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The Temple of My Unfamiliar

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I can remember my mentor stating, "Once you become tenured, you will have more freedom to write for impact—it will be important to publish in venues that are more accessible to broader audiences." Little did I expect that his words would prove significant so early in my professional career, particularly in my first attempt at trying to move beyond the veil of writing solely for peer-reviewed journals. The title of this first article, "The Temple of My Unfamiliar: Faculty of Color at Predominantly White Institutions," was published in *Black Issues in Higher Education.* A number of colleagues and friends in various professional capacities both within and outside of academe contacted me to provide supportive commentary regarding the article. Many stated that the themes it articulated, as they related to the experiences of faculty of color in predominantly white institutions, paralleled their own.

The accompanying biographical sketch stated that this article was excerpted from a larger article. It was this larger piece that created the flurry of dialogue I perceived my mentor was referring to in his admonishment to "write for impact." "Black Professors: On the Track but Out of the Loop" was published in 2004 in *The Chronicle Review.* I was aware that the article had been accepted and would be included in an upcoming issue, but I was caught completely off guard by its publication.

After entering my office, turning on the computer, and engaging in my daily ritual of catching up on email, the chime of the incoming email communiqué and subject line immediately caught my eye. The message came from one of my colleagues on campus; the subject line simply stated, "Congratulations on the Chronicle Article." In the body of the email message he not only congratulated me on the article's acceptance but also thanked me for sharing

the experiences faculty of color spoke about in the piece. Over the next several days, I received a constant flow of email messages (more than 50) and letters. There were several links to web sites discussing the article (it was cited as the most emailed article by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*). A number of colleagues who contacted me stated that their entire campus communities had been forwarded the piece. A former CEO of one of the nation's largest higher education organizations and a former college president both expressed their opinions regarding the article's contents. Faculty of color, administrators, former students, military personnel, and several other individuals who found the article resonated with them in novel ways shared their stories with me. Some of their comments follow:

- Thank you for placing your experiences into circulation so that we might be reminded of how pervasive certain experiences are, but also of the necessity for us to persevere. (African-American female, assistant professor)
- I plan to tape a copy of the article to my office door, carry it with me in my book bag, and give it to students in all of my classes! (African-American female, tenured associate professor)
- Good going on *The Chronicle* essay of recent date. I think you are very perceptive on these issues. It is tough teaching in these schools. Not to get discouraged however. (African-American male, full professor)
- Thank you for addressing a topic that weighs heavily on the minds of African American faculty. It takes courage to give voice to sensitive issues. However, courage is the birthplace of change. Perhaps your article will serve as a much-needed catalyst for reevaluation, reflection, and perspective changing. (African-American female, full professor)
- I was very impressed with your insights and forthright description of your and others' experiences. Without this information, we cannot hope to deal with prejudice and racism. (White male, full professor)

These statements, from struggling tenure-track professors to retired college presidents, recapitulated a common theme—the need to understand the unique experiences of faculty of color in predominantly white institutions, from a professional as well as social perspective. Hence, this chapter will attempt to shed light on several key themes highlighted in the two articles previously mentioned. These articles were the aggregation of data, specifically narrative accounts provided by faculty of color across various disciplines regarding their experiences as tenure-track faculty in predominantly white institutions.

The first theme, I Have Everything to Prove, speaks to faculty of color's perceived need to prove competence in their chosen fields of endeavor. This process often becomes painfully obvious via their interactions with students and colleagues in the higher education context. The second theme, It Is Only My Stream of Double Consciousness, explores the difficulties associated with faculty of color negotiating identity in the academy. Establishing some sense of agency in an environment that is at best disinterested and at worst hostile can be a daunting experience for these faculty members. The third theme, Let Me Entertain You, looks at the disparities that exist among faculty of color and white faculty in their role expectations in the classroom setting. The fourth theme, I Am Having Difficulties Logging In to the Network, focuses on the importance of establishing professional and social networks, a practice many faculty of color feel poorly equipped to facilitate on their own. The fifth and final theme, Adjust Your Climate Control, advances the extant literature that speaks to what some have referred to as the "chilly climate" found in many higher education enclaves, especially for faculty of color.

I Have Everything to Prove

Higher education serves as the great proving ground for faculty. Whether it is demonstrating scholarly acumen via research and publication or intellectual virtuosity in myriad academic leadership capacities, it often becomes apparent that the academy places a premium on individuals who can readily prove and subsequently operationalize their abilities and talents in readily useable forms. Although accepted as the modus operandi for faculty in higher education, this process often is experienced very differently for faculty of color, specifically in their engagements with students in the college classroom.

Many faculty members feel caught in an ongoing process of having to prove their competence as intellectuals. The literature on the experiences of faculty of color in predominantly white institutions speaks to this phenomenon, with faculty stating that they feel as if they must work twice as hard as their white colleagues to get half as far (Turner & Myers, 2000). Perhaps the greatest struggle faculty of color encounter is in the day-to-day engagements with their students in the college classroom. All faculty need to gain the confidence and respect of their students by creating effective course syllabi, valuing diverse learning preferences, using multiple teaching styles, and creating a sense of classroom esprit de corps. Yet the pressures experienced by faculty of color beyond these essential functions are what provide the greatest feelings of angst.

During a symposium presentation I conducted along with three other African-American colleagues at an Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) conference, several audience members spoke candidly about their classroom experiences. One participant added, "I always feel as if they [students] are looking at me with a jaundiced eye, as if my credentials should be questioned." This statement prompted a flurry of follow-up commentary, all affirming this participant's expressed views. The pervasive sentiment articulated by this cohort was that despite their professional credentials, knowledge, and skill sets in their respective fields, students continued to reserve judgment regarding their levels of competence. Faculty of color perceived that their white colleagues did not receive this same level of scrutiny simply due to the respect accorded them by students based on their role and professional status. In essence, the position (authority) power (Bolman & Deal, 2003) accorded to white faculty due to their professional position was not accorded to faculty of color. Thus many felt as if they were forced into a coercive or reward power (Birnbaum, 1988) relationship with their students to gain the same level of respect as their white counterparts.

My Personal Experience: A Narrative Account

As an African-American male professor who has been a member of the faculty of two predominantly white institutions and one Hispanic institution, this particular theme has proven to be salient across each of these academic contexts. Although I could provide numerous personal examples of similar experiences expressed by faculty of color in both the literature and my own informal conversations, perhaps the best example is reflected in a classroom engagement with one of my graduate students.

The course focused on higher education organization and governance. Since I had taught the course on more than a half dozen occasions, I was not surprised by the student comments regarding the level of difficulty associated with some of the readings. Invariably, one of the articles I require the students to review and critique for our classroom discussion is a chore even for the most academically astute master's-level student.

After completing all of the rudimentary classroom administrative chores, I launched into a discussion of the readings for the week, starting with this difficult article. Silence fell across the room, not an unfamiliar experience with this particular reading, so I offered a few prompts to initiate dialogue. But none of the students seemed willing to test the proverbial waters by jumping in to engage in some form of critical discourse about the piece. The more I attempted to pull them into a discussion, the more they seemed to pull away.

None of my training in effective college teaching practices or readings on how to engage students through Socratic dialogue seemed to work. Then finally, after what seemed to be an eternity, a white female student in the back of the classroom raised her hand.

My excitement that at least one student was willing to participate in the discussion was met with what I would describe as an abounding alacrity on my part, and I asked if she wanted to comment on the article. "No, not really," she replied, "but I do have a question for you." "Sure," I responded, "please ask your question. I am sure that your colleagues will benefit; several of them may have the same question or a very similar question in mind." Little did I know that the question would focus on my scholarly expertise and not some aspect of the reading. "I was just wondering if you assigned this particular article to us because you didn't understand it and you wanted us to figure out what it meant?" she asked. At that moment, I would equate my internal feelings to Three Mile Island, for it was as if I was slowly melting away. Could she feel this way? Were these her thoughts? Did the other students share similar feelings? Yet I knew that this was a pivotal moment and that disassociating my internal meltdown to an outward appearance of being shaken or dismayed by her comment was not the proper way to handle the situation.

Immediately, I decided to move into faculty of color survival mode—plans for survival, in essence contingency plans, that faculty of color must have readily accessible to remain viable in the academy. For the next several minutes, in a manner that was neither self-promoting nor apologetic, I shared with the students the difficulties associated with some academic readings, particularly the readings I had engaged with over the years. I shared with them the names and content of some of the philosophical texts I read as a doctoral student in an attempt to understand the theoretical framework that would undergird my research. Additionally, I waxed philosophical about the numerous texts I had read by the author currently under investigation that was providing them with such angst—this experience was akin to running down my academic pedigree, a virtual tour through my mental library to show them that not only had I been exposed to the material they found to be so terse, but reveled in the intellectual dialogue surrounding this content.

The student who posed the question as well as her classmates seemed satisfied with my response; a general sense of calmness seemed to overtake the group. It was as if they needed to first establish that I had the intellectual capital, the scholarly reserve to guide them in their discussion of the piece before they were willing to engage in dialogue. I found the students' public inquisition of me regarding my abilities to be par for the course for an African-American male academic. Fielding questions about my expertise or establishing my

scholarly identity in order to assuage my student's fears has been an ongoing process throughout my academic experience.

For many faculty of color, the constant need to list their scholarly accomplishments just to establish some sense of agency and authority as an academic is an unfair but necessary means of survival. I have often found that white academics view these experiences to be an inherent part of the academic experience: "I had the very same struggles with students, it's not just because you're African American that they question your authority." What I view as one of the distinct differences is that somewhat like their African-American colleagues, white faculty members do have experiences in which their authority is questioned. Yet, unlike their African-American counterparts, white faculty members do not have experiences (i.e., to the degree of faculty of color) in which their competence is questioned.

It Is Only My Stream of Double Consciousness

W. E. B. Du Bois (1903), in his masterful work *The Souls of Black Folk,* spoke to the dual role that blacks had to play in order to survive as U.S. citizens. He asserted, "One ever feels his twoness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (p. 2). It is this same dogged strength that Du Bois referred to in his writings that faculty of color must embrace in order to successfully negotiate their place in academe—a negotiation process that often centers on establishing identity.

Much like the dual roles that people of color perceive they are forced to play in broader society, so too, do faculty of color feel the pressures associated with promoting these multiple identities. Sociolinguists call this process code switching—individuals move back and forth between identities, a strategy used to survive in disparate worlds. Several of the faculty members who participated in the ASHE symposium asserted that they engage in code switching on an almost daily basis. Actions, behavior, language, and persona are all altered to fit the context. One individual stated, "From a distance as short as my car to the entranceway of my building, I have to get myself in the proper mindset, I turn off the R&B music and switch on the 'academic me.'"

Although faculty of color frequently view this code switching process as an inherent burden of their status as minorities in majority contexts, there seems to be an unstated sadness in their reports. At a very core level, they appear saddened by the fact that they are essentially asked to "put their ethnic selves on the shelf"—to tuck away their true identities to gain acceptance. Yet these faculty members' constructed identities are only partially formed within

the academy. It is their identities formed in relationships with family and friends, folks living in the "hood," members of the church, and acquaintances from the beauty shop and barbershop that contribute to a greater sense of agency. Thus, when faculty of color are asked to switch from their socially constructed selves to their professionally constructed selves, they are for all intents and purposes being asked to negate a major part of their identity—a process akin to asking the biracial child to choose sides.

My Personal Experience: A Narrative Account

Any attempt at identifying a singular experience or vignette to adequately describe my daily lived experiences as they relate to this theme would be at best formidable and at worst impossible. What I have found to be endemic to my life as a faculty member of color—particularly as an African-American male—is the requirement to be both a multicultural and multicontextual genius. Many of the cultural norms and traditions that are a standard part of my cultural community are regarded as abnormal or nontraditional when viewed through the academy's lens. Additionally, the situational actors and contexts comprising the professional space that I occupy as a faculty member are often quite different from the community in which I was socialized.

A colleague and close friend from graduate school recently joined me as a presenter at a national conference focused on the African-American experience in Ivy League institutions. After our formal presentation, which focused on the experiences of faculty of color in predominantly white institutions, we took our seats to engage in a brief question and answer session. What started as a discussion about our research and the findings in the literature quickly transitioned into a series of impassioned dialectics concerning the individual and collective experiences of all who were present. "Share with the group your epiphany relating to the cultural differences we have personally observed as faculty of color in higher education," I suggested. "Do you mean our conversation about how our culturally-specific worldviews oftentimes run counter to the workings of academe?" my colleague replied. I nodded, and she provided the following commentary:

> While pulling together information for this presentation, Dr. Bonner and I both discovered a very salient theme that was recapitulated throughout the literature; namely, faculty of color are often overburdened with service related tasks and commitments—often leading to their professional demise when being considered for tenure and promotion. The literature attributes this problem to feelings of obligation on the

> part of faculty of color to remain responsive to communities of color on their respective campuses—i.e., serving on committees, advising organizations and student groups, attending special events. But beyond the literature based notions of how these problems develop, I had another idea, a very practical idea about why this problem had become so pervasive. Let me ask you all this, when a friend or a family member tells you that they really need you to do something for them, we could even add colleague or acquaintance to the scenario, what do you do? You are much like me, more often than not you would say "yes," regardless of what you were engaged in at the time or if making such a decision might adversely impact you in some other way—especially your time to complete other tasks.

What followed were her statements about feeling compelled to be professionally responsive to her colleagues and feeling a strong sense of urgency to comply with any and all of their requests. I found her comments to be keenly aligned with the literature that spoke to the development of an Afrocentric worldview, with its promotion of collaboration, communal uplift, and spirituality. As an African-American male, when a member of my community, codified in some circles as my "village," is in need, then I am compelled to respond, essentially putting the needs of the village first. In return, I receive both internal and external gratification for my role as a community member. Yet this is not the case when the same strategies are employed outside of my village, particularly if this village concept is applied to higher education contexts. The needs of the community very rarely take precedence over the needs of the individual, and when the order of this relationship is misconstrued, the individual suffers.

Beyond enhancing my cultural skills and abilities, I have also had to enhance my contextual skills and abilities to successfully negotiate the academy. Although culture is imbedded in context, I have found that by merely addressing cultural nuances, a holistic view of academe cannot be developed. My conceptual framework for discussing this term is shaped by my experiences in contexts such as the African-American church and my involvement in a Historically Black Greek Letter Organization, as well as my membership in numerous multicultural professional and civic organizations.

To use my upbringing in the African-American church as an example—specifically the African-American Baptist church—critical to most official ceremonies or programs is the selection of a designee to provide what we

commonly refer to as "the welcome." The welcome serves as a means of creating a sense of cohesion and promoting a communal spirit among attendees of various church gatherings. A common refrain in many of the welcome statements I have heard over the years is, "If you feel like shouting, shout; if you feel like running, run; if your clothes are too tight, loosen your buttons; we want you to feel comfortable, we want you to come as you are . . ." The underlying message to the audience is that bringing anything short of your authentic self to the context is viewed as unacceptable. Yet my experiences in higher education have revealed a somewhat different perspective.

In what I consider to be an almost countermantra to the welcome refrain is higher education's admonishment to subdue or jettison the authentic parts of myself that do not keenly align with the academic context. If I feel like shouting, I need to remain silent, and if I feel like running, I need to remain stationary, essentially revealing the inverse relationship between the higher education context and my authentic self. Quite unlike my experience in the African-American church, higher education often implies that bringing anything to the setting that remotely approximates my authentic self would be viewed as unacceptable.

Let Me Entertain You

This particular theme is somewhat difficult to describe because of the subtle nature of how it is expressed. Perhaps the best way to offer an explanation is to first provide a valid example from my own experience. Prior to the start of one particular academic semester, students were dropping by my office to inquire about the necessary textbooks and supplementary materials they needed to purchase for my course. Additionally, many students stopped in for my informal assessment regarding the difficulty of my course—the typical presemester inquiries needed to allay their fears. One student, after asking her set of prestructured questions, said, "I am very excited about taking this course with you, I hear that you are a very good teacher . . . but, I expect for you to make this fun!" Although I perceived the student to be genuine in her statement regarding my teaching, something about the "making this course fun" addendum provided me with some level of discomfort.

As a faculty member with training in the areas of higher education administration and college teaching, I am most aware of the literature that speaks to the importance of making the college classroom a dynamic and interpersonal arena in which learners share in the educational process (Lowman, 1995). Yet what was a source of concern for me was the student's expectation that I make the course not only informative but also entertaining.

Many times I heard my white colleagues in the hall who taught courses within my discipline dialogue with students about their courses. Questions students posed and the responses faculty members provided centered on issues of academic expectations and rigor, learning outcomes, and theory-to-practice engagements. Not once have I heard students engage faculty in conversations about their classroom "enjoy-ability" levels. Students appeared to expect the academic challenge and rigor they would experience in my colleagues' classes notwithstanding classroom teaching style. Content area knowledge and skill was enough to satisfy their educational palates; however, for me, the bar was essentially raised. Not only was I being held to a standard of conveying academic content, but I also was expected to deliver this content in a manner that these students deemed entertaining, exciting, and even fun.

Several faculty of color I have encountered have commented on this same issue. One colleague asserted,

> I don't have the luxury of coming to class with just a book and a smile like some of my non-minority colleagues. I have to "flash and dash" them [students] with multimedia and PowerPoint, else they view me as lazy and incompetent. It would be nice to sit back and just enjoy teaching without all of the extra pressures of trying to be an entertainer, but I guess this is not my lot.

My Personal Experience: A Narrative Account

One of the courses I instruct on a somewhat routine basis is Effective College Teaching. The field is ripe with literature on topics such as student learning and motivation, curriculum content and structure, as well as classroom assessment and evaluation. I use several of the key authors in the field—Angelo and Cross (1993), Brookfield (1995), Davis (1993), Lowman (1995), McKeachie (2002)—not to mention a host of other scholars who write on topics related to college-level instruction. One particular semester, I shared Palmer's (1997) article "The Heart of a Teacher: Identity and Integrity in Teaching," in which he described one of the two best teachers from his undergraduate experience.

> One of those teachers assigned a lot of reading in her course on methods of social research and, when we gathered around the seminar table on the first day, said, "Any comments or questions?" She had the courage to wait out our stupefied (and stupefying) silence, minute after minute after minute, gazing around the table with a benign look on her face—and then, after the passage of a small eternity, to rise,

> pick up her books, and say, as she walked toward the door, "Class dismissed."
>
> This scenario more or less repeated itself a second time, but by the third time we met, our high SAT scores had kicked in, and we realized that the big dollars we were paying for this education would be wasted if we did not get with the program. So we started doing the reading, making comments, asking questions—and our teacher proved herself to be a brilliant interlocutor, co-researcher, and guide in the midst of confusions, a "weaver" of connectedness in her own interactive and inimitable way. (p. 16)

Parker does not reveal the racial or ethnic background of the faculty member he is referring to in the article; therefore, I am taking a bit of a risk in my assumption that this faculty member was not a person of color. Yet I have found that my experiences and the experiences articulated by other faculty of color I have dialogued with concerning classroom interactions with students seem to be quite different from the interactions Palmer refers to. Unfortunately, many of the attempts by faculty of color to encourage student-centered or student-initiated learning in the college classroom are not viewed as innovative or strategic by student cohorts, but as revealing a lack of planning or lethargy on the part of the faculty member of color.

In a recent conversation with a colleague, we discussed the importance of providing faculty of color, especially junior faculty of color, with insight on the classroom experience—especially as how these classroom experiences may significantly differ from their white colleagues' experiences. I commented that a junior faculty member of color shared with me a number of issues that were causing her a great deal of concern. Students inferred that she was unprepared and unskilled in the subject matter she was attempting to convey. Additionally, she was reported to begin class late and often end class early. I asked her to share with me how she structured her class sessions; namely, how did she begin class, what methods were used to engage students, did she lecture, did she provide them with handouts, and how did she end each class session?

What she shared with me regarding her classroom protocol mirrored much of what the literature would describe as effective teaching practices—providing advanced organizers, encouraging critical thinking, practicing effective wait time, and implementing collaborative grouping. She even incorporated many of the strategies used by Palmer's teacher in the previous excerpt. So what made for such a different outcome in her situation?

What I have found to be true for faculty of color is that these practices are moot if the students have not developed some sense of trust in the faculty members' ability to teach the course. White faculty must also develop these same levels of trust, but it is primarily their content area knowledge and not their process of delivery that students use as a means of assessing their ability. For example, my colleague's initiation of each class with the open-ended question, "What new insight did the readings provide you with this week?"—much like Palmer's instructor querying, "Any questions or comments?"—was reported by the students as a way to offload her classroom instructional responsibilities.

To combat classroom disparate treatment, I shared with my colleague the methods I have used in these instructional settings. Unlike my white counterparts, I must concern myself with not only the content, but also how it will be delivered—outlines, handouts, PowerPoint, slides, or video. In essence, the conveyance of professionalism through props is often standard operating procedure for faculty of color. By no means am I suggesting that concerning oneself with process and neglecting content is a solution; however, I am suggesting that if a faculty member, particularly a faculty member of color, knows that simply providing the class with a handout or spending extra time creating a PowerPoint presentation can earn them a two standard-deviation difference in their student evaluations, then it is of utmost importance for this message to be conveyed.

I Am Having Difficulties Logging In to the Network

The personal narrative I share in this section provides an analogy to explain the experiences that many faculty of color have with establishing key professional networks in academe. In this information age, technology often serves as a conduit but many times becomes an albatross, depending on the availability and reliability of the specified medium to meet our needs at the appropriate times. A problem I have invariably experienced with technology is my inability at times to gain access to the network—necessary to access major documents, read my email, or connect to the World Wide Web. There have been days when I, along with my colleagues, have sat down in front of my computer, ready to engage in a hard day's work, only to read on the computer screen: "Network Down." This experience often results in a number of informal hallway meetings, with each individual offering the same query, "Are you able to log in to the network?"

When we are unable to connect to the network, many of us feel as if we have been rendered inoperable. For many faculty, the connection to the network is our lifeline to functioning—without it, we can still perform, but in a

severely limited capacity. Fortunately, whenever we encounter this problem, it is quickly resolved. Via the knowledge and skill of a cadre of individuals identified as network administrators, we are able to connect once again to the system. Thus the role of the network administrator is key; these individuals serve as linchpins, bridges to that all-important network that allows us to function. Yet if we extend this analogy to the experiences of faculty, specifically faculty of color in their attempts to connect, not to a computer network, but to a network of colleagues and peers who could provide them with key information on how to successfully navigate the higher education terrain, will they find a "network administrator" to help them connect? Should we expect the dean to serve in this capacity? A department chair? A senior colleague in the department?

Success as a faculty member, especially a tenure-track faculty member, is intimately linked to the identification and cultivation of key professional contacts. A cursory observation of the literature will reveal the importance of networking in higher education, a process from which faculty of color are often excluded. According to Aguirre (2000), "Women and minorities find themselves in workplace settings that favor the professional socialization of White male faculty" (p. 57). Hence, faculty members of color are often left to fend for themselves in their attempts to understand the complexities of academe. Whether it is demystifying the tenure and promotion process or deconstructing departmental norms and politics, it is through key networks that a true sense of professional identity is formed.

Networking should begin as early as graduate school and should provide students with key information and skills that will assist them in the transition to becoming college faculty. We often refer to this apprentice-teacher relationship that students and faculty engage in as mentoring. Unfortunately, many students of color report that during their graduate school experiences, they were not mentored or sought out for opportunities to dialogue with faculty about critical issues in academe. When speaking about this apparent lack of opportunity to engage in scholarly activity with faculty, one faculty member of color reported, "You know we didn't get the same hook-ups the White boys got [sic]. And guess what? The same . . . is happening on this side of the fence [as a faculty member]."

My Personal Experience: A Narrative Account

The old adage "It's not *what* you know, but *who* you know" more than adequately describes life as I have come to know it in academe. When the article upon which this chapter is based was published in *The Chronicle Review,* I

immediately received an email message from one of my graduate school professors—a major professor and key mentor with whom I have maintained contact since graduation. The message said,

> I just finished reading your article... Well done! I hope you know that you always have my support and I am extremely proud of all you have accomplished... the article was very well written and captures many of the experiences you have shared with me as well as my own observations of tenure-track minority faculty.

Instead of replying to my professor's email message, I decided to phone him. We talked extensively about the article, specifically the message he perceived I was attempting to convey in the piece. I was compelled to share with him how fortunate I felt I had been during my graduate school experience because the mentoring he provided had proven especially invaluable. I said, "You know you were an outstanding mentor—from my first academic presentation, to my first refereed article, to my first position in academe—you were always there to provide guidance. And you have continued to collaborate with me on a number of research projects—for all of your support, I am truly grateful."

We continued our lighthearted dialogue for several minutes and, much like he had done on numerous occasions, he provided me with critical insight and a number of plausible suggestions regarding my career trajectory. I was able to walk away enriched and armed with new knowledge to assist me in my professional growth and development. Our mentor-protégé relationship became an embedded part of my graduate school experience. Not only was I provided guidance when I purposefully sought opportunities for counsel, but I also received guidance when I was unaware that direction was even needed. The literature refers to this mentoring framework as intrusive advising—proactively providing intervening advising when it is not specifically sought out by students—a strategy that is actively practiced in many of the nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Although I realized how fortunate I was as a doctoral student to have had such a wellspring of support, I knew that many of my colleagues of color had experienced graduate school quite differently, especially the levels of support they perceived their graduate program faculty had provided during their matriculation. Beyond the individual testimonials that many scholars of color have shared with me, I personally witnessed these levels of neglect and disparate treatment during my own graduate school experience. What happens all too often is that a select few graduate students of color are recognized for their academic abilities and potential to make a contribution to their respective fields.

These students are mentored, trained, and provided with all the necessary academic accoutrements to ensure a seamless transition between graduate school and the professions. Yet what is problematic about this particular mentoring approach is that it is at best limited in its inclusion of students of color and at worst restrictive.

Typically, the student of color who is selected and benefits from this action-oriented apprenticeship model is the student who the faculty member thinks is more closely aligned with his or her own social and professional mores, values, and traditions. In essence, the student of color who is thought to be "safe" is the student whom the faculty member views as being acculturated. During my own graduate school experiences, notwithstanding the amount of support faculty provided me at both the master's and doctoral levels, I too found that my acceptance as a protégé was often based on white faculty members' assessment of my acculturative competence. A conversation I had with one of my doctoral professors who agreed to serve as one of my professional references supports my assertion: "It's good that you have chosen me to provide you with a letter of recommendation," the professor stated. ". . . These institutions want to know that they are not hiring faculty who are Black militants or radicals who can't get along with their colleagues."

Finding a mentor to serve as an advocate, supporter, and network conduit is critical for the success of all graduate students. To elicit a conversation about the lack of opportunities for students of color, particularly in settings that combine students of minority and non-minority status, is to invite a vigorous debate about the merits of even considering race when discussing an issue of such ecumenical importance. Yet disaggregating race from this dialogue shrouds the real issue—lacking a mentor and being white is a very different experience from lacking a mentor and being black.

My professor's comment that institutions do not want to hire "faculty who are Black militants" reveals this fact—my intentions and motivations were questioned, ostensibly due to my status as a person of color. Hence, beyond my ability to do the job, it was important to establish my relative cultural fit with the institution—that all-important extra step students of color often must take to gain entry into these academic enclaves. Clearly, the shared allegiance among individuals within the same culture serves as a bridge for some, as a barricade for others.

Adjust Your Climate Control

Acclimating to the higher education environment can be a daunting task for many faculty members; for faculty of color, it can be especially disheartening.

Women faculty and faculty of color have often described the higher education climate as "chilly" (Smith, 1997; Turner & Myers, 2000), what Turner and Myers also referred to as the house guest phenomenon experienced by faculty of color in predominantly white institutions. My own research supported these claims. One faculty member, in speaking to the issues surrounding campus climate, commented, "I wouldn't describe the climate around these places [colleges and universities] as 'chilly,' I would describe them as 'subzero'."

Faculty of color cite various reasons for their assessments of these higher education climates. Some have already been discussed in this chapter, but others include a lack of support for their research agendas and interest, disregard of their professional expertise and opinions, lack of a commitment to diversity, and being made to feel like a "token hire." It is the confluence of these issues that serves to create the chill in the air that faculty so readily mention in their dialogue, a chill that must be attended to not only at a micro level, among programs and departments and colleges, but also at a macro level, across the entire higher education setting.

Just as student learning, growth, and development is dependent on the establishment of stable and sustainable higher education environmental contexts (Strange & Banning, 2001), so too does faculty maturation and progress depend on these contexts for support. Much is to be said for campuses that are proactive in their efforts to create culturally affirming venues for all faculty, particularly faculty of color to engage in their craft. Many times, it is the institution's general lack of knowledge as opposed to any unbridled malfeasance that overlooks the disparate impact that these environments exact on faculty of color (Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998).

My Personal Experience: A Narrative Account

One of the primary courses I teach in our higher education administration graduate program is The American College Student, a course that speaks to college student development. Many faculty who teach this course often begin with a theory that is touted to serve as the foundational theory for the field: Lewin's (1936) interactionist paradigm. This theory asserts that behavior is a function of the person mediated by the environment—expressed $B = f(P^*E)$. Following my introduction of the paradigm, we spend the next several classes discussing the relevant theories associated with each variable; those speaking to issues impacting the P (individual), as well as the E (environmental context), and a capstone discussion of the relevant behavioral outcomes associated with this model.

I repeatedly share with students the importance of focusing on all aspects of Lewin's equation, with particular attention devoted to the variable associated with the environment. I tell them that a transactional relationship exists between students and the environment—just as students influence the environmental context, the environmental context influences students—and that many of the unanswered questions associated with student growth and development or attrition and retention could be addressed through a focused study of the environment. As I present my lecture and field questions associated with college student populations in higher education environments, I often reflect on how faculty, specifically faculty of color, are impacted by these environments. All of the buzzwords associated with how students experience these settings—chilly, hostile, and isolating—are the same words used by faculty of color to describe the work environment.

Recommendations and Conclusions

What should academe learn from the experiences of faculty of color? Perhaps each of the themes highlighted in this chapter will provide a cogent place to initiate the search for answers to this question. To address the first theme, I Have Everything to Prove, institutions of higher education could offer opportunities for faculty of color to showcase their research and scholarly accomplishments. By exposing departments, colleges, and campus-wide communities to these scholars and their professional agendas, a level of awareness is created that serves to combat questions regarding credibility. It is important to promote these engagements as opportunities to *showcase* faculty talent and not as interrogation sessions aimed at *proving* competence. Otherwise, the same situations where faculty of color feel they must prove themselves will be recreated, just in a different context.

Several faculty members lamented that they had to play a chameleon-like role to be successful in the academy—suppressing aspects of their identity to fit into prescribed professional and social molds. Faculty of color believed that their white counterparts did not understand the notion of "otherness"—what it means to feel like an outsider or traveler in a foreign land. A prime example of white faculty's lack of understanding about this concept was captured in the statements of faculty of color who implied that their white counterparts were at best cautious and at worst fearful of accepting their invitations to social gatherings outside the academy for fear they might be the "only white person there," revealing an ignorance of the daily experiences with this phenomenon that faculty of color encounter.

Hence, to address the second and third themes, It Is Only My Stream of Double Consciousness and Let Me Entertain You, programmatic initiatives and dialogue centered on understanding "otherness," or what it means to be a minority in a majority culture, are essential. Whether it is through retreats, brown-bag lunch sessions, or designated segments for exploration within department- or college-wide meetings, these engagements are important to begin unbundling the minority experience in academe. Additionally, creating opportunities for campus-based groups who represent the interests of faculty of color (i.e., African-American faculty and staff organizations) to participate in key decision-making roles is critical. These groups cannot be considered tangential or "particularistic" to institutional functioning.

The fourth theme, I Am Having Difficulties Logging In to the Network, is important for institutions to consider when addressing issues related to retention among faculty of color. A commitment to recruiting faculty of color is disingenuous if it does not concomitantly embrace a commitment to retaining these same faculty members. Although frontloading strategies to ensure that faculty of color are successful in their transition processes are critical (i.e., orientation sessions and various social and professional integration experiences), additional strategies must be enacted once the "honeymoon phase" of the initiation process has ended.

Ongoing practices such as supporting teaching, research, and service agendas as well as facilitating the development of viable mentoring networks, both within and outside the institutional context, are important. It is necessary to consider the social and professional needs of the faculty member of color when attempting to establish these networks. This should be a collaborative process with the individual faculty member providing input on viable candidates to fulfill this role. It is important to realize that the role of mentor could potentially be played by more than one person. The individual who meets the professional needs of the faculty member of color may or may not be the same individual who is called upon to speak to issues involving socialization.

The fifth theme, Adjust Your Climate Control, forces institutions to consider the ways that faculty of color experience the campus environment. Understanding campus ecology and the differential impact campus contexts exert on faculty populations is critical. Academe is tasked with creating a sense of community among populations with multiple cultural norms, expectations, goals, and motivations. Much like the quilt maker who sews together different pieces of material, so too must the institution weave together a multifaceted tapestry of diverse cultural constituents to create a unified template for promoting community. In essence, the institution is the aggregator of disparate

realities, a role that must not be taken lightly in its mission to support faculty. Thus institutions should offer faculty of color opportunities to provide feedback—through surveys (e.g., work environment, social climate, etc.), focus groups, or committee task forces—on how they experience the campus environment. A concerted effort should be made on the part of the institution to ensure that this data is translated into effective practices designed to improve the climate for faculty of color.

As Boyer (1990) reported, "The quality of scholarship is dependent, above all else, on the vitality of each professor. Colleges and universities that flourish help faculty build on their strengths and sustain their own creative energies, throughout a lifetime" (p. 43). To truly tap into the knowledge stores and intellectual reserves maintained by faculty of color, academe must first meet their most basic needs: establish a safe and inclusive environment to successfully engage in critical discourse, create a forum to network with colleagues, develop a means to foster viable connections with students, and increase opportunities to interface with the institution. By attempting to meet the needs of faculty of color, academe can convert the unfamiliar temple into a familiar shrine (Bonner, 2003).

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