



# SUPPORTING AND ADVANCING WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

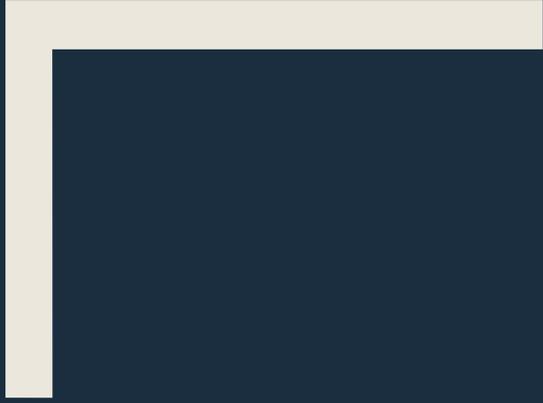
# Reflecting the Diverse Student Body

Provide a more accurate representation of the world

Serve as direct examples of success for a diverse student body

Ensure that diverse viewpoints are taught, represented, defended, and considered within university decisions

Benefit from the perspectives of women at the leadership tables



Achieving gender parity in leadership is a matter of fairness

# Status of women in higher education

- Females disproportionately represented as assistant professors
- Women, especially true for women of color, underrepresented in tenured and full professorships
- Women greater share of entry-level, teaching-only, and service positions

(ACE, 2017)

# Status of women in higher education

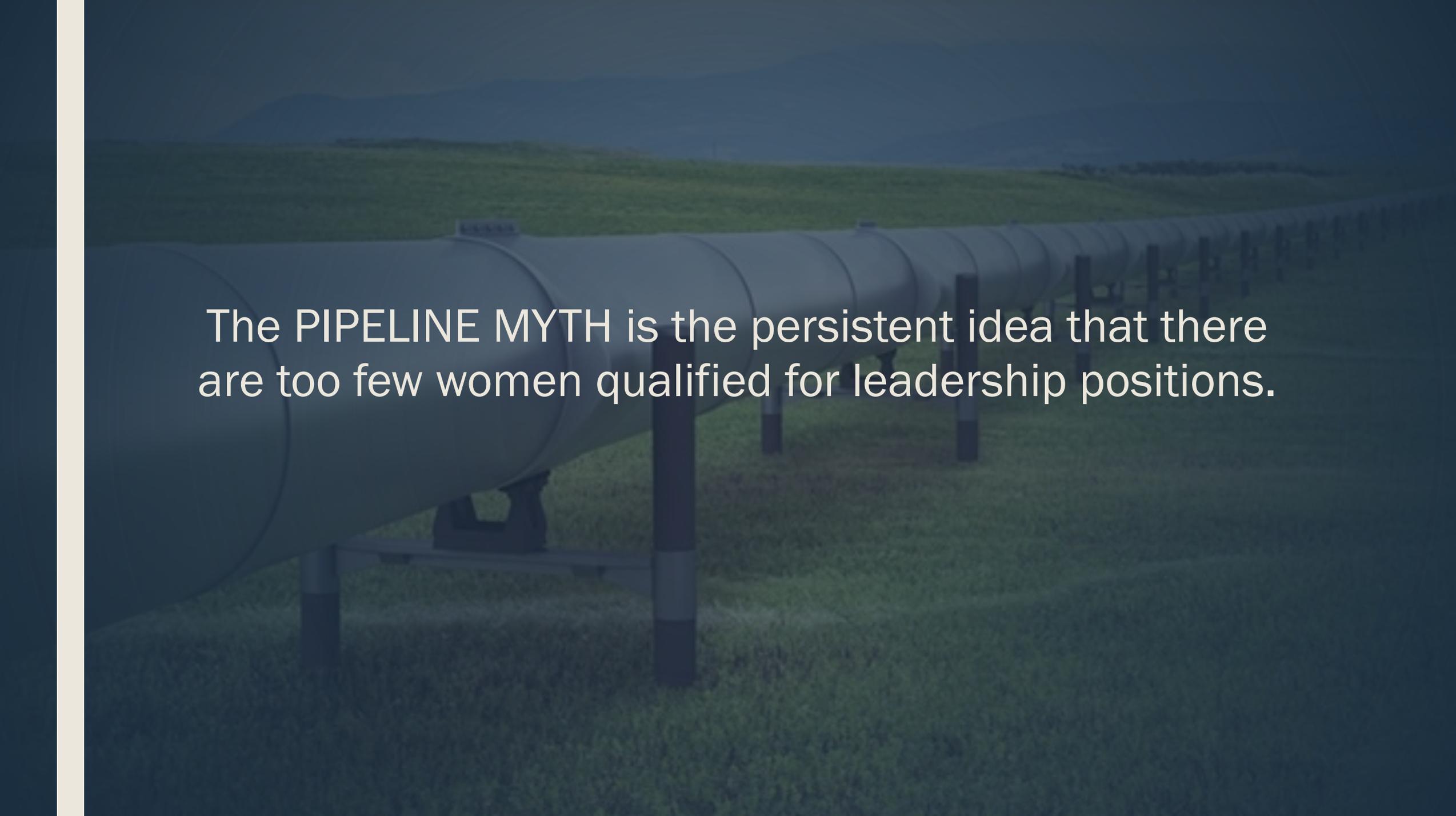
- 30% of university presidents are women
- Male university presidents more likely to be married and have children
- 32% of full professor positions were held by women in 2015
- The gender gap for CAOs is smaller – 43% of women presidents were promoted from CAO positions (compared with 31% of men)
- Men more likely to become college presidents without having a PhD or EdD

(ACE, 2017)

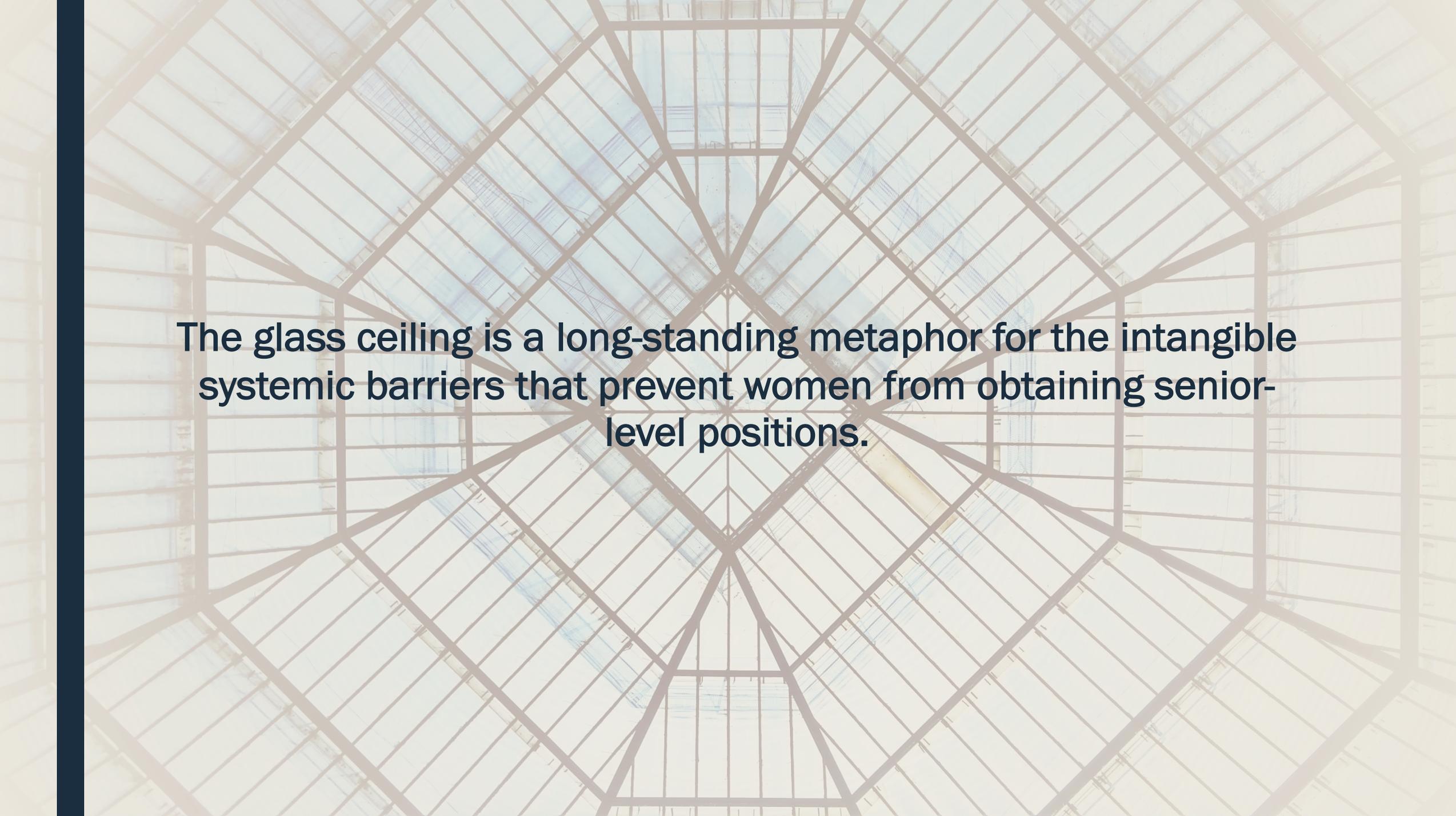
# Status of women in higher education

- Work-life balance – female executives have different experiences:
  - *Less likely married and have children*
  - *More likely to have changed career pathway for family*
  - *More likely to cite work-family balance as major issue in navigating career path*
- University governing boards – for two decades, 70% of board members were men

(ACE, 2017; Johnson, 2016)

A long pipeline stretching across a green field under a blue sky. The pipeline is supported by several vertical posts and runs horizontally across the frame. The background shows rolling green hills and a clear blue sky.

The PIPELINE MYTH is the persistent idea that there are too few women qualified for leadership positions.



**The glass ceiling is a long-standing metaphor for the intangible systemic barriers that prevent women from obtaining senior-level positions.**

Women are not simply denied top leadership opportunities at the culmination of a long career, but rather such opportunities seem to disappear at various points along their trajectories





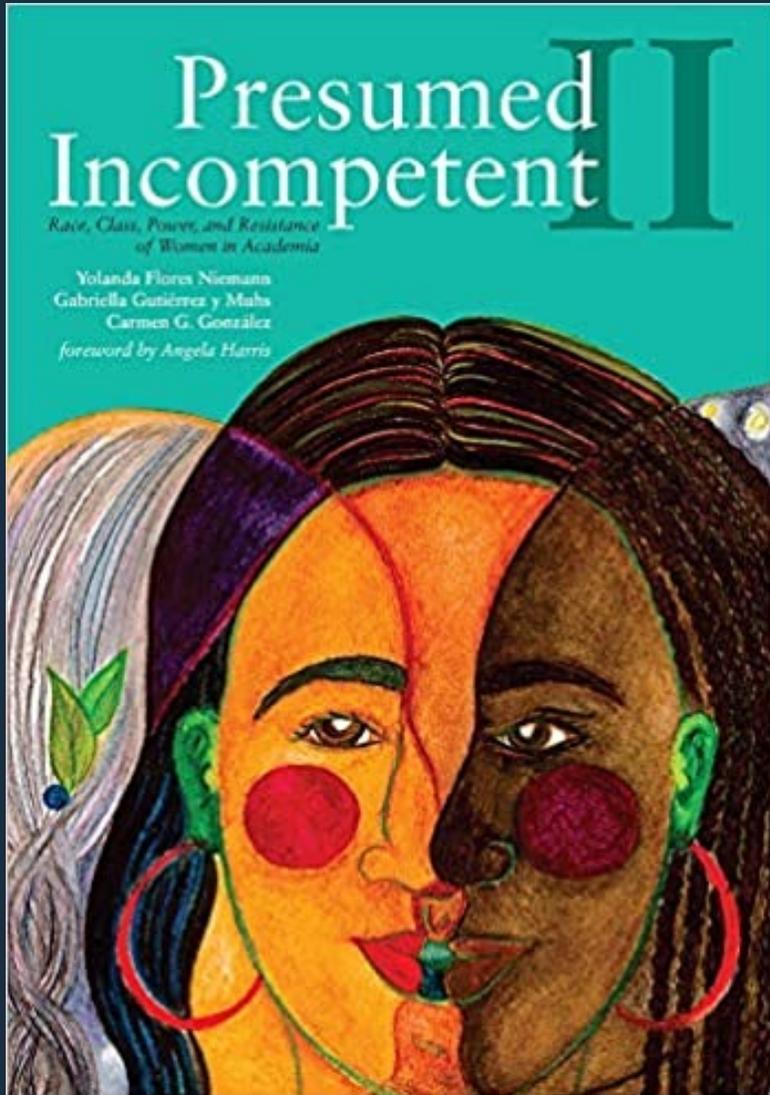
# SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

# Bias and Prejudice

Bias affects how we perceive people which in turn affects our decision-making process

- Hiring and promotion
- Student evaluations of teaching

(Esarey & Valdes, 2020)



Women of color face more day-to-day bias and a wider range of microaggressions and increased scrutiny

**MICROAGGRESSION:** everyday insults or derogatory messages directed toward minorities and people of color, often from people who believe they have done nothing wrong

(Muhs, Niemann, Gonzalez, & Harris, 2020)

# Perceptions of Leadership

- Historically constructed as stereotypically masculine
- Females stereotyped as less capable as leaders than males
- Dichotomy can place women in a double bind

# Lack of Female Mentors

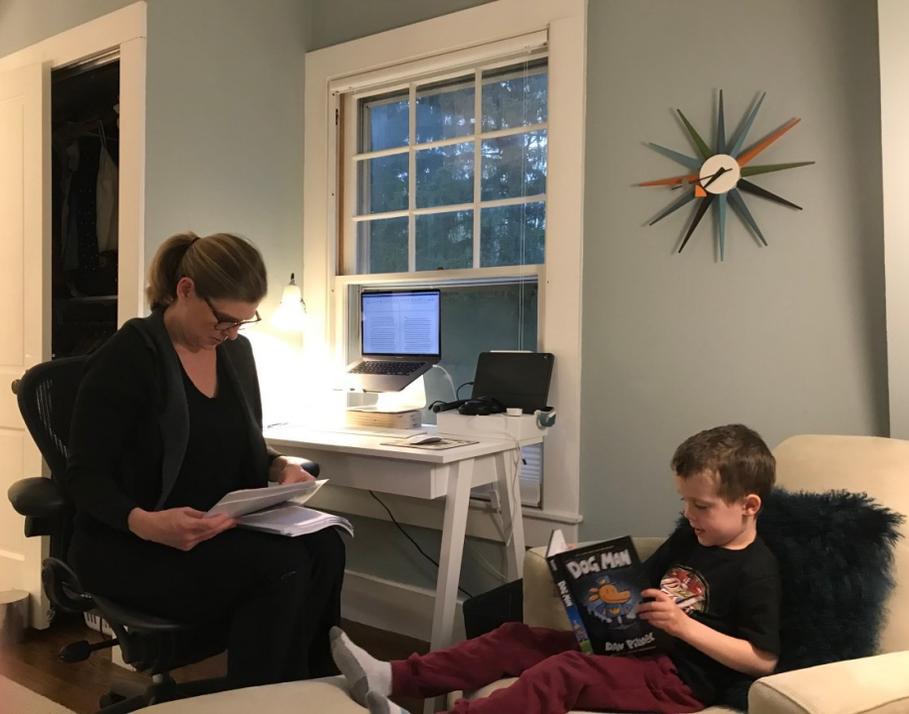
- Mentoring is important for women and men:
  - *Career role models*
  - *Career development and advice*
  - *Sponsorship and greater visibility*
  - *Career guidance and support*
- For women and people of color:
  - *Advice for successfully balancing work/family responsibilities*
  - *Strategies for addressing gendered and/or racial barriers*
- Negative impact due to lack of women in leadership

# Sexual Harassment

- Sexual and gender minority women and women of color more likely to have been harassed
- Women of color more likely to report feeling unsafe because of their gender
- When harassed, women more likely to leave their positions
- Consequences – decline in psychological, physical, and professional wellbeing and costly loss of talent

# Child/Elder Care

- "Double shift" – a full day of work, followed by hours spent caring for children and doing household labor
- Challenges associated with balancing work – family



COVID-19 upended health, education, and work systems

THE PRIMAL SCREAM

## America's Mothers Are in Crisis

Is anyone listening to them?

## Coronavirus and gender: More chores for women set back gains in equality

By Sandrine Lungumbu and Amelia Butterly  
BBC 100 Women

🕒 26 November 2020

## In One Year, Coronavirus Pandemic Has Wreaked Havoc on Working Women

Whether losing their jobs or leaving the workforce to care for children, women have been hit hard by the economic devastation wrought by the coronavirus.

COMMENTARY • WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

## COVID-19 has driven millions of women out of the workforce. Here's how to help them come back

BY KWEILIN ELLINGRUD AND LIZ HILTON SEGEL  
February 13, 2021 9:00 AM CST

## 'This Is Too Much': Working Moms Are Reaching The Breaking Point During The Pandemic

September 29, 2020 · 1:36 PM ET  
Heard on All Things Considered



# COVID-19, Female Faculty, and Research

- Decreased research productivity compared to male faculty
- Short- and long-term effects
- Universities provided resources
  - *Remote work*
  - *Extension to tenure clock*
  - *Support for teaching and technology*
  - *Funded graduate assistants*
  - *Impact statements*

# Solutions

# Talk about Race

- We must talk about race when we talk about gender equity
- Intersectional identities

# Build a Good Feedback Channel

- Feedback from women to the institution to determine their needs
- Women are the ones most able to understand their needs

# Build in Accountability Measures

- Build in accountability measures and enforce them for aggressive and discriminatory behavior
- Accountability is an expectation and an invitation to take ownership and then take a path of correction

# Expand the Metrics and Understand the Story

- Move beyond counting the numbers
- Understand why disparities exist (the story)
- Be transparent about the metrics and disparities and hold your unit accountable for change

# Expect our Leaders are Competent and Aware in DEI

- Highest levels of leadership must initiate conversations on DEI
- Do not leave to the CDO, those in DEI positions, or minority faculty and staff

# Engage in the Hard Work

- Meaningful progress at the structural and organizational levels takes time and hard work
- System-wide approach, not a siloed one

# Formal Mentoring

- Mentoring important contributor to women's career success and progression
- Consideration of programs that frame women as “the problem” or deficient and teach women how to operate in the existing culture rather than viewing the system as the problem
- *Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead* (Sandberg, 2013)
  - Onus placed on women
  - Ignored systemic barriers that don't allow women to sit at the table

# Male Allyship

- Men at the top and laterally to be advocates for all women
- ALLYSHIP: Making a genuine, measurable, and positive impact in the wellbeing of the group you are an ally for
- Be cautious about benevolent sexism
- Consideration of the culture or context in which women work

# Employee Resource Groups: Advocacy and Support

- ERGs serve multiple roles: support, advocacy, knowledge-building
- Workgroups dedicated to advocating for improvements for women

- How are women represented in senior leadership positions?
- How are Black, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous women included or excluded in leadership and decision-making?
- How is the labor of women leaders being recognized and compensated?
- What forms of mentorship are available or being developed to support women as leaders?
- Where do I hold power to make change?

Thank you

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