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Mis/classification: Identity-based Inequities in the Canadian and Global Post-secondary Context
Introduction

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by KelleyAnne Malinen

KelleyAnne Malinen is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology/Anthropology at Mount Saint Vincent University. She holds a PhD in Sociology from Université Laval. Published in *Affilia*, *Sexuality & Culture*, and *Symbolic Interaction*, her research focuses on marginalized experiences of sexual violence and sexual violence service provision. KelleyAnne is editor of the 2019 anthology *Dis/Consent: Perspectives on Sexual Consent and Sexual Violence* as well as the principal investigator of the research project Culture and Perspectives on Sexual Assault Policy. Her teaching focuses on sex, gender, sexuality, and social theory.

This special cluster of three articles represents the response to an *Atlantis* call for papers entitled "Mis/classification: Identity-based Inequities in the Canadian and Global Post-secondary Context." The CFP aimed to explore how elements of post-secondary institutions produce, maintain, or resist equitable or inequitable outcomes for equity-seeking groups. It welcomed critical scholarship in the broad sense of the term, invoking an overriding concern with one or more forms of human emancipation, including work under rubrics of critical feminism, critical sociology, critical disability studies, or critical race theory. We were interested in submissions that might explore the intersectionality of in/equities in the post-secondary context, as well as submissions that offer intersectional approaches for addressing such inequities. We were looking for reflections that would explore, on the one hand, systemic recalcitrancies manifest in post-secondary institutions, and, on the other hand, what has worked and/or is working to address issues of inequity. The three articles selected for publication answered our call in three distinct registers. Motapanyane and Shankar problematized marginalization of minoritized women from post-secondary leadership roles, Wright troubled the consenting/nonconsenting binary at the heart of consent education, and Smith and Gacimi considered menstrual inequity/menstrual justice on campus. Although the call for papers resulting in this thematic section welcomed submissions from and/or about international contexts, all of the articles included

here address data from Canadian post-secondary institutions.

The article "Increasing Pathways to Leadership for Black, Indigenous, and other Racially Minoritized Women," by Motapanyane and Shankar, draws on the authors' research, expertise, and subject positions. The article shows that Black, Indigenous, and other racially minoritized women are increasingly under-represented in post-secondary leadership positions. It raises concerns about institutional orientations toward equity that are merely performative, comprised of elements such as ineffectual anti-bias trainings, and strategic plans that emphasize equity, diversity, and inclusion, but lack mechanisms to accomplish this trio of terms, as well as reliance on underrepresented populations for surplus EDI labour. Motapanyane and Shankar offer concrete suggestions for moving beyond public relations-oriented lip-service toward real change. Their suggestions are organized under the rubrics of governance, commitments of practice, data collection, and recruitment and hiring.

Wright's article "Trauma-Informed Consent Education: Understanding the Grey Area of Consent Through the Experiences of Youth Trauma Survivors" problematizes the consenting/nonconsenting binary at the heart of consent education, a dominant modality of sexual violence prevention in Western universities today. Drawing on qualitative interviews with youth trauma survivors, Wright speaks to how the effects of trauma may produce dynamics at odds with this binary. This author argues that grey areas need to be accounted for in the interest of making consent education more trauma informed. As it stands, consent education programs meant to benefit students by preventing sexual violence may ironically alienate, or even revictimize those who have experienced sexual violence and are living with its effects. Wright suggests consent programming that acknowledges the complexity of consent and eschews binary models. This article advocates an explicitly anti-oppressive approach that is cognizant of the disproportionate vulnerability of marginalized communities to sexual trauma.

Finally, following analysis of qualitative responses from an exploratory survey, Smith and Gacimi's "Bloody Burdens: Post-secondary Students and Menstruation on Campus" explores how students experience and manage menstruation. Their article also considers how inequities associated with menstruation can be addressed. Students report dealing with cost of menstrual supplies, physical and emotional symptoms, missed classes, as well as shame and stigma. The authors note that provision of free menstrual supplies is often presented by post-secondary institutions and media outlets as a sufficient response to calls for menstrual justice. However, whereas free supplies help to address financial costs, they do little to address penalties associated with missed classes, much less shame and stigma of menstrual bleeding.

Variations on the contradiction between an ultimate desire for radical change and more circumspect, though still ambitious, calls for reform appear throughout the three papers. Smith and Gacimi note a contradiction between the focus on concealing menstruation and the more radical objective of eradicating the shame culturally associated with having one's period. The authors express the importance of balancing immediate requirements for menstrual products needed, at least in part to conceal menstrual blood, with Utopian aspirations for a future in which the shame that motivates the urgency for menstrual supplies does not attend bleeding.

Wright's article can be read as engaging tensions between ideals and reality in another way. In a sense this piece suggests typical consent education programs have erred by proceeding as if students inhabit a context where a clear difference between consent and non-consent exists and needs only to be demarcated. An interesting question arising from Wright's contribution is whether there is a possible future in which "no means no," "yes means yes," and grey areas need no longer be accounted for.

Finally, in providing guidance for "progressively dismantling standardized Eurocentric, androcentric, and corporatized academic workplace cultures," Motapanyane and Shankar emphasize their commitment to decolonial change, considering whether this commitment is at odds with the reform-oriented character of their contribution. Ultimately, they argue that progressive reform should accompany and be at the service of more radical change, and that reform-oriented measures must not offer cover for the maintenance of traditional hierarchies.

Taken together, these three pieces provide actionable suggestions for immediate change while pressing toward more radical transformations of post-secondary institutions, cultures, and practices.