



Empirically Supported Steps Toward Faculty Success for Marginalized Women

A Review of

The Duality of Women Scholars of Color: Transforming and Being Transformed in the Academy

by Gaëtane Jean-Marie, Cosette M. Grant, and Beverly J. Irby (Eds.)

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Reviewed by

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The Duality of Women Scholars of Color: Transforming and Being Transformed in the Academy is an edited volume with contributors from a variety of institutions of higher education. Each of the seven chapters is a complete auto-ethnographic study organized with literature review, methodology, results, and discussion. The contributors have chosen a broad range of philosophical frameworks, including Black feminist thought, dialectics, Afro-centric communal "I am because we are," validation theory, and sociocultural theory. Six of the seven chapters are solo authored by Women of Color working in predominantly White institutions of higher learning. The only coauthored chapter is contributed by three Latinas on the faculty of a Hispanic-serving institution of higher learning.

In these auto-ethnographies, the authors shared their experiences as members of multiple marginalized groups. Without specifically using the term "intersectionality," they addressed the joint impact of static and dynamic socioeconomic status, and perceived and actual immigration status and ethnicity. While all identified their gender as women and included feminist and womanist perspectives, they did not specifically address gender, either in terms of racialized sexism or sexualized racism. Attention was given to the folly of externally grouping people from different cultures as if they shared the same life experiences. At the same time, the authors addressed the common problems of "otherness" that have been used in the academy to invalidate them and their scholarship. In the final chapter, Lloyd-Jones specifically summarized previous research on the barriers as "Chilly Climate," issues of legitimacy, tokenization, cultural taxation, trying to balance personal and professional roles, and the glass-ceiling effect. The contributors emphasized the need for mentorship, recognizing that effective mentors might not share the cultural, ethnic, or gender

backgrounds of their mentees. All of the authors described their need to serve as role models and mentors for students and junior faculty.

The auto-ethnographies traced the contributors' lives from cradle to current status as professors. Their backgrounds varied among multinational refugees, descendants of multiple generations of highly educated families, strugglers with overt racists, social activists, and workers in situations for which they felt ill prepared. In various ways, they described the situations that led them to focus on issues of social justice as overriding concerns in their scholarship; those situations ranged from early childhood through experiences in primary, secondary, and undergraduate school to graduate education.

As the authors wrote about their experiences prior to and during their time in the academy, they provided insight into the process of conducting the research that led to this book. Most of the authors acknowledged membership in cultures that deemphasize individual accomplishment, especially for women; the process of revealing themselves through journaling and other self-inquiry was incompatible with collective cultural perspectives and bordered on culturally perceived self-aggrandizement. That revelation was particularly poignant, as was the decision of some of the authors to share information through prose and poetry about very personal information that they had never previously shared, and yet considered as important to their identity development. The process of conducting the auto-ethnographic research provides a foundation for developing culturally relevant research in partnership with other research participants.

Auto-ethnography is a critical, yet often poorly acknowledged research methodology; for example, based on an APA PsycNET literature search, there are no APA publications with auto-ethnographic focus, although the topic appears in APA Convention presentations. This collection of seven pieces of research should be made available to students and their mentors. Undergraduate statistics students exposed to this methodology might find themselves encouraged to engage in research and consider academic careers.

Women of Color considering the professoriate will find this book a very practical guide with empirically supported techniques for approach, entry into, and survival in the academy. Some of the authors provided insight into the unspoken expectations of institutions of higher education. They did this by indicating that there is considerable research on barriers to retention and promotion of Women of Color, but they remained focused on what works to move over, around, and beyond those barriers. As a reviewer with relatively brief experience in the academy, I would have appreciated access to the strategies offered by this group of women scholars of color. The deeply personal sharing and the journeys toward tenure will be helpful to Women of Color making decisions about pursuing careers in fields that demand graduate training. Faculty members who are serious about mentoring students from marginalized populations can benefit from reading both the content and the methods in this book.

There were problems with the copy of the book I received. It was difficult to read due to inconsistent print; some of the text was inexplicably gray rather than black. In some of the chapters, words and entire phrases were missing. This was not consistent with the excellent writing and it appears to be a problem with the actual print and publication process. The print problems detracted from an otherwise impeccably written and edited volume.