

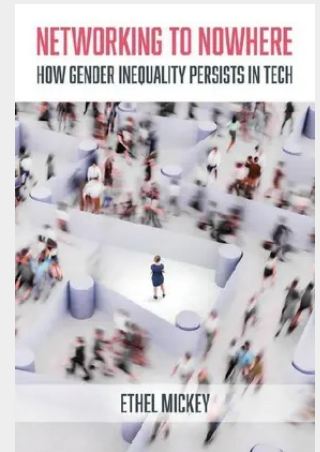
Mickey

Networking to Nowhere

How Gender Inequality Persists in Tech

Why does gender inequality persist in tech—even in workplaces that invest in fixing it? In *Networking to Nowhere*, sociologist Ethel Mickey uncovers the paradox at the heart of modern tech culture: Networking is hailed as the key to opportunity, yet it systematically works against women. Drawing on ethnographic research inside a top tech firm, Mickey reveals how "ideal" networking practices like informal referrals, after-hours schmoozing, and bro-bonding over sports reinforce old boys' clubs that exclude women and people of color. Women, encouraged to lean into formal events, conferences, and diversity programs, often find these efforts go unrewarded, networking them to nowhere. By exposing how gendered expectations, invisible cultural codes, and even well-meaning corporate DEI programs can deepen inequality, this book offers a powerful new framework for understanding gender and organizations in the contemporary economy—and what it will take to chart a new path forward.

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