the root problem yield strategies that focus on training administrators to be more aware of potential biases that may contribute to overvaluing qualifications of male candidates. Other approaches contend that salaries would be more equitable at the time of hiring if women were socialized to be better negotiators. Thus, some strategies reflective of liberal and psychological feminist lenses involve training sessions and tips designed to help women acquire negotiating skills needed to attain salaries comparable to their male counterparts at time of hiring.

A different perspective is offered by Metcalfe and Slaughter (2008), who suggest that shifting prestige systems (from expert-based power of the traditional academy to market-based power in the entrepreneurial academy) place women at a disadvantage in terms of prestige, valuation, and compensation. In their analysis they argue this shift, also known as “academic capitalism” (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004), “creates conditions within colleges and universities that allow men to recapture some of the historic privilege they derived from higher education” (Metcalfe and Slaughter, 2008, p. 81). Drawing from both socialist and third-wave feminist lenses, the researchers suggest women position themselves strategically in light of the predominant academic capitalist knowledge and learning regime. They recommend scholars

acknowledge how interconnections between the marketplace academy and the neoliberal state shift “public subsidy from welfare functions to entrepreneurial activity; [exhibit] preference for commercial solutions to public problems; [empower] managers rather than workers and the individual over the collective” (p. 101). Thus, they caution, “If women choose the academic capitalist knowledge/learning regime, they are in effect choosing the neoliberal state and closing down the network of public policies and agencies that made possible women’s entry into the academy” (p. 101).

Numerous other approaches and strategies exist that tend to prioritize shifting attitudes and cultural norms rather than assuming that increased representation of women will lead to substantive change. In general the strategies in this group seek to alter attitudinal and behavioral barriers found to impede women’s advancement and full participation in higher education and include those designed to (1) acknowledge the importance of, and provide support for, the emotional and household labor for which women continue to hold a greater share than their male counterparts; (2) build awareness of gender and race schemas serving as filters through which participants in higher education unconsciously reinscribe discriminatory practices (Valian, 1999; Sagaria, 2002); (3) challenge differential rewards for teaching and research; (4) build norms that place greater value on the “feminine” work of advising, community building, mentoring, and building webs of inclusion; (5) promote safe and welcoming environments for work and learning through enforcement of harassment and sexual harassment policies and strategies to prevent violations; and (6) promote more egalitarian communications and decision-making processes.

Curriculum Transformation, Pedagogy, and Knowledge Production

Creating more inclusive curricula and classrooms such as women’s studies and women in the curriculum programs is another predominant strategy for promoting the status of women in higher education. Further, emerging from or connected to these initiatives are efforts to transform knowledge production through the development of feminist epistemology and centers for research on women. These curricular and research efforts are transformation oriented. Nevertheless, because they are housed in or maintain connections to institutions described as

inherently patriarchal, the picture is more complex. Although they operate within, however, they are also working to disrupt and transform dominant masculine institutional structures and ways of knowing. This situation is in contrast to other strategies where the emphasis is more aptly described as “reform oriented” such as strategies to increase the number of women in the pipeline.

Schonberger’s overview (2002) of historical and recent developments in women’s studies and women in the curriculum efforts and Ropers-Huilman’s overview (2002) of feminism in the academy provide important contextual perspectives and key themes relative to these change-oriented initiatives. The presence of women’s studies, scholarship by and about women, and curriculum transformation efforts in colleges and universities has grown vastly since the late 1960s, when the first academic program was established at San Diego State University (Purcell, 2002). Today according to data gathered by the National Women’s Studies Association (2010), at least 652 women’s and gender studies programs are available at U.S. postsecondary institutions, and more than 85 percent of courses offered by these programs fulfill general education requirements. In addition, more than 30 percent of women’s studies faculty are of color, compared with 19 percent of faculty nationally.

The growth of women’s studies programs was paralleled and fueled by growth in research by and about women. Much of this research was catalyzed by the recognition that the established knowledge base of disciplines was male centered and failed to acknowledge women’s contributions. Feminist scholars challenged and rejected the value-neutral and objective claims of positivist science and worked to produce an “awareness of the complexity, historical contingency, and fragility, of the practices we invent to discover truth” (Lather, 1990, p. 80). One outcome of these critiques and challenges has been the development of epistemologies and methodologies (Cook and Fonow, 1990; Harding, 1987; Lather, 1991) that seek to decenter privileged perspectives (white, male, heterosexual) inherent in predominant approaches to practicing science and propose methods of knowledge production aligned with feminist principles.

Feminist influences in epistemology and methodology are mirrored in pedagogy as well as with the development of practices designed to “foster equal access, participation, and engagement for all students in the learning process” (Maher and Tetreault, 2002, p. 130). Feminist pedagogy is always evolving

but in general has worked to develop teaching strategies that create more student-centered classrooms through collaborative learning; evocation of student reactions and reflections in journals; shared classroom decision making; acknowledgment of differences in race, sexual identity, and social class; and student-led discussions, to name a few (Maher and Tetreault, 2002).

Efforts to expand traditional curricula to be more inclusive of women of color and their contributions reflect multicultural, global, and postcolonial feminist lenses. Scholarship by and about women of color and research that employs methodological approaches that foreground race, culture, and citizenship as important aspects of women's experiences are also examples of strategies emerging from these frames. *Sage: A Scholarly Journal of Black Women*, Collins's *Black Feminist Thought* (1991), and Walker's introduction of the word "womanism" (1983) as an alternative to black feminism are examples of such strategies from a multicultural perspective. The scholarly journal *Meridians: Feminism, Race, and Transnationalism*; Mohanty, Russo, and Torres's edited volume, *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (1991), and Narayan's *Decentering the Center: Philosophy for a Multicultural, Postcolonial, and Feminist world* (2000) are examples of scholarship that applies a postcolonial feminist lens.

Summary

Strategies to enhance the status of women in higher education are numerous. This overview provided a snapshot of the range of approaches and change strategies commonly implemented to enhance gender equity in colleges and universities. With feminist activism as catalyst over time and across types of institutions, these strategies generally fall into one or more categories: policy and policy-related initiatives, mentoring, leadership development, altering institutional infrastructures and organizational norms, and curriculum transformation, feminist pedagogy, and knowledge production. Clearly, several feminist frames are more evident than others in key change strategies described in the literature. The following chapter takes a closer look at which frames are most prominent and considers potential implications for scholarship related to women's status in higher education.

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