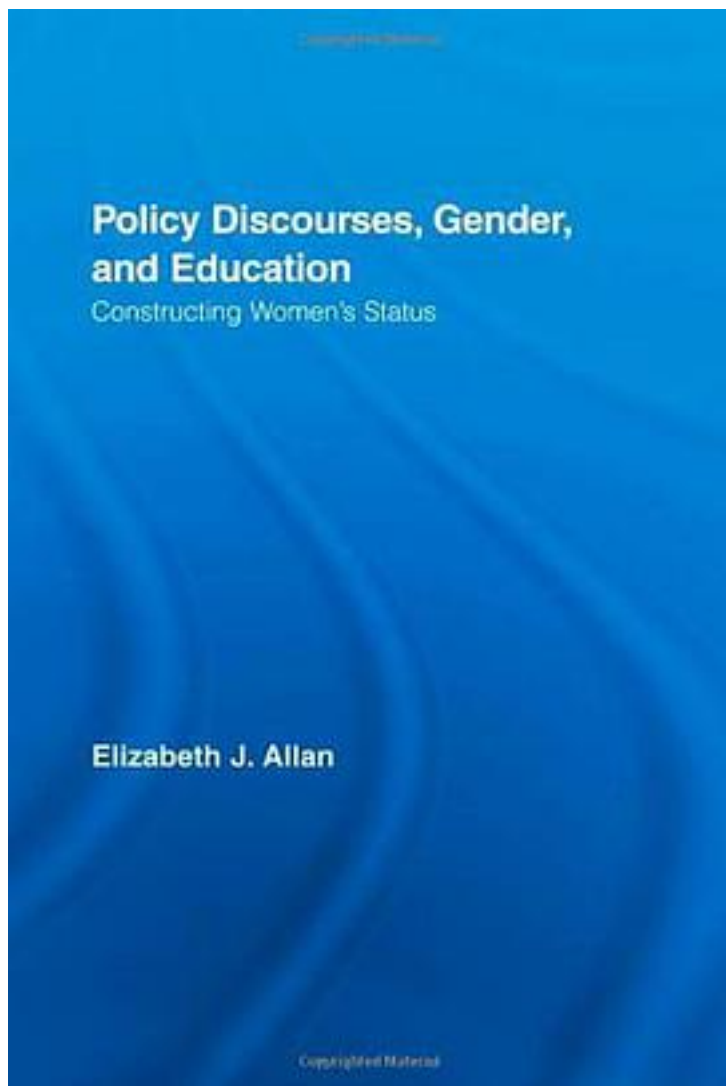


Policy Discourses, Gender, and Education



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Despite over thirty years of activism and legislation to eliminate discrimination, parity has yet to be achieved for women in academe. Enrollment growth, changes in undergraduate and graduate majors and baccalaureate degree attainment indicate improvement in women's status since the early 1970s. However, persistent salary differentials between male and female tenured faculty members, underrepresentation of women in leadership roles, senior faculty, chilly classroom and campus climates are some indicators of the persisting inequities for women in postsecondary education. This book describes policy discourse analysis as a framework for considering how those involved in policy-making efforts may make use of discourses that inadvertently undermine the intended effect of the policies they set forth. Allan illustrates the methods of policy discourse analysis by describing their use in a study of 21 women's commission reports produced at four research universities in the U.S. from 1971-1996. In so doing, she highlights the important work of university women's commissions while uncovering policy silences and making visible the powerful discourses framing gender equity policy initiatives in higher education. Her findings reveals how dominant discourses of femininity, access, professionalism, race, and sexuality contribute to constructing women's status in complex and at times, contradictory ways. This important volume will interest researchers across a number of disciplines including policy studies, educational leadership, higher education and cultural studies of education.

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目录:

[Policy Discourses, Gender, and Education_ 下载链接1](#)

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