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*A Woman's Work. Review of Challenges of the faculty
career for women: Success and sacrifice* by M. I.
Phillipsen

Jody Jessup-Anger

Marquette University, jody.jessup-anger@marquette.edu

difficulty navigating the multiple demands on her time. The first three chapters detail the issues facing a diverse group of women who are in the early, middle, and late stages of faculty careers. These chapters include personal accounts of the women's difficulties, describe their "enablers"—Philipsen's term for the personal and institutional conditions that help women overcome challenges—and highlight the women's coping strategies. Chapter 4 unites the voices of the women across career phases, describing their views of themselves in relation to men and to other generations of women in academe. Chapter 5 summarizes the women's coping strategies and makes recommendations for institutional change.

The book's organization is such that one can read it from cover to cover or examine only the sections of most interest. Its references to other contemporary research and literature on faculty work-life balance will benefit those who want to explore particular topics in greater detail. But for those with a firm grasp of the research on faculty careers, *Challenges*

of the Faculty Career for Women offers little that is new or surprising. Its strength lies in Philipsen's liberal use of women's own words, which convincingly portray the friction women often encounter between their personal and professional lives. Such an intimate and realistic illustration powerfully demonstrates the need for higher education to examine how better to support women faculty.

Philipsen argues that by focusing on different stages in the careers of women faculty and including women with varying family structures, the book provides a unique contribution to the literature. Indeed, the women interviewed are diverse in terms of institutional affiliation, career stage, employment status (tenured or tenure track versus contingent), discipline, family status (single, partnered, divorced, and with and without children), sexuality, nationality, and race. Because of this diversity, almost any woman (and likely some men) will relate to one or more of the stories.

However, the breadth of experiences depicted comes at the expense

of depth. Much of the description provided is surface level. There is no delving into the psychological toll of having to engage in unrelenting personal and professional management, nor is there exploration of the impact of specific coping strategies. Another weakness has to do with the solutions Philipsen and her interviewees propose, which range from vague statements calling for changes to institutional policy, such as clarification of tenure standards, to statements so specific as to be irrelevant to the life circumstances of many readers (for example, "get a PhD right away" or "plan carefully when considering work and children"). And although Philipsen intimates throughout the book that better solutions to women's academic struggles may be found in remedies employed in Europe, she provides insufficient information to substantiate her claim.

Moreover, including women across career stages sets up a challenge that proves impossible to meet within the confines of one book: that of detailing the differing and

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evolving social and institutional factors that perpetuate or alleviate difficulties for women at each stage of the professional lifespan. Philipsen's documentation of these important environmental considerations is inconsistent, resulting in an overly simplistic and decontextualized analysis of the development of women faculty as they progress in their careers. For example, she writes of late-career faculty as having achieved a sense of identity and contentment in balancing their personal and professional lives. In relating their contentment solely to their identity, Philipsen fails to acknowledge explicitly the institutional and social dynamics that enable such contentment (that is, earning tenure, being promoted, and having fewer demands on one's personal time). Worse, she glosses over the painful stories of loss, missed opportunities, and unfulfilled expectations shared by several of the late-career faculty she interviewed.

In summary, *Challenges of the Faculty Career for Women* provides a broad, readable account of many difficulties women face as they navigate the waters of academe. It argues convincingly that academic women frequently find it hard to balance their personal and professional responsibilities. Any faculty member who has struggled for balance will find corroboration for her difficulties in the personal stories of the women depicted.

Furthermore, new faculty members and graduate students seeking an entry point into the scholarship on women in the professoriate may find value in the "enablers" and coping strategies shared by the interviewees. On the other hand, well-informed readers who desire a novel examination of the issues facing women in academe will want to look elsewhere, as the amount of terrain the book covers results in an analysis that is ultimately too broad to deepen the conversation.

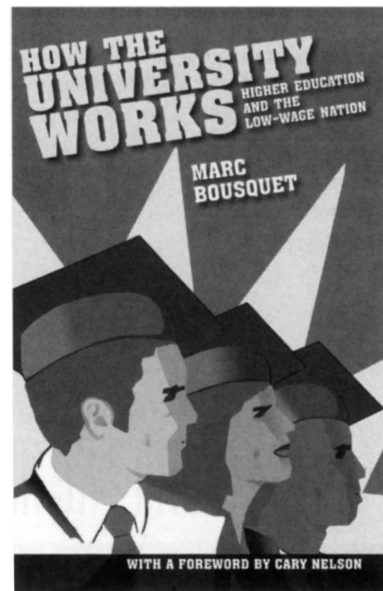
How Should the University Work?

How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation

Marc Bousquet. New York: New York University Press, 2008

REVIEWED BY
CLAIRE A. KIRCHHOFF

It is not always comfortable to read Marc Bousquet's *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation*, nor should it be. Bousquet describes a dilemma that should be familiar to members of the AAUP: most teaching at the undergraduate level is done by people off the tenure track. This is a problem for several reasons related



to academic freedom, fair compensation, and scholarship.

Bousquet also points out that rising university tuition is intricately linked with continually declining wages and benefits for those who teach (I use the word "university" in this review—as Bousquet does in the title of his book—to refer to all types of higher education institutions). At the same time, the number of administrators has continued to rise, as have their salaries. These trends have an alarming correspondence to the number of non-tenure-track workers in higher education. Even more alarming is the history Bousquet relates of how administrations have actively (and successfully) sought to change campus culture so that it is easier to manage and control the campus workforce.

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