Becoming "Gente Educada"

Navigating Academia as a Working-Class, Multiply-Marginalized Student

Christina V. Cedillo

This chapter[1] is part explication, part personal narrative, all story. Here, I want to provide a candid discussion regarding the effects that academic norms can have on a person from a working-class background, particularly as that background intersects with race, gender, and disability. Story is an important methodology for articulating what I wish to share, because story reminds us that there are always real people behind the words we use; as methodology, story also illustrates why specialized accounts can only come from those who *know*. From experience, from a lived understanding.

I begin this way because I am a cultural rhetorician, or scholar of cultural rhetorics (CR), a field that asks us to ethically acknowledge our relationships with others, especially those we write to and about. CR instructs us to build knowledge with people, not over them and at their expense, even when we are talking about our own communities. Thus, cultural rhetoricians explicitly declare what "intersecting, shifting, and variable methodological and theoretical frames and relationships we bring to our scholarly and teaching practices," and we acknowledge that "where someone is located culturally, socially, historically, and physically is significant to the ways that s/he makes meaning" (Cultural Rhetorics Theory Lab, 2014). We do this because the stories we learn at home are very different from those we learn at school, but that does not make them any less authoritative or significant. Those of us marginalized are often told we must renounce our homegrown knowledge, but they can prove powerful technologies for countering systemic injustice. Whether sitting at your abuelita's table, surrounded by your cousins and aunties, or hanging out with friends, stories help us know who we are and allow us to claim that version of the world that we alone can know. As an academic methodology, story is a vital "counter-hegemonic scholarly practice" that allows us to contradict generally accepted and standard/ized beliefs about us, our communities, and our lives using our own lived experiences (CRTL, 2014). Consequently, you're reading my story here because I'm hoping that the knowledge I gained in navigating the complexities of the U.S. educational system as a multiply-marginalized person can provide you with insights useful in your own journey.

1   Academic Difficulties

People in my field (rhetoric and composition) who examine working-class rhetorics may focus on histories (DeGenaro, 2007), localized spaces and cultures (Lindquist, 2002), and identity and/in writing and discourse (Linkon, Peckham, & Lanier-Nabors, 2004; Zebroski, 2006). This essay considers these areas of attention by focusing on people who are multiply-marginalized, or people whose diverse identities and associations with particular communities converge to make the academy especially inhospitable. Teachers and students who are multiply marginalized according to class, race, and so on must study privileged histories and stories that are not their own to be considered "educated." We must also become experts at associating spaces with specific ethoi, impressions of identity in communication, in order to get by or fit in. Along with pathos and logos, ethos is one of the elements of that reliable rhetorical triad we encounter in first year writing and tends to be defined as credibility, but it's rather more complicated. As Jacqueline Jones Royster explains, ethos is "the formation and development of a writing self" (2000, p. 10), highly dependent on one's "sense of self in society" (p. 58), and influenced by how we are seen and how we see ourselves. Multiply marginalized people must contend with social perceptions that may be "deeply compromised" by prejudices and stereotypes (p. 64) to achieve the desired outcome in any rhetorical context, particularly when addressing audiences outside our home communities.

As a result, we tend to become adept at code switching across contexts, finding on account of our educational experiences that we're supposed to shake off certain languages, dialects, and registers as we take on those that mark us as gente educada. We accept this expectation without realizing how it relates to DuBois' concept of "double consciousness," the way a racialized individual living in a racist society always feels an internal conflict among their identities due to how they are perceived by those in power.[2] Writing about code switching pedagogies, Vershawn Ashanti Young explains that teaching students to believe that Black English and Standard Written English are "equal" but maintain "prestige in their respective, separate sites" simply reaffirms the segregationist's mantra of "separate but equal" by substituting language for race (Palmer Baxley, 2012, p. 55). He argues that "what's really wrong with code switching is that it seeks to transform double consciousness, the very product of racism, into a linguistic solution to racial discrimination" (p. 56). Code switching does not account for the various histories of exclusion that we bring with us to scholarship and their influences on our writing and speaking. Furthermore, code switching advocates overlook how the practice asks us to also alter our behaviors, identities, and epistemologies.

Such expectations can exact a heavy price. On finding that his goals didn't resonate with those of his department, Orville Blackman writes, "I recall Goffman's 1959 work where the author opined that we are all actors on stage, presenting a façade that we want others to believe is the true representation of self. We become who we need to become for the purpose of presenting the best face to the audiences to whom we are playing" (A. Smith, 2013, p. 39). When a university deploys a simplistic notion of diversity, talk of diversity actually "individuates difference, conceals inequalities and neutralises histories of antagonism and struggle" under more comfortable neoliberal rhetorics of inclusion (Ahmed & Swan, 2006, p. 96), stealthily affirming privileged norms instead of accommodating difference. Already marginalized individuals who refuse to conform to these norms may find themselves ostracized by administrators and their peers; those who do conform may soon grow weary under the pressures of this burdensome performance. Thus, members of marginalized communities face a "Faustian bargain" when we enter the academy, an institution that was created without us in mind and never quite inclusive of us. Because we are ostensibly welcomed in, academia frames us as proof of its striving for diversity, but academia also renders us proof of a whitestream, "objective" way of being that suggests we need correcting if we do not fit its norms. And, those elusive norms change depending on the program, department, and discipline.

Within institutions that pride themselves on fostering diverse environments where all are welcome, individuals can experience gaslighting—intentional or unintentional "psychological manipulation that forces the victim to question [their] sanity and a product of normalized ways of being" (Wozolek, 2018, pp. 319–320). Gaslighting relies on "gender-based stereotypes, intersecting inequalities, and institutional vulnerabilities" to mark victims as irrational, cutting them off from needed institutional resources and exposing them to "epistemic injustice" (Sweet, 2019, p. 852; McKinnon, 2017). That is, even self-declared allies may discount an affected person's grievances if they don't align with their own privileged perspectives. A school's own discourses of diversity can promote gaslighting when "diversity and equality become forms of capital within organisations" (Ahmed and Swan, 2006, p. 98). Used as a trademark, diversity can subsume human beings under an institution's commercial brand, erasing the reality of those framed as embodying its benefits.

Making matters more complicated, academia often promotes isolation, making it difficult to find real allies or establish solidarity with others having similar experiences. Perhaps we can trace this tendency toward isolation to deeply ingrained beliefs regarding academia's ends. In *Women and Minority Faculty in the Academic Workplace: Recruitment, Retention, and Academic*

Culture, Adalberto Aguirre explains that academics tend to see themselves as "need[ing] distance from the everyday world" to think through their "obscure theories" or to develop "creative ideas for dealing with social and environmental problems" from which they are nevertheless removed (Aguirre, 2000, p. 22). This idea that a proper scholar should be divorced from the realities of everyday life easily translates into a refusal to acknowledge problems like harassment or any ensuing health concerns in one's academic sphere lest one seem weak or unfit, or a reluctance to seek assistance even outside of one's intellectual community.

2   The Importance of Stories

In writing this chapter, I aim to let you know that you aren't alone; many of us have experienced these problems and actively seek to combat their foothold in the academy. I write this story as someone familiar with these difficulties. As a rhetorician, I examine the stressful relationships between academic norms and the body, namely, how academic expectations dictate what is socially acceptable and how they attempt to discipline us into proper form. As a multiply-marginalized individual, I know that these relationships prove daunting, causing us to wonder when things get rough who really are allies, what counts as good enough to get by, and what benefits might accompany "selling out." For these reasons, I use a combination of research and personal narrative to share, and draw attention to, the experiences faced by many marginalized people through the lens of my own. Minerva S. Chávez (2012, p. 344) discusses the use of *testimonio* as a way to "[call] attention to the impact on the ideological roles that educational institutions play in the sorting practices that influence the formation of particular identities." Using *testimonio* as a critical race theory methodology, Chávez reminds us that we can invite the voices of excluded people—including our own—into scholarship by employing the academy's preferred communicative mode (publishing) to inscribe our experiences.

In addition, by using story, we can strategically repurpose academic spaces and practices that fit the conventional mold but speak to Othered ways of making meaning. By sharing our stories like we might do at the kitchen table, we can redeploy our experiences as useful resources. Typically discounted as the mere background to "real scholarship," our stories can provide a kind of "feminist/womanist transformative mentoring" for those who need us but are not necessarily close by (Powell & Mukavetz, 2015). Here, I want to provide support in the form of information and counsel regarding academia's effects on our identities and how it demands their reorientation and reorganization

in sometimes violent ways. However, I also wish to show how our texts, practices, and embodied experiences can be used to enact the strategic reframing of accepted methods and tools and contest harmful academic norms.

3   Entre Amigxs/Between Friends

I am a multiply-marginalized individual, a disabled woman of color (Chicana) raised by working class parents in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands of South Texas. I grew up in Laredo, Texas, a city on the Mexico-Texas border. Statistically and financially, my upbringing would probably be deemed lower middle class. However, the values with which I was raised were characteristically working class. Our stories were those of the hardships endured by my parents' families, who knew how to make do with scarce resources. My family often utilized credit to "escape" working class status, but even now our relationship to capital remains a complicated one. Class identity isn't something you just step out of when you decide to go to college. As MIT economist Peter Temin argues in *The Vanishing Middle Class: Prejudice and Power in a Dual Economy*, it takes almost twenty years with nothing going wrong for people to escape poverty or move up a class bracket (White, 2017). It's too easy for something to go wrong without factoring in additional obstacles facing working class BIPOC, including the racism of the carceral system and the effects of cultural and class prejudices on job hiring practices.

In academia, being raised working class means you may not readily fit in with savvier, more affluent peers who have been prepped for college or graduate studies for a long time. Part of the learning curve involves what we might term "epistemology switching," being made to take on a foreign worldview than that shared by members of your community in order to engage in a particular space. Steve Parks and Nick Pollard (2010) explain how, when they invited a group of writing students to write for real-world labor scenarios, the assignments did not necessarily connect to their lives. The students "were writing within a logic and set of experiences that did not intersect with the primary representational logics within the course … Yet changing the representational logic that dominated the classroom required such connections if the working-class student voices were to gain power 'in numbers'" (p. 486). The instructors were trying to "empower" students based on a set of underlying values that did not align with those that students brought with them to the classroom, even in a space supposedly built on and for class-based camaraderie.

As someone who grew up on the border and is therefore tricultural (United-Statesian, Mexican, and Chicana), the pressure to "switch" involves toggling

between a mix of English, Spanish, and Spanglish, and between aggregative and linear thinking. Some things are just better expressed in one language than another—or maybe we're just used to certain expressions—and we attach memories and emotions to certain terms. Spanglish is perceived as a working-class (read "lower-class") dialect among many Latinxs seeking to climb the social ladder, a source of shame as it supposedly bastardizes proper English and proper Spanish. Yet it remains the dialect of home, family, and affection for many of us. Whitestream expectations of monolingualism force us to scour the thesaurus searching for just the right word to convey an experience that doesn't exist in English. Some experiences simply cannot be translated because borderlands consciousness runs contrary to academic reasoning; borderlands logics are characterized not by either/or thinking but both+and, meaning you see the world from a multitude of vectors. Gloria Anzaldúa explains this episte-mology in terms of nepantla, a Nahuatl word for "in-between space" (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2015, p. 8). In this space of spiritual, physical, and material liminality, change is a constant; new things are always in the process of becoming in this land of linguistic and cultural bricolage. You learn to focus on fluid and ephemeral connections between things rather than fixed categories, and on what could be rather than what is. Such thinking does not jibe with academic rigidity.

Unfortunately, attempting to establish solidarity with working class peers outside of ones ethnoracial or cultural community can prove challenging, given that class is a highly ambiguous notion. Some scholars assume that class is a matter of self-identification, while others argue that class classifications have a lot to do with power and agency. According to Richard Ohmann, class "is more deeply a matter of decision-making power, particularly in relation to where and how one works … [distinguished] by the conditions and terms under which one works in order to live [and] the degree to which [individuals] do or don't manage the work of others" (Welch, 2011, pp. 225–226). In other words, one climbs the class ladder by gaining authority and autonomy in decision-making in one's workplace and one's community.

Race complicates this process by rendering social mobility more accessible to some groups over others. Jennifer Beech reveals how race influences class constructs and vice versa. Speaking of white stereotypes like the "redneck" and the "hillbilly," like Ohmann, Beech explains these as terms related to power, namely, whether one is the object of the gaze or the one who gazes. This objectification is racialized. Beech states that "terms like redneck and hillbilly are regularly constructed as racial terms that work to identify for mainstream whites other white people who behave in ways supposedly unbecoming to or unexpected of whites" (2004, p. 175). Nevertheless, it's important to remember that class and race are not fungible terms of oppression. In an effort to build

class solidarity across racial lines, some people equate the two and in so doing, erase the very real racial oppression that keeps BIPOC in poverty and debt at higher rates than white people (Office of the Assistant Secretary, 2016, p. 26). At the same time, this thinking ignores a crucial point: working-class whites maintain racial privilege over their BIPOC counterparts, meaning they may ignore or downplay complaints about racial discrimination and microaggressions made by BIPOC peers to center class oppression.

Scholarly definitions of working-class identity and its qualifiers are still open to debate, but you know it when you live it. Some experiences seem common, regardless of one's other backgrounds. You learn to expect questions regarding the practical utility of certain subjects, to see the expressions of pride on loved ones' faces even when they don't understand your research, and, in the case of some of us "firsts," to predict your elders' tendency to let everyone know you're Doctor So-and-so. I don't say this in jest or to poke fun even good-naturedly, but because for many families, education remains the crucial path to upward mobility, even when they don't know what that entails or what that requires that we renounce.

However, other experiences are not so widespread, as I and many others have learned. When you're multiply marginalized and working class, you experience problems intersectionally. Like class, disability, race, and gender have each been used to construct the others, giving rise to an inexorable taxonomy of deficiency and normalcy (Davis, 2017, p. 6). If you're working class and disabled, you may be deemed undeserving of services, someone trying to play the system, even a "squeaky wheel" demanding special treatment when you ask your institution for accommodations that are deemed too expensive—accommodations that are legally required, mind you. If you are a working-class woman of color, you're more likely to be tokenized (Sotello Viernes Turner, 2002) and less likely to be regarded as serious a scholar as your white colleagues, whether they are male or female (Niemann, 2012), prejudices compounded by your use of certain dialects or mannerisms. If your research highlights the intersection of these identities, your research may be viewed as limited (Palmer Baxley, 2012, p. 49), and you may be perceived as angry all the time for no reason other than on account of institutional discrimination and microaggressions (Scott, 2013; Olivas, 2009). As a result, we inhabit an odd, precarious position, forced to serve as native informants with specialized knowledges and cultural connections that can help schools serve their ever-more-diverse student bodies. Yet when research shows up our vulnerable positions and those of multiply-marginalized students, or when our methodologies highlight marginalized experiences rather than whitestream ones, we are also more easily regarded as unwelcome strangers with a limited purview.

Attention to these issues tends to be framed as secondary, as an indulgence that detracts from the real substance of learning, but I center them here to make sure that multiply-marginalized students know what they're up against. Not to scare you away from the academy or to discount the strides you've made, but to let you know that your success despite the presence of these problems deserves to be celebrated. At the same time, it's important to draw attention to these issues so that we can work toward real inclusivity. Otherwise, neoliberal notions of diversity will continue to harm us all. Such appeals to diversity function as bait-and-switch schemes. As Ellen Berrey (2015) explains, "Rather than a righteous fight for justice or effective anti-discrimination laws, we get a celebration of cultural difference as a competitive advantage. Diversity, we are told, is an end goal with instrumental pay-offs: good for learning, good for the bottom line, even good for white people." Meanwhile, "[diversity talk] allows us to sidestep persistent, alarming racial inequalities." In recent years, a number of lawsuits involving the denial of tenure to Black women have cited those same tired tropes: their work was seen as less scholarly, less rigorous, too personal, too limited. Alma Jean Billingslea Brown (2012) calls this the "revolving door" of academia because Black women "frequently conduct research and write on issues relevant to their communities and publish in journals that focus on minority issues, their publications are not regarded as scholarly work or as making significant contributions to their fields" (p. 27). Misogynoir, the combination of anti-Black racism and sexism that specifically targets Black women, basically guarantees this view because the typical Subject is middle class, white, and male.

In my own experience, I have had colleagues express their appreciation of my research and teaching from a decolonial perspective while adding that examinations of Indigenous or African American rhetorics are cool but much too focused to be of use to the general student population. More than once I have had a coworker ask why decoloniality even matters to first-year writers, only to be shut down when I try to explain my reasons. Issues of Indigeneity should matter to all students because the United States exists on stolen Native land. Issues of Indigeneity should matter to our students because our school is a Latinx-serving institution, where many of the students are of Indigenous descent. Issues of Indigeneity should matter to our students of color because there are few of us whose histories, languages, and embodied identities have not been affected by colonization. It is reified in our bodies, becomes material reality through its effects on us. As Phil Bratta (2015) argues, political acts become eventful through "embodiment and proprioception," how we exist as bodies, how we sense our body-ness, and how our bodies fit in certain spaces and in relation to other bodies. Bratta explains that the bounds of logocentric

interpretations of events "have slippage and can never articulate the exact temporal-spatial dimensions of lived events. The issue also lies in the fact that lived events are ongoing and in constant flux. They are embodied intensities and ephemeral." In other words, so-called "historical" events may be short-lived and yet they can live on in the present, and they do so through the sensoria of our bodies and as our bodies relate to other bodies around us.

Thus, our presence in the academy as working class, multiply-marginalized people transforms into an embodied rhetoric, our way of sending the message that we will not be erased even though institutional norms ignore us or prove harmful and even as we feel their regulation in our very bodies. We all know when we do not fit in or are unwelcome in certain spaces thanks to proprioception; we feel awkward or uncomfortable even if we can't explain why in words, and marginalized peoples come to trust this sense through personal experience. Proprioception helps us to understand whether spaces were made with us in mind or not, and this sense allows us to read conditions that go unnoticed by privileged people whose bodies fit right in. Yet the only response I have ever received from doubtful non-working class, non-BIPOC colleagues is that this knowledge does little to teach students how to read and write properly—as though we don't communicate through our bodies. Notably, though unfamiliar with the racial dimensions of our experiences, my non-BIPOC working class colleagues have tended toward empathy, all too familiar with that sense of self-consciousness and disbelonging.

The denial of our knowledges also enables a double-bind where women of color faculty become simultaneously hyper-visible and unseen. As scholars, our research is often thought to be too concentrated and yet, schools need us to bring this research to bear to corroborate their consideration of diversity. We're told critical distance requires that our everyday existence and our research remain separate domains. Yet all research is constrained by the substance of the world around us. (Currently, materialist methodologies are all the rage in academia though scholars from marginalized communities have been using examples of these for years.) Our personal investments must be expunged, and in our being made to deny them, we are rendered mere surface images that reinforce simplistic notions of diversity. Sofia Samatar (2015) deems this "skin feeling," or what it means to "be encountered as a surface." She writes, "University life demands that academics of color commodify themselves as symbols of diversity—in fact, as diversity itself …" Told to dislocate ourselves from the concrete reality of life, we take on the ontological status of a rhetorical device, a symbol that allows schools to demonstrate their commitment to diversity and multiculturalism without having to decolonize their foundations or curricula.

It comes down to numbers: "Diversity, unlike, the work of anti-racism, can be represented visually through statistics. How many of X do you have? What percent?" (Samatar, 2015). Not surprisingly, women of color are especially affected by this since we tend to be typecast as nurturers and diversity work is highly emotional labor. Those of us from working-class backgrounds may also take on this additional responsibility, given all-too-familiar gendered expectations regarding work, affect, and authority (see Nixon, 2009).

Furthermore, this process reduces entire identities—and oppressions aimed at those identities—to a few token people rather than omnipresent structures that benefit or hurt all of us. For example, accessibility is a major theme in disability studies but not always in other subjects, even though access should be an invariable concern for all in the academy, whether students, professors, staff, and administrators. After all, "disability is everywhere. Just like we know now that gender is everywhere, even when it doesn't look like gender. Just as Toni Morrison says, Blackness is everywhere, even when we're not talking about African Americans" (Brueggemann, Garland-Thomson, & Kleege, 2005, p. 28). Even and especially when one is non-disabled, not a woman, not raced, not working class, these are axes of identity that organize all of our lives. Hyper-visibility results from labels being placed on some people but not on others, as though the presence of a label indicates an aberration and a lack of one is just "normal." For this reason, visibility can be a fraught aim, too. Grace Hong notes that "visibility can be a kind of violence … not inclusion, but surveillance" for women of color (FemTechNet Collective, 2018, p. 34). Therefore, we must listen to those most affected by institutional problems to better comprehend our entanglement with/in these categories, to ensure that we do not remain complicit in perpetuating oppressive academic norms. Rather than asking who we want to be in a given situation in order to be heeded, we might ask ourselves who we must be in order to heed. Otherwise, we risk contributing to the "invisibility" of marginalized people, including ourselves.

In closing, I want to repeat why I share these experiences and attendant research with you. As I often tell my own students, the ability to make conscious choices is power; in life and in the academy, we are actors and acted upon, so we must be aware of the rhetorics at play so that we can respond as people with agency. Often, "[we] become who we need to become for the purpose of presenting the best face to the audiences to whom we are playing" (A. Smith, 2013, p. 39). However, we should not have to bear such a burden to be in the academy. Many of us working-class, multiply-marginalized people already bear a more important load—generations' worth of familial and communal dreams.

Notes

1 This essay was composed on Akokisa/Orcoquisa and Karankawa territories.
2 It's important to note that DuBois writes about African Americans in *The Souls of Black Folk*, where he theorized his concept, to ensure that his original purpose in centering Black people is not erased. Given the ubiquity of anti-Blackness even among BIPOC, not surprisingly, much, though not all, of the current scholarship on "triple consciousness" also focuses on Black identity as it intersects with gender, sexuality, and ethnicity (B. Smith, 1978; Patton & Simmons, 2008; Jiménez Román & Flores, 2010), although this framework is also used by other critics and feminists of color (see Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2015).

References

Aguirre Jr., A. (2000). *Women and minority faculty in the academic workplace: Recruitment, retention, and academic culture*. Jossey-Bass.

Ahmed, S., & Swan, E. (2006). Doing diversity. *Policy Futures in Education, 4*(2), 96–100. doi:10.2304/pfie.2006.4.2.96

Beech, J. (2004). Redneck and hillbilly discourse in the writing classroom: Classifying critical pedagogies of whiteness. *College English, 67*(2), 172–186.

Berrey, E. (2015, October 26). Diversity is for white people: The big lie behind a well-intended word. *Salon*. https://www.salon.com/2015/10/26/diversity_is_for_white_people_the_big_lie_behind_a_well_intended_word/

Billingslea Brown, A. J. (2012). Black women faculty in predominantly white space: Negotiating discourses of diversity. In M. Christian (Ed.), *Integrated but unequal: Black faculty in in predominantly white space* (pp. 23–37). Africa World.

Bratta, P. (2015). Rhetoric and event: The embodiment of lived events. *Enculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture*, 19. http://www.enculturation.net/rhetoric-and-event

Brueggemann, B. J., Garland-Thomson, R., & Kleege, G. (2005). What her body taught (or, teaching about and with a disability): A conversation. *Feminist Studies, 31*(1), 13–33.

Chávez, M. S. (2012). Autoethnography, a Chicana's methodological research tool: The role of storytelling for those who have no choice but to do critical race theory. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 45*(2), 334–348.

Davis, L. J. (2017). Introduction: Normality, power, and culture. In L. J. Lennard (Ed.), *The disability studies reader* (5th ed., pp. 1–14). Routledge.

DeGenaro, W. (2007). *Who says? Working-class rhetoric, class consciousness, and community*. The University of Pittsburgh.

FemTechNet Collective. (2018). FemTechNet: A collective statement on teaching and learning race, feminism, and technology. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies, 39*(1), 24–41.

Jiménez Román, M., & Flores, J. (2010). *The AfroLatin@ reader: History and culture in the United States*. Duke UP.

Lindquist, J. (2002). *A place to stand: Politics and persuasion in a working-class bar.* Oxford UP.

Linkon, S. L., Peckham, I., & Lanier-Nabors, B. G. (2004). Struggling with class in English studies. *College English, 67*(2), 149–153.

McKinnon, R. (2017). Allies behaving badly: Gaslighting as epistemic injustice. In I. J. Kidd, J. Medina, & G. Pohlhaus Jr. (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of epistemic injustice* (pp. 167–174). Routledge.

Moraga, C., & Anzaldúa, G. (2015). *This bridge called my back: Writings by radical women of color*. SUNY P.

Niemann, Y. F. (2012). Lessons from the experiences of women of color working in academia. In G. Gutiérrez, G. Muhs, Y. F. Niemann, C. G. González, & A. P. Harris (Eds.), *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia* (pp. 446–499). Utah State UP.

Nixon, D. (2009). 'I can't put a smiley face on': Working-class masculinity, emotional labour and service work in the 'new economy.' *Gender, Work & Organization, 16*(3), 300–322.

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. (2016). *Poverty in the United States: 50-year trends and safety net impacts*. https://aspe.hhs.gov/system/files/pdf/154286/50YearTrends.pdf

Olivas, M. R. (2009). Negotiating identity while scaling the walls of the ivory tower: Too brown to be White and too White to be brown. *International Review of Qualitative Research, 2*(3), 385–406.

Palmer Baxley, T. (2012). Navigating as an African American female scholar: Catalysts and barriers in predominantly White academia. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy, 4*(4), 47–64.

Parks, S., & Pollard, N. (2010). Emergent strategies for an established field: The role of worker-writer collectives in composition and rhetoric. *College Composition and Communication, 61*(3), 476–509.

Patton, L. D., & Simmons, S. L. (2008). Exploring complexities of multiple identities of lesbians in a Black college environment. *Negro Educational Review, 59*(3–4), 197–215.

Powell, M., & Mukavetz, A. R. (2015, October 30). *Making kitchen tables in academic spaces: Practicing feminist/womanist transformative mentoring* [Conference presentation]. 10th Biennial Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.

Royster, J. J. (2000). *Traces of a stream: Literacy and social change among African American women*. U of Pittsburgh P.

Samatar, S. (2015, September 25). Skin feeling. *The New Inquiry.* http://thenewinquiry.com/essays/skin-feeling/

Scott, K. D. (2013). Communication strategies across cultural borders: Dispelling stereotypes, performing competence, and redefining Black womanhood. *Women's Studies in Communication, 36*(3), 312–329.

Smith, A. (2013). *It's not because you're Black: Addressing issues of racism and underrepresentation of African Americans in academia.* UP of America.

Smith, B. (1978). Toward a Black feminist criticism. *The Radical Teacher, 7*, 20–27.

Sotello Viernes Turner, C. (2002). Women of color in academe: Living with multiple marginality. *The Journal of Higher Education, 73*(1), 74–93.

Sweet, P. L. (2019). The sociology of gaslighting. *American Sociological Review, 84*(5), 851–875.

The Cultural Rhetorics Theory Lab. (2014). Our story begins here: Constellating cultural rhetorics practices. *Enculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture*, 18. http://enculturation.net/our-story-begins-here

Welch, N. (2011). 'We're here, and we're not going anywhere': Why working-class rhetorical traditions 'still' matter. *College English, 73*(3), 221–242.

White, G. B. (2017, April 27). Escaping poverty requires almost 20 years with nearly nothing going wrong. *The Atlantic.* https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/04/economic-inequality/524610/

Wozolek, B. (2018). Gaslighting queerness: Schooling as a place of violent assemblages. *Journal of LGBT Youth, 15*(4), 319–338.

Zebroski, J. T. (2006). Social class as discourse: Mapping the landscape of class in rhetoric and composition. *JAC, 26*(3–4), 513–583.