

Symposium

Diversity Is Not Justice: Working toward Radical Transformation and Racial Equity in the Discipline

Ersula Ore, Kimberly Wieser, and Christina Cedillo, Editors

This CCCC cross-Caucus symposium seeks to correct the allocation of BIPOC time to white ends by turning inward toward our Caucuses and focusing energy on how best to meet our needs. Taking ownership over our time—for ourselves and our communities—is a radical act of self-care not valued by the university because to care for BIPOC means to arrest the underpinnings constituting white time and its many manifestations. This reclamation of time allows us to critique knowledge central to the university, the discipline, and our respective institutions in ways that encourage a redistributive corrective of time and energy to BIPOC to pursue their research and professional paths unhindered by white interests. Plainly put, we seek to put time back into BIPOC as an act of radical care, community, and coalition building.

In the academy, we run on “university time,” which like white time, national time, colonial time, and slave time, is driven by market aims, the rhetorical stand-in for white desires. In contrast, the notion of “Indian time” in Indigenous communities is one that anything called a decolonial or Indigenizing practice in the university must reach toward. It is the time

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of ceremony, of social gatherings like pow wows, of daily life in reservation communities or other spaces with a dominantly Indigenous population—even if that is sometimes ephemeral. It is a framework that predates settler-colonialism and still challenges and makes insignificant settler-colonial notions of work time. There, in fact, is no time; there is only circular movement through space where there is no separation between the material and immaterial, no separation between life and death.

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and immaterial, no separation between life and death. In Indigenous languages, various tasks are part of being, in the traditional sense. They are what we do to live and what we do to celebrate life. Not without its own notions of slavery, the pre-contact world framed work as something that captives who had no choices of their own did. In the Comanche language, for instance, the word for *work* shares a root with the noun for some categories of slaves.

This makes it clear that the controlling of our time through our participation in the Western, settler-colonial academy, an institution that would not exist without slavery and genocide, proves to be a form of rhetorical violence. We need antiracist action within the discipline to resist and survive, let alone to combat that violence. University time might best be described as a white temporal rhetoric that compels our complicity as BIPOC scholars and that of our allies as the price of our participation. Many of us came to this space idealizing the academy as the bastion of liberal thought in America, but we didn't realize that thinking is just that—thinking. Much of what the academy supports in theory is thwarted in practice precisely because racism IS systemic, and the academy is not as divorced from the rest of society as the “Ivory Tower” metaphor would have us think—unless we totally rethink that metaphor to realize that White Privilege is the structure that has upheld it all along.

We may sound to many like we are “calling out” the academy, and, by extension, the field, with this symposium. We see it as attempting to call the field “in.” We want this conversation to be productive. We want, not to implicate, but to stimulate change. Beyond issues that center on our own experiences and the interests of our respective caucuses, we aim for this symposium to operate as a site of coalition and care for our caucus communities. The motivation behind this cross-Caucus collection was: (1) to

create space for BIPOC graduate students and junior faculty to articulate their experiences in the academy; (2) to contribute to the archive on scholarship examining the experiences of BIPOC graduates and faculty in the field; (3) to explore how programs in particular and the field in general can establish more ethical and equitable processes; (4) to contribute to ongoing work in whiteness studies, race, and composition studies; and (5) to facilitate cross-Caucus dialogue that might foster “coalitional moments” (see Chávez 2013). We want this symposium to assist our Caucuses individually and collectively, to help us know our neighbors, see our neighbors, and imagine together how the field can know and see us, too.

Contributors mention a shared acknowledgment of struggles as BIPOC writers and scholars. This collection allows us to ask larger questions about the adaptive measures BIPOC employ as they navigate the university, allowing us to consider how intersecting forces of oppression inform the institutional literacies of BIPOC graduates and faculty. While not all of our caucus members may be phenotypically recognizable as BIPOC—and those who fall under that description acknowledge that and the differences it creates among us—we still have some shared experiences of the academy and, importantly, some shared survival strategies. Mentorship is a thread throughout the submissions because it is nearly impossible for BIPOC to survive academia without a road map and a guide.

At the same time, however, we acknowledge that the village, the community, and familial spaces don’t come without complications, that they too can be spaces of violence. We remain mindful that the village, the community, and kinship networks take work and that this work too, is an ongoing struggle. All communities require healing. Many BIPOC wrestle with intergenerational post-traumatic stress disorder, the effects of ongoing oppression and violence, and epigenetically-encoded oppression and violence. Thus, we can’t expect our communities not to have “hurt people who hurt people.” Luckily, we also have a good number of “healed people who heal people.” And we cannot separate that from our work as rhetorical scholars, particularly if we work in cultural rhetorics or our work focuses on BIPOC in any way. If we don’t work toward healing in all we do and in all interactions, struggle for it, then we are making our livings off of the back of that violence and continuing it.

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BIPoC and the Struggle over Voice in the Academy

Introduction

Guided by Linh Dich (Miami University), Catheryn Jennings (Hamline University), Raquel Corona (Queensborough Community College, CUNY), and Sherita V. Roundtree (Towson University) joined in conversation to discuss the importance of not giving up one's voice despite academic pressures. This virtual conversation complicates the intersection of "voice" and one's identities, language practices, and spaces/places.

Raquel: Every time I think of academic writing, I get angry. I am reminded of the message I was given about my writing during my undergraduate years: *it is mediocre at best*. I was told that I had really smart ideas, just not the language or skills. After being reported to the honor's thesis chairperson by a professor who didn't think I met the requirements to even enter the honor's program, I had enough. I gave up attempting to harness the language

required to succeed as an English literature major. This forced me to retreat into my creative writing courses, where I felt more freedom to pursue writing in various voices, but even there I quickly noticed you could only speak one language: English. My authentic voice could rarely encompass who I was: a woman thinking and writing in two languages.

Sherita: As Raquel's reflection highlights, there is a lot at stake that oscillates between page and practice. This discussion about "authentic voice" makes me think about the relationship between personal experience and first-person point of view. The first major assignment in my first-year writing courses is a literacy narrative that asks students to write about a memory or series of memories related to an English dialect/variety. Many students report battling with their use of first person when sharing their personal or literacy experience(s). I often questioned how they could imagine an approach in which they could share their narrative with their target audience(s) without the use of "I." I cannot count the number of times that I have had students reluctantly ask me if they are allowed to use "I" in their writing; it feels as if they are anticipating that I will say "no" and scold them.

Catheryn: I ask my students to put themselves into their writing, to embrace their own ways of communicating, and to take ownership and pride in their words, but I struggle with this myself. My undergraduate and masters were very traditional, in that there was a very specific way that "academic writing" had to look and sound with unbendable rules that didn't make my writing look or sound anything like the folks back home, like I sounded. This made writing very difficult for me. Those things echoed in my head and heart, and drove me to remove myself from my writing, to hide the small-town Native kid. Sure, I had stories to tell and opinions to share, but the weight of thinking that there was a capital R "RIGHT" way to do so held me back.

Raquel: Catheryn, your words really reflect how I struggle with believing in my own writing. When you say, "I ask my students to put themselves in their writing . . . but I struggle with this myself," I hear what my mentors tell me while I'm writing my dissertation. I know they speak very highly of me (while I'm present and when I'm not), but I am surprised when I return to the page and still don't think much of what I've created. Meanwhile, if I move away far enough from the dissertation—give me about a month—

upon my return, I ask myself: Whose work is this? Who came up with this semi-intelligent stuff? Is this me? The writing seems foreign and like it does not belong to me. Partially that may be because despite having begun to integrate the academy's ways of being, I am surprised at myself for having acquired its ways. It's hard to believe that what I have to say sounds so clear, persuasive, and valuable.

Sherita: I found myself *placing my hand on my chest* after Catheryn's first statement: "I ask my students to put themselves into their writing, to embrace their own ways of communicating, and to take ownership and pride in their words, but I struggle with this myself." This sentence called me out in a way that I have been needing to call myself out for a while. My dissertation project focuses on Black women graduate teaching assistants who have taught first- and/or second-year writing. The experiences that my participants shared often mirrored my own. There were many times that I wrote myself into my research only to question if I was being self-indulgent.

Conversations with other Black graduate students and faculty in the field helped me to recognize that my narrative didn't develop in isolation. Instead, it was shaped by legacies of racism and gatekeeping. Beverly J. Moss' (2003) "shared knowledge" and Carmen Kynard's (2013) discussion of "affinity groups" guide my thoughts about Black cultural knowledge production as a type of multimodal, multidialectal discourse practice. Through these lenses, I see the ways that my teaching echoes the experiences of Black elders and ancestors (Pritchard 2016).

Raquel: You remind me that some of the most meaningful mentorship I have received has been from my peers who are maybe just one, two, or several years ahead of me. Recently, I co-wrote a chapter for an edited collection on Latinas in higher education with a fellow Latina in my graduate program. She came in a few years prior to me and graduated two years before me. Although there was a large gap between us and our lived experiences, this particular journey to writing an essay provided me helpful and necessary knowledge in publishing and how it works.

Catheryn: Sherita, your discussion of the ways that mentorship helps make space to question the margins and make noise made me go, "Yes. This!" The guidance of community and academic mentors and elders is an invaluable

resource that must be protected and a practice that must be carried on. To me, this is one of the most important roles that we all have in our own academic and home communities, to continue to uplift and amplify the voices of peers and those who come after us. We are all in this frightening but incredible moment of dynamic change, and despite all of the negativity around us, in and out of the academy, we can all show radical compassion, make some noise, and support one another!

Conclusion

What does it mean to exist in and speak from the margins as writers, and with different voices that may not always be acknowledged/recognized by the center? And, what does it mean for those of us who teach and eventually become inculcated with the academy's ways of being, to keep challenging the status quo? We hope this conversation shows that the field has a long way to go to be inclusive of different voices that may, at times, challenge the legacies of gatekeeping. And, we hope that we have shown the integral role mentorship plays in the journeys of students and educators who struggle at the margins.

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The Impact of BIPOC Community-Based Practices in the Academy

Introduction

During the fall of 2020 and in the midst of a global pandemic, racial justice uprisings, and the most contentious presidential elections in recent history, Ersula Ore (Arizona State University) brought Luhui Whitebear (Oregon State University), D'Angelo Bridges (Penn State University), Xiaobo (Belle) Wang (University of Texas, Sam Houston), and Temptaous Mckoy (Bowie State University) together to discuss the role of BIPOC advisors and the

community-based practices of mentorship, how we come to articulate our experiences in the academy, and what constitutes a family emerged in the conversations.

D'Angelo: Family and communities of care for Black graduate students are essential to surviving academe, to matriculating. Just like “it takes a village to raise a child,” it requires one to develop, sustain, and cover a budding scholar as they navigate the *violence* of a graduate school education. It protects them, comforts, and teaches them how to transverse an academic landscape *not designed* for them to thrive. There are not many African American Ph.D.s. Their community (constituted by family, friends, colleagues, and advisors) holds them up when the academy requires a pound of flesh. In truth, the community of care makes surviving the Ph.D. possible. I will end with this: my advisor creates a community of sibling-scholars that I appreciate more than he knows. When we find our village, we find our means of survival.

Temtaous: Sibling-Scholars, now that I love! Now that I've gotten out of school and entered my career, this very notion you've described here is something I've attempted to do as I meet new scholars in my field. So maybe instead of siblings, I would say we are cousin-scholars.

Xiaobo: Thank you for sharing your story! I love that you were able to find sibling-scholars. I had a similar experience, but I also had to find kindred spirits by courageously talking to people at conferences.

Luhui: The sibling-scholars sounds very much like the academic kinship model my mentor/advisor uses. It helped me get through for sure. I will say I did feel disconnected in some aspects since I was also a single parent through most of my master's and my entire Ph.D.

Xiaobo: Family and communities of care are truly important to graduate admission, tenure, and promotion. My parents' support has been crucial in continuing my education through grad school because I'm from a culture that says women and men are equal, but in reality, people don't practice it that way. Women are supposed to get married before they are 30 and if you don't, you're a failure, almost. I'm privileged to have parents who went to college so they advocated for me along the way. Communities of care

are significant in my academic life. I am fortunate to have the Asian/Asian American Caucus as my family when I attend Cs. Senior scholars became my mentors, and I was able to ask whatever questions I had in a safer space. BIPOC can struggle alone in their institutions if no alliance, organization, and/or mentorship is available. Just how much I have to emphasize the importance of my work on nonwestern rhetorics, transnational communication and rhetoric, as well as communication design that is never neutral, shows how far we are from having our work—and by extension ourselves and our cultures—seen as legitimate.

Temptaous: Right out the gate, your mention of graduate admissions really stuck with me. Some people don't even realize how difficult the process to start the application process for applying to graduate school can be, not just because it can be a pain to gather your materials, but also because the general knowledge and know-how when it comes to applying aren't something all of us have.

Luhui: I remember how amazing it was to attend CCCC and connect with other Indigenous folk that have helped shape and expand Indigenous Rhetorics. My focus in my degree program was Gender, Rhetoric, and Representation. Making these connections was really affirming of how my research was becoming shaped the further I went in my program.

Temptaous: As I look back on my graduate studies career, I recognize it was my community that got me through it. When I say community, I'm thinkin' of family, friends, mentors, and fellow grad students. Being a Black woman in a graduate program was a feat within itself. But think of being a Black woman in a graduate program where you was the first of many in your community, now that's somethin' for ya. Don't get me twisted, I grew up around folks that were educated in lots of different ways—but the journey of pursuing a Ph.D. was not one pursued by many. I come from a lineage of some strong women. Women that were fighters and ain't let nobody tell them nothing. They stood they ground, no matter what the obstacle. So all I'm saying, being strong and standin' up for what's right ain't new to me or the generations before me. Nonetheless, my family did not have a necessarily clear understandin' of what I was pursuin' or the work I was tryin' to do. All they knew was I was goin' back to school to be a "Dr." It gave me the

insight to understanding that my pursuits won't just bout me no more. I was breaking generational curses. I was creating paths for my cousins to come after me.

Luhui: That generational piece you brought up really resonates with me, Temptaous. My research is on counter-colonial intergenerational storytelling of Indigenous resistance. As I wrote, I would often think of my mother, and all the trauma she faced in her life, as well as my grandmothers and great grandmothers and their stories. Our stories kept us going as a family, never knowing that they would be what helped us begin to heal. After my defense, my mother called me and cried. She said it was like a weight of all the trauma that was passed down through the women in our family was lifted off of her. She thanked me, finally understanding why I was doing what I was doing. That makes it all worth it.

As an Indigenous (Coastal Chumash/Téenek) woman who was the first to even graduate high school in my family, let alone be a first-generation college student, support systems were everything. I do not think of family as a singular entity, but rather the circles closest to us, sometimes overlapping, and other times existing in their own spheres.

Conclusion

Our experiences were unique and based on our cultural experiences, but there was a similarity that stood out; it was the love shown by our families and communities of care who helped us survive graduate school and continue to help us survive academe. Our connections to the community coupled with our experiences are what guide us in providing that same type of care for our peers and emerging scholars beginning their graduate careers. Reflective of a circle, the practice of care does not end, but rather continues on.

The Difference BIPOC Mentorship Makes in the Academy

Introduction

Being a marginalized person in the academy is lonely and isolating. Finding communities of belonging matters deeply to feeling included and working to

change the systems that isolate us. During the fall of 2020, Mara Lee Grayson (California State University, Dominguez Hills) spoke with Kristin Arola (Michigan State University) and Sherwin Sales (California State University, Dominguez Hills) to discuss the importance of mentorship, specifically BIPOC mentorship.

Kristin: In circles of Indigenous folks, I introduce myself this way: Kristin Arola nindizhinikaaz. Makwa nindodem. Wikwedong nindoonyibaa. Nkwe-jong nindaaw. Anishinaabekwe miinawaa Suomalainen nindaaw. This lays the groundwork for the expectations and relations of our encounter. I've said where I'm from, my clan, my tribal affiliation, and I've also clarified that I am Finnish and Anishinaabe (a common mix where I'm from). In spite of having a protocol in Native communities for how I share myself, I never have mastered a protocol in the professoriate for sharing who I am and how I see in the world. The mentorship of key BIPOC folks in the profession—some of whom I met through the American Indian Caucus—are the reason I am still here.

Mara Lee: My Ph.D. advisor was a Jewish man, but I rarely discussed with him my experiences of being Jewish; I suppose I didn't have to. My experiences on the job market, however, were constant reminders of my context-dependent white-but-not status (Kaye/Kantrowitz). During one interview, I was told I'd been invited to campus (a rural PWI) because they needed "more diversity." I was not-white enough to be that token, but white enough to still be acceptable at a school with a 99% white population. I hadn't been prepared to deal with that; maybe I'd gotten too comfortable in my white privilege. This is why I got involved with the Jewish Caucus: to have a space where I wouldn't have to explain the in-between-ness of my racioethnic identity.

Sherwin: The greatest mentors I have keep it real, and I think that is one of the most important things when preparing BIPOC graduate students for a life in academia. Being Filipino and Native Hawaiian, I knew our numbers may be few, so when I first started my graduate studies, I wasn't too confident that I'd find a mentor who shared my experiences. Just like both of you, I wasn't prepared for the ways my body would be racialized and what effects they would have on my identity and confidence in Rhetoric and Composition.

Sherwin: One of the challenges of mentorship is finding people who understand our unique situations and positionalities.

Kristin: I really think we flatten folks of color in the institution. As much as I can share my own stories, I do not share the same stories as my Black, Asian, and Latinx colleagues. I am suspicious when the Majority tries to flatten us, as I fear it just feeds the box-checking virtue-signaling tendencies of universities.

Mara Lee: I think about this a lot in my work with my graduate students, most of whom are Black and Latinx. It's not uncommon to hear that another professor has denigrated their writing or they've been advised not to bother writing a thesis. I know why they are treated this way; they know that I know that.

Sherwin: I was interested in doing a thesis. And, yoooo, I was shot down mad quick. They didn't "have" any people that focused on Asian-American literature, and the BIPOC professors who did teach ethnic studies classes were (you guessed it) stretched so thin. I followed the advice from my department to skip the thesis and "be out of here quicker." I did that because I didn't know any better or how to challenge that sort of thing. At the time, I thought, *maybe it's not their fault. Really, it's mine for choosing such a topic.*

Kristin: Looking back, I'm not sure having BIPOC mentors could've prepared me. Supported me, yes. Prepared me, no. It would've been great for a number of reasons, but to prepare me for what it would feel like, how I would be treated as a white-skinned Indigenous woman...that's something not all BIPOC folks experience.

Sherwin: We won't always have mentors that reflect our culture, yet some of us flock to mentors who have similar experiences thinking, *this is as close as it's going to get.*

Mara Lee: And it's not close enough. At the end of the day, I worry that, though many of my students see me as the professor who "gets it," I'm still another white face with a Ph.D., working with students who don't see themselves reflected in the faculty body.

Kristin: Most of our undergrad and graduate professors were and are white, yet the graduate student population is much more mixed. This is great, and yet, who is there to mentor them?

Mara Lee: There are so many obstacles for those of us who try to provide that support. This year, a coalition of literature majors and recent graduates sent a letter to our department, demanding a more inclusive curriculum and approaches to instruction and assessment not rooted in white language supremacy. Some of my colleagues have tried to talk about—or around—this in terms of mentorship, but mentorship alone isn't going to address the inequities of the academy.

Sherwin: It's not exactly reassuring to know that such efforts evoke such confrontation. At the same time, we anticipate it. I realize too that the emotional toll doesn't just fall on BIPOC students, but on all of you who understand the "in-between-ness" and still show up.

Kristin: And, we need to acknowledge that having BIPOC mentors for BIPOC graduate students, junior faculty, and senior faculty isn't an automatic recipe for fixing unequal power balances.

Mara Lee: Exactly. That's not going to change until the academy changes.

Sherwin: Having mentors who pull the curtain back on unequal power dynamics that BIPOC students may encounter is so important and crucial to BIPOC graduate students. In academia, a culture which bases its success off of assimilation, we long for these opportunities to feel like we belong because for so long, we've been trying to prove that we belong in the first place. This cross-cultural coalition building is a form of paying it forward, I think. Those who have done this before me know how difficult it is to survive through academia, yet they are still courageous enough to help someone else through it in an honest way.

Conclusion

We are Finnish, Anishinaabe, Ashkenazi Jewish, Filipino, and Kānaka Maoli. Though our experiences and positionalities differ, we note patterns across the stories we tell. We underscore the importance of mentorship that speaks

the truth about how the academy positions, uses, and racializes people for its own ends. We can't live under the illusion that a few well-placed BIPOC mentors can "fix the problem" when the problem is the institution itself.

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Retaining BIPOC Faculty in the Academy

Introduction

The recruitment and retention of BIPOC faculty remains one of the most pressing questions in academia. Christina Cedillo (University of Houston–Clear Lake) brought Kaydra Bui (Miami University), Cecilia D. Shelton (University of Maryland, College Park), and Jasmine Villa (East Stroudsburg University) together to discuss BIPOC recruitment and retention. Typically, the issue of recruitment and retention centers institutions and their needs rather than BIPOC students and faculty.

Kaydra: As a graduate student and instructor in higher education, I have never had the autonomy to self-advocate, challenge, or resist in a way that does not put me in an even more vulnerable position. Not as a graduate student teacher, not even as an advocate staffed within student disability services. Even in student disability services—in which I largely serve low-income BIPOC students with disabilities—I struggle with mitigating the harms of capitalism (which is also to say ableism) within and beyond the university. Most universities grant accommodations only when disabilities are diagnosed or otherwise documented by white, classist, and abled systems (American healthcare, the *DSM-5*, and prior educational institutions). Medication, regular therapy, doctor's appointments, and health insurance were often not affordable—in time and/or money—for most of my graduate colleagues or me, nor to many of the students I serve at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). There is also the issue of accommodations that act as mere bandages on inaccessible praxis, but do nothing to rectify ableist infrastructures, pedagogies, and policies.

Cecilia: I'm reminded of Brittany Cooper's TED Talk *The Racial Politics of Time*, where she argues that if time had a race it would be white—the value of our time in terms of wages, the “pace” of “progress,” the connections between the past, present, and future, the relationships between space and time in the academy. I wonder how time factors into recruiting and retaining BIPOC in the academy. How can institutions repair using time? Should some solutions be longer periods of funding for graduate students; limits on service and teaching; taking research time to protect the time of pre-tenure faculty; more urgency in responding to the demands of BIPOC experiencing harm?

Jasmine: The comment about time not feeling like your own is something that deeply resonates with me as well. The productivity model is ableist and classist, so I think the solutions you mention, Cecilia, would definitely help with retaining faculty. I need to watch Cooper's TED Talk.

Kaydra: I'm endlessly exhausted by how student disabilities services fail to prioritize hiring staff who reflect the disabled and multiply marginalized student populations they serve. BIPOC, queer, and low-income disabled students are not represented or centered within the white-centric field. These students may find disability services inaccessible, untrustworthy, or ineffective. How can we retain faculty if we cannot retain underserved students?

Cecilia: The irony of academics who purport to be aware of social, political, and material conditions and disparities that BIPOC face, but cannot apply these theories to the people in front of them! Are your course policies and program resources set up to deal with the fact that your Black grad students are more likely to know someone who has died from COVID? Contract COVID themselves? More likely to work extra jobs? These are not the questions that programs ask when recruiting. They ask what the program needs to be competitive within the field or for institutional clout. That focus is about consuming BIPOC bodies and experiences, rather than supporting and retaining them for the value they contribute.

Jasmine: And then the assigned mentor model, which is typically one person, is not an effective structure—even if that person is part of their

community. Faculty from marginalized groups are expected to look out for each other. Yet, at times, they are gaslighters and gatekeepers, too. Mentorship requires active engagement at all levels.

Cecilia: You're so right about how problematic the assigned mentor model can be, Jasmine. It's a paradox for BIPOC who need each other but are always already overburdened with obligations. Not to mention your point about gaslighters and gatekeepers; as Black folks say "all skinfolk ain't kinfolk." Certainly, BIPOC can buy into these systems for the (perceived) gains that come with playing along. I have been warned to watch out for BIPOC who like being the only one in the room because we've been fed scarcity logics that would have us believe there is not enough for all of us to eat. I hear that advice, and while I know it is rooted in truth, I try to remember that *the institution* is still the source of that harm.

Jasmine: I have received that advice as well. My previous institution was a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), and the culture shock from transitioning to a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) was worse than anticipated. Working at a PWI as a Latina feels isolating. Our institution is located on the PA/NJ border within a short driving distance from New York City and Philadelphia, so our student population is more diverse than that of other PA State System schools. But the faculty and curriculum often do not reflect our student population. Black and brown students are disproportionately affected by a lack of resources and budget cuts. Working as a non-white faculty member in the university means that you are teacher, therapist, mediator, and resource for students who feel comfortable reaching out to you. This labor goes unnoticed or is seen as expected behavior. But HSIs can also uphold the same oppressions found at PWIs, and hiring faculty from marginalized groups mostly addresses the optics issue.

Kaydra: Jasmine, I resonate with your isolation within white spaces, and with the unseen/undervalued labor of serving as educator, therapist, mediator, and resource for marginalized students. We know white-centric institutions rely on BIPOC and marginalized faculty and staff to disproportionately shoulder these burdens, rather than distribute these responsibilities collectively. Universities are, after all, the legacy of white supremacy. Consequently, even minority serving institutions can perpetuate systemic racism.

Conclusion

The common thread in our reflections is that there is a heaviness to never being able to relax completely that makes it difficult to navigate the PWI experience as BIPOC faculty. We don't talk enough about how much emotional space you need to do intellectual work. When we use energy to navigate microaggressions and gaslighting or to mentally calculate every response in meetings and conversations, it is harder to focus on our research and teaching. How can we sustainably serve harmed students while we ourselves are being harmed? Here's what we know from being in community with BIPOC folks (whether that's in minority serving institutions or in community spaces): We deserve more for the labor of navigating these systems to counter the bone-deep exhaustion that comes with staying. More time, more money, more opportunities, more access, more power, more rest. When institutions don't/won't invest in our wholeness, BIPOC faculty and staff are pushed out, and this further impacts the retention and recruitment of BIPOC students and the perpetuation of white supremacy in the academy as a whole.

The Marginalization of BIPOC Adjuncts in the Academy

Introduction

Although both full-time and adjunct BIPOC faculty experience professional marginalization, the journeys of BIPOC adjunct faculty are particularly perilous. Obstacles to career advancement abound, and adjuncts are forced to navigate an environment where their intelligence, credibility, and value may be questioned. Kimberly Wieser (University of Oklahoma) brought together Joanna E. Sanchez-Avila (University of Arizona), Earl Brooks (University of Maryland, Baltimore County), and Sarah Felber (University of Maryland Global Campus) for this discussion. While Kimberly as a moderator and Sarah as a participant had a good deal of adjunct experience, while conducting this conversation on BIPOC adjuncts, we grappled with the absence of a current BIPOC adjunct among us. Though we cannot speak *for* this group, we *can* critically examine our roles in support and advocacy. For us, this process began with reflections on our diverse experiences in higher education.

Sarah: As a member of the Jewish Caucus, I see our role as Jewish faculty first and foremost as allies to BIPOC who don't have white privilege. Even absent outright hostility, Jewish faculty can experience a taste of marginalization in the workplace, particularly as the scheduling needs of religious minorities are often overlooked. Faculty members are forced to be the "squeaky wheel" or be further marginalized.

Showing the compounding effects of marginalization, an adjunct faculty member whose continued employment may depend on *not* standing out as very needy, demanding, or problematic may believe (quite correctly) that their professional survival is tied to the invisibility of their identity. Those of us in more stable employment situations have to be noisy—to make it known that the needs of *all* adjunct faculty are important and must be honored.

Earl: Thanks, Sarah. I also would like to expound on the lack of "noise" from those with stable employment. This kind of commitment requires a serious interrogation of the ideology of meritocracy. Within a meritocracy, those who succeed believe their success is due *solely* to their accomplishments and work ethic. There is less attention given to structural advantages that make such striving possible. Those with such beliefs often perceive those who do not achieve comparative levels of success as deserving of their lot in life. We must collectively confront the elitism that subdues a more forceful identification with higher education labor of all kinds. We must resist a discourse that pits research labor against instructional labor because both deserve support. When BIPOC adjuncts thrive, we all thrive.

Sarah: "When BIPOC adjuncts thrive, we all thrive." YES! If we do not take this view, then we perpetuate a system where a privileged class benefits off the labor of the less privileged. When adjunct faculty teach the majority of classes that bring in tuition money, they pay everyone else's salaries.

Joanna: I am a member of the Latinx Caucus, a Honduran-American and first-generation Ph.D. student without experience as an adjunct. However, this conversation moved me to respectfully reflect on moments that I witnessed related to contract-based lecturers' experiences. The English program at my university relies on the essential labor of both graduate students and adjunct lecturers to teach First-Year Writing and fulfill other roles for the university at large.

As a graduate student, I sense a “class” difference between tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure track educators, between an “elite,” valuable member of the university versus someone “expendable.” In other words, some are lasting worth and some are exploitable and short-term.

Sarah: Joanna, I appreciate your reference to “contract-based” employment, as there is a whole “class” of contingent faculty who are not adjuncts. I count myself among this group, as my university does not offer tenure to any faculty, and I work on one-year contracts. We can expect to see more of this going forward, as public sentiment questions why college and university faculty should have job guarantees.

I doubt there will ever be a consensus around the merits of tenure, but we do have evidence concerning the negative effects of job insecurity. A meta-analysis discusses the vast effects of job insecurity for the employee’s “job attitudes, organizational attitudes, health, and, to some extent, their behavioral relationship with the organization” (Sverke et al. 242). Health really stands out to me here, given the current global health crisis already disproportionately affecting BIPOC. If we acknowledge that institutions will be keeping some sort of contingent arrangement for large proportions of faculty, the question then becomes “How do we make this a humane and equitable arrangement?”

Earl: Joanna, I think your viewpoint as a graduate student is important because that is when attitudes about higher education labor are established. In many ways, we are repeating the challenges Martin Luther King Jr. discussed in his book *Where Do We Go from Here*. Reflecting on the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, King argued: “The practical cost of change for the nation up to this point has been cheap. The limited reforms have been obtained at bargain rates.” King’s analysis is as true now as it was then; honest engagements with social inequities will always come down to questions concerning resources and priorities. Budgets are moral documents. This challenge requires the interpersonal advocacy Sarah describes and a laser-like focus on structural change.

Conclusion

As academics at various career stages and representing graduate students, contingent faculty, and tenure-track roles, we see an urgent need for open

communication and active cooperation among college and university stakeholders to support BIPOC faculty, adjunct faculty, and BIPOC adjunct faculty. It is essential that we increase awareness and attunement to our fellow workers and their labor conditions, while identifying and evaluating the ideologies that create inequities among faculty. An intersectional approach (Crenshaw Williams 1994) will facilitate examination of the matrix of domination (Collins 1990) affecting BIPOC and adjunct members of academia.

On a practical level, we should be looking for ways to stand up to the systems and dynamics that continue to perpetuate inequities for faculty in the already precarious positions of being BIPOC and/or adjuncts. Professoriate associations should lobby for relaunching the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty by the National Center for Education Statistics, last commissioned in 2004. Finally, we look forward to CCCC taking more active steps to include adjunct faculty and their voices in its programs and publications.

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