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## Book Review

Brenda L.H. Marina

*Georgia Southern University*, [bmarina@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:bmarina@georgiasouthern.edu)

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## **Book Review**

*Brenda L.H. Marina*

*Women and Leadership in Higher Education* (2014), edited by Karen A. Longman and Susan R. Madsen is a provocative and important contribution to the conversation about women and leadership in higher education and student affairs. Published by Information Age Publishing, this book is the first in a series that will influence both scholars and practitioners towards a better understanding of gender dynamics in higher education.

There is a picturesque but “stern looking” building on the cover of the book. The bridge leading to the building suggests that “all that enter are welcome”. The big bold letters of the title of the book gives the audience a sense that this book probably will proclaim that women have arrived at the top in the higher education arena. However, the introduction starts out with the alarming demographic information that makes one want to look into each of the windows of the building on the cover and peer down the halls to take a look at what is really going on - this continued underrepresentation of women.

The introduction sets the tone for the book and the purpose intended by the authors; the book articulates the impact that the culture of “maleness” has had on women, students, and the organization of higher education as a whole. The book is divided into four cause-oriented sections with each chapter giving voice to the realities about attitudes and aspirations of both men and women in academia. Through the second section of the book, I was particularly encouraged by the “women of wisdom” who collectively reminded me of different ways to renew my commitment to keep other women moving forward. The third section provided research and insights from presidential perspectives, with intersecting realities about gender socialization and leadership expectations versus leadership experiences. In the final section of the book, the chapter titles alone will draw the reader into topics such as the quest for legitimacy, big-time sports, agents of change, conviction and courage, and grounding.

This book is about much more than women and leadership. It is about struggle, domination, political trends, community needs, and still more. While this book would fit nicely into any women’s studies course, this book could be used as a dynamic tool in an educational leadership course, an ethics course, or a sociology course. As a scholar who examines factors that influence the glass ceiling for women across the global, I found illuminating information that is both timely and critical for transformative thinkers who are willing to re-evaluate the male-normed cultures of higher education institutions. I applaud the authors for this book and encourage both men and women to read this book with an openness to new ideas. It is my hope that each reader will internalize the differing perspectives offered and take intentional steps towards redefining conventional leadership models in higher education.