

TOGETHER BUT UNEQUAL: COMBATING GENDER INEQUITY IN THE ACADEMY*

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ABSTRACT

Although overt discrimination has waned, gender inequity remains in the academy. Using data from a large Arts and Sciences unit at a public research university, I focus on how gender inequities continue to be produced anew and prove to be durable. I describe two processes: workplace interactions that occur within a hierarchy of gender status beliefs, and gender stereotypes that are consciously or unconsciously institutionalized into organizational policies and decision making. Women's lack of access and mobility is no longer simply a "pipeline" issue. Rather, subtle mechanisms of inequity operate to advantage men, while disadvantaging women, helping to keep universities gendered male. By focusing on the institutionalized practices that produce gendered advantages and disadvantages, we can more readily chart a course toward institutional change that identifies and modifies the concrete behaviors and policies that cumulatively reproduce gender inequity in the academy.

We have heard many explanations of why high-achieving academic women fall behind comparable men over the course of their careers. Most researchers now agree that old-fashioned sexism, and the more overt discrimination it produces,

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have waned. Yet, gender inequity remains in the academy, and indeed continues to be produced anew. In recent work with Mary Gatta, I examined how subtle sex biases operate, using quantitative and qualitative data from a large Arts and Sciences (A&S) unit in a public research university (“State U.”) (Roos & Gatta, in press). In our study, Mary Gatta and I show how durable gender inequities are produced in the academy, focusing on two processes: (1) workplace interactions that occur within a hierarchy of gender status beliefs; and (2) gender stereotypes that are consciously or unconsciously institutionalized in organizational policies and decision making. In this article, I summarize some of our findings, focusing on how subtle forms of favoritism work to men’s advantage, while disfavoring women. And I discuss how these findings are useful in helping us to move toward gender equity in higher education.

The MIT report burst onto the scene nearly 10 years ago, providing an exceedingly frank discussion of the inequities senior women face. The MIT faculty women were by all reports stellar members of the university and gifted scientists in their larger professional communities. The report provided an insider’s look at exactly what happened to them, and initiated a new wave of gender equity research in the academy. The study’s key finding is straightforward: contrary to the more blatant discrimination of the past, “1990s discrimination” is more subtle, stemming from “unconscious ways of thinking that have been socialized into . . . men and women alike” (MIT, 1999: 3). In an important finding replicated elsewhere (for example, in our study), the interviews revealed a difference between the responses of senior and junior women faculty members: senior women described themselves as “invisible” and “marginalized,” while junior faculty women felt well supported. In a telling response, senior women reported that they had held similar beliefs when they were junior faculty. The study of subtle bias has become widely accepted. Even the prestigious National Academy of Sciences noted the existence of “unintentional biases and outmoded institutional structures” (Committee on Maximizing the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering, 2006: 1). What is absolutely clear from the outpouring of gender equity studies is that women’s lack of access and mobility is no longer simply a “pipeline” issue, the explanation typically offered to explain women’s and men’s differential progress in the academy.

The “Hows” of Ascriptive Inequality

In her analysis of “ascriptive” inequality, Barbara Reskin (2003) argues that our theories have typically focused on unobservable, and empirically untestable, motives of decision makers and peers. Indeed, conflict theories assume that “dominant groups use their monopoly over resources to maintain their privileges” (Reskin, 2003: 2). But as Reskin points out, gender inequality can also be produced by nonconscious cognitive processes that operate as much to favor in-groups as disfavor out-groups. DiTomaso et al. (2007: 176) find evidence that

existing “consensual status hierarchies” provide “micro advantages” to white men (the normative in-group) and “micro inequities” to women, nonwhites, and immigrants (the normative out-groups).

As Reskin (2003) recommends, Gatta and I focus on the “hows” of ascriptive inequality, or the specific mechanisms of inequity at work in the academy. We examine subtle mechanisms in two linked arenas: workplace interactions and institutionalized policies and procedures. One key to producing ascriptive inequality is the interactional (or “relational”) nature of social relationships (Ridgeway, 1997; Tilly, 1998). Workplace interactions occur within a hierarchy of gender status beliefs that tend to advantage men and disadvantage women in the distribution of key resources. Gender operates as a cultural “superschema” that “pumps gender into the interactionally mediated work process by cueing gender stereotypes” (Ridgeway, 1997: 231; see also Ridgeway & Correll, 2000). These “gender schemas” (Valian, 1998: 52) can function positively, negatively, or neutrally for women and men.

Gender stereotypes are reinforced when they become consciously or non-consciously institutionalized in organizational policies and decision making (Roos & Reskin, 1984). As Tilly (1998) aptly describes it, organizations often link external asymmetrical categories such as male/female to internal organizational distinctions. Thus, common stereotypes about sex differences in the larger society (such as perceived female-male differences in nurturing vs. analytical ability) can be and are reproduced within organizations. As the gendered organizations literature (Acker, 1990; Britton, 2000; Kmec, 2005) argues, these processes produce gendered universities, where gender becomes embedded in organizations’ processes and practices. Once it is embedded, producing gender anew requires no conscious conspiracies or planning but simply the regular operation of standard operating procedures (Bird, 2008; Bird, Litt, & Wang, 2004; Eveline, 2004).

Personal interactions underlie much of our everyday work lives, making higher education an excellent laboratory for investigating the subtle biases that stereotypes can produce. Among such interactions, we evaluate vitae; interview job candidates; negotiate salaries; engage in research with colleagues; teach our students; assess scholarship, teaching, and service for promotion and merit increases; attend faculty and other committee meetings; and meet with academic administrators. As this list indicates, much of what academics do involves the application of *subjective* judgments of those with whom we interact. Our academic judgment of the quality of a colleague’s work is inherently subjective, depending in part on our subfield, methods, theoretical approach, and academic age, as well as personalistic criteria. It is precisely in such interactions that evaluators tend to fall back on gender schemas and/or personalistic biases, demonstrating the “elasticity of merit” (Eveline, 2004: 99).

Sex biases can and do become embedded in policies and procedures that are otherwise neutral in character. For example, universities often use outside job

offers to boost faculty salaries. Those less able to take advantage of this strategy (presumably women, but also men with working wives) can lose out financially (and otherwise) over the long run. To the extent that culturally based gender beliefs infuse our work interactions, or are automatically produced (and institutionalized) within work interactions, men can be advantaged and women disadvantaged.

In a larger work, Gatta and I (Roos & Gatta, in press) provide quantitative data on the extent to which the indicators of advantage or disadvantage are consistently sex biased in the aggregate. And we point to specific mechanisms that help to maintain inequity, providing a catalogue, if you will, of the “hows” of gender inequity in the academy (Reskin, 2003). Specifically, we use descriptive quantitative data to assess the extent to which unequal gender outcomes persist in the aggregate, and qualitative interview and survey data to gain insight into how these inequities are produced and maintained. I focus here on our qualitative data, detailing the concrete behaviors of specific people or groups of people that produce inequality. Such data make tangible the mechanisms of inequity that help to keep universities gendered male (Acker, 1990; Bird, 2008; Britton, 2000; Eveline, 2004).

Methods

Mary Gatta and I used personnel data from a large Arts and Sciences (A&S) unit of a public research university (“State U.”) at two points in time (Academic Year [AY] 1999–2000 and AY 2003–2004). From the outset we had full access to the dean’s staff and data, including demographic and personnel history, professors’ reasons for leaving the university, administrative history, merit increases, rank, degree years, promotion dates, leave history, current salary, and so forth. We also had full access to data from other sources on promotion and tenured hiring decisions; internal research, start-up, and summer funds; and historical information on academic leadership positions (those of deans, chairs, center directors), which we linked to our database where possible. To assess gender equity in access to faculty positions, we compared the A&S faculty within fields to National Research Council availability data on PhD degrees for 1981 to 1998.

We supplemented the personnel data with interviews with senior women faculty members (and a few senior men) in spring 2000, and an anonymous Web-based survey of A&S women faculty in spring 2001. For the spring 2000 interviews, we separately sampled within three stratified groups of A&S faculty: “senior professor” women (“senior professor” being a separate rank above that of full professor), female full professors with 10+ years in rank, and “senior professor” men, for a total of 20 completed interviews. The Web-based survey was sent to all 190 tenured and tenure-track women faculty members in residence in spring 2001, and 81 responded (43% of those contacted).

MECHANISMS OF INEQUITY

In this section, I provide examples of the mechanisms of inequity we found at State U. I focus on how subtle factors operate, both through workplace interactions and through organizational policies and decision making. Importantly, I examine those concrete behaviors of specific people or groups that produce inequality in the academic workplace. This focus on the concrete helps to chart a course toward greater gender equity in the academy.

Importance of Historical Legacies

Like many universities, State U. has historical legacies that have, over time, helped to produce women's current underrepresentation in the top ranks. In addition to assistant, associate, and professor ranks, at State U. there are two additional ranks above full professor: "senior professor" and "special professor" (while many universities have "named professors," few have the equivalent of "senior professors"). In AY 2003–2004, only 18% of these senior and special professors were women (up from only 9% in AY 1999–2000). One important reason for the predominance of men in these ranks comes from State U.'s own internal policies. Theoretically, all fields are eligible to promote or recruit faculty to these senior ranks. But, in reality, these ranks are common precisely in the discipline group where women are least represented, the math/physical sciences group: 58% of senior/special professors in 2003–2004 were mathematical/physical scientists (52% in AY 1999–2000). This reflects the decision of State U.'s top administrators in the 1980s to embark on an ambitious rebuilding strategy that aimed at (and succeeded in) propelling the university into the ranks of the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU). Administrators recruited external "world class scholars," especially in the top ranks and especially in the sciences (then and now primarily male). Thus, policies that are not discriminatory in intent can nonetheless operate to reproduce the gender status quo. The legacy of such choices is long standing (see also West et al., 2005).

Hiring of Senior Professors

It's not just the existence of such policies (and ranks) that matters, but how the hiring itself occurs. To try to get at sex differences in hiring, we examined how the current group of senior/special professors were hired into State U. As of AY 1999–2000, we found that fully two-thirds of the female senior/special professors had been hired as assistant professors, compared with only approximately one-third of their male counterparts. Male senior professors were thus notably more likely than their female counterparts to be initially hired into tenured positions, while women followed a quite different path, rising through the ranks. Although certainly not definitive, these data are consistent with the argument that departmental gatekeepers were more comfortable hiring women at junior levels,

promoting them once the gatekeepers were more knowledgeable about the women's abilities. In contrast, decision makers took more risks in hiring senior men from the outside for coveted tenured positions. Certainly hiring senior talent from elsewhere requires decision makers to be more comfortable with the proffering of lifetime employment, because hiring at these ranks comes with tenure.

Eveline (2004: 104) provides a similar example of how seemingly merit-based recruitment strategies can replicate the gendered demographic status quo when no one is paying attention to outcomes:

We recently went through how we'd employed a number of people, and by the time we added up our selections for those jobs we looked and we had not one woman. . . . we were judging people on all the criteria we were supposed to, we were following policies exactly, doing all the things to ensure merit—and yet not one woman. (academic administrator, University of Western Australia)

At State U. in the 1980s, however, women academic leaders were in fact paying attention: when they became aware of the lack of senior women being recruited through these hiring initiatives, they mobilized, ensuring that three female “world class scholars” were finally included in this elite group. Paying attention to outcomes matters.

Differing Promotion Rates

Over the period of time we studied (1997 to 2004), men were slightly more likely than women to be promoted (86.7% vs. 84.3%, a 2.4% difference). Contrary to what one might expect, however, the sex gap grew over time (from 2.2% in 1997 to 2000 to 3.4% in 2001 to 2004). The sex gap doubled for those in the humanities (2.2% to 4.7%) and tripled for those in the social/behavioral sciences (3.9% to 11.7%). Such findings suggest increasing sex inequity in promotions.

Here our qualitative data help to clarify the processes that produce the gendered differences in outcomes that we found. Our respondents spoke at length about perceived inequities in the promotion process, especially in promotion to the full and senior professor ranks:

One of the most important hurdles for women faculty is promotion to [professor and senior professor]. In terms of the [professor] promotion, a number of us have been subtly undermined by our colleagues so that we are more reluctant than we might be to go up for promotion. In addition, the promotion rates to [senior professor] appear to be blatantly inequitable. (associate professor, humanities/social sciences)

Subtle discrimination occurred, our respondents argued, when departmental leaders encouraged early promotion for men but not women, or used qualitatively

more impressive language to describe the records of men than to describe the records of women:

Men are encouraged to seek promotions and to seek them early (e.g., to full professor) by other men; women generally are not. Men are assumed to be "academic stars." Similarly situated women must prove they are deserving. In short, women have to do twice as much to be judged half as good. Women of color are particularly devalued in the promotion process. (professor, humanities/social sciences)

Central to this process of discrimination, one of our respondents noted how the subtle use of language creates an inequitable environment:

The biggest problem is with the language and tone of the evaluation and the messages that are conveyed. We just had a reappointment decision in our department where a guy, three years out of grad school, was heralded as an emerging "star" in his field. They said they were worried that he might leave despite the fact that no one has expressed an interest in him. . . . In contrast, two women who recently came up for reappointment and then tenure and objectively had much more impressive records were talked about in much less enthusiastic ways. One has just been offered the sun and the moon by another major research institution and is likely to leave because she feels so undervalued here. (professor, humanities/social sciences)

And, they argued, women and men are differently evaluated:

I have my doubts about the jump to [senior] professor. For example, several men have been promoted to [senior professor] largely on the basis of department administration. This has never happened for a woman in our department. Every [senior] woman in our department has a solid international position, funding, and more publications than anyone else. (professor, humanities/social sciences)

Subtle discrimination can also take the form of devaluing the intellectual work that women do, especially when that work focuses on gender:

[F]eminist scholarship being produced by women is [seen as] less worthy and so women have to produce much more than male or nonfeminist colleagues in order to make up for this. . . . objective criteria are thrown out when they favor women/feminist individuals, and male contenders are given a leg up on questionable or debatable "quality of mind" arguments. This is very demoralizing for a young faculty member, as the message is that as a feminist woman you have to work twice as hard just to get equitable promotion decisions and even then you will not be valued. (assistant professor, humanities/social sciences)

In sum, women see themselves as differently evaluated, and valued, in the promotion process.

Few Women in Leadership Positions

The low numbers of women in leadership positions have been striking, especially when viewed historically: during the 24-year period since the consolidation of the A&S faculty, one-fifth of A&S's department chairs have been women, and this has been driven primarily by the large representation of humanities chairs. During the same period, only one woman served as a chair in the sciences.

Our respondents spoke to the existence of negative stereotypes about women in leadership positions, and the “male social spaces” that were less accessible to female faculty:

In my department it is explicitly acknowledged . . . that a female chair would have great difficulty within and outside the department in doing her job due to the perception that a woman head is a mark of inferiority. A woman who assumes a leadership role must be far superior to male colleagues to assume similar roles. (professor, humanities/social sciences)

Another female professor agreed:

There are too few women in departmental officer positions—[the university's] departments need more women chairs, more women graduate directors. There are almost no women in higher-level positions in Central [Administration]. [The university] more generally needs women in top administrator positions and in deans' offices. One is struck repeatedly at how male those social spaces still are. And it does make a difference. (professor, humanities/social sciences)

A number of faculty members reported that the “old boys’ network” was alive and well at State U. As the professor quoted above noted, the network was central to the informal decision-making process within departments:

Our department has a formal and an informal decision-making structure. The real power lies with the informal, which is an old boys' club—no women allowed. Several of the old boys get together for dinners on Tuesday night, and it is all boys!! Occasionally a girl has been asked to come, but there has been no sincere effort to gender integrate the dinner club. While our department chair is very concerned with keeping the men happy, he seems relatively unconcerned that most of the women have been perpetually unhappy during his administration. Our department has never had a woman department chair, and I expect I will see a Jewish pope long before I see the men in my department elect a woman as chair. (professor, humanities/social sciences)

This point was reiterated by one of the senior men we interviewed:

I have been part of a group that [meets regularly] for 30 years. Half of the [group] are members of the department. I don't think we would invite

a woman to join. So boys' networks are there. (professor, humanities/social sciences)

Negative stereotypes about women and leadership limit women's advancement to leadership positions.

The Importance of Discretionary Earnings

I focus in this section solely on the kinds of discretionary funds that are available, funds that have reduced women's relative salaries in comparison to men's. I use the term "discretionary" to emphasize how these earnings outcomes result from the discretionary actions of individual administrators or committees charged with the tasks of assigning summer salaries, allocating out-of-cycle merit increases, or providing research accounts. For example, a dean may decide to respond to a faculty member's offer of employment elsewhere (outside offer) by allocating summer money on either a permanent or a temporary basis, or by generating an out-of-cycle merit increase. Or that same dean may provide a summer salary for a faculty member taking on an administrative responsibility (e.g., the honors program). Alternatively, a department chair may allocate dollars in a research account to a faculty member who takes on extra service responsibilities. We thus looked for evidence of how the concrete actions of specific people, or groups of people, can produce sex inequity in earnings.

We calculated the percentage of A&S faculty members receiving discretionary summer salaries for each year from 1998 to 2004, separately by discipline group and sex, and found that male A&S faculty were substantially more likely than comparable females to receive discretionary summer monies. This general pattern typically held within discipline group: men's percentages bested women's in all but 3 of the 21 possible within-discipline comparisons, suggesting that the male advantage cannot be explained away by sex differences in disciplines.

Pushing this analysis further, we examined the possibility that men received more summer funding because they were more likely than women to do additional service work. The results suggest just the opposite: men were more likely to receive summer funds as salary enhancement (e.g., in response to an outside offer), while women were the ones who did more service work. This form of earnings enhancement is an example of the more subtle ways in which sex-neutral policies and procedures can contribute to women's lower relative earnings. While not intended to increase sex differences, such policies nevertheless produce a sex-biased outcome. Our data provide strong evidence that women earn less than men in part because they are somewhat less likely to receive discretionary summer salaries. In particular, they are less likely than men to get discretionary salary enhancement.

We also examined two additional ways in which faculty salaries can be augmented (and sex differences widened): out-of-cycle merit awards and supplementary research accounts, both of which are potentially subject to sex bias. The

out-of-cycle merit awards clearly favor men. These awards occur rarely, and are often provided in response to outside offers. Out-of-cycles in the humanities and social/behavioral sciences in the AY 1999–2000 period favored men, and in the sciences they favored women, although by AY 2003–2004, only women in the math/physical sciences did better than their male counterparts. The largest sex gap was among humanities faculty, where 16% of the men received an out-of-cycle merit award, compared with 7% of the women, a gap that widened further by AY 2003–2004. Even controlling for discipline and rank, men are advantaged for out-of-cycles (there are too few women scientists to make reliable sex comparisons, but for the humanities and social and behavioral sciences, 8 of the 12 sex comparisons over the two time periods studied favored men).

Across the entire A&S faculty, women are more likely than men to be awarded research accounts (39% of women vs. 31% of men in received them in AY 2003–2004). But this female advantage is attributable entirely to two factors: such accounts are allocated primarily to nonscientists (and especially to faculty in the humanities), and there are far fewer women than men in the sciences. For example, 62% of the male, and 53% of the female, humanities faculty in AY 2003–2004 period had research accounts, compared with 13% and 7%, respectively, of the male and female scientists. With one exception, controlling for discipline reveals that the men were more likely than their female counterparts to have research accounts. Among those who received internal research accounts, men's funding typically exceeded women's. Across A&S as a whole, women averaged approximately 81% of men's research awards. This male advantage held in the sciences and the social and behavioral sciences, although women had the advantage in the humanities.

Our respondents helped to explain these observed inequities in the allocation of discretionary dollars. A tenured woman described how her department used out-of-cycle merit increases:

All my male colleagues at the same level of seniority or lower who have been shortlisted at other universities have received an out-of-cycle raise. . . . Although I have been shortlisted several times at prestigious universities, my department chairs . . . did not inform the administration. . . . Being placed on a shortlist was considered very prestigious for my male colleagues. But it ended up being considered negatively for me. My salary has consequently stayed lower than that of men faculty of comparable ranking and increased at a slower pace although my publication results are clearly comparable. . . . This is the most direct evidence . . . I have ever received that my work was not considered of comparable value to [that] of others in my department. (associate professor, humanities/social sciences)

Others described access, or lack thereof, to research support:

After complaining several times to various department chairs about the fact that I received NO research support, unlike almost every other senior

professor in my department, I was given [several thousand dollars]. There is another senior woman who has NO research support. Both of us are research active and well published. . . . Apparently, the public relations policy rewards men and women who get outside offers, but not those who are research active and who pull in large amounts of grant money. I am deeply resentful of this. (professor, humanities/social sciences)

Others remarked on yet another practice that increased the gap between men's and women's access to resources, that is, a disadvantage in receiving indirect cost returns from university administrators:

[From] grants, the indirect costs go to the chairman and then that money gets distributed and often women don't have access. I have [many dollars] a year in grants; that generates a lot of overhead. I don't see much of that money. The university doesn't give me any money for my labs, but lots of guys get money. (senior professor, sciences)

Reflecting her discouragement, and sounding very much like the senior women at MIT, a senior scientist remarked:

The university was supportive when I was younger, but I think it's this rise, you get well advanced in the professorial ranks and some people continue and are used for leadership positions and some are not. There are women who are very advanced and there might be a committee in the university dealing with their expertise and they are lucky if they even get on the committee, let alone chair it. . . . [University administrators have] a very sports minded mentality and that excludes women. Rewards are given out such as "come with me to the football game and we can talk." (senior professor, sciences)

AGENTS OF CHANGE: TOWARD GENDER EQUITY

To the extent that specific institutionalized practices produce advantages or disadvantages that cumulate and re-create inequity, the way forward becomes clearer. In charting the "hows" of inequity, our research has taken an important first step in demonstrating how such practices can produce inequities anew in the academy. A second, and more important, step is to chart a course toward institutional change that identifies and eliminates (or modifies) the concrete behaviors and policies that cumulatively reproduce gender inequity. Because the kinds of interactions and policies we describe are embedded in academic institutions, change must occur at the institutional level. Sturm (2006: 249) describes the appropriate strategy:

Workplace equality is achieved by connecting inclusiveness to core institutional values and practices. This is a process of ongoing institutional change. It involves identifying the barriers to full participation and the pivot points for removing those barriers and increasing participation. . . . [a crucial step is to] move to institutions as the focus on analysis and intervention

(as compared to the more conventional emphasis on individuals, groups, or policy). Interventions aimed at institutional practice have traction to improve the conditions shaping individuals' experiences and to connect local experimentation to national networks.

Finding opportunities to change institutions, as opposed to changing individuals to fit into static institutions, is the most effective way to move forward. "Organizational catalysts" and "institutional intermediaries" (Sturm, 2006: 3; see also Bird, 2008) can take concrete actions within academic institutions to counteract those policies and practices that produce inequality. Institutions must work with people of good will to ensure that more people "see" the kinds of subtle barriers we have described. The idea of institutional change is at the heart of the National Science Foundation's (NSF) ADVANCE program, specifically its institutional transformation grants (Sturm, 2006).

While the kinds of inequities we document can be difficult to eradicate, leadership at the dean's level has moved State U.'s A&S unit toward greater gender equity in recent years. Our own data show positive changes in the promotion and recruitment of A&S women to senior professor positions between our two data points: the number of senior/special professor women more than doubled between AY 1999–2000 and AY 2003–2004. Part of this increase was a direct consequence of the A&S Dean's Office's attention to this issue through the initiation of this study and its initial results. The then (male) A&S dean took concrete steps to recruit and promote senior women, and the success of these initiatives shows up in our AY 2003–2004 results. A few years later, the (female) A&S dean initiated an A&S committee on faculty diversity, charged with recommending "realistic goals and strategies to address the underrepresentation of women and faculty of color in many [A&S] departments." That committee presented its final report in March 2004, just after we completed our data collection. The report included a number of specific recommendations that focused on increasing awareness, updating information, identifying best practices, enhancing retention, generating new resources, and using accountability mechanisms to greater advantage. An informal A&S diversity analysis (conducted in September 2005 by the A&S Dean's Office) summarized the first year's success: of 34 new faculty members, 16 were women, 16 were members of underrepresented ethnic groups, and 4 of the 13 new science faculty members were women. Paying attention does matter.

The results of these efforts at State U. demonstrate what a difference leadership on diversity issues can make, a point Nancy Hopkins (2006) underscores from her experience at MIT. She argues that without constant vigilance, diversity gains can rapidly evaporate (see also Eveline, 2004). This has happened more broadly at State U. Despite an increase in the percentage of females among tenured/tenure-track faculty from 27% to 35% between 1976 and 2004, institutional data show a more complicated picture: declines in the actual number of

women from 573 to 510 between 1978 and 1992, and a slow increase to 587 by 2002. The data for African American and Latino faculty show both percentage and actual number declines between 1976 and 2004. Academic leaders at State U. have publicly recognized these declines, and have initiated policies to reverse them.

To the extent that nonconscious gender biases get mapped onto organizational interactions and decision making, or historical legacies or policies continue to produce gender inequity, unconventional strategies are called for. As Ridgeway and Correll (2000) point out, we need to modify the existing gender system through an interactive process of social interventions that will slowly reshape our personal interactions and hence how we perceive and evaluate others. Ridgeway and Correll (2000) recommend renewed commitment to affirmative action, policies that equalize the distribution of resources, transparency with regard to pay and reward practices, accountability for gender equity outcomes, and family-friendly workplace policies. This is not to say, of course, that we should lose sight of the bigger picture. There are still continuing pipeline issues to consider, and other factors that help to reproduce gender inequity in the academy (e.g., educational choices and work-family issues: see Petersen, 2006). Clearly a multi-pronged set of approaches is necessary.

As institutional change occurs, we must also be careful not to re-create inequity *among* women as we attempt to reduce inequity *between* women and men. There is evidence in our data that such differences exist among women at State U. As occurred at MIT, senior and junior women in A&S often “see” their situations differently. It is senior women who report feelings of invisibility and marginality that are exacerbated as they move into the senior ranks. This pattern of differential perceptions by rank seems to be a common one. Not only do our findings replicate those in the MIT report, but other researchers have noted this as well (e.g., Monroe et al., 2008; Task Force on the Status of Women Faculty in the Natural Sciences and Engineering at Princeton, 2003). But it’s not just rank. A&S women also spoke of being differently evaluated, especially if their scholarship focused on gender issues. Such findings suggest a kind of segmentation *among* women, where certain women are more valued or accepted than others (e.g., those more junior, or more recently hired, or those not engaged in gender scholarship).¹ One could also imagine a differentiation between those women who are in decision-making positions as against those who are not. The danger of such within-sex differentiation is that increasing gender equity at the institutional level could still mask inequity among women faculty members.

¹ I thank Sharon Bird for suggesting this to me.

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