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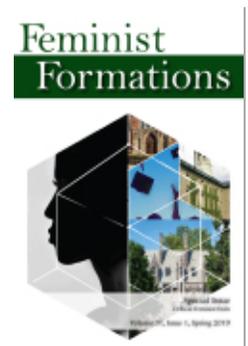
The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities by Frances Henry et al. (review)

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The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities by Frances Henry, Enakshi Dua, Carl E. James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramos, and Malinda S. Smith. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2018, 374 pp., \$75.00 hardcover, \$37.95 paper.

Natchee Blu Barnd

This book tackles the seeming contradiction of why equity has either stagnated or noticeably declined when university equity policies have become standard and ubiquitous. More of a collection than a multi-authored text, it comprehensively maps out the ways that race and indigeneity operate in Canadian universities, presenting original data derived from individual faculty experiences as well as statistical and discursive analyses. This book offers quite a bit more than the standard collection of essays, which often struggles to sustain a clear trajectory throughout. *The Equity Myth* results from a coordinated national research “report” on barriers for racialized and indigenous faculty in Canadian universities, which means the chapters have clear and important relationships to one another as well as an evident analytical arc.

Failures abound in training, curriculum, recruitment and hiring, retention, tenure and promotion, scholarship and more. We are offered quantitative analyses of faculty “representation” and comparable earning disparities in chapters 2 and 3. These nicely dispatch anticipated critiques about “data,” and also offer nice anchor points for later chapters. Others draw mostly on qualitative research or discourse analysis techniques in order to flesh out the processes. Chapter 6, for example, uses original interviews and narrative analysis to provide a more nuanced picture of how faculty of color and indigenous faculty experience, navigate, and interpret their institutions.

In chapter 9, we are offered a snapshot of Canadian university equity structures via interviews with administrators and equity office staff and by examining the infrastructure designs. Seeing how staffing, reporting, and mandates have shifted and are unevenly or ineffectively assembled, we better understand the weaknesses of those units as they have often moved toward “managing” racism as individual conflicts. Most importantly, we see how these offices (and much of the university) operate through a “performativity of ineffectiveness” (drawing from Ahmed). In short, articulations of equity only gesture toward and thus in effect actually preclude equity practices. Chapter 10 looks closely at a single discipline, political science, as a case study in order to quantify and otherwise illustrate the ways that racism and indigeneity are rendered invisible and disempowered via hiring practices, curriculum choices, and the outcome of the core disciplinary publication channels. Using both statistical and narrative data, the authors leave readers with a disappointing conclusion that “many political science students can graduate from a degree program and never grapple with issues of diversity

and decolonization . . . [and] that such subjects are not seen as ‘core’ knowledge constitutive of the modern discipline of political science” (261–62).

Most of the findings are not necessarily new or unexpected. Indeed, the research presented here is prompted mostly by the need to more fully and strategically document what has long been observed and implicitly understood among faculty of color and indigenous faculty. The value here, thus, is in giving those findings concrete data and gathering them together; in effect, generating a research-based handbook on the true nature and scope of the equity challenges for Western universities (Canadian or otherwise), as well the persistent contradictions and inherent failure points.

In the introduction and conclusion, the authors effectively and properly frame the findings of the individual chapters in terms of two important contexts. The first is the relationship between the current equity practices and the institutional responses to the antisexual harassment/human rights/antidiscrimination activism of the 1980s. The second is the larger frame of neoliberalism, which impacts universities in multiple troubling ways, but with particularly devastating outcomes for issues of equity.

Focusing on the impact on racialized (or “visible minorities,” in Canada) and indigenous faculty, multiple points in the text convey how earlier feminist interventions in the form of discrimination and sexual harassment policies have been ineffectively extended and adapted to deal with race and indigeneity. These reminders are valuable lessons for those wanting to understand the complex relationship between equity and difference, as well as the ways that progress in social practices and policies are neither linear nor ever complete.

Much can be said about the impact of neoliberalism, but here I will limit commentary to an appreciation of how this text effectively and clearly connects all the various points of equity (e.g., hiring, tenure, earnings, representation, personal experiences, equity office structures) to the larger political-economic-cultural shifts in university practice. The authors provide clear explanations and illustrations for how these principles shape each stage of a faculty experience. Furthermore, they offer an important critique by pointing out how these ostensibly economically driven values operate in conjunction with and through whiteness. Noting the demands for metrics, for example, they point out that “one of the consequences of neoliberalism is the irony that although it promotes accountability and auditing, its emphasis on austerity means that it underfunds initiatives and offices that enable researchers to monitor progress in the pursuit of equity” (303).

In many ways, this book feels like a fleshed out manual that would be useful for administrators genuinely seeking to address issues of racism and colonialism on their campuses. They would no doubt appreciate the map it provides for understanding the institutional and systemic nature of the problem, which they often miss or misrecognize. While this is valuable, I am not convinced that the set of recommendations provided at the end (e.g., cluster hires, upper

administrative oversight) can adequately combat the accountability structures of neoliberalism or address how administrations will inevitably respond to such ideas. All of the recommendations still require an investment of resources, a reflexive and cultural countering of whiteness, and mechanisms for dealing with racism as structural. The core hope here, I think, is that once the totality is revealed, key decision makers might be better equipped to take more substantive and structurally radical action. Perhaps we can at least use the ideas to reverse some of the losses.

In terms of other work that would pair nicely in a teaching context, I suggest Rod Ferguson's *We Demand: The University and Student Protests* (2017). Ferguson's book aims toward student and community-based political activism, and the origins of fields like ethnic studies that initiated and forcefully engaged with these questions of equity and representation in universities. His book also serves as a more focused discussion on how equity gains have been intentionally targeted and evaporated under neoliberalism. As a model for alternative ways to move forward, I might also pair this book with La Paperson's *A Third University Is Possible* (2017). La Paperson (aka K. Wayne Yang) remains fixed on the possibilities of decolonial practices that more often than not already exist within the spaces created by the neoliberal institution. Since some of the frame for *The Equity Myth* already draws on the insights of Sara Ahmed's *On Being Included* (2012), I think that text would also provide a useful match for delving deeper in recognizing, naming, and resisting practices that feign equity, deploy its discourse, and instead produce its impossibility. Nothing seems a more valuable skill set in the current era.

I can see this book being a welcome resource for students in educational leadership and activism-oriented policy programs that could extend its insights into other realms besides academia that face parallel kinds of tensions and failures. Campus equity committees might likewise use this as a resource for diagnosing local conditions while understanding their challenges as largely shared across institutions, and within conditions of whiteness and neoliberalism. Individual chapters would serve as useful sets of case studies for graduate-level ethnic studies and indigenous studies programs, as well as for methodology courses, especially surveys of methods or courses examining the differing and complimentary contributions of qualitative and quantitative data. Graduate-level women/gender studies courses would find this text useful, if disheartening, for seeing how feminist projects were narrowed within the university context toward compliance and individualism, and the precise ways those projects have failed faculty of color and indigenous faculty. It would also provide robust discussion for how it tries to attend to intersectional analyses, even as it openly warns that current Canadian demographic and employment data make such analysis exceedingly difficult.

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Beyond Gender: An Advanced Introduction to Futures of Feminist and Sexuality Studies edited by Greta Olson, Daniel Hartley, Mirjam Horn-Schott, and Leonie Schmidt. London: Routledge, 2018, 296 pp., \$120.20 hardcover.

Kali Furman

Beyond Gender: An Advanced Introduction to Futures of Feminist and Sexuality Studies, edited by Greta Olson, Daniel Hartley, Mirjam Horn-Schott, and Leonie Schmidt, brings together seventeen multidisciplinary contributors to examine the multiplicity of theories and methodologies used in feminist and sexuality research and advocacy today. The contributors in *Beyond Gender* expound on the ways theories of sexuality and gender-based research have extended, modified, and criticized Butlerian theories of gender performativity that gained credence in the 1990s. *Beyond Gender* invites questions surrounding issues of identity, sexuality, feminist, transgender, and queer advocacy, emphasizing the plurality of ways feminist and queer scholars and activists engage in unsettling “dominant economies of knowledge” (18). Following the introduction, the book is divided into two parts, part 1: “Undoing Gender Studies: Theoretical Positionings,” and part 2: “Forms of Practice: Doing the ‘after’ of Gender Studies.” Each chapter in the volume contains two introductions: an editorial introduction that provides important historical and theoretical context for the piece, and an authorial introduction that contains a longer chapter abstract and discussion of how and why authors came to their topics. These chapter introductions serve as a useful tool for reader engagement and provide a connection back to the broad themes outlined in the book’s introduction.

Editors Greta Olson and Mirjam Horn-Schott’s introductory chapter, “Beyond Gender—Toward a Decolonized Queer Feminist Future,” usefully