Sarah Elaine Eaton
Amy Burns *Editors*

Women Negotiating Life in the Academy

A Canadian Perspective

Springer

Women Negotiating Life in the Academy

Sarah Elaine Eaton · Amy Burns
Editors

Women Negotiating Life in the Academy

A Canadian Perspective

Springer

Editors
Sarah Elaine Eaton
Werklund School of Education
University of Calgary
Calgary, AB, Canada

Amy Burns
Werklund School of Education
University of Calgary
Calgary, AB, Canada

ISBN 978-981-15-3113-2 ISBN 978-981-15-3114-9 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd.
The registered company address is: 152 Beach Road, #21-01/04 Gateway East, Singapore 189721, Singapore

Preface: Insights into Women Negotiating Life in the Academy—A Canadian Perspective

In our preface to *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy: A Canadian Perspective*, we share an overview of the chapters. This edited volume includes individual and collaborative contributions from twenty-five women. The contributors share their perspectives about their professional experiences navigating life in higher education. These experiences encompass the voices of faculty members, graduate students, and higher education professionals. One of the purposes of having the focus of this volume be on the Canadian experience is to showcase aspects of our experience that is uniquely Canadian. This includes the voices of Indigenous and Métis contributors, immigrant women, children of immigrants, and those whose families came to this country many generations ago.

This book started as a conversation with colleagues at our home university. At that time, we were early career researchers learning to navigate full-time careers in the academy. We answered a call to write a submission for the special issue of the *Journal of Educational Thought* on well-being of those in higher education (Burns, Brown, Eaton, and Mueller 2017). We began documenting our stories and experiences, weaving together reflection, analysis, conversation, and support for and with one another.

The experience of working and writing together proved to have a deep impact. We further developed that work the following year into a presentation for the annual conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Women and Education (CASWE), (Burns, Eaton, Brown, and Mueller 2018). The work also evolved into a small, but funded research project, called Leading with Heart, with Amy Burns as the Principal Investigator, with Barbara Brown, Katherine Mueller, and Sarah Elaine Eaton as collaborators. That project led to the development of a four-course graduate certificate with the same name, nested into the Interdisciplinary Specialization of the Master of Education program offered by the Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary.

This work has been expanded and amplified through the graduate certificate, but we also felt compelled to capture the voices and experience of women in higher education in a more intentional and permanent way. That is when the idea of putting together this edited volume, *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy: A Canadian Perspective*, emerged. Two of the collaborators from those initial projects opted to pursue other projects as their careers progressed, but we owe them much in terms of the development of this work in its early phases. They remain dear friends and we are grateful for their support not only of the work, but of us, as colleagues and human beings.

We have chosen to focus on the Canadian perspective, as we felt a need for the voices of Canadian higher education professionals not only to be heard, but to be situated within a broader discourse that has, in our opinion, not often captured Canadian women's experiences to the extent we would have liked. One of the purposes of having the focus of this volume be on the Canadian experience is to showcase aspects of our experience that is uniquely Canadian. This includes the voices of Indigenous and Métis contributors, immigrant women, children of immigrants, and those whose families came to this country many generations ago.

As we read through this collection of essays, we note that they are as scholarly as they are personal. Kuipers (2008) notes that the word anthology, "generically designates a collection of texts pertaining to almost any field" (p. 122), and that the Greek origin of the word meant "literary bouquet" (Kuipers 2008, p. 122). The idea of a collection of essays as a "bouquet" resonated with us for esthetic reasons. There is beauty in each individual contribution, which is unique, and when combined, the unique contribution of each can clearly be seen in relation to the others. Kuipers (2008) talks about this "arrangement of those selections into a greater whole" (p. 124) as a second creative act that happens after the writing. The arrangement of the works in this volume is neither random, nor arbitrary. We have not placed the chapters in alphabetical order by first author, for example. Instead, we have taken care to mindfully arrange each chapter in the volume with intentionality so it relates to those directly adjacent to it, but also situated as part of a greater whole.

Like a piece of twine that might hold the individual flowers of a bouquet together, there are intertwining common threads that stretch across and connect the individual chapters. These include themes relating to identity, relationships, contemplations of what it means to be a woman working in the academy and the various tensions that are ever present in our chosen way of life. These threads emerged organically and naturally, and we noticed them only after all the chapters had been submitted. We purposely offered contributors of individual chapters freedom in how they chose to interpret and write about their perspectives as Canadian women negotiating life in the academy. Although between us as editors we had met many of the lead authors, we did not know all of the contributors individually—and they certainly did not all know one another at the beginning of this project. We have come to know our fellow authors through their work, and we have observed these common threads that emerged on their own, throughout the various chapters.

Other prominent themes that can be seen in various chapters include that of "becoming" or finding oneself through and within scholarly work (Burns; Eaton; Kovach/Stelmach; Lindstrom; McDermott; Ragoonaden; Stoesz). Those who were writing their chapters after having achieved tenure mentioned this as a notable moment in their careers (Burns; Ragoonaden; Kovach/Stelmach), and those who wrote through the lens of leadership noted how their roles had shaped them as scholars, professionals, and women (Baron; Burns; Gereluk; Janes, Carter, and Rourke; and Usick). Of particular note are those who contributed as leaders working in the "Third Space" (Whitchurch 2015), meaning that they hold leadership as higher education professionals, but do not hold faculty positions (Baron, Usick). We thought it was especially important to include their voices in this volume, as these contributors share important perspectives on what it means to be a woman negotiating life in the academy, but with a status that stands apart from those with academic positions.

Some unexpected commonalities caught our attention. Three contributors (Gereluk; Markides; and Stoesz) mentioned the amount of driving and time on the road that impacted their lives as women in the academy. This was not a theme that we anticipated, but upon reading the chapters, it was impossible to ignore it after we read it. Similarly, the approach of several chapter authors to frame their contributions as letters, either to themselves (Gereluk), each other (Kovach/Stelmach), or their children (McDermott) was an authorial choice that the contributors made consciously and independently of one another, but provided an interesting thread among various contributors.

In addition to the professional, these chapters are intensely personal. Heritage and cultural background are topics echoed throughout the volume, as are ancestral languages. Individual chapters are peppered with words from Blackfoot (Lindstrom); Cree (Markides); and Plautdietsch or Mennonite Low German (Stoesz), with others sharing stories about how their first language played a role in their development as scholars (Kubota, Saleh, and Menon).

The topic of social class and privilege was evident in a number of chapters (Burns, Eaton; Kovach/Stelmach; Stoesz; Usick), with some contributors explicitly noting the impact of being first-generation students when they entered their undergraduate degrees (Eaton; Lindstrom; Stoesz; and Usick).

A recurring theme woven throughout the volume is that of motherhood, with contributions from a number of chapter authors exploring how motherhood has impacted their life as a scholar, and shaped their approach to their work (Bauer, Behjat, Brown, Gavrilova, Hayley, and Marasco; Burns; Gereluk; Hill; Kubota, Saleh, and Menon; Lindstrom; Markides; McDermott; Stoesz; Usick). In some cases, daughters reflected explicitly on their relationships with their mothers (Burns; Eaton; McDermott; Stoesz; and Usick). These mother–daughter relationships ranged from uncomfortable relationships to positive mentorship, and we note that there is no singularity among contributors' experiences.

This lack of uniformity is an important motif. As we were writing this introduction and contemplating its contributions as a collection of essays or a scholarly anthology, it occurred to us that this volume shares the stories of the authors, but

these should not be seen as representative or archetypal of all women in the academy. This book is not like the medieval morality play, *Everyman*, that is supposedly representative of humans in a universal way. In contrast, this collection is the antithesis of an *Every(wo)man*. Instead it speaks to individual experiences, and though there are themes, we are careful to add that the contributors do not speak for all women.

We are cognizant that some voices have not been heard in this volume. Despite it being framed from the Canadian perspective, contributions are in English and represent those who work in Anglophone regions. We also note that none of the contributors has written explicitly through an LGBTQ lens. For these reasons, we call upon our fellow scholars to continue the conversation by sharing their stories, particularly in ways that showcase Canadian voices, to further develop this dialog over time.

We conclude on a personal editorial note. This is our first time as book editors and we have learned much through the process. We are grateful to our fellow contributors, from whom we have learned much. As we went through the process of working with contributors, we were surprised, at times, at how contributors e-mailed us, stopped to talk with us at conferences or other points where we encountered one another in person, to share their thoughts about this work being an emotional labor, as much as a scholarly one. The end result is intensely personal, authentic, and vulnerable, while being simultaneously scholarly and grounded in theory.

Calgary, Canada

Sarah Elaine Eaton
Amy Burns

References

Burns, A., Brown, B., Eaton, S. E., & Mueller, K. (2017). A day in the life: An examination of women's choices in the academy. *Journal of Educational Thought*, *50*(2&3), 118–137.

Burns, A., Eaton, S. E., Brown, B., & Mueller, K. (2018). *Making choices around wellness: Women leading, learning and working in the academy*. Paper presented at the Canadian Association for the Study of Women and Education (CASWE), Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE). Regina, SK.

Kuipers, C. M. (2008). The anthology as a literary creation: On innovation and plagiarism in textual collections. In C. Eisner, & M. Vicinus (Eds.), *Originality, imitation, and plagiarism* (pp. 122–132). University of Michigan Press.

Whitchurch, C. (2015). The rise of third space professionals: Paradoxes and dilemmas. In U. Teichler, & W. C. Cummings (Eds.), *Forming, recruiting and managing the academic profession* (pp. 79–99). Dordrecht: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-16080-1_5.

Acknowledgements

We wish to express our gratitude to everyone who has contributed to this volume, either directly or indirectly. Firstly, we thank our contributors who accepted the challenge of adding their voices to this book through their chapters. None of us knew at the beginning the emotional labor that would accompany the intellectual labor of that task. Their (her)stories, wisdom and scholarly expertise have added deep value to this volume. They also demonstrated unending patience with us as we pushed everyone to meet deadlines and work with us as we undertook our first experience co-editing a book together.

We would also like to thank everyone at Springer who believed in us and guided us through the process. Special thanks to Nick Melchior, Lay Peng Ang, Jayanthi Krishnamoorthi, Muruga Prashanth, and Albert Papp for your support.

We are also grateful our colleagues at the Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary. We received unwavering support from this project from our fellow academics, as well as students and staff. We offer special acknowledgement to Barbara Brown and Katherine Mueller, who were early-stage collaborators that ended up leading to this larger volume.

As we went through the various stages of this project, we commented to one another how helpful the lingering influence of our Ph.D. supervisor, J. Tim Goddard, was to us. We were separated by a few years in our doctoral journeys, and when we came together as colleagues and friends, we recognized the similarities in our work ethic, our training and our overall approach to our work. Tim, you taught us to focus on creating community, while simultaneously having the courage to critique and persist in our quest for quality. You told us when you retired that it was up to us to carry on with the work, and we heard you. We approached this book not only as an edited volume, but also as an opportunity to connect and create community among academic women in Canada who may not have known one another previously. Now, not only do we know one another's names, but we know each other's stories, which is at the heart of our work as educators.

Finally, we know that our work as scholars is supported by those outside the academy, our family and friends. We love and appreciate you.

Sarah Elaine Eaton
Amy Burns

Contents

Editors and Contributors

About the Editors

Sarah Elaine Eaton Ph.D., is a faculty member at the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary. She has worked in post-secondary contexts in a variety of roles since 1994. Her research interests focus on higher education leadership, policy and governance, with specific expertise in applied ethics and integrity.

Amy Burns Ph.D., is the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs in Education with the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary. She has worked extensively in both the K-12 public school system as well as in the post-secondary context. Her research interests focus on two primary areas including feminist leadership in education and the role of leadership in pre-service teacher education.

Contributors

Violet Baron University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Kristine Bauer University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Lahleh Behjat University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Jo-Anne Brown University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Amy Burns University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Lorraine M. Carter McMaster University, Hamilton, ON, Canada

Sarah Elaine Eaton University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Marina L. Gavrilova University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Dianne Gereluk University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Jocelyn L. Hayley University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Diane P. Janes Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Calgary, AB, Canada

Margaret Kovach University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK, Canada

Hiroko Kubota University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada

S. Laurie Hill St. Mary's University, Calgary, AB, Canada

Gabrielle Lindstrom Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB, Canada

Emily A. Marasco University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Jennifer Markides Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Mairi McDermott University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

Jinny Menon University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada

Karen Ragoonaden University of British Columba Okanagan, Kelowna, BC, Canada

Lorna E. Rourke St. Jerome University, Waterloo, ON, Canada

Muna Saleh Concordia University of Edmonton, Edmonton, AB, Canada

Bonnie Stelmach University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada

Brenda M. Stoesz University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB, Canada

Brandy L. Usick University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB, Canada

Our Academic Selves

Bringing My Past into My Future as a Woman in the Academy

Amy Burns

Abstract This chapter describes my engagement with feminism from my time as a public school teacher and educational leader into my work as a tenured Faculty Member and Associate Dean in a large research-intensive university. It draws heavily on doctoral research concluded over a decade ago (Burns in Feminist educational leadership in the Alberta public school system: The possibilities and challenges of leading from the nexus, 2008) and examines how many of the themes developed in that doctoral research still ring true today. Ideas around evolutionary feminism, activist feminism, and generational feminism are introduced and both my own story and the words of those featured in the doctoral research are presented side-by-side. The chapter concludes with a discussion of what feminism means in my role as an academic and the path forward that requires me to make my feminist ethic visible.

Keywords Evolutionary feminism · Activist feminism · Generational feminism · Educational leadership · Academia

What follows is both story and research, including my experiences and the experiences of others. It is located in time and, while it begins in the present, it is centered on work I completed over a decade ago (Burns, 2001, 2008) and then put on the shelf, mostly out of necessity. Currently, I enjoy a fulfilling and joyous career in academia, but at the time of the aforementioned research, I was a public school teacher; also mostly fulfilling and joyous.

My career as an educator began in 1996 in a variety of classroom teaching and educational leadership roles. That career spanned almost 20 years, and in that time, I completed my Master of Arts (Burns, 2001) and Doctor of Philosophy (Burns, 2008). I got married, had a child, and began to learn about and understand the skills so necessary to trying to having it all (Burns, Brown, Eaton, & Mueller, 2017). I sought out experiences in my teaching career that led me to four different school divisions, to schools nestled in the countryside with 200 students in kindergarten to grade 12 classes, and then to urban high schools with 1000 students. I worked with incredible people who shaped me and helped me find my voice. One of the

A. Burns (✉)
University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: amburns@ucalgary.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_1

most compelling and encompassing lessons for me happened in the first year of my career and led to my interest in women in leadership and, more specifically, feminist leadership (see, e.g., Blackmore, 1999; Skrla, 2003). It was a difficult lesson but an important one: it shaped my academic career from that point on.

I am currently the Associate Dean of a large undergraduate teacher education program, and at the time of this writing, have been doing this work for just over a year. Prior to this, I held a directorship in the same program where my primary responsibility involved placing approximately 1000 preservice teachers into academically appropriate practicum placements several times a semester. Of course, teaching, research, and service, all aspects that are synonymous with a life in the academy, came with both leadership roles. I have been in the postsecondary world in a full-time way for just over six years and recently attained that most important of milestones, tenure.

This chapter is different than anything I have yet written for publication, and I will admit to a sense of nervousness in "putting it out there". I draw on my experiences moving from the public school system to the academy and the ways in which feminism has been lived and described in these two environments. I also draw on my doctoral dissertation (Burns, 2008) in which I examined, among other things, differences between the public school system and the academy in relation to feminism and how it is taken up. I reflect on how some of these concepts were apparent or not in my early teaching career and in my current reality. But more than that, it is my story located beside and within the experiences of those I engaged with over a decade ago.

A Statement of Feminist Belief

It would be inappropriate for me to begin my story without locating myself in the feminist discourse. Even today, feminism and feminist epistemology is debated and contentious. Schumann (2016) noted that this debate is "distorted by pre-existing biases" (p. 2). Indeed, Schumann continues to say that it goes much further than the word to a need to rethink "customary conceptions of knowledge and take into account the particular, contextual, embodied and emotional dimensions and conditions of knowledge generation" (p. 2). But this contention and debate are not new and spring from the continually evolving history of feminist thought. From Wollstonecraft (1792/2004) who noted that her early experiences "in childhood and as a young woman, in a class-bound and male-dominated society, influenced and shaped the ideas she would later develop into a feminist argument" (p. x) to the works of more recent feminist authors (see, e.g., Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Jones & Hughes, 2016; Wallace & Wallin, 2015; Weiler, 2001) to the movement into a conception of feminism aimed at the digital world (see, e.g., Guillard, 2016), the discussion continues.

I come to feminism from a poststructural perspective, with a deeply held belief that it is language which creates and shapes us in innumerable ways that are both explicit and invisible. I believe that by questioning and troubling entrenched societal

discourses, feminists can begin to see, acknowledge, and change societal structures that silence those outside of the dominant discourse. I also believe that feminism is a political act, a movement based on acts of resistance, however small. Through my experiences, I have come to believe that feminism demands action, be it a rally or a protest or attendance at a board meeting. To deny action is to prevent change. Having said this, I have also come to know that this isn't always easy. I didn't necessarily recognize this idea when I was younger, and I like to believe that I have come to a place in my life where I am more forgiving of the fear that often accompanies inaction, although others may not agree or see this as a positive change.

What has not changed for me is my commitment to a poststructural perspective, and it is with this lens that I revisit my doctoral study alongside my own experiences. Hesse-Biber and Yaiser (2004) describe poststructural feminism as "a new form of political creation that occurs by creating resistance to dominant knowledge and then allowing that resistance to disrupt the social system thereby necessitating change" (p. 19). This understanding was echoed by Irigary (1985) who discussed poststructural feminism and critical deconstruction as the means by which one goes about "jamming the theoretical machinery" (p. 78). Common to these conceptualizations is reliance on discursive knowledge and constitution of knowledge based on complex and shifting notions of power and meaning.

This constant state of flux results in a poststructural feminist belief in the socially contextualized and constructed nature of reality. Language, a tool by which we create our social reality, is also socially contextualized and constructed and, therefore, by its nature, language is not neutral or objective (Foucault, 1980). A poststructural feminist examination of social practice and ideology is one that scrutinizes the complex and shifting power relations which create meaning in our social world while pursuing a politically transforming agenda.

Reflecting on the experiences I have had and the day-to-day workings of my life, I cannot pretend to have stopped and noticed each and every encounter from a poststructural lens. But, in 2008, I had the opportunity to interview six university academics and six practicing school principals on the topic of feminist leadership specifically and feminism more generally. This experience led to themes on topics such as the discourse of equality and the perceived role of feminism in the academy and the public school system. It is from this study (Burns, 2008) that I have chosen to present three narratives focused on evolutionary feminism, activist feminism, and generational feminism. These narratives and experiences of feminism have played a significant role in my life both as a teacher and as an academic. The quotations I offer in this chapter are the ones I have curated from among the 12 participants. In this chapter, I share the perspectives of three principals and two academics who shared their stories in my study. The names they are known by here are not their real names, but ones they chose for themselves: Julie (principal), Elizabeth (academic), Marianne (principal), Karen (academic), and Lois (principal).

Narrative 1: Evolutionary Feminism

As a woman in the academy, I am acutely aware of the impact that my past experiences have had on my conception of myself as a feminist in this space. When I began my teaching career, I couldn't put a name to the ideas I had and the issues I noticed regarding women in teaching. But, through the formative experiences of my early career and over time, my feminist awareness began to evolve and change. I began to have a sense of the ways in which women evolved in their roles through exposure to the educational environment. For example, I watched as many of my early female colleagues evolved from nurturers of children to advocates for the educational experience of children and this evolution often led to increased responsibility and a moral imperative to make a difference. This was also true of the academics and principals I engaged with during my doctoral journey. A number of them described the ways their feminist commitments had changed over time and could be traced back to the ways in which they had been influenced by the educational environment.

For Julie, a principal who, at the time of her interview had been in educational leadership for more than ten years, evolution in feminism meant an evolution in available opportunity:

> I think it [feminism] has evolved over time. Twenty years ago, females were not as accepted into the domain of principalship. It's like females couldn't drive heavy duty equipment in Fort McMurray, and I think if I'd been born twenty years later that's what I'd have been doing instead because it's a lot of money you stand to make doing that. But girls didn't do that, and twenty years ago not so many girls did this. It's tough to get into a man's domain as a heavy duty mechanic, for example, or a welder, or a plumber, or some of these high-tech positions. It was tough twenty years ago, not so much now, and in ten years I believe that won't even be a point of discussion. I really don't. (Julie—Principal in Burns, 2008, pp. 83–84)

In discussing Julie's lack of opportunities and the ways in which she had perceived traditional ideas of gender to have changed, Julie painted a picture of the way feminism had evolved for her. This evolution and the deconstructing of traditional notions of womanhood are certainly not new (see, e.g., Butler, 1990, 1993; Hekman, 1999) and are often now taken up in examinations of identity, particularly where gender norms are challenged. Wallace and Wallin (2015) noted that the participants in their study described a feeling of being tested. "They were held to differential criteria, or were tested, by the patriarchal culture of the enterprise that seemed them worthy (or unworthy) to participate as academic scholars" (p. 419).

I too experienced a shift in my early career as I began to consider leadership and my role as a decision-maker. But it wasn't until I came to the postsecondary environment as a student that I realized how little I understood of the foundation upon which the evolution of feminism was built. In graduate studies I was introduced to a body of feminist thought that would change my feminist vocabulary and understandings. Guest (2016) described this sense of "coming to" feminism as starting with "having a feminist inclination, instinct, or feeling" that is then crystallized in higher education through reading and discussion (p. 474). Indeed, it was through study and discussions with academics like Elizabeth that I came to understand my own feminist evolution. For Elizabeth, an academic who shared her perspective in my study, the evolution of

feminism, specifically, the postmodern movement which acknowledged and honored the existence of multiple perspectives and differences between marginalized groups, involved a softening of the divisive theoretical and political lines drawn through feminist thought generally:

> I have really appreciated the post-modern turn in feminist thought because I got tired of being dismissed by other feminists as not radical enough, while they had no appreciation of the sort of contexts that I and others like me were working in, trying to open spaces. And so, the whole idea of being critical between groups of feminists is something I don't have a lot of time for at all. I think the post-modern turn of course broke apart the notion that there was only one right way to be a feminist even though some people certainly cling to that. (Elizabeth—Academic, in Burns, 2008, p. 85)

Elizabeth, in considering her own past, applauded the growing notion of a plurality of feminist thought and action, although she also acknowledged that this growing acceptance was not shared by all. She remarked that she was "tired of apologizing for her liberal feminist beliefs. All of a sudden, it's not good enough to be feminist. You have to be the right kind of feminist. I am sick of being not radical enough to please other feminists and too feminist for everyone else". (Elizabeth—Academic, in Burns, 2008, p. 137)

This debate about the definition of feminism, liberal notions of feminism, and what it means to be feminist have likewise been put forward by hooks (2000) who spoke against the plurality of feminist thought, describing the need for feminism to define itself in the interest of ensuring meaning:

> Currently, feminism seems to be a term without any clear significance. The "anything goes" approach to the definition of the word has rendered it practically meaningless. What is meant by "anything goes" is usually that any woman regardless of her political perspective (she can be a conservative right-winger or a national communist) can label herself feminist. Most attempts at defining feminism reflect the class nature of the movement. Definitions are usually liberal in origin and focus on the individual woman's right to freedom and self-determination. (hooks, 2000, p. 25)

Considering this debate from these two perspectives, what stands out is the role of political activism and the extent to which each of these women felt activism must be undertaken. Whether one believes, as hooks does, that we must declare ourselves and define feminism, as Elizabeth does that we must acknowledge our everyday activities, or as Julie does that it is the improvement in opportunities for women that is important, all of these ideas speak to the evolution of feminism from a fight for equality to a much broader discourse. This realization struck me when this interview was first conducted and continues to resonate with me today.

From one context to the next, feminism continues to evolve and our understanding deepens. As I noted earlier, this expansion of my view was something I needed to come to the academy with true experience. There simply wasn't the time or the encouragement to pursue the theoretical understandings associated with feminism. Reflecting, I can see that my time in the public school system enabled me to understand and trouble the positional issues I saw with regard to power and voice but it wasn't until I came to a place, the academy, that I could evaluate those experiences from a more theoretical stance. I could see then that Julie and Elizabeth were opening

spaces but they were doing so with a different vocabulary and a different perspective on the evolution of feminism.

Narrative 2: Activist Feminism

A second narrative that arose out of my doctoral work in 2008 and one that has been most difficult for me to see myself in is the idea that feminism implies some kind of action, be it protest or the opening of spaces described by Elizabeth. I will admit that, in the early years of my teaching career, I vacillated between a fear of speaking up and an inability to be quiet. What I learned and came to understand very clearly was that any kind of public activism was mostly unappreciated and often led to my feeling a sense of isolation. This realization, this hard lesson, led me, like Julie, to feel uncomfortable with the activist elements of feminism for some time:

> To me it [feminist activism] conjures up females with placards demanding something that they don't have, and I'm not sure what that is. But it's very intense, very female oriented. They're looking for something that they feel they need. I don't like it. I don't use it. (Julie—Principal, in Burns, 2008, p. 88)

Other principals who participated in interviews also used terms and descriptions that identified a fear of being labeled, and, again like Julie, described activism as intense and unappreciated. Even Marianne, a principal who at first blush appeared more comfortable than the others with the term activism, noted that she "wouldn't ever want to be construed as someone who wasn't fair because of a feminist perspective" (Marianne—Principal, in Burns, 2008, p. 89). I, too, experienced feelings of fear of being labeled in my early career although I came to better understand later that I was viewing activism from a narrow lens.

In many respects, I was able to re-envision what activism meant for me through my conversations with the participants in my study who shared a wider view of activism. For Karen, an academic and leader in the postsecondary environment, activism was a commitment to action and formed the basis of the political and ideological agenda that she felt underpinned feminism in the past and in the present:

> Feminism is a way of being. It's also a kind of ideological commitment and the ideological commitment is to democratic relations. In my classes it means that, when we're talking about the world that we occupy, we talk about it in a caring and meaningful way and that all voices are heard around the table. It also means commitment to social justice particularly for those who are vulnerable within our cities, our towns, our world. It means all of those things, and it means that not only do I have an ideological commitment to that, but I do something about it. (Karen—Academic, in Burns, 2008, p. 86)

In speaking with Karen, I came to see that I had been engaging in feminist activism, in opening spaces for everyone to be heard. Additionally, I was able to look back and see that this kind of activism was happening in all of the schools I had been a part of during my time in the public school system. Through the work of committed, passionate teachers who believed in social justice and the importance of all people,

spaces were being opened in small ways each and every day for different voices to be heard. Karen further described how "the more meaningful activities are the daily activities, the calling to question of those who denigrate others, who don't give others place in the world" (Karen—Academic, in Burns, 2008, pp. 86–87). At the time, although I agreed whole-heartedly that the willingness to call out injustice was central to a feminist ethic, I often struggled to find my voice. As a relatively young female teacher, I often worried about "getting in trouble" for speaking up, but would instead act as a quiet support for those in need. Twelve years following the completion of my doctoral work, six spent in the public school classroom and six in the academy, I still find it difficult but, through the experiences with leadership and collegiality I have had in the academy, I have finally found my place as a feminist activist, broadly defined.

Narrative 3: Generational Feminism

In rediscovering my doctoral work and looking backward and forward in an attempt to grapple with the ways my past has impacted my present and will inevitably impact my future, the final narrative of generational feminism seems particularly appropriate. I have never doubted that I grew up in a home led by a strong female figure who instilled in me the ability to advocate for myself and to solve challenges in my way. I was expected to get an education and to make a life that wasn't reliant on another. In many ways, my own daughter is growing up with these same expectations. But when I was conducting research for my doctoral work, I was surprised by how principals and academics alike had stories about a strong female figure who had influenced them to become who they were. Looking back, I am unsure why I was surprised.

Lois, a principal, shared a particularly interesting story that, at the time and still today, reminds me of my own upbringing. Her story was one of seeing but not knowing and of learning by quiet example how women might live in the world:

> I grew up in a home where my dad was really useless at any kind of household anything. He just didn't do a thing. He didn't even know how to hold a hammer, he didn't paint, he didn't do yard work. My mom did it all, and she worked fulltime, and she raised four children. And so, you know, think about me growing up. I'm almost 54, so 50 years ago when I was a youngster, my mom was working fulltime. That was a very rare thing. I didn't know that it was rare. I never grew up thinking my mom's a hero. But when I look back on it my mom was an amazing woman, what kind of modeling I had without even knowing. And she never was conscious that she was modeling that women have capacity to do everything that needs to done, and yet that's what I learned growing up. (Lois—Principal, in Burns, 2008, p. 79)

Lois grew up seeing what it meant to step outside of traditional gender roles and take a position that may not have acceptable for women at the time. In contrast, at the time of our conversation, it was commonplace for women to hold certain leadership positions in education. Looking back now, this is not the idea I see as important in this narrative. What Lois' mother taught was not so much that Lois could be anything, but that she could be everything.

This was a similar story to that of Elizabeth. For her, the message from her strong maternal grandmother was the same: her children and their children could be everything and education was the key. What I found so compelling in this conversation and what still resonates for me today is that postsecondary education was central to the expectations of a previous generation. I certainly experienced this and hold similar expectations for my daughter. I wonder how many more women either currently in the academy or who will enter it one day can trace this decision back to a strong feminist role model?

> My grandmother was a teacher and a university graduate. She came to the West, married, and had a family out here. She was a principal in a place which I think was a one room school. And then she came to the West and according to my aunt, my mother's sister, came to the West to find a man. But she was a very independent woman and well educated for her time, which was really early in the twentieth century. And so, I understand through the family lore, she insisted that her daughters, as well as her son, or their daughters as well as their son, be given university educations. And I'm a third-generation university graduate. (Elizabeth—Academic, in Burns, 2008, pp. 78–79)

For Elizabeth, a woman's right to develop academically through university education was instilled in her by a strong female figure. In the development of her own career, both as a university graduate and a school principal, Elizabeth's grandmother put her commitment to feminist thought into action which would later affect Elizabeth herself. Although seemingly simple and even commonsensical, understanding the impact of one generation on the next has significant ramifications. It calls me to consider my impact as a feminist role model on my daughter and begs me to re-examine the role my mother played for me. It also makes the responsibility we have to generations of other women we may not yet even know very real.

My Role in the Academy

As the title of this chapter states, this reflection on my teaching career and the research I undertook in my doctoral work has been about bringing past experiences forward into my new reality as an academic leader in a postsecondary environment. The narrative excerpts offered by the principals and academics in 2008 and my reflections as I have prepared this chapter have enabled me to begin to see myself in a new way. This brings to light two realizations about the ways in which my past has come with me into the academy including access to theory and access to a feminist network. First, I am coming to understand that I have access to a life and career that provides time and opportunity for individual study. While I was a teacher, I was shaped primarily by those with whom I worked. To these individuals including my public school colleagues and my many students and their families, I owe a debt of gratitude for the role they played in shaping my feminist evolution. This diversity of experience was critical to providing me the confidence and the impetus to develop my own feminist ideas and begin the process of understanding who I was as a teacher and who I would become as an educational leader. But life in the public school system

does not offer much in the way of time for academic study outside that needed to teach the students.

Entering the academy, I discovered an environment where critical study was not only accepted but encouraged, and where the development of a feminist ethic was considered a strength. In my role as an academic, I have been encouraged to explore my previous research in feminist theory, to build on it, and to critically unpack my own feminist commitments. This invitation has also led me, however, to question why it was necessary for me to become a part of the academy to experience this kind of active support for my feminist beliefs.

I believe the reason for this was, in large part, access to theory. When I consider the academics I interviewed, including Elizabeth and Karen, they had access to feminist theory that was both readily available and written in a familiar language, that of the academic journal. All of the principals I talked with, on the other hand, admitted to not having read "enough" feminist theory, and, for many of them, this situation equated to not having read any. When they discussed why this might be, their reasons were varied but primarily centered on a lack of time and the perceived difficulty with what they considered to be the dense language used in academic journals. If I consider my own experiences as a teacher, this was true for me too. At what point in my day which was dedicated to the needs and education of children was I to carve out time to indulge my interest in feminist theory? In between the planning and the grading and the concert rehearsals and sports teams and my own family? Indeed, it was only when I committed to two graduate degrees that time for study and access to feminist theory became my daily reality. I finally had access to the time and resources I needed to immerse myself in feminist vocabulary. I still enjoy this access and time, even if reading cannot always be my top priority.

Second, just as the academy provides access to theory, it also provides access to a network of other feminist scholars with whom a person can learn and discuss. This opportunity has been one of the greatest gifts I have experienced in my time in the academy. At the same time, this in no way lessens the importance or impact of the incredible group of women I have worked with in the past. The teachers and educational leaders with whom I worked in the public school system were invaluable to my professional learning and development and, in many cases, became like my family. Together, we created a network of support that still sustains me. However, and this was made clear by the principals I spoke with in conducting my research, feminist networks are rare, and many of the principals admitted to not even knowing who else might share their views. This situation prevented them from discussing their feminist beliefs and refining their vocabulary with like-minded colleagues. The academic participants I spoke with, on the other hand, described occasions for discussion with other feminist colleagues who, in turn, helped them refine their own ideas about feminism and feminist theory. It is this kind of conversation and debate within the academy, with like-minded, self-declared feminist colleagues, that has become such an important part of my reality.

And so, here is where I end my story which has been infused with research I conducted over a decade ago and which has helped me to continue to look for clues to understanding my own feminist journey. That my teaching career influenced the

ways in which I engage with colleagues and ideas in the academy is clear. I have never lost that desire, cultivated early in my teaching career, to be an advocate for children, teachers, and educational leaders. I have also retained my drive to lead with heart and in the service of people and innovations that will make a difference. These are traits that developed in my years in public schools and without them, I would not be the kind of academic I have become. Without my experience in public education, I would not have gone looking for answers to the gendered, political challenges I saw around me every day. I would not have had the benefit of learning from generations of women who led in formal and informal ways, who fought for students and for the betterment of students' lives and the lives of their families. Moreover, I certainly would not have had the courage to go looking for a vocabulary for my beliefs, much of which I developed in concert with the women presented in this writing. I have taken all of these experiences with me into my new career and found not only another group of courageous women but the space and, occasionally, the time to bring feminism to the fore for the benefit of others and myself.

The Path Forward

This opportunity, through the writing of this chapter, has allowed me to question a number of my own personal commitments. While I am so appreciative of the learning and growth I experienced in my career as a teacher and now as an academic, I am also acutely aware of the inherent responsibility I now have to others. For example, at the start of this chapter I noted a number of things that, taken together, signal my path forward. I am an Associate Dean with tenure at a large, research-intensive university. In that work I have the privilege of working in teacher education and educational leadership, two areas about which I am passionate and committed. I have extensive public school educational experience and deep roots still in that world. I have a mother who modeled a feminist ethic, even if she didn't name it, and I am raising a teenage daughter.

It would seem clear that I have a responsibility to make my feminist ethic visible to my colleagues, both in the academy and in the public school system, to the students in our undergraduate program and to my own daughter. Allen and Flood (2017–2018), for example, provide concrete and visible suggestions for Deans, Associate Deans, and Department Chairs to "ascertain the importance of mentorship or support groups" through "greater explorations by feminists or women advocacy groups whose focal point is women in higher education" (p. 22). Whether it is mentorship groups or something less formal, I see that we all have a responsibility to ensure that we are willing to put forward and not hide from our feminist beliefs. It is that activist ethic, one that will need to be taken up in its many forms. This also applies to my own daughter, one who is growing up with the expectation that further education will be a part of her future. How do I ensure she can engage with her world in a way that honors her strengths, whether she is using the term feminist or not? By ensuring

that one day she can tell the story of a strong mother who showed her how to live independently and how to take up her role as an activist.

And so, I begin.

References

Allen, T. G., & Flood, C. T. (2017–2018). The experiences of women in higher education: Who knew there wasn't a sisterhood? *Leadership and Research in Education*, *4*, 10–27. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1174433.

Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. New York: Basic Books.

Blackmore, J. (1999). *Troubling women: Feminism, leadership and educational change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Burns, A. M. (2001). Constituent group perceptions of effective female leadership in an urban elementary school: A case study. Unpublished master's thesis. University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Burns, A. M. (2008). Feminist educational leadership in the Alberta public school system: The possibilities and challenges of leading from the nexus. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Burns, A., Brown, B., Eaton, S., & Mueller, K. (2017). A day in the life: An examination of women's choices in the academy. *Journal of Educational Thought, 50*(2/3), 118–137.

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of "sex"*. New York: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972–1977*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Guest, C. J. (2016). Knowing feminism: The significance of higher education to women's narratives of 'becoming feminist'. *Gender and Education, 28*(3), 471–476. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1167842.

Guillard, J. (2016). Is feminism trending? Pedagogical approaches to countering (SI)activism. *Gender and Education, 28*(5), 609–626. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2015.1123227.

Hekman, S. (1999). *The future of differences: Truth and method in feminist theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Yaiser, M. L. (Eds.). (2004). *Feminist perspectives on social research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hooks, B. (2000). *Feminist theory: From margin to center* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: South End.

Irigary, L. (1985). *Speculum of the other woman*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Jones, S., & Hughes, H. E. (2016). Changing the place of teacher education: Feminism, fear, and pedagogical paradoxes. *Harvard Educational Review, 86*(2), 161–182.

Schumann, C. (2016). Knowledge for a common world? On the place of feminist epistemology in philosophy of education. *Education Sciences*, *6*(10). https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci6010010.

Skrla, L. (2003). Mourning silence: Women superintendents (and a researcher) rethink speaking up and speaking out. In M. D. Young & L. Skrla (Eds.), *Reconsidering feminist research in educational leadership* (pp. 103–128). Albany: SUNY.

Wallace, J., & Wallin, D. (2015). 'The voice inside herself': Transforming gendered academic identities in educational administration. *Gender and Education, 27*(4), 412–429. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2015.1019838.

Weiler, K. (2001). Rereading Paulo Freire. In K. Weiler (Ed.), *Feminist engagements: Reading, resisting, and revisioning male theorists in education and cultural studies* (pp. 67–88). New York: Routledge.

Wollstonecraft, M. (2004). *A vindication of the rights of woman*. London, UK: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1792).

Amy Burns, Ph.D. is the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs in Education with the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary. She has worked extensively in both the K-12 public school system as well as in the post-secondary context. Her research interests focus on two primary areas including feminist leadership in education and the role of leadership in pre-service teacher education.

Challenging and Critiquing Notions of Servant Leadership: Lessons from My Mother

Sarah Elaine Eaton

Abstract In this chapter I offer a critique of Greenleaf's notion of servant leadership through a feminist lens. I reflect on my own formative experience as the child living in the servants' quarters of an English estate home where my mother served in the combined role of housekeeper, cook, maid, and scullery maid. I discuss the sense of perpetual humiliation and shame she felt living as a servant and how she emphasized the importance of education as a means to lift oneself out of poverty. I consider servant leadership as romanticized approach that fails to consider the aspects of servitude such as the subjugation of those who serve because they have no other choice. I consider how servant leadership has evolved to have an almost-pathological following, but without deep scholarly considerations of the limitations of this approach. I note that previous critiques of servant leadership have been dismissed by its proponents, resulting in a lack of criticality about this approach to leadership that was popularized by a white, middle-class American man whose lived experience never included working as a servant as his only means of survival.

Keywords Servant leadership · Critique · Higher education · Women · Feminism

In this chapter I share my experience as a woman and as a scholar whose early formative experiences shaped my education, career, and my life overall. The values I hold are fundamentally rooted in hard work, sometimes to the point of exhaustion, as a means to rise above one's circumstances. It is not uncommon for women, particularly those from less-privileged circumstances, to feel they must work harder than men to prove themselves (LaPan, Hodge, Peroff, & Henderson, 2013), while at the same time undervaluing their work by accepting less pay than male colleagues of similar rank and experience (Easterly & Ricard, 2011; Gee & Norton, 2009). This chapter is a narrative of tenacity, persistence, and success despite feelings of guilt and inadequacy (Burns, Brown, Eaton, & Mueller, 2017).

S. E. Eaton (✉)
University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: seaton@ucalgary.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_2

Formative Experience

Both of my parents had a grade 10 education, though my mother later earned her General Education Diploma (GED) that was equivalent to high school completion. When I was five years old and my mother was seven months pregnant with my parents fourth child, my father left. With little education and very little work experience, she had few options for employment. Being an immigrant from England, she also had no family in Canada to offer emotional or psychological support. She gave up their fourth child for adoption, while trying to figure out how to feed the remaining three of us.

My memories of that time are blurry. I think my older brother ran away or went to live with some friends and my sister went to live with my paternal grandparents. I have never been able to reconstruct an accurate picture of what happened with the rest of my siblings during that time. I remember that my mother took me to England where she at least had family to lean on. I have written about this pivotal time in my early life elsewhere (Eaton, 2012). One particular day remains as a flashbulb memory, one of those "sundry private shocks" (Brown & Kulk, 1977) of a crucial day that shaped those that followed.

After returning to her natal homeland, my mother took the job of a live-in housekeeper for a wealthy family in Kent. I sometimes try to explain this time to others by referring to the television show, "Downton Abbey" (Fellowes, 2010). The house and grounds were impressive, with flower and vegetable gardens, livestock, stables, and other buildings across the property that housed equipment and animals.

My mother and I lived in the servants' quarters of the main house. There was a separate entrance that led into a large working kitchen. There was a time when the family had numerous servants working in the house, but the number of staff had dwindled over the decades. By the time we arrived in the mid 1970s, the only other staff besides my mother was the gardener. He lived with his wife in a separate house further away on the estate.

Our life was confined to the female servants' quarters. There was an area of the house reserved for a butler as well, but by that point, there was no butler and no need for that section of the house to be open. That, too, was closed off to us.

My mother's role was that of all female servants rolled into one: housekeeper, cook, scullery maid, and whatever other roles that needed filling. At the back of the kitchen there was a set of narrow, spiraling stairs leading to a dormitory-style bedroom upstairs, lined with six single beds, one for each of the female staff. The dormitory was set up for single girls who would have followed a strict hierarchy, starting with the scullery maid at the lowest end, leading up to the main housekeeper. There was no space or place for small children in the dormitory.

Given that my mother was the only female staff member at the time, the family allowed me to have one of the other beds. Naturally, there were strict rules that I was never to enter the main section of the house. The family of the estate was doing my mother a favor by allowing her to have a child with her in the house, but they certainly did not want me to be seen or heard.

I did not mind though, especially since there was a small sitting room for us off the kitchen that had a TV. There was no cable for us, of course, but that did not matter. Every night after supper had been served, the dishes were washed and the kitchen was spotless, my Mum and I would snuggle up on the little settee and watch a program on BBC before bed. My favorite was "Dr. Who". Every night, we watched one show and then headed up stairs to the dormitory.

My Mum regularly started work at 5:00 a.m. with preparations for the day, cleaning and getting ready for breakfast to be served at 6:30 a.m. Looking back, I cannot imagine how tired she must have been on a daily basis. But I never remember her complaining about being tired. She was English and had been trained to have a stiff upper lip, as is the British custom.

One day I arrived home from school to find my mother doing the job she had come to hate most in the world, de-feathering and "drawing" (also known as "gutting") a chicken. The process involves plunging the chicken, headfirst, into a pot of scalding hot (but not boiling) water for a few seconds to soften up the feathers and kill any lice or fleas. Then, holding the chicken by its feet, she would pull out its feathers one by one. The smaller pinfeathers that were impossible to pick out by hand were either removed with small pliers or singed with a match. She worked without gloves, which meant that her hands became cut up and sore from the scratch of the quills.

The smell was the most memorable part of the experience. It is the kind of smell one never forgets. She would do this job in the scullery, the small room just off the kitchen, reserved for such unpleasant tasks. I remembered that she worked. And worked. And worked.

While my mother worked in the house, I was sent off to school. I went to a local school that most Canadians and Americans would call a "private school". It was not a particularly high-ranking school, as I remember, but it was the best Mum could afford. She was adamant that I not attend a state school. She was emphatic that the level of education in the private schools was better.

The uniform consisted of a white collared shirt that had to be perfectly starched and pressed, a grey tunic dress, and a tie. I had no idea what to do with a tie, so my mother would carefully tie it for me every morning for the first few weeks, until I learned to tie a sailor knot on my own. I remember those moments as being intermingled with commentary, such as: "I know you don't like this uniform, but it's a privilege, young lady. A good part of my hard-earned money goes to paying for this school. You'd best quit your grumbling!"

If anything was drilled into my head in that year, it was that education was tantamount. It required sacrifice on her part. My part of the deal was to approach school as if it were a sacred privilege, and honor the experience through rigorous rituals of daily disciplined homework and respect for education.

The phrase "to have pluck" or "to have guts" means to be courageous or to be brave. I suspect my Mum did not feel particularly courageous as she was holding the chicken by its feet, plucking its feathers, as the first step in its preparation. After

the plucking comes the drawing (disemboweling) the fowl and, if appropriate, de-boning it. That sounds disgusting, but it was nothing compared to the process of de-feathering it.

She came to hate those days when she would be brought a freshly killed chicken from the barn and had to prepare it for supper that evening. She hated it even more when guests were invited and there may have been up to four chickens to pluck and gut before starting to cook the actual meal. I remember one such Saturday clearly. She was muttering under her breath in the scullery when I came downstairs first thing in the morning. I went to the scullery and found her bent over a bucket with a chicken that she was in the middle of de-feathering. I asked, "Are you OK?"

She looked up at me with tears filling her eyes and said, "Whatever you do, child, don't be like me. Don't be a servant. Get an education and have a better life. Whatever you do, don't pluck chickens to earn a few cents". She turned back to her fowl and kept working. Both literally and figuratively, she had pluck.

Servant Leadership Reconsidered

In the fields of education and leadership, servant leadership has long been considered highly desirable. The underlying tenet of this philosophical approach is one's desire to serve others (Greenleaf, 1998, 2002a, b, 2007). A key principle of servant leadership is that one puts serving ones followers above one's own needs or the needs of the organization, and in doing so, moves beyond self-interest (Van Dierendonck, 2010). Robert Greenleaf has arguably been the single most influential scholar on the topic. His rise to fame has been helped by endorsements from other well-known management gurus such as Covey (1994) and Senge (Bradley, 1999). Emphatic praise from the "managerial elites" (Eicher-Catt, 2005, p. 17) has led to an almost cult-like adoption of Greenleaf's teachings that is nothing short of pathological (Eicher-Catt, 2005).

The general idea of servant leadership makes sense to me on a soul-level that when we start from a desire to serve others, our moral compass remains firmly fixed on helping others, rather than exploiting them. Although the idea of the servant leadership model resonates deeply with me because of its roots in altruism, I also wrestle with it. This is exacerbated for me because the notion of servant leadership is almost sacrosanct in my field of educational leadership. To say one does not subscribe to the tenets of servant leadership is tantamount to heresy precisely because "serving and leading become almost exchangeable. Being a servant allows a person to lead; being a leader implies a person serves" (Van Dierendonck, 2010, p. 1231). Links to social justice seem to be inherently embedded in servant leadership. The "notion of servant leadership runs counter-cultural to traditional Western notions of leadership where men are heroes upholding positions of power" (Marina & Fonteneau, 2012, p. 72).

However, the definition of servant leadership varies wildly. Critics have noted that the numerous interpretations of servant leadership are vague and problematic (McLellan, 2008; Van Dierendonck, 2010). It has been asserted that the notions of

ethical or effective leadership and servant leadership have become so intertwined that any critique of servant leadership seems to be an endorsement of unethical or exploitative leadership (Bradley, 1999). So as an educator, I have been reluctant to be openly critical of servant leadership, for fear of becoming a pariah in my professional community.

This reluctance has perhaps been heighted because critiques of servant leadership seem limited. Among those that have been situated as critiques, some seem to serve only as a rebuttal of other critiques (McLellan, 2008; Reynolds, 2014). Even though it has been noted that "servant-leadership was not originally developed through research-based scholarship" (Reynolds, 2014, p. 52), advocates seem to insist on an almost unwavering discipleship of Greenleaf's ideas. Such thinly veiled dismissal of any positionality that runs counter to full and unquestioning adoption of the Greenleaf school of thought seems a bit dangerous to me. When we shut down others' critiques of ideas, it does not invite further debate on the topic. At the time of this writing, Trump is the President of United States of America and Boris Johnson is the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Stories of "fake news" permeate our daily news and the country where I spent formative time as a child is contemplating how it will move forward with its departure from the European Union. I contextualize this chapter in this geo-political snapshots to emphasize that we live in a time when deep intellectual curiosity and debate are needed more now than ever before.

Greenleaf wrote that the idea for this approach was drawn from Hermann Hesse's (1957) *Journey to the East*. Greenleaf himself notes that the meaning of Hesse's original work has been debated and there was much speculation about Hesse's life (Greenleaf, 2007). However, among those who have had the courage to engage in a critique of servant leadership, it has not been lost on us that Greenleaf and, his inspiration, Hesse, were both men of European descent. Among some of the critics of servant leadership that exist, a few have noted that the theory of servant leadership, as it has been articulated in research and management literature, is undeniably Eurocentric, and had its roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition (Liu, 2019; McLellan, 2008). The notion of servant leadership is co-constructed between those who lead and those who are led, which can result in either an over-dependence on the leader, or employees who question whether the manager is a "real leader" (Liu, 2019, p. 1108), particularly if the leader is not of European heritage.

Feminists have noted that the notion of servant leadership is not genderless and that management and scholarly literature "that explicitly discusses women or examines feminist issues through the study of servant-leadership is rare" (Reynolds, 2014, p. 51). One feminist critic observed that servant leadership espouses and upholds patriarchal norms (Eicher-Catt, 2005). Women scholars of African heritage have astutely pointed out that Dr. Martin Luther King popularized the saying, "Anyone can be great because anyone can be a servant" (Marina & Fonteneau, 2012, p. 71). Greenleaf's theories of leadership emerged shortly after King's death in 1968 (Marina & Fonteneau, 2012). Given that Greenleaf and King both lived in the United States during the civil rights movement, and that Greenleaf allegedly made a point to promote women and Blacks to "non-menial positions" (Frick, 2004) it seems strange that Greenleaf gave the nod to Hermann Hesse, another white man, as the primary

source of his inspiration. African-American scholars have pointed out that the notion of servant leadership proliferated in African-American churches during the time of slavery (Marina & Fonteneau, 2012), but the possibility of such a theoretical lineage is rarely addressed when we read about or teach the concept of servant leadership.

To the best of my knowledge, Greenleaf never actually lived a life of service. His notion of servant leadership is romantic and idyllic. It appeals to those with a deep sense of morality who seek to do good through their work and their life. Greenleaf himself said, "My good society will have strong individualism amidst community." (2007, p. 83) But when one is living as a servant to another, one's individualism does not actually matter that much. What matters is following orders, undertaking tasks such that they are performed to the expectations of one's employer, and being obedient. What matters when one is a servant is not that one be *individual*, but that one be *invisible*. Greenleaf talks about the noble aspects of serving, but seems not to recognize there is a societal divide between those whose titles deem them to be part of the nobility and those whose life of servitude means that even if they act in ways which seem noble, they themselves will never be part of the nobility. Greenleaf's apparent obliviousness to the subjugation of those who actually live as servants has been noted by others (Bradley, 1999; Eicher-Catt, 2005), but his oversight has been largely absent from general discourse about servant leadership.

My mind goes back to that day in the scullery… To my mother's tearful plea that I get an education and "not be a servant". To her, being a servant was the worst and lowest possible job that anyone could have that was still considered an honest living. It was the only job she could get at the time, given her education, lack of experience, lack of a personal network, and limited employment skills.

The difference, I think, between being the kind of servant leader that Greenfield and others talk about in their work and the kind of servant that my mother actually was is choice… and freedom. The "desire to serve" is easy to talk about when the reality does not require plucking and gutting freshly killed animals. A life of servitude means that you do not have the option of declining or delegating tasks you find distasteful or reprehensible. You do not do the tasks because it is the "right", or "just", or moral thing to do. You do them because your employer could (and would) impose harsh consequences that could cost you your livelihood if you did not.

That time in our lives was about survival. It was not until years later (decades, actually) that I realized that there is a certain shame that comes with survival. There is a desperation that simmers underneath, a gagging need to hope for something better, and an unspoken fear that the dark days will never end.

This is an era of my life that I have disclosed to few people, until the past few years. The truth is that I have been ashamed of it. My mother lived in a state of perpetual humiliation during that time. She was ashamed to have us live in servants' quarters and not have a proper home of our own. We eventually came back to Canada. She took night classes and earned her GED, got a job in a library, and life got better. Even so, we never owned a home, or even a car. And the scars of shame about her life of service remained for many years.

The time we spent living in England was deeply formative for me in terms of my values and life direction. Every single day I was reminded of the value of education

and how important it was and that it was worth almost any sacrifice. When I think about the millions of immigrants in Canada, the United States, and other countries today who work as taxi drivers, janitors and factory workers, because it is the best job that they can get to feed their families. It is not unlikely that immigrant parents in "serving" jobs are saying the same things to their children today that my mother said to me some 40 years ago. They want a better life for their children, one that offers them freedom from servitude, oppression, poverty, and loneliness. For those who serve not by choice, but out of necessity, an escape from that life can be an unending quest.

I am cautious today, when I talk about servant leadership, cognizant that models are sometimes just that—theoretical aspirations we work from when we try to do good. In North America particularly, I think we are almost obsessed by the idea that the power of positive thinking can help us overcome anything. The reality is that having the choice to live one way or another, work and act in a certain way, is driven partly by our own psyche and partly by our circumstances. When the circumstances get better, so the psyche can thrive, too. But before we can thrive, we must survive.

Deep down, my mother was a most reluctant servant. Naturally, she kept up the formalities and appearance of being a good servant, which is, of course, part of the job. But she was deeply ashamed of being a servant. And she wished for me to be anything but that.

My Life as a Scholar

Those formative experiences influenced me deeply. I learned to value education above all else. I became the first person in my immediate family to earn an undergraduate degree. I remember my mother feeling helpless that she could not help me with the admissions application because she had no experience with such processes. It nevertheless mattered to her very much not only that I apply, but that I be accepted. Throughout my post-secondary education, I often had the sense that other students whose parents had degrees had no idea that they were starting with an advantage. They simply took it for granted that others knew how to navigate higher education. I, on the other hand, often felt like I was navigating in the dark, never knowing what the next obstacle would be or when it would appear.

Being the child of a servant meant that I had been taught to be respectful and obedient, to know my place, and to be seen and not heard. These values were—and sometimes still are—at odds with life in the academy, where one is expected to debate ideas with confidence, ask questions, and challenge ideas. Even though I write this chapter as a scholar with a full-time academic tenure-track job, I can easily reflect on moments where the values of my upbringing are at odds with the demands of my role. I recall a moment at a meeting recently where a senior female colleague nudged me in the ribs and whispered in my ear, "Say something! You're the expert in the room on this topic!" I fight my tendency to listen and keep quiet on a regular basis.

I have found few other women of European background whose experiences are similar to mine. When I read the writings of women scholars of African heritage whose experiences include wrestling with servitude as part of their lived experience (Marina & Fonteneau, 2012), their stories resonate with me, but I am cognizant that their experience differs from mine in deeply fundamental ways. I have had countless privileges as a white woman that they have not had. I cannot claim to know their experiences and I recognize that it would be egregiously wrong to do so.

It seems to me that there is a larger critique of servant leadership that must be undertaken, not only from feminists but also from those who study class, poverty, and decolonization. That critique is beyond the scope of a single chapter, but it is worth emphasizing that there are undeniable power, control, and injustice issues embedded in service that must be explored by scholars through a critical lens. There are further notions of Christianity entangled with servant leadership, such that the two sometimes become inseparable, making critiques of this approach more treacherous, as arguments against servant leadership can be taken as a rejection of Christian values.

For more than forty years, women scholars have been writing about how women's exclusion in the academy has been "an active and brutal process" (Smith, 1975). As I look around me today, I see women in positions of leadership who have become not only mentors, but friends. We have more opportunities for advancement and leadership than ever before. I recognize that although I may not have roots in a community of the intellectual elite, I nevertheless enjoy a position of privilege today. I also recognize that part of my development as an academic and as a leader involve not only finding my voice but using it.

My research focuses on academic integrity and applied ethics in educational contexts. Part of that work includes an obsession with having my students track down and consult primary sources. I insist that they cultivate a conscious reluctance to be satisfied with secondary sources. I have read and re-read Greenleaf's original works numerous times since I was a graduate student. Only now do I feel confident expressing a critique of one of the allegedly great leadership theorists of my field. This is part of what I feel I can do—and must do—with my voice as a scholar: speak up. It behooves us as educators, scholars, and academics to be skeptical. Discipleship is the enemy of criticality. We cannot engage in critical reflection if we insist on following a particular school of thought without scrutiny of the ideas stemming from it.

I continue to think deeply about what it means to be a leader, an educator, and a scholar. I continue to struggle with a notion of servant leadership that has been espoused almost without criticism that was popularized by white men who never lived a life of service. For me, those moments in the scullery led to a path in the ivory tower, but I have never forgotten my roots.

References

Bradley, Y. (1999). Servant leadership: A critique of Robert Greenleaf's concept of leadership. *Journal of Christian Education, 42*(2), 43–54.

Brown, R., & Kulik, J. (1977). Flashbulb memories. *Cognition, 5*(1), 73–99. https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0277(77)90018-X.
Burns, A., Brown, B., Eaton, S. E., & Mueller, K. (2017). A day in the life: An examination of women's choices in the academy. *Journal of Educational Thought, 50*(2&3), 118–137.
Covey, S. (1994). New wine, old bottles. *Executive Excellence, 11*(12), 3.
Easterly, D. M., & Ricard, C. S. (2011). Conscious efforts to end unconscious bias: Why women leave academic research. *Journal of Research Administration, 42*(1), 61–73.
Eaton, S. E. (2012, January 20). A year of inspired insights: Servant leadership in the scullery. Retrieved from https://drsaraheaton.wordpress.com/2012/01/20/a-year-of-inspired-insights-3-servant-leadership-in-the-scullery/.
Eicher-Catt, D. (2005). The myth of servant-leadership: A feminist perspective. *Women and Language, 28*(1), 17–25.
Fellowes, J. (2010). Downton Abbey. United Kingdom: ITV.
Frick, D. M. (2004). *Robert K. Greenleaf: A life of servant leadership*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
Gee, M. V., & Norton, S. M. (2009, Fall). Improving the status of women in the academy. *Thought & Action*, 163–170. Retrieved from http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/TA09WomenAcademy.pdf.
Greenleaf, R. K. (1998). *Power of servant leadership* (1st ed.). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
Greenleaf, R. K. (2002a). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness* (25th anniversary ed.). New York: Paulist Press.
Greenleaf, R. K. (2002b). *Teacher as servant: A parable*. Newton Centre: Robert K. Greenleaf Center.
Greenleaf, R. (2007). The servant as leader. In W. C. Zimmerli, M. Holzinger, & K. Richter (Eds.), *Corporate ethics and corporate governance* (pp. 79–85). Berlin: Springer.
Hesse, H. (1957). *Journey to the east* (H. Rosner, Trans.). New York: Noonday Press.
LaPan, C., Hodge, C., Peroff, D., & Henderson, K. A. (2013). Female faculty in higher education: the politics of hope. *Schole: A Journal of Leisure Studies and Recreation Education, 28*(2), 1. https://doi.org/10.1080/1937156x.2013.11949702.
Liu, H. (2019). Just the servant: An intersectional critique of servant leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics, 156*(4), 1099–1112. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3633-0.
Marina, B. M., & Fonteneau, D. Y. (2012). Servant leaders who picked up the broken glass. *Journal of Pan African Studies, 5*(2), 67–83.
McClellan, J. (2008). The emergence, expansion, and critique of servant leadership as a leadership philosophy. *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership, 4*(1), 281–302.
Reynolds, K. (2014). Servant-leadership: A feminist perspective. *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership, 10*(1), 35–63.
Smith, D. E. (1975). An analysis of ideological structures and how women are excluded: considerations for academic women. *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue canadienne de sociologie, 12*(4), 353–369. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1755-618X.1975.tb00543.x.
Van Dierendonck, D. (2010). Servant leadership: A review and synthesis. *Journal of Management, 37*(4), 1228–1261. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206310380462.

Sarah Elaine Eaton, Ph.D. is a faculty member at the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary. She has worked in post-secondary contexts in a variety of roles since 1994. Her research interests focus on higher education leadership, policy and governance, with specific expertise in applied ethics and integrity.

Her Stories

Karen Ragoonaden

Abstract In *Her Stories*, a newly promoted professor revisits the complexities of a professional life mired in intense competition where individual success is measured by single-authored publications, securing international funding, seeking national and international collaborations and acclaimed recognition in one's field. Her narrative examines the tensions surrounding the lived experiences of female academics navigating the gendered and racialized contexts of higher education. Drawing from theoretical foundations of critical qualitative inquiry, self-study, and feminist epistemologies, she discusses the elusive sisterhood, where women in academia weave work together, promoting and encouraging self and others to achieve their highest potentials and contributing in healthy ways to challenging work contexts. As a racialized woman thriving in academia, she reflects on the demands of teaching, research and service, struggling to balance work with a rich life at home as a mother, a partner, a sister, and a daughter. While she recognizes the collective strength of her many female colleagues in North America, in Europe, and in Asia, this chapter concludes with counsel to stand up boldly and courageously finding the collective strength to articulate the micro-inequities and micro-aggressions that pervade the professional experiences of women negotiating life in the academy.

Keywords Professors · Women · Academy · Micro-inequities · Micro-aggressions · Critical inquiry · Self-study · Feminism

Sometimes it is difficult to find home. This is especially true for one's academic home. It is vital for one's intellectual health and vitality to find a place where one feels comfortable and is able to express one's self in a supportive environment; a place where one can try out ideas, come to know new colleagues, find informal mentors, be introduced to new concepts, and feel the support of that community when back at one's own institution (Taylor & Coia, 2014, p. xiii).

Until recently, when I emerged from the tenure and promotion process as a professor, I felt that I had no academic home. Looking back on my trajectory, I recognized

K. Ragoonaden (✉)
University of British Columba Okanagan, Kelowna, BC, Canada
e-mail: karen.ragoonaden@ubc.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_3

that my professional life was mired in intense competition where individual success was measured by single-authored publications, obtaining international funding, national and international collaborations and acclaimed recognition in one's field. With a sigh of relief coupled with waves of exhaustion, my chapter examines the tensions surrounding the lived experiences of a female academic navigating the gendered and racialized contexts of higher education. I draw from the theoretical foundations of critical qualitative inquiry, self-study, and feminist epistemologies. Of particular interest is my search for the elusive sisterhood, where women in academia weave work together, promoting and encouraging self and others to achieve their highest potentials and contributing in healthy ways to challenging work contexts. As a racialized woman thriving in academia, I have often felt overwhelmed by the demands of the teaching, research and service, struggling to balance work with my rich life at home as a mother, a partner, a sister, and a daughter. I am not alone in this observation. As I recognize the collective strength of my many female colleagues in North America, in Europe, and in Asia, this chapter concludes with counsel to stand up boldly and courageously finding the strength to articulate the micro-inequities and micro-aggressions that pervade about our experiences.

In 2017, the viral progression of the #MeToo movement encouraged women around the world to share their stories of sexual harassment and assault. Tarana Burke founded the movement in 2006 to spread awareness and understanding about sexual assault in underprivileged communities of colour. Almost ten years later, spearheaded by female celebrities reacting to the Weinstein Case, #MeToo became a hashtag central to the global push for increased women's rights and a symbol of resistance and resilience. As the hashtag and all that it represented crossed boundaries and borders, I started to systematically reflect on the tensions surrounding my lived experiences on the pathway of a tenured professor.

It is within the context of Lincoln and Denzin's (1994, p. 575) *fifth moment*, by being present and engaged, that I reflect on the policies and practices in higher education, with specific reference to my campus. For at least a decade, my female colleagues and I have been enduring daily micro-inequities, rampant misogyny, and the unfurling of hostile work environments (Rowe, 1974, 1990). This despite academic policies and practice which, in theory, support inclusion and gender equality (Ragoonaden, 2010).

In keeping with my career path, my narrative inquiry emerges from a self-study of teaching and teacher education practices, providing me with parameters to explore activist-oriented research based on social critique (Kitchen & Russell, 2012; Ragoonaden, 2010, 2014, 2015a, 2015b). In self-study of teacher education practices (S-STEP), research begins with the self (Loughran, 2004). Being self-focused and self-directed, the aim of S-STEP is to reconceptualize and to improve practice in authentic, sustainable ways. The notion of the self is necessarily complicated, navigating between the flux of identity and mainstream understandings of knowledge. Bullough and Pinnegar (2001), citing the "humanistic commitment of the qualitative researcher to study the world … from the perspective of the interacting individual" (p. 13), recognize that self-study's appeal "reflects the postmodern academic focus

on identity, power and privilege on self-formation" (p. 14). Furthermore, the "articulation of the personal never really becomes research until it is connected through evidence and analysis to the issues and troubles of a time and place" (p. 15). At this point in my career, the goal of my inquiry became increasingly focused on what Pinar (2004) considers complicated conversations (pp. 191–193) critically examining how my gender and my race impacted the conditions of not only my work, but reflected the experiences of women academics in higher education.

As part of my conference presentations at the American Educational Research Association (AERA), I became acquainted with Taylor and Coia's (2014) examination of gendered power and privilege. Taylor and Coia's discussion of gender, feminism, and queer theory is representative of their focus to introduce social justice issues to educational practices. They recognize the importance of community in supporting scholars pushing the boundaries by seeking ways to disrupt traditional, patriarchal canons with alternative knowledges. They reveal that numerous self-studies incorporate feminist research methods into their modes of investigation. Citing Strong-Wilson (2005), they refer to this construction of female travel narratives as "feminitopias". Their approach encourages reframing (Schön, 1983) by creating a heightened sense of the value of noticing (Mason, 2002, 2009; Mason et al., 2006), two key components of quality in pedagogical reasoning and practice.

Adhering to the premise that because we are women in education, "our positions are feminist", Luke and Gore (2013) align feminism in education with critical pedagogy (p. 5). Linked to movements in emancipation, authentic libratory teaching, and the rejection of patriarchy, critical feminist pedagogies actively explore how knowledges are created along with greater understandings and awareness of society's socialization and normalization of white, male power and privilege. Greene (2013) addresses the importance of relational, practice-centred, contextualized, open-ended practices while refuting the old authorities and undermining traditional institutional controls. It is from this perspective that I view my self-study as a feminist firmly anchored in questioning and interrogating the circles of gendered and racialized power and privilege in academia.

Like many other feminist educators, I found my strength by engaging in scholarship and research with other women academics. In my experience, my collaborative efforts with male colleagues were dismal failures, mostly because I carried the load of researching, writing, and presenting. Never again! Despite cajoling and fierce exhortations, I usually solo-authored the article, the conference presentation and the funding application that we submitted. As Luke and Gore (2013) eloquently state, *we all stand hip-deep in cultures saturated with phallocentric knowledges, in institutional structures ruled epistemologically and procedurally by men and masculinist signifiers, and in a discipline which, despite its historical terrain as women's work, a caring profession, remains the theoretical and administrative custody of men* (p. 4).

While I strive to co-create the foundations of a collaborative and inclusive work environment in my workplace, I am very aware of an undercurrent of misogyny purposefully marginalizing my performativity and the performativity of my female colleagues. Recently, in a year in which I received highly competitive Tri-Council

funding, published four articles, and presented at international, national, and provincial conferences, my colleagues, elected committee members, denied me merit. Did it matter that my elected colleagues were all men? Did it matter that they arbitrarily applied the merit criteria to some and not others, specifically the only racialized woman in the department?

In *Warrior Women: Remaking Postsecondary Places Through Relational Narrative Inquiry*, Young et al. (2012) frame and promote the importance of decolonizing education and creating more inclusive and generous spaces in postsecondary settings. While the focus of the ten co-authors is on Indigenous learners in higher education, I suggest that *Warrior Women* is exactly what higher education needs for women academics. For example, the ten women embody, throughout the work, a collective approach to authorship. All of the writers involved share their voices, both individual and collectively through the narrative circles held during the course of their writing. This narrative distillation and shared discourses are the *stories to live by* Clandinin (2015), Connelly and Clandinin (1999)—the stories that give us hope, inspiration, and the courage to progress in the face of inequality. Long before, the commodification of the term *mindfulness*, Young et al. (2012) lead us to be "mindful and wakeful" as we strive to build relational communities of learning based on patience, trust, and engagement.

Along the same lines, Aiston (2019) loudly decries the underrepresentation of women academics in the senior ranks and leadership positions in higher education as an enduring social justice issue. In a move to understanding how and why women academics experience the higher education profession differently to their male colleagues, Aiston proposes that the silence of, and silencing of, academic women is at the heart of this underrepresentation.

Accordingly, *internal silencing* refers to internal barriers experienced by many academic women: an unease in saying no, a lack of confidence, a fear of failure, and a sense that women should remain quiet. As a consequence of socialization and gender stereotyping, the decision to remain silent, despite discriminatory comments, unconscious and conscious biases and prejudiced behaviour, for many women becomes a safe and strategic decision protecting future career prospects including merit awards.

Aiston (2019) identifies several examples of *external silencing*, which often occurs when academic women speak out. Examples include women not being allowed to express their views, being interrupted, having their views attacked, and their ideas attributed to male colleagues, or, in my case, experiencing formal bullying and harassment charges. A further dimension to external silencing is *silence by exclusion* from significant decision-making committees (recruitment, promotion, research, and budgets), from consultation, informal and social conversations.

Following this critical examination of internal and external silencing, Aiston refers to the concept of micro-inequities as central to our understanding of how and why academic women voices are muted. Micro-inequities (Rowe, 1990) are small, sometimes daily events, which are hard to prove, covert, and often unintentional. Acknowledging that the discrimination academic women experience is subtle and almost intangible, the study of micro-inequities is an important part of gender equity work. While individual instances of micro-inequities may seem innocuous, the cumulative effects can

account for large-scale differences in outcome, in positions in senior leadership, and a detrimental effect on health and well-being. Subsequently, it is important to examine the aggregate effects of micro-inequities and discriminatory, biased practices that impede career progression.

Brubaker (2014) recognizes the complex and nuanced ways in which gender is constructed across the programmatic university structures, experiencing how these environments were symptoms and manifestations of male hegemonic power and privilege. As he progressed through tenure-track, he became increasingly aware of the jointly constructed nature of gender oppression. He developed a deeper understanding of the complexity of male positionality in predominantly female faculties. He engaged in discourses where the focus was less on the emancipation of women but on the systems of domination and the interrelatedness of race, class, religion, and other forms of social oppression concerning gendered identities.

Concurrently, Marso (2006) noted how women often felt positioned within this double entanglement of balancing the demands of intellectual life and femininity (mother, wife, daughter, and sister). I acknowledge this entanglement, often feeling depleted by the amount of work that seemed to land in my capable hands, and recognizing the service and administrative work being sidestepped by many of my male colleagues. While I appreciated and enjoyed the opportunities to work with many colleagues to shape the direction of our faculty, I wondered why the balance of the service and administrative work seemed to be upheld by my female academics. During the past 15 years, I have, along with my female colleagues, experienced ongoing silencing, micro-inequities leading to chronic stress and incredible fatigue.

Ensconced in an institutional culture lacking equitable structures relating to race, gender, and social justice, I navigated the pathways of my academic career with much trepidation and angst. Negotiating the contradictions in my personal and professional lives, and dealing with issues of power, privilege, resistance, while balancing the demands of performativity took its toll on my sense of self and my sense of well-being (Acker & Dillabough, 2007; Blackmore, 2002; Cherkowski & Bosetti, 2014; Ragoonaden, 2015a). To this day, I still rise at 4:30 am or 5:00 am to write, to review, and to respond to emails. In my quest to find balance, to be kind and compassionate to myself, I am, now, making concerted efforts to support my wellness. So, I often have to force myself to wait for the sun to rise before I begin my day. I know that I am not alone in this; a familiar scenario playing out every day for innumerable women, regardless of context, time, and geographical location.

My experiences are similar to many women crossing gendered and racialized boundaries (Acker & Dillabough, 2007; Denker, 2009; Saunderson, 2002), struggling with the lack of structure, policy, and practices to support equity in academia. What is lost, first and foremost, is the sense of belonging and a sense of wellness in academia (Mason, Goulden, & Wolfinger, 2006; Pillay, 2009). We, as female academics, are not always at home nor are we well. As we converge, edited books like *Women negotiating life in the academy: A Canadian perspective* (Eaton & Burns, Eds.) provide a space to share our stories, specifically, *Her Stories.* By examining and interrogating the inner and outer silencing, the micro-inequities, and the micro-aggressions faced in our daily workplaces including the secondary impact on our personal lives, we realize that we

are not alone. As we stand, together, despite our successes, on the brink of exhaustion and burnout, it is our writing that unites us. On a more personal level, those of us who can, seek out like-minded colleagues, either down the hallway or at conferences, symposiums, social media, and research centres. United by technology, in a different city, country, or continent, our stories remain the same. Carving friendships within this sisterhood, though challenging, can offer a space for solace, comfort, and also for sharing joys and triumphs at work and in personal lives.

It is also from within this time and space that I consider how wellness, reflective of alternate and different ways of being and doing, can be enacted and embodied in academia. Recognizing the neo-liberal conceptions of success abounding in universities, there is an inherent loneliness in negotiating this chosen life path of a female academic. As seen in the literature, the quest for equality and for integration between professional and personal identities resonates in the narratives of many academic women and in the choices they make regarding how to live their lives. Inspired by the work of academic women bringing the multitude of their voices together, I seek out through my writing and their writing, and through our intentional personal and professional collaborative stances to co-create institutional cultures and practices that support the promotion of equitable and democratic practices relating to gender and race.

In keeping with the critical feminist literature cited, I am deeply engaged in education with a purpose seeking out the *fifth moment* by being present, engaged, and committed to activist research. I aim to create communities of inquiry—characterized by "caring, funfilled human relationships, which are at the core of human flourishing" (Yos, 2012, p. 52) as we engage in scholarship and research aimed at advancing democratic and equitable practices.

In this chapter, I have not only shared my thoughts and commentary about the tensions surrounding my lived experiences but also those of female academics navigating the gendered and racialized contexts of higher education. Using a self-study method (Kitchen & Russell, 2012; Samaras et al., 2004), I have documented my experiences through critical reflective stances focusing on a pathway that is inclusive, hopeful, positioning wellness as foundational stepping stone. Through this self-study, I have found common ground in my search for equity within the academy. At this point in my career, I recognize that the marginalized positionality of women in higher education is acknowledged in the literature (Luke & Gore, 2013; Taylor & Coia, 2014). We are all concerned with balancing the multifaceted aspects of our lived lives, personally and professionally, our own values and integrity with contemporary political perspectives, and our commitment to democratic rights. Despite our unique historical, social, cultural, linguistic, and political landscapes, we, as women in academia, all have a collective yearning to express and make our ideas heard through scholarship and through the written word, both of which we now recognize as important acts of freedom from the policies and constraints that shape our respective environments. As a result, I posit that we can change the narrative and positively reframe our perspectives, develop confidence, and gain both personal and collective strength and optimism to move forward, to take risks, and to not be afraid of the voices that oversee our careers. As I conclude my thoughts, I do recognize the

tenuous positions of my untenured colleagues, of those who are seeking stillness in the balancing act that is academia. Until that tenuousness becomes tenacity, I suggest that writing becomes a way forward constructing and re-constructing ways of being and ways of doing that are respectful, reciprocal, relevant, and responsible (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991).

References

Acker, S., & Dillabough, J. (2007). Women 'learning to labour' in the 'male emporium': Exploring gendered work in teacher education. *Gender and Education, 19*(3), 297–314.

Aiston, J. (2019). Behind the silence and silencing of academic women. *University World News: The Global Window on Higher Education.* Retrieved from https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20190314071633193

Blackmore, J. (2002). Globalization and the restructuring of higher education for new knowledge economies: New dangers or old habits troubling gender equity work in universities? *Higher Education Quarterly, 56*(4), 419–442.

Brubaker, N. (2014). *Gender, feminism, and queer theory in the self-study of teacher education practices*. In M. Taylor, & L. Coia (Eds.) *Professional learning* (pp. 111–125 15 p, vol. 17). The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Bullough, R. V., Jr., & Pinnegar, S. (2001). Guidelines for quality in autobiographical forms of self-study research. *Educational Researcher, 30*(3), 13–21.

Cherkowski, S., & Bosetti, L. (2014). Behind the veil: Academic women negotiating the demands of femininity. *Women's Studies International Forum, 45,* 19–26.

Clandinin, D. J. (2015). Stories to live by on the professional knowledge landscape. *Waikato Journal of Education*, *20*. https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v20i3.233

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1999). *Storied identities: Storied landscapes*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Denker, K. J. (2009). Doing gender in the academy: The challenges for women in the academic organization. *Women and Language, 32*(1), 103–112.

Greene, M. (2013). Forward. In C. Luke & J. Gore (Eds.), *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Kirkness, V. J., & Barnhardt, R. (1991). First Nations and higher education: The four R's respect, relevance, reciprocity, responsibility. *Journal of American Indian Education, 30*(3), 1–15.

Kitchen, J., & Russell, T. (Eds.). (2012). *Canadian perspectives on the self-study of teacher education practices*. Ottawa: Canadian Association for Teacher Education.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Denzin, N. K. (1994). The fifth moment. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 575–586). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Loughran, J. J. (2004). Learning through self-study: The influence of purpose, participants and contexts. In J. J. Loughran, M. L. Hamilton, V. K. LaBoskey, & T. Russell (Eds.), *International handbook of self-study of teacher education practices* (pp. 151–192). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Luke, C., & Gore, J. (2013). *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Marso, J. (2006). *Feminist thinkers and the demands of femininity: The lives and work of intellectual women*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Mason, J. (2002). *Researching your own practice: The discipline of noticing*. London: Routledge Falmer.

Mason, J. (2009). Teaching as disciplined enquiry. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 15*(2), 205–223.

Mason, M. A., Goulden, M., & Wolfinger, N. H. (2006). Babies matter: Pushing the gender equity revolution forward. In S. J. Bracken, J. K. Allen, & D. R. Dean (Eds.), *Balancing act: Gendered perspectives in faculty roles and work lives* (pp. 9–29). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Pillay, V. (2009). Academic mothers finding rhyme and reason. *Gender and Education, 21*(5), 501–515.

Pinar, W. F. (2004). *What is curriculum theory?*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Ragoonaden, K. (2010). Creating identity and culture in the great white north. *Citizenship, Social and Economic Education, 9*(1), 14–22.

Ragoonaden, K. (2014). Critical pedagogy and personal history. In L. Thomas (Ed.), *Becoming teacher: Sites for teacher development in Canadian teacher education* (pp. 393–415). E-book published by the Canadian Association for Teacher Education at https://sites.google.com/site/cssecate/fall-working-conference

Ragoonaden, K. (Ed.). (2015a). *Contested sites in education: The quest for the public intellectual, identity and service.* New York, NY: Peter Lang http://www.peterlang.com/download/datasheet/77879/datasheet_312506.pdf

Ragoonaden, K. (Ed.). (2015b). *Mindful teaching and learning: Developing a pedagogy of well-being*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books. An Imprint of Rowman & Littlefield.

Rowe, M. (1974). Saturn's Rings: A study of the minutiae of sexism which maintain discrimination and inhibit affirmative action results in corporations and non-profit institutions. *Graduate and Professional Education of Women. 1,* 1–9. American Association of University Women.

Rowe, M. (1990). Barriers to equality: The power of subtle discrimination. *The Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal, 3*(2), 153–163.

Samaras, A., Hicks, M., & Garvey Berger, J. (2004). Self-study through personal history. In J. J. Loughran, M. L. Hamilton, V. K. LaBoskey, & T. Russell (Eds.), *International handbook of self-study of teaching and teacher education practices* (pp. 905–942). Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Saunderson, W. (2002). Women, academia, and identity: Constructions of equal opportunities in the 'New Managerialism'—A case of lipstick on the gorilla? *Higher Education Quarterly, 56*(4), 376–406.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York: Basic Books.

Strong-Wilson, T. (2005). 'White female teacher arrives in native community with trunk and cat': Using self-study to investigate tales of traveling White teachers. In C. Mitchell, S. Weber, & K. O'Reilly Scanlon (Eds.), *Just who do we think we are? Methodologies for autobiography and self-study in teaching* (pp. 218–230). New York, NY: RoutledgeFalmer.

Taylor, M., & Coia, L. (2014). *Gender, feminism, and queer theory in the self-study of teacher education practices*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Yos, T. (2012). Raising the bar: Love, the community of inquiry, and the flourishing life. *Educational Perspectives, 44,* 52–57.

Young, M. I., Joe, L., Lamoureux, J., Marshall, L., Moore, D., Orr, J.-L., et al. (2012). *Warrior women: Remaking postsecondary places through relational narrative inquiry*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing.

Karen Ragoonaden, Ph.D. is a Professor of Teaching in the Okanagan School of Education of the University of British Columbia's Okanagan Campus, Canada. Fluently bilingual in English and French, her teaching practice and academic research focus on a pedagogy of well-being through Mindfulness and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. She is recognized for her educational leadership in the conceptualization and development of the stress management and resiliency techniques (smartEducation) curriculum, integrating well-being initiatives in teacher education and in professional development contexts.

Mentoring as Support for Women in Higher Education Leadership

Diane P. Janes, Lorraine M. Carter and Lorna E. Rourke

Abstract In this chapter, we build on our previous work on the transition of women to leadership in higher education in Canada (Carter & Janes, 2018). Based on a review of the leadership development (LD) and mentorship literature and informal conversations with female colleagues at Canadian universities who provided permission to have their experiences shared in this chapter, we consider the role of mentorship in this professional progression. The chapter is a response to a movement which encourages women to mentor women (Carter & Janes, 2018) and, given the limited representation of women in leadership in higher education today which Block and Tietjen-Smith (2016) associate with a "lack of purposeful mentoring by same-gender role models," this informal "conversation about leadership, mentorship, and women in higher education is timely" (p. 306).

Keywords Leadership development · Gendered organizations · Mentoring · Critical-social theory · Equity

Introduction

Historically, women in leadership have tended to work in the so-called helping professions such as elementary and secondary education and nursing. Increasingly, however, women are finding their way into senior leadership roles in business, technology, medicine, and academe. While there is a change afoot, leadership in universities continues to be male dominated. Moreover, the route to leadership for strong female academics and administrators is often complex.

D. P. Janes (✉)
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: Diane.janes@sait.ca

L. M. Carter
McMaster University, Hamilton, ON, Canada
e-mail: cartel1@mcmaster.ca

L. E. Rourke
St. Jerome University, Waterloo, ON, Canada
e-mail: lornaerourke@gmail.com

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_4

The general nature of leadership in Canadian universities, the prevalence (or lack thereof) of female leaders, leadership development programs, and the role of mentoring of women by women are explored in this chapter. Notably here, leadership is conceptualized as that which effects change and is different from management (Cameron & Green, 2012; Graban, 2012; Rose & Bergman, 2016). Mentoring is a relationship-based partnership that may be informal or formal in nature (Inzer & Crawford, 2005).

The informing literature review presents leadership development approaches and how they pertain to women in universities. In turn, highlights from informal conversations we conducted with diverse female leaders in Canadian universities at various stages of their careers are presented. The chapter closes with what we have learned about the women's views about mentorship and leadership in the context of present-day trends.

Literature Review

A Brief Overview of Contemporary Leadership

For many years, the literature on leadership is connected principally to the world of business. Today, this is changing. Discussion of leadership is prevalent across all professions, just as there are growing bodies of literature on the differences between leadership and management, male and female leaders, leadership in specific sectors such as higher education, and how to foster leadership through diverse strategies.

As a starting point, for many years, leadership was conceptualized as a top-down phenomenon. However, according to McKimm and O'Sullivan (2012), today's leaders need "to practice in very different ways, responding to increased complexity, demographic change, technological advances, global economic trends… increased…involvement [by stakeholders], and accountability" (p. 485).

A distinct characteristic of contemporary leadership is its shared nature. Kotter (2013) notes that "the notion that a few extraordinary people at the top can provide all the leadership needed today is ridiculous and it's a recipe for failure" (para. 9). If contemporary leadership builds on the ideas of shared responsibility and collaboration, leaders are those who can motivate others, generate enthusiasm, and harness the collective to achieve the intended results (Cameron & Green, 2012; Graban, 2012; Rose & Bergman, 2016). Given this shift and research evidence that women are often skilled collaborators and relationship builders, it follows that now is the time for women to consider leadership progression in universities and to be supported in achieving this goal.

Leadership Development Programs: From Competencies to Contextual

In complex organizations such as hospitals, medical schools, and universities, leaders may be appointed or hired into senior positions subsequent to working in a practice setting. They may or may not, however, have experienced dedicated training in leadership. As an example, Malby, Edmonstone, Ross, and Wolfenden (2011) explain how, in health care, high-performing clinicians are often moved from clinical practice to leadership without the requisite leadership mindset and skills. As Malby et al. (2011) further suggest, these talented clinicians need to learn to shift their views from "professional priorities [to] service and organizational goals…from wanting to do the very best for each individual patient, to accepting that prioritization and compromise are necessary" (p. 344). The same shift is required in universities when someone from an educational or research background finds herself in a leadership role. Progressing through the academic ranks to the roles of Department Chair, Dean, and Vice-President or taking on a senior administrative position after years of service are challenging undertakings. Unfortunately, leadership development initiatives are often made available only after the leader finds herself in the senior position, or not at all.

Many leadership programs are based on competency frameworks, which generally do not emphasize context. This orientation derives from the viewpoint that "competencies are the ideal qualities for all leaders at all levels" (Grandy & Holton, 2013, p. 62). Competency models are standardized and "do not pay attention to individual and contextual differences" (p. 61). Grandy and Holton further point out that there may be a "lack of consideration of context (social, cultural, political, and economic) in the design and delivery of LD programs" (p. 64).

A step away from more standardized leadership development programs are those grounded in the organization's philosophy and culture (Scheck-McAlearney, Fisher, Heiser, Robbins, & Kelleher, 2005). Such programs increase the "understanding of the strategic goals and direction of the organization" (Scheck-McAlearney et al. 2005, p. 18). According to Hotho and Dowling (2010), this kind of program may be more effective when "context-specific dimensions are recognized as shaping and constraining factors impacting on program participants" (p. 609) and when participants are co-creators in the experience. This way, leadership development is not an event but "an open-ended and iterative process" (Hotho & Dowling, 2010, p. 625).

There is also a school of thought that conceptualizes leadership development as a team-based interprofessional experience. As a collaborative effort between members of an organization, "the process of concentric collaboration can serve to strengthen the skills of the individual leader as well as foster collective leadership" (Roberts & Coghlan, 2011, p. 231). The practice of "extend[ing] outward to create connections with others" positively impacts social capital within an organization (Roberts & Coghlan, 2011, p. 231).

Action learning grounded in the principles of adult education and implementation of relevant projects have been identified as valuable components of leadership development programs. Storr and Trenchard (2010) recommend a cross-section of adult and person-centered learning methods including facilitator-led presentations and discussions, group work based on "live" case studies, 360-degree appraisal feedback, Socratic questioning, and negotiated projects (p. 480). Programs that blend theory with practice and that are grounded in appropriate design principles are recommended over other programs (Edmonstone, 2011, p. 13).

Learning by doing is likewise important in that applied learning tends to "stick." The added benefit of designing leadership learning this way is that it facilitates organizational improvement rather than being overly focused on the developing leader's personal qualities. The development of a leader's personal qualities is certainly important, but striking a balance between the personal and the strategic is ideal.

Mentoring and Its Role in Leadership Development

In contrast with thinking about leadership development as a program-based experience, mentorship is unique in its relationship-focused orientation. While the purpose of both approaches is the development of human capacity, mentorship involves a non-judgmental partnership built on trust so that the mentee experiences support and guidance during the process of taking on different professional responsibilities (Irby, 2017). The mentor is an experienced individual who shares knowledge and insights with someone less experienced in a relationship of trust (Arnesson & Albinsson, 2017; McKimm, Jollie & Hatter, 2007). Stated simply, the mentor is a transitional figure in an individual's development. They can be a more senior employee within an organization or a colleague with greater experience in a specific area who offers support and guidance. Generally, mentoring occurs in the face-to-face context but it can also occur virtually. In both settings, the mentor works to build the skills of the mentee and to cultivate the mentee's aptitude for self-reflection on professional practice.

There are diverse reasons why leaders may want to develop other leaders: these reasons include the importance of transferring their experience and knowledge, the opportunity to guide others on their journeys to accomplish important organizational and departmental goals, and the establishment of strategy across different levels (Tichy, 1997; Tichy & Cardwell, 2002). As well, the mentor's personal leadership skills, knowledge, and insights can be enhanced during the mentoring process (Arnesson & Albinsson, 2017; Mumford, 1993). Development through mentoring contributes to a continuous learning and leadership culture (O'Toole, 2001; Ulrich & Smallwood, 2003).

Gender and Leadership in Universities

Although women are generally recognized for their collaborative expertise and collaboration has been identified as a key characteristic of contemporary leadership, most senior leadership positions in postsecondary settings in Canada continue to be held by men (Bilen-Green, Froelich & Jacobson, 2008; Jones, 2013). Moreover, there are distinct patriarchal hierarchies within the organizational structure of universities. Tradition sits at the heart of most universities as do longstanding practices of control and dissemination, with male persons acting as the principal gatekeepers (Bilen-Green et al., 2008; Morley, 2014).

Offering a further insight into senior leadership and gender at universities, Bruner (2017) suggests that temperament and readiness are critical in the transition to a leadership position. Regarding temperament, Bruner suggests that the person requires self-confidence, resilience, humility, and an inclination to action. As for leadership readiness, progressive leadership experience, expertise in academic and non-academic settings, and action-oriented approaches are valuable.

The differences between male and female temperament relative to readiness for leadership in higher education are related, to some extent, to socialization and other realities of nature. Today, children and adolescents are often socialized differently than their parents were. In contrast, today's leaders and those aspiring to leadership were largely socialized based on their biology at birth (Little & McGivern, 2014). As an outcome of this process, some female leaders may be more nurturing than male leaders (Sherwin, 2014; Zenger & Folkman, 2012). In turn, depending on the context, this nurturing tendency may be perceived as an inability to be firm, direct, and results-driven.

Female leaders often carry heavier family-based roles than their male counterparts. Although institutions are starting to recognize this reality, things are not balanced yet. When a female leader takes time to care for an ill child or elderly parent, this time away may be seen as detracting from her role as leader (Bilen-Green et al., 2008). As an example, maternity and other leaves of absence may impact the career development of the novice to mid-career female academic, delay her progression through the ranks, and impede her consideration for departmental leadership.

Further elements related to disposition may be perceived as negative when a female chooses to demonstrate that she is "self-aware and genuine; mission driven and results focused; [and leads with the] heart and focus[es] on the long term" (Kruse, 2013, p. 1). This woman may be regarded to be aggressive (Oakley, 2000) and, thus, not favored for a leadership position. Despite social and other changes over the last thirty years, it can take substantive effort to "shake off" stereotypes and historically entrenched ways of thinking.

A further challenge for the female leader in the university can exist in the expectations of faculty, staff, and supervisors as well as various environmental and historical factors (Carter & Janes, 2018). Women leaders stand out because of their very femaleness. Thus, they may be subject to greater scrutiny and evaluated against outdated ideas about academic leadership. As noted earlier, the academy remains a

place where leadership is principally male and support staff is often female. While present-day management models in academe promote "…more women friendly environments" (Fisher & Fisher, 2007, p. 508), ideas about power and leadership remain, in many instances, reinforced by male values and an "emphasis on competition, targets, and performance" (Fisher & Fisher, 2007, p. 508; Morley, 2003; Hannum, Muhly, Shockley-Zalabak & White, 2015). These ideas are further reflected in thinking that "men lead and women manage," an understanding that links leadership with power and management with the oversight of tasks (Langland, 2012, p. 1).

Programs, Mentoring, and Female Leadership in Universities

Early leadership development programs for women were often modeled after programs for male leaders and/or designed to "fix" what is wrong with women as leaders (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). According to Ely and Meyerson (2000), these programs included "ameliorative strategies to create gender equity in the workplace" (p. 107). Complementing this idea, the 1970s saw researchers state that gender is a predictor of leadership style. In the 1970s and 1980s, institutes such as the Center for Creative Leadership and the Simmons School of Management pioneered women-only leadership development programs and workshops (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). Women-only programs were also developed at Harvard, Stanford, and Duke. These programs emphasized 360 feedback assessments and networking as ways of facilitating a work identity.

According to Grove (2018), "in a study, published in *Annals of Global Health* and based on answers from 405 delegates at the [2017] Women Leaders in Global Health Conference, held at Stanford University, a lack of mentoring emerged as the main barrier to achieving a leadership position—with 56% of respondents identifying it as a problem" (para. 5). These numbers indicate "… that institutions should incentivise mentorship and incorporate it into more of their training programmes" (Grove, 2018, para. 6). Although the report included a recommendation that more male leaders should step up to mentor women, one respondent noted that she had many male mentors; however, when an opportunity to advance the mentee's career through a presentation or a new responsibility arose, her male mentors would "…default to thinking of a young man for the opportunity" (Grove, 2018, para. 10).

In their study, Hill and Wheat (2017) reported that the majority of women on a path to becoming university presidents did not have "a primary career mentor" (p. 2098). Instead, they found a number of things at play including a lack of female role models to approach for mentorship and the circumstance that many of the women did not set out to be educational leaders until well into mid or late career. When the women did find female leaders to help them, they found multiple role models and mentors for mentoring relationships (p. 2105). Hill and Wheat (2017) emphasized that this experience was generational in nature and that younger women reported more opportunity to be mentored because of the larger numbers of women who had attained leadership preceding them.

Theoretical Frameworks

The overarching theoretical framework used in this chapter is critical theory. Critical theorists are committed to empowering human beings to transcend the constraints placed upon them by race, class, and gender (Fay, 1987). In the case of scholarship rooted in critical theory, educators and researchers provide information which enables persons or groups to improve their situations through knowledge of others' experiences. Through its presentation of relevant literature and the informal conversational insights of female leaders in Canadian higher education, this chapter enhances our understanding of the role of mentoring for female leaders in universities.

A second influencing theory is gendered organization theory which is based on the idea that organizations are gendered when they consider male behaviors and experiences to be the norm and they reject behaviors and experiences that appear to be feminine (Acker, 1990, 1992). A gendered organization may idealize the ways in which men lead and conduct themselves and diminish the ways by which women handle the same situations. In such settings, women may choose to conduct themselves in ways that reflect the behaviors of their male peers in an attempt to gain advantage in their positions (Drury, Sly, & Cheryan, 2011). While universities are changing, they continue to be gendered organizations.

People, Processes, and Themes

Who and How

Over the spring and summer of 2019, we engaged in informal and collegial conversations with eight women about their leadership experiences and experiences with being mentored. These conversations grew out of work we had just completed (Carter & Janes, 2018), and work we had begun theoretically with respect to women leaders and mentoring; and our need to hear "their" stories. The women were asked to share how their mentoring experiences had shaped their leadership roles, and they graciously provided permission for sharing their experiences in this chapter. The women ranged in age from late 20s to late 60s and represented various career points: early career (one woman), mid-career (three women), and late-career/retired (four women).

All of the women had been leaders at different junctures in their careers. Specifically, their leadership roles ranged from leading small academic and service teams to leading large academic organizations. Their professional experiences extended from local to global. Five of the women held doctorates in their chosen fields; the remaining were master's prepared.

The Themes

As we considered the women's observations in order to discover main ideas, we determined that using thematic analysis (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017) would be helpful. Having done this, an initial series of ten themes, with a number of sub-themes, emerged at the semantic level. As Braun and Clarke (2006) note, in the case of semantic level themes, the goal is not to look "for anything beyond what a participant has said or what has been written" (p. 84). After our first efforts to discern themes, we collaborated to discern where themes might be related to each other. Questions guiding this level of analysis included the following: Which themes overlapped? Did some themes say the same thing through different language? Alternately, were the themes distinct and discrete from each other?

This second strategy led us to four separate ideas which we framed as questions:

- *What is mentoring?* In relation to this theme, the conversations focused on how the women defined mentoring and how they experienced it including as an informal experience, a formal experience, or both.
- *What is the value or benefit of mentoring?* In relation to this idea, each woman shared what she "got" from the experience.
- *What are the characteristics of the overall mentoring relationship?* The characteristics most frequently identified by the women were honesty, confidentiality, and risk.
- *What logistics and dispositions are required to ensure a successful mentoring relationship?* Speaking about the logistics and dispositions necessary in a mentoring context, the women spoke of ground rules, time, expectations, and knowing when to end the relationship.

More About What We Learned

While all of the women, but one, commented on the experience with mentoring over their careers, the ways in which they experienced mentoring differed. Four of the women had never been formally mentored for the purpose of leadership development, while three noted having mentors in a more formal capacity. One woman recalled being assigned a formal mentor whom she met only once. In another instance, the mentor was departmentally assigned; another woman described her mentor was a personal coach. These women shared that they saw these situations as different from a mentor–mentee experience. Still another woman described her experience as co-mentoring where she and her peer alternated between who was the mentor and the mentee, depending on the needs of each partner at that moment in time.

What is mentoring? A number of questions were presented in relation to the definition of mentoring. These questions included the following: What do we really mean by mentoring? How is mentoring different from coaching, supporting, or supervising? No single idea emerged as the answer to these questions. For some, mentoring

was a way to acquire career advice, especially as the woman moved from practitioner to administrator or into other leadership roles. For other women, mentoring was a movement or progression from being a peer to being a guide.

As a group, the women did not see the gender of the mentor to be an issue based on their experiences of being mentored by both male and female persons. At the same time, one woman noted that both her assigned and self-selected mentors were women while another woman expressed preference, if possible, for female mentors.

In the overall, the women's perception of mentoring pertained to the emotional support the mentee experiences; knowing that someone cares and is interested in how the woman progresses in her work or studies was identified as the defining activity of the mentor. This idea cut across gender, level of experience, and age. As noted previously, in one conversation, a woman spoke about co-mentorship as a balanced mentorship relationship in which a woman can serve as mentor and mentee.

Value and Benefit. The women spoke about a number of benefits with respect to mentoring. The most significant benefits, according to the discussions, were encouragement, shared plans of action and goal setting, and meaningful conversations that deepened knowledge and skills. The women also identified how their mentors helped them connect with others and conveyed that they "had [the mentee's] back" even when the relationship may have involved a power imbalance between the two parties. The women also remarked on how a mentor could enable success and confidence during transition to a new role.

Several of the women noted various career milestones achieved with the support of a mentor: publishing their first paper in a journal; securing tenure within a new stream in the department; navigating a first teaching assignment; and seeking promotion. One woman observed that she would have loved a mentor as the mentor might have helped her further her career.

Characteristics and Qualities of the Overall Relationship. In addition to commenting on how power imbalances and personalities can have an impact on a mentor–mentee relationship, the women acknowledged other critical characteristics and qualities of the mentoring relationship. They shared how important it was that the relationships they had with mentors were honest and confidential. They also wanted mentors who had time for informal relationship building: several of the women noted their need for social interactions in addition to strictly professional ones; they suggested that such interactions are valuable and should be encouraged. Speaking specifically about leadership and mentoring, they remarked that women seek out other women to learn from since men are not generally able to relate to the issues experienced by a female leadership mentee. Stated another way, female mentors often have different approaches and ways to nurture leadership and, according to the women, these ideas need validation.

The women further described the mentors they had had or would have liked to have had as people who share career successes; encourage reflection on practice; pose questions about beliefs; and engage them in learning. Such mentors help mentees clarify their thinking and gain insights. Further, they convey empathy as the mentee journeys her way along the career path and toward leadership in its many manifestations.

Risk was highlighted as a key element in the mentor–mentee relationship. Mentoring relationships, it was suggested during the conversations, can include unspoken expectations and power dynamics. One woman found her mentor to be highly critical and sometimes detached from the relationship: they were too different for the process to benefit either party. Another woman in her role as mentee experienced unethical expectations as she did most of the "heavy lifting" and felt that she was being taken advantage of because of her status. In a third situation, a woman expressed how the mentor did not appear to care about her as a person and, instead, often shared negative comments without suggestions for improvement as well as, in the mentee's estimation, bad advice. In these situations, the women commented on how they learned not to be as a mentor. Given these kinds of experience, some of the women did not feel that they had the expertise to mentor others. They also hesitated to mentor others based on thinking that they were not successful enough to be able to offer guidance and support to other women.

Logistics and Dispositions. Ground rules and dispositions were seen as important in the conversations. As an entry point to the mentoring relationship, the women discussed the criticality of clarifying expectations and establishing goals in advance. Time was also identified as a specific consideration. One woman suggested that the mentee needs to be aware and appreciative of the mentor's time and commented on the need to express appreciation for the mentor's time. Being on time and prepared for meetings and discussions also emerged as important.

Other related areas include ability and comfort to ask specific questions, how to be organized during the mentoring process, and how to listen to advice with humility and confidence while maintaining one's personal views. This latter idea derived from the circumstance that mentors can be wrong and that recognition that leadership comes in many forms. Further, the mentee should reflect on what she can contribute to the mentoring experience working from the position that the mentor's and mentee's goals and values are generally aligned. Ongoing reflection on whether the partnership is an appropriate fit and what the mentee has learned from her personal work experiences and via the mentoring experience was recommended.

Further, the women spoke about working with more than one mentor, the need for intentionality, the value of being goal-driven, and how mentoring relationships are time- and context-bound. Both the mentor and mentee should be careful not to fall into the trap of thinking that a single person can be all-knowing and that the mentor is the "wise one" dispensing knowledge. Finally, the women spoke about their need to end the relationship when goals are achieved and/or when the relationship is no longer benefiting the mentee, the mentor, or both.

Discussion

In the overall although not exclusively, the women who took part in these informal conversations spoke positively about mentorship by other women and suggested how their career experiences which ranged from being mentored well to not being

mentored made them want to mentor others. Paying it forward and sharing what they had learned about leadership through the mentoring relationship motivated the women. The women further recognized how the mentoring role can serve as a form of professional development for the mentor.

Returning to why this discussion of mentorship of women is important in the first place requires consideration of women's desire to assume leadership roles in universities. As Morley (2013) suggests, "it is pertinent to ask why women should desire or aspire to enter HE leadership at all. This often involves taking on a completely new job—sometimes without any socialisation, training or support" (p. 118). As noted in Carter and Janes (2018), the why mentoring questions include diverse factors such as support, experience, vision, and change. These factors, and the risks associated with them, require support at personal and institutional levels (Katsinas, 1996; Rose & Bergman, 2016; Striffolino & Saunders, 1989). If, upon arrival in her new position, the female leader discovers gaps in what she needs to know and do to carry out her role well and she is not adequately supported, she and the organization are significantly disadvantaged (Carter & Janes, 2018). Mentorship before and during the leadership experience can play an essential role in the successful transition of women from practitioner to leader. While the idea of a female mentor emerged as highly valued by the women, unfortunately, female mentors are not always available.

Early iterations of mentoring programs to support new leaders including female persons have not always included women and/or persons from other underrepresented groups. Additionally, in some cases, mentoring programs were established "to inculcate white and middle-class values" and they were not always culturally relevant (Weiston, 2015, para. 5). As experience has shown, mentoring including mentoring of women by women must involve understanding, appreciating, and respecting the values and sense of person the mentee brings to the relationship. Only then, will the mentor be able to help assist the mentee in navigating a new leadership world (Weiston, 2015, para. 8).

There is much in the leadership literature about persons who move through organizational structures until they are in positions for which they have received no formal training (Dickson & Tholl, 2014). Certainly, some new leaders including female leaders can be successful without leadership development training such as the formal programs discussed earlier in this chapter. It is suggested, however, that personally-based mentorship coupled with participation in established leadership development programs that recognize the strengths and challenges of female leaders may be the best recipe for leadership success (Carter & Janes, 2018). While the women who participated in the conversations were asked solely about female mentorship, it is anticipated that a blend of the two experiences—mentorship and program-based learning—would have been seen as ideal. This combination benefits the developing female leader on two fronts: a mixed gender leadership program enables the woman to learn about gender in universities in the safer context of a program versus her actual job; secondly, a program with other female and male persons enables the development of a network of colleagues and allies for when the woman steps into her new leadership role.

In all, reflecting specifically on the female leader, Morley (2014) calls for "… more investment … to be made in mentorship and leadership development programmes for women … [while] gender needs to be included in existing leadership development programmes" (p. 124). Further, exploring the idea of varied approaches to mentorship, Vance (2016) proposes the following:

An important trend is that institutions have begun to expand beyond the single "guru-based" mentorship into a variety or combination of models, each designed to accommodate the mentee's individual needs or goals. Some of these include:

- *Peer mentoring* pairs the mentee with another professional in a similar situation to share experiences.
- *Network mentoring* recognizes that the needs of a mentee are varied and change over time, making it hard for a single mentor to provide adequate support. Individuals can seek input from a network of mentors, each with unique expertise and guidance.
- *Group or team mentoring* allows an individual mentor to meet with multiple senior advisors (selected by the mentee or, more typically, the employer) who have a common need or similar goal.
- *E-mentoring* allows access to a mentor online and thus without the limitations of geographic distance.
- *Reverse mentoring* pairs a junior with a senior professional with the junior acting as the primary mentor, most often to keep the more senior colleague informed of new methods or technological advances.

While the women did not refer to their mentoring experiences using Vance's (2016) terms, there was sufficient variety in their observations to state that the women had experienced different kinds of mentoring. An interesting development in the leadership training sector for women is the practice of mindfulness which, like mentoring, involves relationship: that is the relationship with the self as a gendered person and in the moment. Research currently underway at the University of Saskatchewan in relation to mindfulness and women's experience of the stereotyping threat they often experience as they pursue leadership should provide interesting and valuable information (Carleton & Walsh, 2019).

In their research on the impact of mentorship and role models on female leaders on career paths to becoming university presidents, Hill and Wheat (2017) encountered a number of interesting ideas. Not insignificant was that older women had accessed more male mentors than younger women during their career advancement. As well, according to Hill and Wheat (2017), women can benefit from cultivating multiple traditional and non-traditional mentoring relationships across the span of their career paths.

While mixed gender mentoring relationships and programs can be beneficial to female leaders, women should be supportive of others of their gender (Morley, 2013). By sharing their leadership experiences and serving as role models for other women, female leaders can advance their own learning. In short, "mentoring can be another form of leadership . . . [and] can result in a form of feminist redistribution of power and social capital" (Hill & Wheat, 2017, p. 2106).

Women seeking senior leadership roles such as those held by some of the women who engaged in conversation for this chapter are more likely to transition into such roles when there are women already there Bilen-Green et al. (2008). This circumstance results from the idea of critical mass. This idea of critical mass was suggested by Karsten (1994) when she noted that it could take up to 40% of leaders from minority groups in a leadership role to remove the idea of "tokenism" and the disgrace that comes with this notion (Bilen-Green et al., 2008, p. 3). When a critical mass of women is attained in the leadership structure, the institution is "positioned for change" (Bilen-Green et al., 2008, p. 4). Female mentors and role models who "challenge the gendered assumptions of leadership may promote social change" (Hill & Wheat, 2017, p. 2106). Hill and Wheat (2017) also suggest that "given the lack of primary mentoring experienced by women in [their] study and the importance they accorded to having role models and mentoring, it is clear that women interested in academic leadership should take responsibility for seeking out and providing mentoring opportunities" (p. 2106). This positive perspective on women and mentoring was clearly reflected in the dialogue with the women leaders.

As indicated in at least one of the conversations, women in leadership in higher education need to continue to carve their own paths. The assistance of a thoughtful and caring formal or informal mentor or series of mentors who have been intentionally selected or perhaps simply discovered seems to hold promise for making the journey less onerous than it might otherwise be.

While the above suggests that mentoring of women in the academy by other female leaders is essential, to close the conversation here would be short-sighted. Mentorship is a human activity and, as such, comes with human barriers and risks. As an example, one woman spoke of receiving bad counsel from her female mentor while another spoke of meeting with her mentor only once. Like every human activity, mentorship by women will be shaped by personal attributes, capacity to trust and engender trust, and the actual commitment of the women involved.

A second limitation of the female mentoring model derives from the fact that universities remain dominated by men. While, in general, a developing female leader will benefit from capable female models, she must remember that her university is likely to be dominated by men. As well, mentoring alone as a leadership development strategy has limitations particularly when women progress to levels of Dean, Vice-president, Provost, and President.

Final Thoughts

Mentorship of women by women holds significant value in the leadership fabric of universities. Simply put, the disposition and talents of a female person are such that they are best understood by other females. Moreover, the caring and encouraging ways of many female mentors are uniquely important to female mentees.

As these insights have expressed, leadership in universities is a complex career beast, and gender plays a role in it both positively and negatively. Universities committed to developing their female staff and faculty in wise ways are encouraged to study, assess, and innovate how they prepare women for leadership. Women too would do well to learn about the mentoring experience and seek out opportunities for safe and meaningful relationships with female leaders. This way, the academy will continue to progress toward an identity of greater balance and alternate leadership structures in a time when new and fresh ways of leading are required more than ever before.

References

Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender and Society, 4*(2), 139–158.

Acker, J. (1992). Gendering organizational theory. In J. A. Mills & P. Tancred (Eds.), *Gendering organizational analysis* (pp. 248–250). London: Sage.

Arnesson, K., & Albinsson, G. (2017). Mentorship—A pedagogical method for integration of theory and practice in higher education. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy, 3*(3), 202–217. https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2017.1379346.

Block, B. A., & Tietjen-Smith, T. (2016). The case for women mentoring women. *Quest*, *68*(3), 306–315. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2016.119028.

Bilen-Green, C., Froelich, K. A., & Jacobson, S. W. (2008). The prevalence of women in academic leadership positions, and potential impact on prevalence of women in the professorial ranks. In 2008 *WEPAN conference proceedings*. Retrieved from https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/forward/documents/WEPAN2.pdf.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3,* 77–101.

Bruner, R. (2017, January 15). The three qualities that make a good dean. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from http://www.chronicle.com/article/The-3-Qualities-that-Make-a/238883?cid=trend_right_h.

Cameron, E., & Green, M. (2012). *Making sense of change management* (3rd ed.). Philadelphia: Kogan Page.

Carleton, E., & Walsh, M. (2019). *Addressing stereotype threat for women in leadership: The role of mindfulness.* SSHRC funded research project with the Edwards School of Business, University of Saskatchewan. Retrieved from https://news.usask.ca/media-release-pages/2019/USask%20researchers%20use%20mindfulness%20training%20%20to%20help%20women%20achieve%20leadership%20and%20excel.php.

Carter, L., & Janes, D. (2018). The transition of women to leadership in post-secondary institutions in Canada. An examination of the literature and the lived DIM experiences of two female leaders. In C. L. Cho, J. K. Corkett, & A. Steele (Eds.), *Poison in the water cooler: Exploring the toxicity of lateral and microaggression in multiple contexts and disciplines* (pp. 209–230). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Dickson, G., & Tholl, B. (2014). *Bringing leadership to life in health: LEADS in a caring environment*. London: Springer.

Drury, B. J., Sly, J. O., & Cheryan, S. (2011). When do female role models benefit women? The importance of differentiating recruitment from retention in STEM. *Psychological Inquiry, 22*(4), 265–269. https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2011.620935.

Edmonstone, J. (2011). Developing leaders and leadership in healthcare: A case for rebalancing? *Leadership in Health Services, 24*(1), 8–18.

Ely, R. J., & Meyerson, D. E. (2000). Theories of gender in organizations: A new approach to organizational analysis and change. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *22*, 103–151. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/s0191-3085(00)22004-2.

Fay, B. (1987). *Critical social science: Liberation and its limits*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Fisher, V., & Fisher, G. (2007). 'You need tits to get on around here': Gender and sexuality in the entrepreneurial university in the 21st century. *Ethnography (Special Issue), 8*(4), 503–517. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/24048095.

Graban, M. (2012). *Lean hospitals: Improving quality, patient safety, and employee engagement* (2nd ed.). New York: CRC Press.

Grandy, G., & Holton, J. (2013). Evaluating leadership development needs in a health care setting through a partnership approach. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 15*(1), 61–82.

Grove, J. (2018, December 13). Career advice: Who should lead on mentoring for female academics? *Times Higher Education (THE)*. Retrieved from https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/career-advice-who-should-lead-mentoring-female-academics.

Hannum, K. M., Muhly, S. M., Shockley-Zalabak, P. S., & White, J. S. (2015). Women leaders within higher education in the United States: Supports, barriers, and experiences of being a senior leader. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, *35*, 65–75. Retrieved from http://awl-ojs-tamu.tdl.org/awl/index.php/awl/article/view/129.

Hill, L. H., & Wheat, C. A. (2017). The influence of mentorship and role models on university women leaders' career paths to university presidency. *The Qualitative Report, 22*(8), 2090–2111. Retrieved from https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol22/iss8/2.

Hotho, S., & Dowling, M. (2010). Revisiting leadership development: The participant perspective. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 31(*7), 609–629. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1108/01437731011079655.

Inzer, L., & Crawford, C. B. (2005). A review of formal and informal mentoring: Processes, problems and design. *Journal of Leadership Education, 4*(1), 31–50. Retrieved from https://journalofleadershiped.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/4_1_Inzer_Crawford.pdf.

Irby, B. J. (2017). Mentoring as professional development. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 25*(1), 1–4.

Jones, S. (2013, April 22). The 'star' academics are so often white and male. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/apr/22/university-jobs-not-being-advertised.

Karsten, M. F. (1994). *Management and gender: Issues and attitudes*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group Inc.

Katsinas, S. G. (1996, Fall). Preparing leaders for diverse institutional settings. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 15–25. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.36819969504.

Kotter, J. (2013). Management is (still) not leadership. *HBR Blog*. Retrieved from http://blogs.hbr.org/2013/01/management-is-still-not-leadership/.

Kruse, K. (2013, May 12). What is authentic leadership? *Forbes*. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/05/12/what-is-authentic-leadership/#5ddf732bdef7.

Langland, E. (2012, Summer). Cultural narratives of academic leadership at the dawn of the 21st century. *Forum on Public Policy*, 1–9. Retrieved from http://forumonpublicpolicy.com/vol2012.no2/archive/langland.pdf.

Little, W., & McGivern, R. (2014). Chapter 5. *Introduction to sociology* (1st Canadian ed.). Rice University (CC international license 4.1). Retrieved from https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontosociology/chapter/chapter5-socialization/.

Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (AISHE-J)*, *8*(3), 3351–33514. Retrieved from http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/viewFile/335/553.

Malby, R., Edmonstone, J., Ross, D., & Wolfenden, N. (2011). Clinical leadership: The challenge of making the most of doctors in management. *British Journal of Hospital Medicine, 72*(6), 341–345.

McKimm, J., & O'Sullivan, H. (2012). Developing and accessing medical leadership. *British Journal of Hospital Medicine, 73*(9), 484–485.
McKimm, J., Jollie, C., & Hatter, M. (2007). Mentoring: Theory and practice. Report from the Undergraduate Medicine Office, Imperial College School of Medicine (originally published in 2003 and revised in 2007). Retrieved from https://faculty.londondeanery.ac.uk/e-learning/feedback/files/MentoringTheory_and_Practice.pdf.
Morley, L. (2003). *Quality and power in higher education. The society for research into higher education*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
Morley, L. (2013). The rules of the game: Women and the leaderist turn in higher education. *Gender and Education, 25*(1), 116–131. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2012.740888.
Morley, L. (2014). Lost leaders: Women in the global academy. *Higher Education Research and Development, 33*(1), 114–128. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2013.864611.
Mumford, A. (1993). *How managers can develop managers*. Gower: Aldershot.
O'Toole, J. (2001). When leadership is an organizational trait. In W. Bennis, G. M. Spreitzer, & T. G. Cummings (Eds.), *The future of leadership* (pp. 158–174). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
Oakley, J. G. (2000). Gender-based barriers to senior management positions: Understanding the scarcity of female CEOs. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *27*, 321–334. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1023%2FA%3A1006226129868.pdf.
Roberts, C., & Coghlan, D. (2011). Concentric collaboration: A model of leadership development for healthcare organizations. *Action Learning: Research and Practice, 8*(3), 231–252.
Rose, K. J., & Bergman, M. (2016). Reaction to leadership misplacement: How can this affect institutions of higher education? *New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development, 28,* 26–29. https://doi.org/10.1002/nha3.20149.
Scheck-McAlearney, A., Fisher, D., Heiser, K., Robbins, D., & Kelleher, K. (2005). Developing effective physician leaders: Changing cultures and transforming organizations. *Research and Perspectives on Healthcare, 83*(2), 11–18.
Sherwin, B. (2014, January 24). Why women are more effective leaders than men. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from http://www.businessinsider.com/study-women-are-better-leaders-2014-1.
Storr, L., & Trenchard, S. (2010). From swampy lowlands to giddy heights: A case study of leadership development in a mental health setting. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, *34*(5), 475–487.
Striffolino, P., & Saunders, S. A. (1989). Emerging leaders: Students in need of development. *NASPA Journal, 27*(1), 51–58.
Tichy, N. M. (1997). *The leadership engine: How winning companies build leaders at every level*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
Tichy, N. M., & Cardwell, N. (2002). *The cycle of leadership: How great leaders teach their companies to win*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
Ulrich, D., & Smallwood, N. (2003). *Why the bottom line isn't: How to build value through people and organization*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley.
Vance, M. C. (2016, October 27). The importance of mentoring for higher ed leadership. *Higher Ed Jobs*. Retrieved from https://www.higheredjobs.com/articles/articleDisplay.cfm?ID=1077.
Weiston, T. (2015, November 1). How to 'do' critical mentoring: Making your program more culturally relevant. *The Chronicle of Evidence-Based Mentoring*. Retrieved from https://www.evidencebasedmentoring.org/how-to-do-critical-mentoring-making-your-program-more-culturally-relevant/.
Zenger, J., & Folkman, J. (2012, March 15). Are women better leaders than men? *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2012/03/a-study-in-leadership-women-do.

Dr. Diane P. Janes is a faculty member with the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT), at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in Calgary, Canada, and has held senior teaching and academic leadership positions in educational technology and instructional design in both Education and Business. She is currently focused on mentoring faculty in the area of the scholarship of

teaching and learning (SoTL) research. Diane has served as President of the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education (CNIE) and she currently serves as Secretary-Treasurer. She is co-editor of "Making the Transition to E-learning: Strategies and Issues" (2007). Her current research includes a focus on women leaders in higher education; mentoring faculty and graduate learners; the impact of technology on teaching and learning; and using augmented reality for supporting indigenous storytelling and ways of knowing.

Lorraine Mary Carter, Ph.D. is the Director for the Centre for Continuing Education at McMaster University. Lorraine also holds a faculty appointment with McMaster's School of Nursing and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine in Sudbury, ON. Highlights of her national leadership work include serving as the President of the Canadian Association of University Continuing Education (CAUCE) and the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education (CNIE). Lorraine's present research focuses on interprofessional practices; experiential learning; online learning and other forms of technology-supported learning for working professionals; access to health and education in rural, remote, and northern contexts; and leadership.

Lorna E. Rourke is the Library Director at St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. She is a past President of the Ontario College and University Library Association, and is a former recipient of the University of Guelph Faculty Association Librarianship Award and the Ontario College and University Library Association Lifetime Achievement Award. Her research interests include mental health in universities; information literacy; labour relations in universities; and generational characteristics of faculty and students.

The Surprisingly Empty Feeling of Getting Full: Contemplations on the Contradictory Nature of Full Professorship—Margaret Kovach/Bonnie Stelmach

Margaret Kovach and Bonnie Stelmach

Abstract Having both achieved Full Professor in the same year, we found ourselves feeling ironically emptied. This experience prompted us to critically contemplate the forces that have shaped, reshaped, and misshaped us in the construction of our professional selves. Analogous to growth rings on a tree, each line on our C.V. demarcates intentional acts that beckon both the becoming and unbecoming. Our collection of publications, conference proceedings, research grants, and scholarly "arrival" signify assenting to institutional conformity defined by a White male gaze. We unravel how becoming a female academic implicates a process of "unbecoming," of being blinded and binded by institutional-driven expectations of what a woman academic ought to be. We write this chapter, in part, as a letter. In epistolary form, we reach out to each other to chart those indelible moments of our academic life that have left an imprint in memory. We write from a liminal space, between two mountains, where we pause to ask: Who are we? What have we become and simultaneously unbecome?

Keywords Women academics · Indigenous women academics · Academic identity · Higher education

(W)here We Are

What are the forces that shape, reshape, and misshape women scholars' identities? Who do women scholars become and (un)become over time in the academy? We

As we aim to interrupt what we critique, we are requesting equal author positioning. For this reason, we omit the ampersand, and use a back slash to indicate we occupy the same author position, as indicated in the chapter title. This chapter should be cited as Kovach/Stelmach, instead of Kovach & Stelmach.

M. Kovach (✉)
University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK, Canada
e-mail: margaret.kovach@usask.ca

B. Stelmach
University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada
e-mail: bonnies@ualberta.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_5

explore these questions through personal self-reflection guided by Colley, James, and Diment's (2007) notions of becoming/(un)becoming at the intersection of personal and professional ethos and professional identity; Anzaldúa's (2012) borderlands theory that gives expression to intersecting oppressions alongside the visceral experience that occurs when rupture strikes everyday complacency; and Brooks' (2019) contemplation of a life that moves beyond the rampant individualism of an achievement-centric society. All three perspectives advocate for stillness in the restless, shifting moments that foreshadow who one becomes. If identity is the intersection between who one is and what one does, academic women whose professional lives advance within a male-gendered achievement culture might benefit from a deserving moment of reflection.

We are two education professors. We, Bonnie in 2006 and Margaret in 2007, were appointed into tenure-track assistant professor positions in education at the same Canadian university. In 2018, we each achieved the rank of Full Professor, but at two different institutions. While our academic situatedness is similar, our personal and professional experiences are nuanced by dissimilar positionings. Margaret is Nêhiyaw and Saulteaux, a cross-racial adoptee, and was raised in a working-class rural family. She is an interdisciplinary scholar with a focus in Indigenous research methodologies. Her professional background is in social work with scholarship in the area of Indigenous higher education. Bonnie is an education scholar who studies parents' roles in schooling. She taught secondary school in rural and northern Alberta, and internationally. Bonnie is of Ukrainian descent, the youngest of three daughters from a nuclear farming family.

This chapter constitutes a pause in which we contemplate the construction of our professorship thus far. We forage memory to write this text. We write for ourselves, to each other, and with a witnessing reader in mind. The act of writing is an impulse as Anzaldúa (2015) describes: "By writing I put order in the world, give it a handle so I can grasp it…To discover myself, to preserve myself, to make myself, to achieve self-autonomy" (p. 167). Of the decolonizing power of writing Cisneros (2018) shares, "Although writing has often been used as a calamitous tool of colonization, it is also true that writing has been a force used by Indigenous peoples in the service of tribal communities" (p. 191). For us this writing is cathartic. This writing is connection.

We embrace two forms to write this chapter: essay and letter. Peppered with literature and theoretical framing, essay is standard for an academic publication; however, this undertaking required something more. In an attempt to capture a moment of syncope (Luce-Kapler, 2003), an alerting pause, we include the epistolary form of letters to explore our internal subterranean, and to communicate it outward. Through letters written to each other, we invite our reader into an intimate space of indelible moments from our professorial lives. As we sit with these moments we find ourselves in a perplexing, bountiful place. This chapter, then, is attentiveness to the disquietude. Our letters testify to the shift.

Becoming and (Un)Becoming

The concept of "unbecoming" forwarded by Colley et al. (2007) is a useful lens through which to glance back at the construction of our academic selves. It helps to make sense of where (and who) we have (un)become as academics given the push–pull of professional choices in a hyper-achievement orientated university landscape. Colley et al.'s study of teachers' professional identity emphasized "the dynamics of movement towards, within, or away from belonging to a profession" (p. 176) as a fluid process of gain/loss. Professional identity is a negotiation, though not always conscious, with oneself and between one's institution that involves taking on as well as taking off aspects of our professional and personal selves. Important for our inquiry, Colley et al. argue: The logic of the market and of corporatism combine to create "organizational professionalism" an ideal type opposed to that of "occupational professionalism." The discourse acts as a form of managerial control which promises autonomy through accountability, but in fact promotes occupational change and the intervention of micro-level control over professional practice (p. 175). Thus, the mechanisms of the market act to undo and rescript professionalism in the form of managerial relations. In their context of schooling, this conflicts with teachers' "deeply held professional ethos of caring for their students" (p. 176); a focus on tangible outcomes causes teachers to see themselves through such outcomes, and their behaviour and identity changes (Ball, 2003). Such is the process of "unbecoming."

Likewise, education scholars have an a priori identity shaped by professional experiences but similarly take on and cast off identities to fit within a culture that quantifies. Within a climate of corporatization in the academy, tenure standards reflect a focus on measurable outcomes; quantity of publications, research grants, graduate students supervised to completion, and committee service are among the countable items that legitimate academics. These standards become performative acts (Ball, 2003, 2006) ritualized by annual performance reviews.

One's scholarly identity is a derivative of the standards for tenure, promotion, and merit. While critique of the audit culture and corporatization of the university remains current (e.g. Smyth, 2017), a gender analysis of women as a structurally marginalized group has receded into the background. Acker and Armenti (2004) comment that while there is substantial literature "on the intersection of globalization and university work," they observe the "issue has been largely de-gendered" (p. 7). Where there is a gender analysis the focus has largely been on understanding their experiences and not on interrogating institutionalized gender oppression that emanates from structures such as standards.

Additionally concerning is that Acker and Armenti (2004) note a desire among some younger women academics to be more attracted to "affirming theorizations of gender than to 'the same old tired narratives of oppression, marginalization, and disempowered women favoured by older academic feminists'" or a "whingeing" (p. 6) feminist typecast. Coupled with the factors pointed out, we assert that this perspective is a response to a gendered neo-liberal achievement ethos prevailing in Canadian universities, and a particular ideological stance in response to this question: "who can

be the 'authentic' and 'successful' academic in contemporary academia" (Archer, 2008, p. 387)? Salary, for example, is often perceived as a normative indicator of achievement pointing to the "successful" academic, especially because the merit system of most Canadian universities is tied to a particular type of performance standard. Numbers are useful in revealing the relationship between achievement, performance, and salary, and how this plays out for women scholars. According to the Canadian Association of University Teachers [CAUT] (2018) report based on 2016 statistics of average earning of College and University Professors, male professors earn an average of $110,713 CAD, while women professors earn an average of $91,366 CAD. Racialized college and university female professors experience further salary inequities with Indigenous women earning an average of $84,158 CAD (p. 11). While women are better represented in Canadian universities than they were ten years ago, currently women full professors are underrepresented at 27.6% of the professoriate (p. 3). Salary and demographics are a strong indicator of inequity, and we argue, reflect White male bias.

Tenured, and without realizing, full rank tenured professors may find themselves unintentionally complicit in a regime that holds them in tension with what they aspire to be as academics (Smyth, 2017). We, the authors, are now part of the 27.6%, and we notice this inherent tension. It is between "constraint and agency" (Currie & Vidovich, 2009, p. 442), and autonomy and limitations, which characterize and caricature the academic life. While identity is personal, it is influenced by external expectations. By considering the performativity of tenure and promotion, we find ourselves, at this time, fully cognizant of the intersected—and for many women a compromised—nature of this identity (e.g. Faircloth, 2012; Reed, 2012). We wonder what has (un)become of us.

Borderlands: Where We Find Ourselves

Not all identities fare equally well in this place. The above notation on Indigenous women's salary is one indication. Anzaldúa's (2012) borderlands theory further shines a light on the internal and external tensions of those with intersecting marginalized identities and how they navigate a social world of privilege of which they do not belong. Cantú and Hurtado (2012) describe the identities and the undertakings of the borderland:

> …. individuals (primarily women) who are exposed to multiple social worlds, as defined by cultures, languages, social classes, sexualities, nation states, and colonization, develop an agility to navigate and challenge monocultural and monolingual conceptions of social reality. Within Borderlands Theory, oppressions are not ranked nor are they conceptualized as static; rather they are recognized as fluid systems that take on different forms and nuances depending on the context. (p. 7)

People with intersecting "outsider" identities as women, Indigenous, racialized minorities, LGBTQ, individuals with disabilities, and those from working and poverty class do not fit easily within universities shaped by the forces of privilege,

competitiveness, and elitism. Micro or macro, each day holds the potential for an oppressive aggression. Those with "outsider" identities often find their scholarship is demeaned. Thomas and Hollenshead's (2001) study on the coping strategies of racialized women in the academy "highlighted their [women of color] resistance to organizational barriers, nonsupportive and unwelcoming institutional and organizational climates, lack of respect from colleagues for their scholarship and research agendas…" (p. 175). These factors, the author's state, "influence career satisfaction and retention" (p. 175). In Canadian universities, there is a call to indigenize the academy. Some argue, with a persistent hope, that this involves a decolonizing aim. The question, then, will need to be asked whether the academy is meeting this target. If pay equity for Indigenous scholars is a standard of equitable inclusion and in light of salary inequities of Indigenous women professors, then Canadian universities are currently failing to meet this standard.

Given the scrutiny, jibes, and concessions that are increasingly a part of academic life, it is no wonder parts of the self are pushed back. In the daily grind of fight, fail, concede, the full self slowly recedes into the shadows. The negative, blank space, between the lines, of the academic C.V. presents a spectral self that tell of that "…which has been excluded, marginalized, and expelled" (Cameron, 2018, p. 383). In reflecting on our academic careers, it's been an on again/off again relationship with the White, male spectre gazing over our shoulders. There have been compromises, words that have stuck in the throat, but here we are. We find ourselves with a different professional designation but, more so, we find ourselves in new terrain. Anzaldúa (2012) might tell us we have just pulled into a border town.

Alongside highlighting the oppression experienced by persons (particularly women) of intersecting identities, Anzaldúa's borderland conceptualizes a liminal zone where rupture of one's ingrained consciousness breeds confusion and restlessness. This place, Anzaldúa (2012) tells us, is a complex but bountiful space of being in-between—not here, not there, yet somewhere. Borderlands is akin to the moment of syncope. Luce-Kapler (2003) describes the moment of syncope as a positive pause, a breath, an interruption, and a shift in our rhythm where "attention is drawn to what has previously been in the background," giving us an "opportunity to consider what is important" (p. 3). Anzaldúa (2012) calls this space *Nepantla* from the Nahuatl (i.e. Aztec) language. Nepantla is "the space between two bodies of water, the space between two worlds. It is a limited space, a space where you are not this or that but where you are changing." It is a place, she says, where one "has not found a new identity yet and haven't left the old identity behind either—you are in a kind of transition" (p. 276). We find ourselves at this threshold, "this kind of transition" (p. 276) within our academic life and contemplate what is ahead.

Beyond Achievement, A Second Mountain

In *The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life*, Brooks (2019) invokes the metaphor of two mountains to distinguish between those who are driven by and

toward a particular definition of achievement, and those who live intentionally with the goal of creating deep meaning in their lives. On the first mountain, Brooks suggests, are "insecure overachievers" (p. 21), handmaids to the hyper-individualism that characterizes a meritocratic society where achievement is sustenance for ego. The first mountain is "soul-flattening" (p. 23) because identity is tied up in constant comparison to what others have accomplished and amassed. First mountaineers find themselves "drift[ing] into a life that society loves but which they don't" (p. 24). The first mountain is a proving ground of worth based upon job position or title, which legitimates individuals to an external audience. But it does not measure up to personal expectations for a life of meaning. The first mountain requires toil in hard work, but not engagement in *heart* work.

The second mountain is marked by a "motivational shift" (p. 67) in desire. Brooks typologizes desire in six layers: material pleasure, ego pleasure, intellectual pleasure, generativity, fulfilled love, and transcendence. No longer chasing "the shallow things in life" (p. 51), like material and ego pleasures, second mountaineers seek, find, and live a purpose that leaves them feeling "right with [them]sel[ves]" (p. 68). Community, connection, and care are the summit of the second mountain.

In the valley between the first and second mountain is the realization that we are "under-living" (p. 24) and not doing and being that to which we aspire. This is where we start listening to our lives. At this point we pause to ask, "were there times when I put on faces that other people wanted me to wear, or that I thought other people wanted me to wear" (Brooks, 2019, p. 42)? This is apt for our purposes here, for we sense that we have been climbing the first mountain following a trail of C.V. crumbs.

In challenging egocentrism, Brooks is essentially arguing that succumbing to modern pressures to compete and conquer leads to a betrayal of the fullest sense of our communal selves, and it is only in those moments when we face the mirror and search beyond the surface do we begin to reflect on our true desires. It is a process of breaking open to become whole. In this way, he is kindred with Colley et al. (2007), Anzaldúa (2012), and Luce-Kapler (2003) in identifying points of arrest and interruption that afford us a real look at our fractured and depleted selves. In these rests, we can rescore the rhythm, shift in our seats, and reconcile the discomfort of balancing on the hard edge of a well-worn position.

Letters from the Shift

What follows is an exchange of letters between the two authors. We write to each other from unchartered territory of an internal vale. It is not a writer-reader-response, but instead each reaching out to the other to help make sense of the territory and place we find our self in. We choose a letter because, like a life, a letter is a constructed story. Of epistolary acts, Jordan Zweck (2018) states that the letter form follows a five-part structure of the *ars dictaminis* of the twelfth century. First, the *salutatio* identifying the writer and the recipient followed by the *exordium*, a word or phrase, to draw the reader close. The *narratio* of letter is where the purpose begins to reveal

itself as the writer unravels the story, pen in hand, reader in mind; close and personal, formal or distant, the writer sets the stage for the invitation or request. Finally, the *conclusio* and the writer's work is done. With a lick of the envelope the letter frees itself from the writer and it is the reader's turn. Words on page reveals a glimpse into a life both seen and not seen.

Dear Bonnie,

It's been awhile since we spoke. I hope you are doing well? You have been so busy. I am not sure where you are finding your energy. Conference season has finished and I am trying to still myself to write this chapter and contemplate my career and this professorial identity. In writing our piece, I can see how different parts of my identity push against each other and vie for space. The *woman professor* tends to superimpose herself upon the whole of me and she has a trunk full of masks and robes that she can disguise me in. To be honest, I like her, but she gets on my nerves. I am trying to make peace with her as I write this letter today, but she doesn't retreat easily. She is badgering me to reference the literature to explain why I am writing a letter and not an essay. This is annoying, but she has a point. I think of Anzaldúa's (2015) words from *Speaking in Tongues* and it does help me explain:

> It is not easy writing this letter. It began as a poem, a long poem. I tried to turn it into an essay but the result was wooden, cold. I have not yet unlearned the esoteric bullshit and pseudo-intellectualizing that school brainwashed into my writing. How to begin again. How to approximate the intimacy and immediacy I want. What form? A letter, of course. (p. 163)

To you, Bonnie, a letter. It starts with a memory from 2018.

* * *

It is 2018 and I am waiting for the final decision on my academic promotion application. This year has wiped me out. Since submitting my application, I have been on pins and needles. I hate this vulnerability. And I am tired. True, I am an Indigenous academic still standing, but it has taken its toll. More days than not it's like I am in costume and I end my performance waiting for reviews. Secretly, I am rebelling. For now, at least, I am letting my hair grow back. I cut it off soon after my appointment here in 2007. Why I did this and the knot of rationalizations prompting this act I have yet to untangle, but I am getting sidetracked…

Yesterday, I was at a meeting with colleagues. Like clockwork, the usual tensions with the unstated sub-text of "we need more of this and we don't care much about that" were present. There needs to be more Tri-Council grants, more teaching if you don't have a research grant, more publications, more service,—I know you've heard it all before. The morale was down. I left the meeting feeling crappy. After the meeting, I walked to my office. As I was unlocking my office door, a colleague walked by. We aren't friends per se, but she is an ally of sorts. She is alright though I always feel that I am disappointing her. Anyhow, I saw her coming down the hallway and was torn between engaging and avoiding. I had a knot in my stomach and didn't want to get into it because it would only make me feel worse. But I made eye contact, and before I could stop myself, I started to talk with her about the meeting. It wasn't the brightest

idea because my words started gushing out, one after another, spilling all over the place. I was totally caught in the emotion of it. As I was talking, I could see her look at me with guarded aversion in her eyes and I heard her say, "Breathe". No big deal, right? The thing was, I stopped immediately. I shut-up. After that we went our separate ways. I think she was trying to be helpful. Yet, there was something in our exchange that left me feeling inadequate. All night, my inner critic kept informing me that my wounded outcast being will never fit the professor identity.

* * *

A year has passed and it is February, 2019. It is cold and snowing outside and the roads are bad. I am looking at a recent email correspondence between us. We are struggling to schedule a zoom call to talk about this chapter. It's the same old, same old as we try to juggle commitments. The difference from last year is that both of us are full professors now. We've worked our way through the ranks and some would say we have 'arrived'. It's an achievement, but there has been a price. The corporatization and judgement culture of the academy is hard on the spirit. This term, I am, again, scrambling to squeeze in writing time. I am teaching, teaching, teaching. Between classes, I have been on the road every month giving public talks. I am licking my wounds from an unsuccessful research application and trying to figure out what is next. I continue to monitor my academic production because soon it will be salary review season when our colleagues assess our C.V. and judge our worth. The politics continue. Demands persists. I am now able to see that over the years I have managed to negotiate a certain kind of "constraint and agency" (Currie & Vidovich, 2009, p. 442). Supportive colleagues, students, and community keep me sane at work and it has been healing writing this chapter with you. Home is good. Still, I am not resting easy. I continue to negotiate this liminal zone of hunger and appeasement. As Anzaldúa (2012) says, "Living in a state of psychic unrest, in a Borderland, is what makes poets write and artists create. It is like a cactus needle embedded in the flesh. It worries itself deeper and deeper, and I keep aggravating it by poking at it…" (p. 95)

* * *

The change in seasons has come quick. It is July, 2019 and I am on sabbatical this year; it is as though someone has let oxygen into the room and I can breathe. The other day I walked to the Remai Art Gallery from my home to see an exhibit by Kwakwaka'wakw Artist Beau Dick called *Devoured by Consumerism.* It is the last collection he put together before he died in 2017. When I walked into the exhibit, I felt a connection. The exhibit was full-on Indigenous. I am Oji-Cree not Kwakwaka'wakw but this sense of belonging came over me just the same. The cedar carved masks, birds, and figures of the exhibit were inspired by the Kwakwaka'wakw winter ceremonies. It is exotic and unsettling for many, but I could feel a sisterhood with *Shapeshifter Otter Woman*, *Wild Woman of the Woods* and *The Supernatural Cannibal Birds*. The birds were striking but it was the masks with their watchful eyes

that drew me in. One mask called me. It was different from the others. The left and right side of the face did not match. On one side, the artist carved and painted the features of a face (i.e. eyes, nose, mouth) and attached long dark hair that fell past the chin. The other side of the face was blank. It was a mask with only one side of its face defined with a void where features ought to be. Looking at the half-carved face a lonely funk came over me, but also a weird sense of hope. As I stood there, I wondered if the ache of emptiness is the price of a new becoming? I left the gallery.

* * *

It's late August, 2019. I am sitting at my desk. What to write? How do I sign off this letter to you, Bonnie? Toni Morrison's (2019) book of speeches, essays, and meditations is sitting on my desk. I pick it up and a page falls open. Serendipitously, it is from her essay on *The Price of Wealth, the Cost of Care.* In the essay she reflects on the significance of art in her life. Morrison's lifework alongside the last line in the essay resonates for what it suggests about an intellect bound by spirit and heart. She writes, "Its [Arts] conversation with the public and among its various genres is critical to the understanding of what it means to care deeply and to be human completely" (p. 53). Hmm, I think the full professor, the full self. Can you imagine?

Be well and hope to see you soon,
Maggie

Dear Maggie,

I hope you are enjoying the summer, and your much-deserved sabbatical. I know your teaching load this past year was insane! "Insane" is a common description of faculty schedules, isn't it? I've battled converging deadlines all year; with new educational policy in Alberta such as the mandate for principals and superintendents to be certified there have been expectations from the field for the faculty to deliver programming for these new requirements. Meanwhile, the expectation to secure Tri-Council funding, publish, and be innovative with classes feels relentless.

Here we are, full professors, eh? I, too, thought this was the last hoop. I thought I was going to finally relax, focus solidly on "my work", and do things "my way" (what is *my* work or *my* way anyway?). But I do not feel freed. The message I hear is full professors must do more. I wasn't granted more hours in my day when I earned this promotion. Were you? I've decided "behind" is the new "caught up."

I dug up some poetry I wrote a year into my academic career. I came upon one titled, "Costumes." Your comment about "masks and robes" that can disguise you is uncanny.

October 25, 2007

Costumes

There's a mirror in front of me.
I tell it who I am.
Two coats of mascara;

a round brush through my static-laced hair.
Red shoes over passion pink painted toenails.
I turn my back to the mirror.

A black coat is draped over my arm
as I twist a pewter colored key into the space
that pulls me into my masquerade.
8:36 a.m.
I *control - alt - delete*,
Log on to my mask.

That same year I had created a graduate seminar on gender issues in educational leadership. I wanted to call the course "Sexing Ed. Admin." but I was advised otherwise and it became "Gender in Educational Administration." Much tamer. The seminar was great, but during one discussion a female student asked, "Do you think you are taken seriously when you wear those boots?" I was donning leather boots with spiked heels, over three inches high. I uncrossed my legs after the question. I recall feeling "called out," ashamed. Ultimately, I didn't alter my footwear—I'm too much of a shoe fanatic as you know—but ever since I have worn my hair back to teach (akin to cutting, like you did?). A slight alteration, but just like my passion pink toenails, I have kept the seemingly non-serious aspects hidden from view, under control.

That same year I was "taken to lunch" by a female colleague in my department. I invoke scare quotes because it wasn't a social visit, it was ultimately an event for my reshaping. I believe her counsel was delivered out of kindness, and that her aim was to mentor me toward success. But I was dumbfounded when she suggested that when I took an idea for an initiative to the dean, my department (who were all male and senior except for us two) perceived it as an affront. "Talk to the guys," she said about proposing ideas, "they're good guys." Talk to the guys? I didn't know what to think about such an avuncular suggestion, especially because I simply took the idea to where I thought it should be heard. I meant no affront. But I let my idea die, and I positioned myself to be inferior to assure them I needed them.

Looking back on these occasions I see the precariousness of the negotiation between "woman" and "academic," and how becoming a "serious" academic entailed unbecoming what might stand out as sexualized, brazen, and novel/novice. In what other ways have I, or do I, turn my back to the mirror?

I have been thinking back to the end of my undergraduate years. A teaching assistant encouraged me to pursue a master's degree. Me? A master's degree? That was outside my imagination. Having loved my philosophy of education course, however, during the summer break of teaching I enrolled in a master's course on aesthetics to test the waters. At the end of the course, in green pen and elegant cursive, the professor wrote on my paper, "Bonnie, you are a philosopher. Now what are you going to do about it?" I was beaming. I started an application.

My parents encouraged—no, they *demanded* post-secondary education. They did not want a future of manual labour and financial struggle for their children. They were

proud of me as a teacher, and the pursuit of a master's degree made sense because it would place me higher on the teaching salary grid. But they did not understand my passion for philosophy, or why I would spend my time reading dead Greek guys.

Years after I completed the degree, my mom said she tried to read my thesis, but could not understand it and gave up pretty much after the first page. I found it in the basement in the bottom drawer of an old cabinet, among other forgotten paraphernalia. That incomprehensible piece was tucked away. It was fine for me to go away to be educated and cultured, but I was supposed to return exactly the same. Other academics from working class backgrounds have faced this (Dews & Law, 1995).

Seven years later when the philosophical itch came back, I resigned from my position in the school district to pursue doctoral studies. I was at my parents' rotating through flash cards of Latin roots, and practicing math problems in preparation for the GRE exam that was required for some schools when my father suggested I join the family at a restaurant for dinner. I declined. He insisted. I caved. While I was pulling on my sneakers to go with them, he asked, "Do you really need that Ph.D. if it's going to cause you so much stress?" There I was in that "space between two worlds" (Anzaldúa, 2012, p. 276) where the need to fuel my mind and play with new ideas clashed with a simultaneous yearning to be seen as pursuing something valuable, especially in my father's eyes who often joked that my teaching area (English) was "dry."

And then there was the problem of developing a critical mind. I naively challenged family discussions. At one such time I was told, "You used to be nice before you got a master's degree." In their eyes, I was pushing boundaries, and perhaps my questions were interpreted as a rejection of them. I have been accused of losing my common sense. I'd become esoteric, a stranger to their clan. And because an academic position would mean a salary cut for me by about $30,000, a Ph.D. was overkill, or just "piled higher and deeper" as they have often joked. I often wish I were researching a cure for cancer, rather than conceptualizations of parents' roles in school so that I could justify my researcher self. They ask me why I am still studying the same topic after all these years? And why do I keep writing articles when I have already written about it and hardly anyone reads it? I am tempted to invoke Smyth (2017) here, to tell them that to succeed in the academy, your research has to have "built-in obsolescence, so as to continue to generate wealth through continued saleability", and that "solving questions once-and-for-all is not a recipe for continued profitability" (p. 101). But I contain my rant against marketization of the university and the way it shapes academics into self-enterprising subjects (Rose, as cited in Ball, 2006). I usually brush things off and change the subject. Perhaps their hints of self-indulgence bother me because my utilitarian roots are poking at me from beneath the academic turf on which I now reside.

So, why am I digging up ancient bones? It helps me to understand that my path has always been forked. Whatever I have become in the academy involved an unbecoming of other aspects, and the same is required if I want to belong outside of it. At this point in my career, I feel pulled towards the second mountain (Brooks, 2019). This shift has me questioning what matters.

Did I mention that it is annual report time? This explains why my attention to what matters is piqued. I'm sure you are completing yours, too. I have also just received news that I have been awarded an internal travel grant for a conference in Europe. Want to know how much work was involved in asking for less than $3000? I had to justify a detailed budget, supply a SSHRC C.V., and explain the impact of my five most significant achievements! On the day it was due I was running from office to office to get signatures from the department chair, the dean, and a research officer! The audit culture is killing me. Like the female academics in Archer's (2008) study, I am tired of "begging and bragging" (p. 389). Instead of feeling validated by the promotion to full professor this past year, I find myself on an even more challenging course of proving my worth. It is not the research that I will present that is my instant focus, but rather, the relief of knowing I can already check off a box on next year's annual report. As Smyth (2017) argues, it is not the content of what we achieve with grant money that matters, but what the grant money signifies on the ledger that constitutes our worth.

I assumed the manic pace of chasing C.V. lines would let up. But the words of one of my very published male colleagues have been indelible, "You are only as good as your next publication." Contrary to Archer (2008), it is not only younger academics who struggle with "authenticity, success, and professional identity" (p. 385). I now feel the added pressure to live up to this rank, to show that the committee was right in promoting me.

Every few years I find an email from that philosophy professor I mentioned. I respond with generalities, evading my specific research activities. I do not want to admit that I have strayed from the philosopher that I was to become. But I feel it. Succumbing to "project greediness" (Rinne & Koivula, 2005, p. 190), I have engaged in "academic promiscuity" that I and my colleagues wrote about years ago (Stelmach, Parsons, & Frick, 2010, para. 13). This last year was crazy-busy with multiple projects and "fast scholarship" (Smyth, p. 133). I have packed my C.V., but the spaces in between are so full with all the things I would like to do and try—read outside my topic, innovate my methodology. But these are fantasies of a dilettante. They do not fit into a serious trajectory.

Smyth (2017) argues that the neo-liberal agenda of the university has "hollowed out the work" and in doing so, commits "identity theft" (p. 18). Have I nurtured my true love in this academic gig? Have I become a C.V. template, unliving the life of the mind for which I set out? I am growing tired of telling myself who I am, Maggie. Even the enjoyable aspects shift in the cold calculus for merit. And I wonder, in becoming Full Professor, has some of me emptied out? Heavy question…

Take care, and fare well on your sabbatical!

Bonnie

Postscript: Non-conclusion

Unlike academic authors, letter writers *need* their readers (Jevne & Martin, 2017). Letters are always written *to* someone, "ushering [them] into [the writer's] universe" (p. 17) to participate in joy, surprise, adventure, and heartache. We chose this genre to push against the current of academic expectations and established criteria for publishing because we see ourselves not as neatly arranged articles or chapters, but as untidy stories without arbitrary endings. That the form defies conclusion is fitting for this journey we find ourselves on, for we are trying to figure out where we are, how we got here, and what/who got lost along the way.

We might have heeded the warnings of others who have allowed the autobiographical into the sterile theatre of the academy that this work might not be recognizable as scholarship because "the stories of our lives are subjective, inappropriate, and unprofessional" (Dews, 1995, p. 334). By disclosing our vulnerable selves, we risk accusations that this is mere catharsis and therapy. And to that we say, yes.

For over a decade we have both, to borrow from Wiebe and Fels (2010), "engage[d] in a practice of noticing what matters, a living inquiry refracted through a performative lens" (p. 13). It has become evident to us that thriving in the academy means complying, but this is also likely code for concession and constraint. At least part of the time we have had to cleanse our authentic selves of social class, cultural and ethnic heritage, and gender to gain entry and acceptance. Our academic identity is analogous to growth rings on a tree, each line on our C.V. demarcated intentional acts that beckoned both a becoming and unbecoming (Colley et al., 2007). These lines have been transposed onto us, and in this way we have "become" through hyper-rationalized functions. Through the process of becoming academics we have noticed what matters to the academy, but perhaps not to us. In our service as academic citizens and community members, for example, we feel the pressure to make neighbouring and caring "count." In quantifying relational activities to be more "countable," the counting cheapens the effort. When we dare critique our academic personage, we feel the knot in the stomach accompanying the hard question of whether we are exploiting our community relations to plump our C.V. We perform, as Ball (2003) suggested, and it is these masks and costumes that we confront.

We are at the top of the first mountain, noticing our angst about measuring up (Brooks, 2019). In our letters, we have given ourselves permission to voice an unspeakable question that could easily be interpreted as "privileged complaining" (Barcan, 2018, p. 105), a question that dares us to find the soul purpose of our academic lives: "Is this all there is?" (Brooks, p. xii). By asking this we align with philosopher Kathryn Norlock (2018) who argues that complaining is not only acceptable, but an "affective duty" (p. 119) among the vulnerable who may feel isolated living in imperfect realities. Ethical complaining acknowledges, unites, and makes imperfect life bearable. For us, it is in the questioning that we summon back soulfulness, a quality to our work we will not abandon. Thus, "is this all there is?" serves as an orienting device for two women academics who find themselves fractured along

similar yet different borderlands (Anzaldúa, 2012) and in shadowy valleys shifting direction to look for the trailhead to lead them to wholeness.

References

Anzaldúa, G. (2012). *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (4th ed.). San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Anzaldúa, G. (2015). Speaking in tongues—A letter to Third World women writers. In C. Moraga & G. Anzaldúa (Eds.), *This bridge called my back: Writing by women of color* (4th ed., pp. 161–172). New York: State University of New York Press.

Acker, S., & Armenti, C. (2004). Sleepless in academia. *Gender and Education, 16*(1), 3–24. https://doi.org/10.1080/0954025032000170309.

Archer, L. (2008). Younger academics' constructions of 'authenticity', 'success' and professional identity. *Studies in Higher Education, 33*(4), 285–403.

Ball, S. J. (2003). The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy, 18*(2), 215–228.

Ball, S. J. (2006). Performativities and fabrications in the education economy: Towards the performative society. In H. Lauder, P. Brown, J. Dillabough & A. H. Halsey (Eds.), *Education, globalization & social change* (pp. 692–701). Oxford, ENG: Oxford University Press.

Barcan, R. (2018). Paying dearly for privilege: Conceptions, experiences and temporalities of vocation in academic life. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 26*(1), 105–121. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2017.1358207.

Brooks, D. (2019). *The second mountain: The quest for a moral life*. New York, NY: Random House.

Cameron, E. (2018). Indigenous spectrality and the politics of postcolonial ghost stories. *Cultural Geographies, 15,* 385–393.

Canadian Association of University Teachers. (2018). Underrepresented & Underpaid—Diversity and Equity Among Canada's Post-Secondary Education Teachers. Retrieved from https://www.caut.ca/sites/default/files/caut_equity_report_2018-04final.pdf.

Cantú, N., & Hurtado, A. (2012). Introduction. In G. Anzaldúa (Ed.), *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (4th ed., pp. 1–13). San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Cisneros, N. A. (2018). 'To my relations': Writing and the refusal toward an Indigenous epistemology methodology. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *31*(3), 188–196.

Colley, H., James, D., & Diment, K. (2007). Unbecoming teachers: Towards a more dynamic notion of professional participation. *Journal of Education Policy, 22*(2), 173–193. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930601158927.

Currie, J., & Vidovich, L. (2009). The changing nature of academic work. In M. Tight, K. H. Mok, J. Huisman, & C. C. Morphew (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of higher education* (pp. 441–452). New York, NY: Routledge.

Dews, C. L. B. (1995). *Afterword*. In C. L. B. Dews & C. L. Law (Eds.), *This fine place so far from home: Voices of academics from the working class* (pp. 332–336). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Dews, C. L. B., & Law, C. L. (Eds.). (1995). *This fine place so far from home: Voices of academics from the working class*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Faircloth, S. C. (2012). Seeking more than balance: An American Indian female scholar's attempt to navigate the perceived work-life divide. In J. M. Marshall, J. S. Brooks, K. M. Brown, B. C. Fusarelli, M. A. Gooden, C. A. Lugg, L. Reed, & G. Theoharis (Eds.), *Juggling flaming chain saws: Academics in educational leadership try to balance work and family* (pp. 207–214). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Jevne, R. F., & Martin, H. (2017). *Living life as a writer*. Millet, AB: Prairie Wind Writing Centre.
Luce-Kapler, R. (2003). Melopoeia: Syncope, interruption and writing. *Educational Insights*, *8*(2). http://www.ccfi.educ.ubc.ca/publication/insights/v08n02/contextualexplorations/voices/lucekapler.html.
Morrison, T. (2019). *The source of self-regard: Selected essays, speeches, and meditations*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
Norlock, K. J. (2018). Can't complain. *Journal of Moral Philosophy, 15,* 117–135. https://doi.org/10.1163/17455243-20170004.
Reed, L. (2012). Pieces of a professor: Livin with limitations, but high expectations. In J. M. Marshall, J. S. Brooks, K. M. Brown, B. C. Fusarelli, M. A. Gooden, C. A. Lugg, L. Reed, & G. Theoharis (Eds.), *Juggling flaming chain saws: Academics in educational leadership try to balance work and family* (pp. 145–152). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
Rinne, R., & Koivula, J. (2005). The changing place of the university and a clash of values: The entrepreneurial university in the European knowledge society: A review of the literature. *Higher Education Management and Policy, 17*(3), 91–123.
Smyth, J. (2017). *The toxic university: Zombie leadership, academic rock stars, and neoliberal ideology*. London, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan.
Stelmach, B., Parsons, J., & Frick, W. C. (2010). Fear and loathing in the academy. *Academic Matters*. https://academicmatters.ca/fear-and-loathing-in-the-academy/.
Thomas, G., & Hollenshead, C. (2001). Resisting from the margins: The coping strategies of black women and other women of color faculty members at a research university. *Journal of Negro Education, 70*(3), 166–175.
Wiebe, S., & Fels, L. (2010). Thinking around tenure: Ducking under the finish line. *The Journal of Educational Thought, 44*(1), 11–26.
Zweck, J. (2018). *Epistolary acts: Anglo-Saxon letters and early English media*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Margaret Kovach is a Professor at College of Education, University of Saskatchewan. Her work focuses on Indigenous research methodologies, Indigenous post-secondary education, and life-long learning. Dr. Kovach's publications have had a significant impact in her field. Of note is her book, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts*. She is a Member of the College of the Royal Society of Canada.

Bonnie Stelmach is a Professor in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. Since joining the academy in 2006 she has published on the impact of bibliometrics and tenure/promotion processes on academic identity in the *European Educational Research Journal* and *Academic Matters.* Although her primary area of research is on parents in secondary rural and northern contexts, examining the academic life has been her way of figuring out this academic gig.

Professional Identity: Creating Stories in the Academy

S. Laurie Hill

Abstract The area of professional identity is a fascinating topic of research as it involves the examination of personal experiences and individual values and beliefs. Learning to teach is fundamentally an introspective pursuit, and knowing yourself is the key to good pedagogical practice. In this chapter, I take a step back and contemplate my own professional identity and how my experiences have shaped my work and helped me to navigate the challenges and requirements for doing work in the academy. Thinking narratively (Clandinin, 2013), I inquire into stories from my academic life to understand the many ways that I have been shaped by my work and my relationships with others.

Keywords Professional identity · Teacher education · Ways of knowing · Epistemological beliefs · Narrative inquiry

I have been involved in teacher education for the whole of my post-secondary career and working with student teachers has been rewarding and meaningful work. Teacher education lays the foundation for a professional identity for individuals pursuing this professional work. The area of professional identity is a fascinating topic of research as it involves the examination of personal experiences and individual values and beliefs. It is the consideration of what is already an established identity to what is possible. Pre-service teachers integrate their sense of self to what they learn is required of them in a classroom setting. Britzman (2003) suggested that "learning to teach—like teaching itself—is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become" (p. 31). Learning to teach is fundamentally an introspective pursuit, and knowing yourself is the key to good pedagogical practice.

In this chapter, I take a step back and contemplate my own professional identity and how my experiences have shaped my work and helped me to navigate the challenges and requirements for doing work in the academy. The questions "Who am I in relation to my work with others?" and "What stories do I carry with me as I engage in my academic role and responsibilities?" are ones that will inform this inquiry into my

S. Laurie Hill (✉)
St. Mary's University, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: Laurie.hill@stmu.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_6

professional identity. Thinking narratively (Clandinin, 2013), I inquire into stories from my academic life to understand the many ways that I have been shaped by my work and my relationships with others. I also explore implications for developing and exploring professional identity(ies).

A deep understanding of "identity" involves subjective accounts (Greenfield, 2011, p. 23) and so my narrative inquiry into professional identity is supported by Clandinin's (2013) assertion that lived experience is an essential "source of important knowledge and understanding" (p. 17). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) conceptualized narrative inquiry as a research puzzling. Just as a person puts together pieces of a puzzle, narrative inquirers need to search for the pieces of their experience puzzle and continue to reflect until the puzzle becomes a whole picture (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The pieces of an individual's experience puzzle are "personal and social (interaction); past, present, and future (continuity); combined with the notion of place (situation)" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50).

Inquiring into my stories of professional identity, I also draw on the framework provided by Baxter Magolda through her work with college students (Baxter Magolda 1992, 2002, 2007, 2009, 2010) to ground my thinking about relationships with colleagues. Baxter Magolda identified the importance of learning partners to support individual growth and self-authorship. Briefly, her model illustrates the manner in which learning partners can support individuals in developing self-authorship. The model rests on the longitudinal research that Baxter Magolda carried out with college students, aged 18–24 throughout their college career and with other young adults in subsequent research. The learning partnership model illuminates how individuals may develop their own voice (self-authorship) through the respect offered by peers for their thoughts and feelings, affirming the value of their perspective. A partnership with peers also affords individuals the opportunity to question authority and gradually become confident in forming their own views while grappling with external influences. Referencing this model allows me to recognize the support and guidance of colleagues who have supported my professional growth.

Finally, a feminist perspective shapes my narrative inquiry. Reflecting on all of my experiences in academia, it is clear that feminist theory has developed from a liberal feminist perspective focused on issues of equity with regard to policy and practice in educational settings, to a more nuanced consideration of diverse voices. Understanding and acknowledging the lived experiences of my students whose backgrounds include experiences of "colonialism, racism, and globalized capitalism" is a requisite step in addressing "the intersection of race, class, minority sexual identity, Indigeneity, cultural experience, and ableness with gender" (Wallace, 2019, p. 110). Intersectional feminism has provided a way to theorize and make visible, the experiences of women that were excluded and often hidden. This particular feminist theory supports the values of social justice and equity that I hold.

A sense of professional self is an essential aspect to my teaching and research roles and identity. Being aware of my professional values and the beliefs I have about education guides my teaching in the classroom. Professional identity has been described by Winslade (2002, p. 35) as the fostering of "self-descriptions," with these

descriptions rooted in the social and cultural norms of specific contexts. Professional identity has also been defined as "an ongoing and dynamic process which entails the making sense of and (re)interpretation of one's own values and experiences" through personal, social, or cognitive factors (Flores & Day, 2006, p. 220). These definitions both place an emphasis on a continuous examination and description of self within a particular setting, while acknowledging that navigating individual experiences and (re)affirming one's values and beliefs are important. In this chapter, I draw on these ideas about identity to consider my own sense of professional self through Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of temporality, sociality, and place. I rely upon texts that include digital communications, researcher reflective writing, and conversations with colleagues as sources of data or "field texts" (Clandinin & Caine, 2008, p. 544).

Identity and Place

Clandinin (2013) writes that in order to understand and appreciate the stories of others, we must always begin with ourselves. In the first few years as a university instructor, I found it difficult to find a place for myself to fit, a space that felt safe and welcoming. As a new academic, I had imagined a collegial space that offered an opportunity to think and discuss with others the issues raised by our work. It would be a space for reflection and contemplation, but also collaboration and shared endeavors. However, I found that these elements are only part of the workplace environment in postsecondary institutions. The contemporary space in academia can also be a place of unequal working conditions, shifting institutional politics, and awkward working relationships.

In recent times, the context of higher education has changed. "Higher education is increasingly shaped by market-oriented values and approaches in the context of neoliberal globalization" (Burke, 2015, p. 388). Summerlee and Christensen Hughes (2010) note that in Canada, "there is no question that Post-Secondary Education (PSE) has for some time been associated with job creation and the economy" (p. 246). The authors explore a number of challenges that impact an institutions' ability to respond to these expectations, including the information explosion, employability of graduates, accessibility and funding issues, student demographic changes, and challenges within the K-12 education system (Summerlee & Christensen Hughes, 2010). With the growing emphasis on accountability and efficiencies in higher education, I wonder how much the experience of students is valued, and how we can meet the needs of our students, empowering them as learners and offering them relevant and engaging opportunities for critical thinking. These personal but professional questions were often at odds with program goals articulated by faculty administration. In my classes, I could live my values in the way that I approached my teaching, but within the larger faculty community my work was influenced by large class sizes and use and availability of resources.

Early on, I experienced a feeling of disquiet and self-doubt in the faculty. I understood that all new positions require a period of transition to new ways of thinking and doing, but the sensation of being a new-comer persisted. Heilbrun (1999) describes someone who is "betwixt and between, neither altogether here nor there, not one kind of person or another, not this, not that" (p. 8) as being in a state of liminality. Heilbrun goes on to say that the state of liminality is unsteady as one lacks clarity "about exactly where one belongs and what one should be doing or wants to be doing" (p. 1). This sense of being on the threshold of a new working experience was exhilarating and a bit alarming. Trying to understand the normative ways of communicating in the academy, the particular routines and practices that were part of how the work was done, and the codes of professional behavior were aspects of the new environment that I explored tentatively, but determinedly. My colleagues became allies and helped me to navigate this new and unfamiliar place. Shared work responsibilities allowed me to build strong working relationships and to collaboratively solve problems.

On one occasion, two colleagues and I were asked to be responsible for creating and implementing an entirely new field experience curriculum for our students. It was a wonderful opportunity to reimagine the way that our student teachers could engage in classroom settings. The process of creating the new curriculum was also challenging. Institutional constraints were imposed on us. I wrote about some of the challenges this way.

We experienced anxiety in not knowing what could be done and when. On campus we did not have full access to support staff knowledge or their time. Our engagement with our work felt fragmented, and at times, we felt frustrated (Seidel & Hill, 2015, p. 57).

My colleagues and I recognized that often the work carried out in creating a field experience curriculum and indeed any work in the field experience office was institutionally invisible. There was no money for brochures on the newly designed curriculum, or for handouts at the workshops we conducted with teachers. We purchased the refreshments ourselves for all meetings held to introduce the new field curriculum to the groups invested in our work including the teachers and the university mentors. We struggled in developing some elements of the field curriculum. We believed that a stronger connection could be made between on-campus course work and practicum experiences. So we created a more flexible first practicum and designed a thoughtful progression of competencies between the second, third, and final practicum. We also wondered about the value of our "behind the scenes" work within the university community. Although there were many challenges in completing the work, in the end, the quality of the new experiences that student teachers had as a result of the new field curriculum was an affirmation for us. It was also a reminder that in many ways the work done in teacher education can be messy and fragmented.

Identity and Temporality

Of course, identity shifts over time as roles change and as familiar community members leave and new colleagues arrive. As a grad student I was a newcomer to the academy. I was expected to be a rational and autonomous student, always prepared to adapt to and carry out the requirements for each course. My previous experiences as a classroom teacher were mostly invisible in my graduate work and my identity as a parent was not ever acknowledged. I was searching for a way to combine and integrate my many selves, grad student, mother, teacher, and feminist. At times I floundered, especially in trying to meet the expectations of my supervisor and the needs of my children. Often the investment of time that I needed to give to both roles would conflict. At one academic gathering I attended, I tried to leave early in order to get home for my children; however, my supervisor admonished me to forget about my children for the evening. So I stayed a bit longer. This separation between my home and the more public space of the university is an echo of the divide between the public and the private space. In the past, women were actively discouraged from pursuing an education in institutions of higher education. Barriers that persisted up to the twentieth century denied or discouraged women's participation in particular degree programs and with research opportunities (Stalker & Prentice, 1998). However, gender equity has been a significant focus in education policy in the past 25 years and most countries in the "global north" have developed policies for gender equity in higher education (David, 2014).

In Canada, women accounted for 56% of the undergraduate student body in 2016/2017 (Statistics Canada). However, David cautions us to remember that gender parity (formal equality in terms of numbers) is not the full picture of gender equality (balances between men and women proportionally) as it obscures deeper issues of inequality. Writing in the Globe and Mail, Bessma Momani (2019) reports that female academics are often expected to take on undervalued work within the academy. She states that:

> Previous research has shown that male and female professors face different challenges in getting research funding, get different types of recommendation letters that can affect their career advancement and are being cited differently in team research publications because of their gender alone (p. 1).

Gender equality remains a contested issue. David (2014) concludes that as higher education "has expanded, and more women have participated, it has become increasingly difficult to attend to questions of women or even gender alone" (p. 5). Additionally, she writes that while "there has been a huge transformation in women's participation as students in HE across the globe, this is not matched by significant change in women's participation in academic labour markets" (David, 2014, p. 48).

Over time, I grew more comfortable navigating academia. I became a sessional instructor, a full-time instructor, and then obtained a tenured position in a faculty of education. Each of these roles required specific ways of engaging as an academic and presented new responsibilities to carry out. Davey (2013) describes teacher educator

identity development as a precarious one. Teacher educators' focus on and commitment to developing professional capacity in their student teachers may suggest to some in the university community that their role of researcher and scholar is less accomplished. Davy also notes that the connection teacher educators have to the university can result in public school teachers denying their expertise and knowledge as teachers (Rice, Newberry, Whiting, Cutri & Pinnegar, 2015). Certainly there is a struggle to enact identity while navigating the competing demands of the academy and the extended teaching community.

The various roles and responsibilities that I have held have helped me to understand my place in the discursive space of my faculty and university. The mission statements, policies, and program goals that guide my work also structure the ways in which I interact with others and the manner in which I carry out my responsibilities. However, mission statements are updated, policies are revised, and program goals shift. As these elements are often in flux, so then are the ways in which I carry out my work, build relationships with others and learn to balance my principles with the expectations of the institution. New stories are created and new narratives emerge about the academy and the people who work there.

Identity and Sociality

Talking to each other is how people think together (Wheatley, 2002). The most profound impact on professional identity for me has been (and continues to be) the relationships that I have developed with my colleagues and students. These relationships have helped me to feel at home in the academy. As individuals, we do not exist in isolation, rather we define who we are in terms of how we relate to others and how we negotiate our participation and belonging within a community (Wenger, 1998). Wenger (1998) suggests that an understanding of self is impacted by the educational contexts we work in and the communities we belong to.

Support from others plays a key part in developing a sense of professional self. Baxter Magolda (2004, 2009, 2010) describes the manner in which learning partners may challenge and support each other to develop their own voice (self-authorship) through three principles that inform her learning partnership model:

1. Learning partners respect the thoughts and beliefs of their partner and so affirm the value of their perspectives.
2. Learning partners help their partner to view their experiences as an opening for growth and new understanding.
3. Learning partners collaborate with each other to help understand and analyze problems and dilemmas and learn from them (Baxter Magolda, 2009, p. 251).

These principles are ones that have applied to my professional life. I have been fortunate to be mentored by a number of accomplished colleagues. These intercollegial relationships have given me a sense of confidence and have provided a sense of belonging. An early collaboration with a colleague who continues to be a

mentor to me involved an invitation to work with her and her graduate students on a multi-year research project. This was my first opportunity in the academy to be part of a large research endeavor and gave me a chance to develop research skills and an understanding of the framework for conducting research. As in any research endeavor, the cycle of investigation and analysis did not always go as anticipated, so I learned how to approach these problems through my collaboration with the research team. However, I have also learned that the projects that I value and that have meaning for me are not always recognized by the university. It is not always possible for our values to be lived out.

Feminism has been an empowering influence for my teaching and research. Membership in a national education feminist association was an important support for me early in my career, giving me a community that both supported and challenged my thinking and approaches to my work. It was a space where women could conduct research on women and where women researchers could share their work. The opportunity to conduct research through a feminist lens and to be given a space to present this work publicly and also publish was a valuable experience.

The concepts of voice and connected knowing (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986) have been instrumental in how I think about my work and my engagement in the academy. Belenky et al. describe voice as related to the ability to formulate thoughts and then recognize them as worthwhile and worthy of being heard. Linked to this idea is the concept of connected knowing described by Stanton (1996) in this way: "students enter into another's perspective and reason with the other to achieve understanding; in contrast, the more familiar separate knowing entails challenging the other's reasoning with particular attention to rules of logic and sources of bias" (p. 41). Both kinds of knowing are useful and can contribute to new ways of understanding. The realization that multiple voices could be brought into conversations and that these voices (understandings) could be legitimate and illuminating was liberating for me. It gave me insight into my identity as a grad student and as a early career academic.

"Teachers' identities are deeply implicated in their teaching" (Nieto, 2003, p. 16). While the obligations of faculty and committee meetings and the demands of research and writing fill much of my professional time, it is the teaching portion of my role that I feel most at home with. When I walk into a classroom for the first time each semester and begin to connect with my students through the course material that in the beginning I am sharing with them, but by the end they will be sharing with me, I feel at ease. I feel myself. The process of seeing student teachers develop their own sense of professional identity is a rewarding experience and the relationships that I have developed with my students have been meaningful ones for me.

A few years ago, a student asked me several questions about professionalism and how she might manage the emotional aspects of her teaching role. She was specifically concerned with saying goodbye to her students and one particular student whom she had worked with, with care and thoughtfulness without losing her composure. She told me she was asking the question to me because "I know you are highly invested in your students and work, and I was wondering if you had any suggestions for making some of these transitions a bit easier, or if there is a sort of thinking that

has helped you out" (personal communication, 2015). I wrote these comments back to her.

Your question about how to manage the emotional aspects of this role is more difficult for me to answer… To me it makes sense that you were sad that you were leaving—that is a reflection of the time and commitment that you made to the students and the empathy with which you engage in life in general. And what you invested was given back to you when the students found it hard to let you go. That is a beautiful transaction. Not an easy one, but one that is enormously worthwhile. I find that the emotional aspect of teaching is something that I can anticipate I will be feeling and so I can manage it a bit better, but I have also come to know myself and accept that the way that I enter into my work always has a huge emotional piece. As long as I do not indulge myself, but remember that I am there for my students, I hope to get the balance right most of the time. There are so many ways to be a teacher. And often the role models we have do not fit how we would approach the role, so it takes some time to figure this out on our own. You have already shifted your focus to the children, and it was your emotional investment in them that allowed you to reach them and have an impact on them.

This story as lived by my student in her relationship with her students and also lived by me in relationship to her represents teaching as a personal expression of values indistinguishable from professional values. Teaching was a form of expression of identity for both of us. I believe that the relational element of teaching that my student was grappling with echoes the concepts of connected knowing and a connected approach to teaching (Belenky et al., 1996). Underlying both these concepts is the idea of inclusiveness. Not only whose voice is heard in our classes (through multiple ways that include discussion, reflective writing, storytelling), but also who is actually present in our classes and how we honor the relationship that informs the learning experience for the child are important pedagogical questions to be aware of.

Concluding Thoughts

In a "remembering moment" (Spence, 1982, p. 31). I have tried to achieve the most "internally consistent interpretation of the past-in-the-present, the experienced present and the anticipated-in-the-future" (Sanelowski, 1991, p. 165). My remembering has been a task to make more explicit my professional identity over time and across professional landscapes and personal responses. Clandinin, Downey and Huber (2009) suggest that teacher identity is threaded to the narratives of teachers' professional lives and that these "stories to live by" linking teacher knowledge and particular contexts are powerful in shaping our professional selves.

The feeling of ambiguity that was part of my initial entry into the academy created a state of liminality for me, a state described by Heilbrun (1999) as "uncertain ground" (p. 3). A space exists in that state of liminality when one is on a threshold. This space is an opportunity that affords some agency as to how to move across the threshold. As academics we are continually reconstructing our views of our professional selves

in relation to our colleagues and to the institutional context we work in (Sutherland, Howard, & Markauskarite, 2010). In the stories that we share with each other, we convey what is important to us and what we believe to be true. It is through these stories and conversations that we can build our professional communities together and the kind of story we choose to share will impact this process. Narratively inquiring and reflecting on my experiences through stories shared here has given me an opportunity to consider their meaning and significance for me.

Feminism continues to be a valuable influence in my work. It has offered a lens for conducting research and for teaching in the academy that is reflexive, connective, and imaginative (David, 2014). It has also provided a vehicle for navigating relationships with my colleagues and my students. A feminist standpoint has informed the way that I describe and understand my own professional identity. A continued focus on feminism for attending to gender and social justice issues can offer a critical eye for our consideration of the future of the academy (David, 2014). This critical lens is more important than ever as questions of identity and spaces for multiple identities in the academy are vital ones for us to address.

New narratives that include "our relationship to colonization and its harmful legacy" (Wallace, 2018, p. 115), identity politics, and global higher education policies all require our attention. Talking to each other is how people think together (Wheatley, 2002). It is my belief that learning happens in and is strengthened through relationships, when as Baxter Magolda says we are supported by "good company" (2010, p. 1). I recognize that my relationships with my students and my colleagues are essential elements of my identity and that I must remain vulnerable and open to engagement with each of them. Community and professional networks have contributed to my professional identity development and have provided safe and supportive environments. Role models and mentors have supported my learning and growth in leadership and my students have provided a sense of purpose to my work. The web of conversations I have had and the relationships that I have built have influenced me in ways that I cannot map or entirely understand. But I am grateful for them.

References

Baxter Magolda, M. B. (1992). *Knowing and reasoning in college: Gender–related patterns in students' intellectual development*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Baxter Magolda, M. B. (2002). *Helping students make their way to adulthood*. About Campus (pp. 2–9).

Baxter Magolda, M. B. (2007). Self-authorship: The foundation for twenty-first century education. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 109,* 69–83.

Baxter Magolda, M. B. (2009). *Authoring your own life: Developing an internal voice to navigate life's challenges*. VA: Stylus Publishing LLC.

Baxter Magolda, M. B. (2010). A tandem journey through the labyrinth. *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education, 2,* 1–6.

Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Britzman, D. P. (2003). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach*. New York, NY: State University Press.
Burke, P. J. (2015). Re/imaging higher education pedagogies: Gender, emotion and difference. *Teaching in Higher Education, 20*(4), 388–401. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2015.1020782.
Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
Clandinin, D., & Caine, V. (2008). Narrative Inquiry. In Lisa M. Given (Ed.), *The sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 542–545). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909.n275.
Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
Clandinin, D. J., Downey, C. A., & Huber, J. (2009). Attending to changing landscapes: Shaping the interwoven identities of teachers and teacher educators. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 31,* 141–154.
Davey, R. (2013). *The professional identity of teacher educators: Career on the cusp?*. London: Routledge.
David, M. E. (2014). *Feminism, gender and universities: Politics, passion and pedagogies*. New York, NY: Routledge.
Flores, M. A., & Day, C. (2006). Contexts which shape and reshape new teachers' identities: A multi-perspective study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *22*(2), 219–232.
Greenfield, S. (2011). *You and me: The neuroscience of identity*. London, UK: Notting Hill Editions Ltd.
Heilbrun, C. G. (1999). *Women's lives: Views from the threshold*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
Momani, B. (2019, January 14). Canadian universities must stop undervaluing female academics. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from https://www.theglobeandmail.com.
Nieto, S. (2003). What keeps teachers going? *Phi Delta Kappan, 60*(8), 14–20.
Rice, M. F., Newbury, M., Whiting, E., Cutri, R., & Pinnegar, S. (2015). Learning from experiences of non-personhood: A self-study of teacher educator identities. *Studying Teacher Education: A Journal of Self-study of Teacher Education Practices*. https://doi.org/10.1080/17425964.2015.1013024.
Sandelowski, M. (1991). Telling stories: Narrative approaches in qualitative research. *IMAGE: Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, *23*(3), 161–166 (Fall).
Seidel, J. & Hill, S. L. (2015). Thinking together: A duoethnographic inquiry into the implementation of a field experience curriculum. *Education*, *21*(2), 49–64.
Stalker, J., & Prentice, S. (1998). *The Illusion of inclusion: Women in post-secondary education*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.
Stanton, A. (1996). Reconfiguring teaching and knowing in the college classroom. In N. Golderber, J. Tarule, B. Clincky, & M. Belenky (Eds.), *Knowledge, difference, and power: Essays inspired by Women's ways of knowing* (pp. 25–46). New York, NY: Basic Books.
Statistics Canada. (n.d.). Table 37-10-0112-02 Proportion of male and female postsecondary enrolments, by field of study and international standard classification of education. https://doi.org/10.25318/3710011201-eng.
Summerlee, A. J. S., & Christensen Hughes, J. (2010). Pressure for change and the future of university education. In J. Christensen Hughes & J. Mighty (Eds.), *Taking stock: Research on teaching and learning in higher education* (pp. 243–260). Montreal, QU: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University Press.
Sutherland, L., Howard, S., & Markauskaite, L. (2010). Professional identity creation: Examining the development of beginning preservice teachers' understanding of their work as teachers. *Teaching and Teaching Education, 26,* 455–465.
Wallace, J. (2018). Rewriting sisyphus: The possibilities of feminism in educational administration. In D. Wallin & J. Wallace (Eds.), *Transforming conversations: Feminism and education in Canada since 1970* (pp. 98–119). Montreal & Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
Wheatley, M. (2002). *Turning to one another: Simple conversations to restore hope to the future*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
Winslade, J. (2002). Storying professional identity. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work, 4,* 33–38.

S. Laurie Hill is a faculty member in Education at St. Mary's University, Calgary, Canada. Her research interests include pre-service teacher professional identity, ways of knowing, teacher education, as well as the variety of learning environments that support undergraduate student success. She has worked in a variety of post-secondary contexts in teacher education programs and has experience in the K-12 public school system.

Betwixt and Between: Navigating Academia as a First-Generation Student and Higher Education Professional

Brandy L. Usick

Abstract As a first-generation student and later as a student affairs professional, I have felt a keen sense of being betwixt and between, not fully being one thing or another. Reflecting on my journey within the academy, I recognize existing in that space between two worlds has led me at times to question my own value and legitimacy in relation to others within the academy. Learning to navigate these boundaries, I have developed knowledge and skills that have helped me to be successful in working across the institution.

Keywords Third space · Student affairs · First-generation · Higher education · HEPRO

Betwixt and between or the notion of not fully being one thing or another is a theme that will be explored within this chapter. I share my personal journey navigating university as a first-generation student and later as a student affairs professional. Both journeys involve(d) explorations of my identity in relation to the dominant cultures within the academy. I propose there are parallels to my experiences as a first-generation student to those as a professional working in higher education. In both circumstances I was (am) in between worlds. These explorations are guided by the literature as I attempt to make meaning of these experiences and to better understand how being a first-generation university student with working-class rootshelped me in my role as student affairs practitioner and leader operating in the Third Space between academic and administrative roles.

First-Generation University Student

I am a first-generation student. Neither of my parents attended university and I am the first in my immediate family to attend, and certainly the first in my extended family to continue to graduate school. We were a working-class family: my dad a

B. L. Usick (✉)
University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB, Canada
e-mail: Brandy.usick@umanitoba.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_7

journeyperson in the trades and my mom an administrative assistant. They were both born and raised in rural Manitoba, my dad from a farming family, and my mom, from entrepreneurial-minded parents who lived in town. I was an early reader and as a preschooler, I carted books around the house in a little wagon. In school, I demonstrated a strong scholastic aptitude and I was quite goal-oriented. Although we did not discuss my future plans, there was one important declarative statement made by mom while I was in grade nine. In referring to the future, she said when I attend university. This was a pivotal moment. This expectation of pursuing post-secondary education became a future beacon and one that helped to hold my focus as I completed high school.

Unfortunately, there was little in the way of planning for this eventual reality. When it came to paying for tuition that first year, I realized my parents did not have the means to support me, which was understandable. I took a necessary gap year in between high school and university and I saved money. When it came to course selection and registration a year later, my mom told me she did not know how to help me. I have a strong memory of sitting on my bed crying tears of frustration because I was having difficulties with the university's telephone registration system; the automated voice seemingly becoming shriller as I continued to make mistakes in entering the required information. But I persevered and successfully registered in a full course load. My parent's inability to help me with university continued when I asked my mom to proofread my first research paper. She began to read but handed it back and said that she couldn't help me as my writing was more advanced than hers. Such experiences underscored for me that my pursuing a post-secondary education meant my life was going to be different than my parents. I understood my parents wanted a better and different life for me and I began to understand that this would change the dynamics of our relationship.

My parents assisted how and when they could (I was able to live at home rent free while completing university). But they otherwise trusted and expected that I would figure out things on my own. This self-sufficiency was something I learned early, but it was not without challenges. There were many times when I wished they could help me beyond reminding me to eat or suggesting, rather unhelpfully, that I would be better off getting a good night sleep than staying up late to write a paper due the next day.

I did not have any adult mentors who were close to me who had attended university. I lived within a working-class neighborhood and attended a high school known for its vocational programs. I relied on friends who had similar family backgrounds and we tried to figure it out together. I recognize in hindsight that my struggles in attempting to navigate university were in part because of my lack of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) given my status as a first-generation student from a working-class family. For those who have cultural capital, university is a "comfortable or familiar place…a place where one fe[els] welcome" (Rahilly & Buckley, 2016, p. 173). Such students have knowledge of the hidden curriculum or what can be described as "the unwritten, norms, values, and expectations that unofficially and implicitly govern the interactions among students, faculty, professional staff, and administrators" (Smith, 2013, p. 3). This implicit knowledge can be picked up "in the absence of any deliberate

inculcation and therefore quite unconsciously" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 245). Students arrive—like I did—with varying levels of cultural capital and thus different exposure to the hidden curriculum (Oliveri, Funke, Clark, & Seifert, 2018).

> Many adults with working-class backgrounds who have achieved social mobility remember their time at university as a period of profound confusion that includes feelings of inferiority vis-a-vis their well-traveled, better read, privately educated, well-spoken, articulate, and generally more privileged peers (and faculty). (Lehmann, 2014, p. 3)

My undergraduate experiences were at times difficult in part because I was without a guide or guidebook. Adding to these challenges were encounters with other students who contributed to my feelings of being an outsider. As Lehmann (2009b) explains "class identities do matter, particularly in social contexts, like university, in which the invisibility of class actually highlights its relevance" (p. 644). I recall a particularly cruel comment from a male student connected to my social circle. He suggested that the provincial government builds another university for those who come from blue-collar neighborhoods like mine given the difference in property and income tax that my parents pay in contrast to his. The implication being that wealthier families subsidize education of students like me at the expense of students like him. His comments were sharp and cutting. The emotional response I experienced stayed with me for quite some time and did nothing to bolster my confidence.

Now, years later, universities are attempting to better support the transitions of first-generation students including delivering early intervention programs, tailored orientations, and creating opportunities for social connections with peer mentors and faculty members (Rahilly & Buckley, 2016). Some offer sessions on the otherwise implicit rules and expectations and "acknowledge[e] the kinds of issues not mentioned in the student handbook" (Chatelain, 2018, p. 2). Incidentally, in my current professional role, such initiatives fall into my portfolio.

Halfway through my undergraduate degree, I experienced a strong pull to become meaningfully connected to campus. A close friend secured a job as an assistant in a research lab at the university and I was incredibly envious. I knew this would provide her with meaningful and practical experiences that I was craving. It felt as though she was now that much closer than me to achieving a career. I, like many working-class students, had an "overtly vocational motivation" (Lehmann, 2009a, p. 148) for pursuing post-secondary education.

I had to work to put myself through school, but such positions were a means to an end, and they felt very limiting. So, I began to pursue opportunities on campus which included both volunteer and paid experiences. I discovered firsthand Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement at play: "the greater the student's involvement in college, the greater will be the amount of student learning and personal development" (p. 529). These experiences contributed to my having a clearer purpose and I transferred into the honours degree program. I became part of the honours student cohort and got to know my professors. My experiences completing an undergraduate thesis exposed me to what it would like to complete graduate work. I also sought out co-curricular opportunities (a fateful decision as it led to my future career). I became

a peer advisor within a peer to peer helper program. This program involved completing a placement within a student affairs unit. When I completed the placement, I was hired as a student employee. After graduating, I was later encouraged to return to the university by my former supervisor and mentor and was subsequently hired into a full-time position.

Reflecting on my undergraduate journey, I had transformative experiences that for working-class students "can be confirming or contradictory… evolutionary or dislocating" (Lehmann, 2009a, p. 139). In my case, they were confirming and evolutionary. I surrounded myself with ambitious and motivating friends and I met faculty and university staff who inspired me. Decisions to get involved on campus led to my career path. Although I have this seemingly happy ending (and to be sure I love what I do), I continually bump up against this feeling of not quite belonging. Is it my working-class roots? Likely. Recently, I read the experience of another working-class first-generation student who compared the social mobility afforded by her university degree to learning a new language as a teenager: "years later, your vocabulary may be flawless, you might have no trace of an accent, but a small part of your brain is always working very hard to translate and wondering if you got it right" (Proudfoot, 2019, p. 4). Although I have been immersed in higher education for many years as a student and as a professional, those feelings of inferiority are not far under the surface. In the next section, I explore how becoming a student affairs professional working in higher education resulted in experiences not unlike being a first-generation working-class student.

Student Affairs: "Separate and Unequal"

My experience as a first-generation student has made me a more empathetic student affairs practitioner, and later, a more inclusive leader. I have spent considerable time in my career helping students to understand the university environment. This involves helping to decode academic culture and explaining expectations about behavior. I have been able to draw upon my own experiences to better understand the perspective of the students I support. In many ways, my background prepared me well for my career as a student affairs professional. Perhaps it is in part because higher education environments are ideal for "class-vaulters…[as universities are] thoroughly middle-class worlds in which your role is to observe closely but skirt the edges of every room, understanding the unwritten codes, but always questioning them" (Proudfoot, 2019, p. 3). Although this quote captures my experience, I am not exactly a wallflower at my university. My positions have meant high profile exposure within the campus community. However, even after all of these years I do not take my work environment for granted. I am constantly interpreting verbal and non-verbal communications, taking stock of the situation to inform my own behavior. This explains why I was originally and still am intrigued with institutions of higher education, academic culture, and how one successfully navigates within them.

In my undergraduate degree, I was aware of the challenges I would face as a first-generation student, but I had not anticipated the class dynamics I would experience as a new student affairs professional. In this case, however, instead of with middle- and upper-class students, it was with the professoriate.

The first exposure was early on in my career when I was asked as a new professional to be part of a panel at a national conference for our professional organization, Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS). The presentation was entitled "partnerships with the academic sector" and the panelists were asked to consider how they support the educational mission at their respective institution and the ways in which they work with the academic community. In the session, I explained how my preparation for the presentation led me to realize that I may have been naïve, thinking that as a student affairs professional my contributions were valued by the academic community in ways that I had hoped. My preparation for the panel involved a review of the literature which left me feeling disillusioned. This quote, in particular, called into question the value and legitimacy of my work:

> Many faculty, especially on large campuses, are hardly aware of the existence of student affairs professionals, much less of their goals. Academic administrators are more likely to be aware of their student affairs counterparts, but they tend to view their functions as separate and unequal. (Barr, Upcraft, & Associates, 1991, p. 241)

Within the literature I reviewed I had noted as well that there had been historic (American Council on Education, 1937, 1949) and ongoing (Kuh, Miller, Lyons, & Trow, 1985) calls for partnerships between academic staff and student affairs. Persistent too were the encouragements that student affairs be active partners in student learning (Joint Task Force on Student Learning, 1998; The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and The American College Personnel Association, 2004). These findings provided evidence these issues were pervasive, which I found discouraging. Although there remains some truth to these original observations, the reality is, of course, much more complex and nuanced.

Since that experience as a new professional, I went on to complete my master's degree and was promoted to director, a mid-level leadership position within student affairs. I was recently promoted again to an executive director role overseeing several units that supports student success and engagement. Seeking legitimacy has been a common thread within my professional career and it shapes my perspective of self in relation to others, particularly with faculty. I learned quickly the importance of building relationships and having a collegial and cooperative approach. Although I have generally found it easier to partner with centralized academic units (teaching and learning centers, libraries) and administrative areas (governance, legal, equity offices), I have worked with faculty and administrators on numerous projects, cases, and initiatives that have been meaningful, cooperative, and successful. Despite these positive experiences, I continue to feel vulnerable, in part due to the shifting environments at universities.

The landscape of post-secondary is changing and there are increased demands and expectations from both within and outside the campus community. This reality has contributed to tensions between faculty and administrative staff. Faculty point to

the administrative "bloat" and given diminishing resources, "feel they have lost out to a growing cadre of unaccountable and highly-paid managers with literally dozens of job descriptions hardly known on campus a generation ago" (Chase, 2017, p. 22). However, these positions—which include positions within student affairs—exist in response to institutional and external needs that are vital for successful operations as well as supporting the university's expanded mission (Chase, 2017).

The relationship dichotomies of faculty-staff are polarizing and political and a challenge to navigate given the importance of working collaboratively. Working with academic units is a prevailing feature of my work as a student affairs professional. It has provided some of my greatest accomplishments, but also occasionally has been a source of consternation. The higher education environment is not conducive to support collaborative initiatives, as academic culture tends to support solitary pursuits (Kezar & Lester, 2009). Other researchers have suggested that partnerships between academic and administrative staff are challenging because there are fundamental differences in approaches including but not limited to ways of working, communication practices, and incentives (Bartunek & Rynes, 2014).

I see the parallels between my experiences as a first-generation student and later as a professional staff. In both instances not being part of the dominant culture has meant questioning the value of my own contributions. My experience has been one of working within and between these different worlds (academic and administrative) and navigating the boundaries which I explore in the next section. The literature focusing on positions like mine are helping to contextualize my work and bring some legitimacy.

Working in the *Third Space*

As a doctoral student, I became aware of the literature on Higher Education Professionals (HEPROs) (Schneijderberg & Merkator, 2013; Kehm, 2015) and *Third Space* professionals (Whitchurch, 2008) and it was affirming. Professionals like me could move away from a deficit label—non-academic—to something different altogether. I will consider these professional identity typologies and how they apply to my own experiences working within the academy.

Although HEPRO and *Third Space* professionals are different terms, they describe a similar phenomenon. Whitchurch (2009) refers to these staff as blended professionals who work in the *Third Space* between academic and professional arenas. These positions have emerged in part because of the changing nature of higher education which includes responsibilities that go beyond traditional academic work and are service orientated (Whitchurch, 2015). HEPROs are a heterogeneous group that share common qualities including graduate degree holders, skills and knowledge acquired on-the job, and expertise in higher education (Schneijderberg & Merkator, 2013). Their work responsibilities may fall into one of two categories: one, completing tasks hived off from academic workload or two fulfilling new tasks that do not fall into the workloads of either an academic or administrator (Kehm, 2015). HEPROs

are a "special group of professionals who are not primarily active in teaching and research but prepare and support decisions of the management, establish services and actively shape the core functions of research and teaching" (Schneijderberg & Merkator, 2013, p. 53).

These descriptions of HEPROs and *Third Space* professionals resonate for me and reflect my positions within higher education. I have not held an academic appointment, but my current position is one that has been historically filled by a faculty member. My experiences align with Whitchurch's (2009) "blended professional" in the *Third Space.* Such positions do not hold academic appointments and there is a blurring of academic and non-academic functions within the roles. Most in these roles have earned graduate degrees (masters or doctorate) and have research and/or teaching experiences (Kehm, 2015; Whitchurch, 2015). Although my graduate work is valued, my scholarly activities at the university have not been formally recognized given my employment classification. My achievements have helped me to be promoted and have helped bring legitimacy to my work. My academic work has shaped how I carry out my responsibilities. As a practitioner scholar, theory has always informed my practice and my practice informs my research. The nature of these roles is informed by research and reflect "professional and academic activity [that is] both integrated and co-dependent" (Whitchurch, 2009, p. 414).

HEPROs tend to describe themselves as generalists rather than experts (Kehm, 2015) and are comfortable with being seen as service providers or as part of the line management. They are happy to "provide advice, supervision, support and information" (Kehm, 2015, p. 104). Working within student affairs, one often sees one's role as providing a service. That may mean formal instruction but often means delivery of services or programming. Although I see myself as an educator, I understand that I am to provide services and supports to help students succeed. These positions tend to feel more appreciated by the administration than by academics (Kehm, 2015), which is true for me to a certain extent. Tensions rise if academics feel these positions are adding rather than taking away the workload for academic staff. HEPROs whose work is supporting students are typically seen as providing necessary work if it relieves for faculty "part of the burden of advice and support for students" (Kehm, 2015, p. 108). For faculty it is important that HEPROs work have "facilitative functions and is based on shared goals" (Kehm, 2015, p. 108).

From the description of higher education professionals—whether HEPROs or those working *Third Space*—these positions typically operate as boundary spanners. As a student affairs leader, one has to successfully navigate these boundaries that exist between academic units, administrative departments, student organizations, and the external community (Pruitt & Schwartz, 1999). Student affairs professionals, given that they provide support to the entire campus and in particular attend to the needs of students, have a special perspective that benefits the institution. This special perspective helps to anticipate and manage change. Boundary spanners can find legitimacy within their institution through their ability to interpret and explain uncertain and ambiguous situation (Pruitt & Schwartz, 1999). This has been my experience, particularly, for example, in my former role which involved complex student cases and helping faculty and administrators with processes that govern student behavior.

There is an expectation that positions like mine help to "implement policy, oversee programs, and make connections all over campus, so their relationships with others can add to or detract from their ultimate success" (Roberts & Winniford, 2007, pp. 255–256). I often feel my value is only as strong as my next accomplishment. Complacency is simply not an option.

HEPROs demonstrate a high degree of "communication competence" (Kehm, 2015, p. 104). Those working in the *Third Space* (Whitchurch, 2015) may prefer to remain neutral but are politically astute of their environments. Leaders in the *Third Space* have an inclusive approach and rely on power of persuasion (Kehm, 2015). They value autonomy and encourage teams to self-manage, not unlike in academic departments.

HEPROs see themselves as mediators and with strong communication skills to manage tensions including being adept at highlighting areas of mutual benefice and common goals when working with individuals across groups (Kehm, 2015). In my student casework, I have had to take on the role of mediator between groups and help identify workable solutions. HEPROs role may be one that "supports organizational change and decision-making" (Kehm, 2015, p. 101). In my positions, I have been asked to lead or otherwise be involved in institutional initiatives. Aspects of a HEPROs leadership are clearly demonstrated through their ability to successfully move projects and initiatives forward on behalf of the institution. In working on institutional projects, I have worked to ensure processes are inclusive of different perspectives and decision-making is shared.

Conclusion

I have explored my journey within the university which began when I entered as a first-generation student in my undergraduate program and continued when I became more engaged on campus first as a volunteer and later as a student employee. I entered student affairs and have grown my career while completing graduate work, a master's program and currently a doctoral degree. Throughout my experiences I have continued to bump up against class differences, first as a student with working-class background in a "hegemonic middle-class university culture" (Lehmann, 2009a, p. 148) and later as a student affairs staff within academia. Although I continue to struggle with my identity in relation within academia, I have developed skills and knowledge to help me be successful in working across the institution. Literature on the HEPROs or *Third Space* professionals has helped me to find more legitimacy in my work as I continue to navigate between academic and administrative worlds.

My leadership practice has been shaped by my earlier experiences as a first-generation student and a student affairs professional working within the *Third Space.* It is because of these experiences that I am particularly sensitive to ensure that as a leader I cultivate a work environment that is respectful and inclusive. Having benefitted from mentoring, I prioritize providing support to those who report to me, making time to meet individually and collectively with my team. I strive to make

expectations clear and avoid making assumptions about what others may know or understand. I remind myself to be vulnerable and share my experiences but more importantly, I listen and to ask questions, creating space for others to be vulnerable with me.

References

American Council on Education. (1937). The student personnel point of view: A report of a conference on the philosophy and development of student personnel work in college and university. Retrieved from https://www.naspa.org/about/student-affairs.

American Council on Education. (1949). *The student personnel point of view.* Retrieved from https://www.naspa.org/about/student-affairs.

Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Development, 40*(5), 518–529.

Barr, M. L., Upcraft, M. L., & Associates. (1991). *New futures for student affairs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bartunek, J. M., & Rynes, S. L. (2014). Academics and practitioners are alike and unlike. *Journal of Management, 40*(5), 1181–1201. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314529160.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). New York: Greenwood Press.

Chase, T. (2017). *Currents both deep and strong: Naming and overcoming obstacles* (pp. 21–26). Springer: University Manager.

Chatelain, M. (2018). We must help first-generation students master academe's hidden curriculum. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 65*(8), 1–3. Retrieved from https://www.chronicle.com/article/We-Must-Help-First-Generation/244830.

Joint Task Force on Student Learning. (1998). *Powerful partnerships: A shared responsibility for learning*. Retrieved from https://www.aahea.org/articles/Jount_Task_Force.htm.

Kehm, B. M. (2015). The influence of new higher education professionals on academic work. In U. Teichler & W. K. Cummings (Eds.), *Forming, recruiting and managing the academic profession* (pp. 101–111). Switzerland: Springer.

Kezar, A., & Lester, J. (2009). *Organizing higher education for collaboration: A guide for campus leaders.* New York: Wiley.

Kuh, G. D., Miller, T., Lyons, J., & Trow, J. A. (1985). *Reasonable expectations: Renewing the educational compact between institutions and students*. Retrieved from https://www.naspa.org/articles/reasonable-expectations-1995.

Lehmann, W. (2009a). University as vocational education: Working class students' expectations for university. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 30*(2), 137–149. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425690802700164.

Lehmann, W. (2009b). Becoming middle class: How working-class university students draw and transgress moral class boundaries. *Sociology, 43*(4), 631–647. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038509105412.

Lehmann, W. (2014). Habitus transformation and hidden injuries. *Sociology of Education, 87*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040713498777.

Oliveri, C., Funke, K., Clark, J. J., & Seifert, T. A. (2018). Blueprints for student success: High School students' questions about the transition to college. *The Journal of College Orientation and Transition, 25*(1), 43–59.

Proudfoot, S. (2019). What does it mean to be working class in Canada? *Maclean's*. Retrieved from https://www.macleans.ca/society/what-does-it-mean-to-be-working-class-in-canada/.

Pruitt, D. A., & Schwartz, R. A. (1999). Student affairs work as boundary spanning: An exploratory study. *College Student Affairs Journal, 19*(1), 62–87.

Rahilly, T., & Buckley, L. (2016). First-generation students. In C. C. Strange & D. H. Cox (Eds.), *Serving diverse students in Canadian higher education* (pp. 164–187). Montreal, QC: McGill-Queens University Press.

Roberts, D., & Winniford, J. (2007). Campus partnerships. In R. L. Acker & L. D. Roper (Eds.), *The mid-level manager in student affairs* (pp. 255–274). National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

Schneijderberg, C., & Merkator, N. (2013). The new higher education professionals. In B. M. Kehm & U. Teichler (Eds.), *The academic profession in Europe: New tasks and new challenges* (pp. 53–92). Dordrecht: Springer.

Smith, B. (2013). *Mentoring at-risk students through the hidden curriculum of higher education*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and The American College Personnel Association. (2004). *Learning reconsidered: A campus-wide focus on the student experience*. Retrieved from https://www.naspa.org/articles/learning-and-assessment-reconsidered.

Whitchurch, C. (2008). *Professional managers in UK higher education: Preparing for complex futures*. Leadership Foundation for Higher Education. Retrieved from https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/research-resources/research-hub/2008-research/professional-managers-in-uk-higher-education.cfm.

Whitchurch, C. (2009). The rise of the blended professional in higher education: A comparison between the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States. *Higher Education, 58*(3), 407–418. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-009-9202-4.

Whitchurch, C. (2015). The rise of *Third Space* professionals: Paradoxes and dilemmas. In U. Teichler & W. K. Cummings (Eds.), *Forming, Recruiting and Managing the Academic Profession* (pp. 79–99). Switzerland: Springer.

Brandy L. Usick is the Executive Director of Student Engagement and Success at the University of Manitoba. Through consultation and committee work, she provides direction on student services, programs, and policies and leads working groups that focus on institutional priorities including academic integrity and childcare. Brandy is currently a doctoral student at the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary and her research focusses on family friendly practices that support student success.

Negotiating the Invisible Maze as an Academic Professional

Violet Baron

Abstract Through reflections of my experiences as an academic professional woman, this chapter offers a glimpse into the challenges and satisfaction of a contested space in academia. This in-between space is difficult to describe and exists amid the history and tensions of different factions within the university. Although filling a senior level position, my experience resonates with the voices of early career academics negotiating professional identity and institutional expectations. Academic work usually includes a blending of research, teaching, and service often separated into two categories: the research or the teaching track. There is an emerging discourse of the expansion of the parameters of academia to include another track more focused on the area of service. Whitchurch (Forming, recruiting and managing the academic profession. Springer, Dordrecht, pp. 79–99, 2015) contends that this *Third Space* does not sit easily in formal organizational structures and can be both ambiguous and uncertain. Logsdon et al. (College and Undergraduate Libraries 24:155–170, 2017) highlight how intersectional feminism continues to frame what it means to be in a border space and how power, hierarchy, and privilege play out in these spaces. In exploring what academic work is, who is included, and who gets to make decisions, there are lessons to be shared for women in the academy no matter how their work is defined.

Keywords Academic professional · Third space · Academic hybrid · Blended professionals

The art exhibit, *Invisible Labyrinth*, has no physical walls yet is comprised of elaborate passages filled with blind alleys and barriers that only materialize as a visitor moves through it (Hein, 2005). "It was really interesting watching some people negotiate the labyrinth fairly easily whilst others had a lot of difficulty" (Lawrence, 2012). The metaphor of negotiating an environment filled with obstructions and undisclosed pathways strongly resonated with my experience of working as an academic professional. Obstacles found in higher education are not always perceptible to the uninitiated and can create an impression of unscalable walls that impede progress.

V. Baron (✉)
University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: vlbaron@ucalgary.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_8

Negotiating these obstacles such as institutional bureaucracy, hierarchal academic norms or "the history and the tensions between different factions and groups… it's like walking through an invisible maze," (Whitchurch, 2015, p. 15).

In exploring the metaphor of an invisible maze, I happened upon *The Image of the City* by Kevin Lynch, (1960). His portrayals of communing with the urban landscape spoke not only to my experiences but also to the sensibilities that I bring to my role as an academic professional. "At every instant, there is more than the eye can see, more than the ear can hear, a setting or a view waiting to be explored. Nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings, the sequences of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences…Only partial control can be exercised over its growth and form. There is no final result, only a continuous succession of phases" (p. 1).

My upbringing was surprisingly similar to that of other authors in this book and through the writing process, we discovered that we could see ourselves in each other's narratives. Growing up in a small town, I was one generation distant from the building of a homestead in the northern bush. Entrepreneurial spirit seems to oft appear in visioning documents recently, but this sentiment of a pioneering experience had long been the foundation of my community. With few government services to rely upon, problems were solved with persistence, the adaptation of available resources, as well as, reliance on family and neighbours.

Although my vision of the future as a young adult was aligned with the traditions of marriage and family, circumstances opened up other paths that drew on the problem-solving strategies gained in my youth. My "continuous succession of phases" led me to teaching in small communities in northern Alberta and Manitoba and spending a year in the sun, teaching at a large Bahamian high school. Interestingly, moving to suburbia in southern Alberta was as dissimilar to me as moving to a foreign country—both required gaining competencies to negotiate the cultural norms, vocabulary and humour. But this move also provided an opportunity to further my graduate studies and to join a teacher professional development project in war-torn Kosovo. Leveraging this opportunity, I spent five years as an administrator with a humanitarian medical organization and worked in a number of countries suffering from the effects of conflict and/or natural disasters.

Returning to Canada, circumstances once again created a new path leading to my current role and the completion of a doctoral degree. My position was specifically created to support the faculty re-organization to a decentralized network structure with multiple interconnected hubs or units. A key component to the role was to support "reasonably efficient communication with a reasonably robust structure, enabling considerable flexibility and high adaptability" (Sumara & Davis, 2009, p. 35). My day-to-day work of connecting people with resources and helping them navigate lengthy and confusing processes requires persistence, the adaptation of available resources as well as reliance on colleagues, especially those in academic professional roles. This work of implementing dynamic faculty goals within inelastic university structures has been some of the most rewarding and frustrating work that I have undertaken in my career. Along this path, I have found that I am most successful professionally and personally when I am able to accept the existence of the higher

education maze but reframe it as a network of interconnected challenges that can be addressed through experiential knowledge and networks of support.

Work of an Academic Professional

After working as an academic professional for a number of years, I still find it difficult to clearly explain my role. I have discovered that I have not found an identity within the binary "academic/non-academic" positioning of higher education. I exist in an "in-between" space within academia. Similar to other academic professionals, I have academic credentials with a teaching or research background and I am required to be fluent with the issues, principles, and vocabularies while also being attentive to the practical ramifications of implementation. These roles are often the driving force in characterizing the nature of the institution through the implementation of the academic vision but are not easily defined. Staff in these roles try to make sense of, explain, reconcile or combine different institutional principles and practices and through these roles, they will either move the agenda forward or will reproduce established norms and meaning structures (Johansen, Olsen, Solstad & Torsteinsen, 2015). When best positioned, these hybrid roles are situated within a "re-combination and blurring of distinct professional and organizational modes of working" (Waring, 2014, p. 689).

Kirkpatrick (2016) found in his review of the literature, that there are "hybrids" who actively seek these positions seeing the role as able to support innovation, influence standards, address difficult issues, and pursue change. Fitzgerald, Ferlie, McGivern & Buchanan (2013) view these hybrid positions "as boundary spanners" who have a crucial mix of navigation skills and knowledge and were crucial in terms of strengthening the cumulative effect of the work (p. 235).

In occupying this quasi-academic territory, I tend to view these roles less of a passive bridge and more of a dynamic pathfinder. In the words attributed to Hannibal, *Aut viam inveniam aut faciam* [I shall either find a way or make one]. During the reflective journey of completing a dissertation (Baron, 2016), I came to understand that I bring a hermeneutic approach to my work through the circuitous viewing of gaining understanding by alternatively considering the academic and professional parts of my work, and then considering how these individual parts affect the whole. The principle of the hermeneutic circle holds that the process of understanding is necessarily recursive, as we cannot know a whole without knowing its essential parts, yet we cannot know the parts without knowing the whole that determines their functions (Hirsch, 1972). As an academic professional, the objectives of the academic and professional parts may be achieved through "exploiting the looseness of role boundaries [and] acting entrepreneurially to obtain external resources" (Fitzgerald et al., 2013, p. 237) while constantly being attentive to the whole of the academic vision.

When seen as a mental picture of the environment, the academic vision can be "the product both of immediate sensation and of the memory of past experience,

and it [can be] used to interpret information and to guide action" (Lynch, 1960, p. 5). An academic professional needs to interpret information and guide action using not only the requisite professional skills but also draw on less definable knowledge and abilities. Within previous work (Baron, 2016), I argued that organizations have well-established practices and belief systems, and that the leader becomes the "consciousness of the collective," being attentive to subtle signals for attention in implementing the vision so they can know when and how to respond to both evident and indistinct circumstances. Similarly, academic professionals approach their role by viewing not only what is, but also what might be brought forth. "It comes to be a participation in a recursively elaborative process of opening up new spaces of possibility by exploring current spaces" (Davis, 2005, p. 87). Johansen et al. (2015) also suggest that the strategic positioning of these roles within organizations can provide them with the ability to see the full range of possible responses and outcomes to opportunities and challenges that may arise.

In approaching each situation with a hybrid approach, institutions benefit from decisions that consider both academic and professional perspectives. For example, recently my institution encountered bureaucratic obstacles in implementing an initiative that would improve student experience. Through exploring and understanding the academic principles underscoring the initiative, the importance of the initiative could be argued. But it also required drawing on past experiences of unstated personal positions and bureaucratic barriers to find an achievable implementation path.

Approaching work from an academic and professional perspective can be challenging. Hybrid roles often emerge in tension and the roles can be difficult or arduous (Kirkpatrick, 2016). The multiplicity of these roles may result in competing priorities and practices (Winter, 2017; Johansen et al., 2015); a lack of trust (Winter, 2017; Annansingh, Howell, Liu, and Baptista Nunes, 2018; Whitchurch, 2009); and conflicting loyalties and identities (Winter, 2017; Johansen et al., 2015).

Much of my work is responding to various and sometimes incompatible expectations. It is through the recursive attention to the whole and each of its parts that I am able to "develop strategies that reconcile different and sometimes conflicting interests" (Johansen et al., 2015, p. 726).

Additionally, I believe in being attentive to the experiences of those who have gone before us. Returning to the labyrinth metaphor, Lynch (1960) references the example of the Lutitcha of central Australia, who relied on the memory of their oldest members to lead them across the desert to safety. As an academic professional, seeking out institutional elders for advice and guidance is helpful in building trust across the academy and making decisions regarding competing priorities. The experiences of institutional elders can be foundational in finding solutions to navigating university bureaucracy. Drawing on collective memory without being beholden to it enables a stronger understanding of context and promotes a wider reach for resolution. For example, recently a proposed program update was suggested that seemed to meet the recommendations set forth in a review process. Through the sharing of the discussions and underlying principles that informed the creation of the program, valuable insight was gained that informed the update.

My experience in the academic world resonates with the findings of Annansingh et al. (2018) that although knowledge sharing and collaboration is promoted within higher education, individuals are hesitant to trust, and because they may be in competition with each other, are often not open to sharing their knowledge. On the surface, the hybrid role of the academic professional is not in competition with colleagues and should be in position to establish an atmosphere of trust and promote cooperation and collaboration in the work. Yet, the isolationist culture of academia remains a substantial barrier that is difficult to transcend (Belkhir et al., 2019). My experience would suggest that the willingness to embrace trust and collaboration often relies on the sharing and understanding of role delineations. Australian Aborigines' understanding of territory is of an interlocking network of "ways through" that are linked through exchange, negotiation, singing, and storytelling (O'Rourke, 2013). Similarly, through sharing lived experiences, strengthening ties through shared work, and negotiating toward a shared vision, academic professionals can reach the space where trust and collaboration are possible.

Inhabiting this hybrid space, academic professionals are often caught between different factions and priorities resulting in a challenge to their loyalty and self-reflection on their identity. Johansen et al. (2015) categorized the response of hybrid professionals to competing priorities as stretching—not choosing one group over another but looking for more resources to meet the needs of both groups; forsaking—choosing one option at the expense of another; and clarifying—separates the decision-making in a way that overcomes the conflicts of loyalty and identity. In *Managing Academics*, Winter (2017) provides the example of a department head having to make the choice between managing research role expectations according to established university targets or encouraging the professional autonomy of academic colleagues to pursue their own research agendas.

I agree with Johansen et al. (2015) that it is only when there is an incongruence between priorities that issues of loyalty and identities may come to the fore. Whenever possible, I prefer to situate myself in the "stretching" category. I view looking for more resources to meet the needs of multiple stakeholders as one of the key components of my current role and I contend it should be critical to most academic professional roles. From a sustainability education literature review, Wiek et al. (2015) synthesized the following key competencies that could be operationalized to help students meet specific objectives: systems thinking, futures thinking, values thinking, strategic thinking, and collaboration. I suggest that being attentive to how things are accomplished within the organization, anticipating risks and rewards, weighing stated and unstated cultural values, being action-oriented, as well as collaborating with others are competencies found in academic professional work as well. The culmination of past experiences, academic background, professional expertise, and undefinable sensibilities position the academic professional to best formulate resolutions to emerging problems and opportunities.

A Contested Space

Academic work in most universities usually includes a blending of research, teaching, and service, but the people doing this work are often seen as either research-focused or teaching-focused. With the requirement of higher education institutions to become more accountable, senior leaders need not only an academic foundation but also the administrative skills to manage these large complex organizations (McCaffery, 2018). This work of academic professionals being more aligned with the area of service suggests a need for the rethinking and expansion of the traditional parameters of academia.

Management in universities has long had its legitimacy questioned and is often depicted by academics as an irrelevant business practice which has no place in the collegiate environment of the academic world (McCaffery, 2018). Middlehurst and Kennie (1997) foresaw economic shifts and technological developments leading to a range of parallel tracks with management and leadership skills gaining prominence.

The introduction of an increasing number of staff in higher education who fulfill a hybrid of academic and professional roles has caused some higher education institutions to re-enter deliberations about the values and purposes of higher education, elitism versus populism, and the distribution of power. In furthering the exploration of how to recognize academic work, discourse has emerged about who should be included as academic staff and who gets to make those decisions.

In my experience, there appear to be three groups of academic professional staff in higher education who do not fit conventional binary descriptors such as "academic" or "non-academic" categories: (1) staff in traditional research and teaching faculty roles who take on professional leadership roles, (2) staff with academic and professional credentials who take on professional leadership roles having arrived from outside academia and then move to traditional academic positions, and (3) staff with academic and professional credentials who are from outside academia take on professional leadership roles but who are not considered to be academics.

Staff on research and teaching tracks who take on professional leadership roles such as presidents, provosts, deans, and department heads are normally filled by staff who have been in traditional academic roles and have taken on administrative duties as service while still meeting research and teaching benchmarks. The Canadian Association of University Teachers (2016) postulates the reliance on positions that do not involve a full range of academic activities undermines the mission of a post-secondary institution, suggesting all of these positions should contribute to research, teaching and service, and other staff who do not fill traditional academic roles should not be given senior leadership roles. Until recently, staff within professional leadership roles were not provided, nor expected to pursue managerial training; "since any intelligent and educated individual *can understand* what we say then *ipso facto* they will *automatically* be able to manage it" (McCaffery, 2018, p. 5).

Waring (2014) uses the term "knowledge elites" to describe those members of a profession who through career development have moved into the realms of knowledge creation and dissemination, often through university appointments. Some might

continue to practice in their professional field but often their contribution leans toward developing professional standards, policy, and research publications. Interestingly, Freidson (1985) and Waring (2014) suggest that these professionals are often no longer seen as "real" professionals by their peers, although they are considered to be filling hybrid roles; Waring further suggests that they tend to shift their identity and allegiance toward the academic research community. Senior leaders in this category may face tension as they negotiate the pull from their professional, academic, and managerial identities.

Less attention has been paid to modulation of professional identities, or to roles that have arisen between professional and academic spheres of activity, in what Whitchurch (2015) has termed *Third Space* environments. Although the work is most frequently determined by individual departments and by the prerogatives of supervisors, hybrid academics have the distinct vantage point of working across departments resulting in the ability to see the institution from many different angles fostering better institutional knowledge and collaborative thinking (Kaplan, 2018; Whitchurch, 2009). Akin to the actors in the *Third Space*, Ryttberg and Geschwind (2017) found that professional support staff shared similar factors including not having clearly defined nor fully institutionalized roles; viewing themselves as paving the way for academics and university leadership; and operating in a culture dominated by academic values and norms.

Whitchurch (2015) contends that this *Third Space* does not sit easily in formal organizational structures and can be both ambiguous and uncertain. Individual universities through their organizational structures determine who is or who is not considered academic staff. This ongoing debate is often shaped by contrasting managerialism and academic freedom, competition and cooperation, market vs academic values, or, more in general, the characterization of the nature of the university within society (Winter, 2017). Hazel (2012) disagrees with Whitchurch's conception of integrated and codependent academic activity. Rather, she contends that the work of professional staff, who might draw upon scholarly bases of knowledge in their work, does not span the gap between the academic and administrative terrains, but rather occurs in a separate space altogether.

In my experience, the gap is much less defined than Hazel suggests. With blurred boundaries of inclusion, staff with the same roles may be assigned different identities depending on their specific institution. For example, a colleague and I have similar pre-academia experiences. Both of us are women who worked in the public school sector for most of our careers and achieved positions in senior leadership. Having recently completed doctoral degrees, we have joined the university with our main role being developing and implementing policy. In our institution, one of us would be considered entering traditional academia as a "knowledge elite" and the other as occupying the *Third Space*, yet in a nearby university, both of us would be considered academic staff.

Whitchurch (2009) characterizes these roles as dealing with a "multi-layered reality" and having both a sense of "belonging" and "not belonging" entirely to either the academic or professional domains. Often working in ambiguous conditions, the sense of "not belonging" can create legitimacy issues. The expectation that I

would take minutes at a meeting even though it is not part of my role very much mirrors examples provided by Whitchurch (2015) and Hazel (2012) in describing the dissonance in relation to role expectations. Individuals are "obliged to build their authority, in situ, via day-to-day activity and relationships with colleagues, rather than via their position in the organisation chart or specialist knowledge" (Whitchurch, 2009, p. 409). But, it is not only the expectation of others but also the expectation of ourselves that frame our identity and give us legitimacy. Upon reflection, I often offered to take minutes, especially early in my role, as I had the skill set and saw it as part of my service to the unit. It was not until my supervisor suggested that by completing visible clerical tasks "to be helpful," that I realized I was also shaping how colleagues viewed my position.

A Feminized Space

Although my role is a senior level position, my experience as an academic professional resonates closely with other marginalized voices negotiating professional identity and institutional expectations within academia. Hazel (2012) proposed these roles in which 60% of workers are women, have little professional autonomy, are expected to serve the agenda of others, and are responsible for managing the relational aspects of that agenda, seems to support the notion that they are in a feminized area of the university.

Logsdon et al. (2017) highlight "how intersectional feminism has established and continues to frame what it means to be in a border space and how power, hierarchy, and privilege play out in these spaces" (p. 157). The example of a faculty member having the power to restrict a librarian to a technical role rather than drawing on her experience to support students in applying the concepts of the lesson speaks to the realities of the lived experience of the academic professional. Without the institutional recognition of the value of all academic professionals, the application of power differentials will continue to deprive the institution of valuable expertise.

In a review of the literature, Lee and Won (2014) suggested that women who aspire to power positions are required to internalize the dominating norms of the organization and conform to the traditional male-dominated hierarchy. Further, women are not seen as fully equal, tenurable colleagues by their male counterparts and discrimination against women in educational institutions will ultimately prevent them from achieving their potential and contributing to improved educational outcomes.

Hazel (2012) found that academic professionals were largely invisible in gender equity initiatives and individuals were treated poorly based on both gender and professional status. This resonates with a recent experience in which a review of gender inequity of salaries resulted in every female faculty member receiving an increase in salary, yet academic professionals were not included in the review.

Conclusion

In my experience, I have found that in understanding the traditional norms and hierarchy of the university, I tactically choose either to adhere to or to challenge those norms. In doing so, I feel I move my work agenda farther and with fewer obstacles when time is a priority but through challenges to archaic systems, I can sometimes offer a different view of "how things could be."

On a day-to-day basis, the work of an academic professional can be overwhelming. Through stepping away and reflecting upon my role in its entirety, I find that I am well satisfied with the hybrid career path I have chosen. I take pride in my work, I am enthusiastic about the direction the university is going, and feel my work supports that direction amid economic uncertainties. Being able to apply research and teaching to a focus on service provides a myriad of opportunities that are not always available to many of my colleagues in faculty positions.

The work of an academic professional can be isolating while negotiating the invisible maze of academia. In exploring what academic work is, who is included, and who gets to make the decisions, there are lessons to be shared for women in the academy no matter how their work is defined. Often it is the sharing of stories that is most important. Prior to exploring the literature for this chapter, my understanding of the lived experience of an academic professional was limited to informal gatherings with other colleagues in similar positions. In becoming aware of the discourse on postsecondary hybrid positions and particularly those within the *Third Space*, I was able to develop a deeper understanding of the isolation and frustration inherent in my role, resulting in a process of exploring my identity beyond the binary positions of academic or non-academic.

References

Annansingh, F., Howell, K., Liu, S., & Baptista Nunes, M. (2018). Academics' perception of knowledge sharing in higher education. *International Journal of Educational Management, 32*(6), 1001–1015. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-07-2016-0153.

Baron, V. (2016). *Education thoughts and acts: decisions school leaders feel they need to make* (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from The Vault: Electronic Theses and Dissertations, University of Calgary. (2016-04-28T15:38:30Z).

Belkhir, M., Brouard, M., Brunk, K., Dalmoro, M., Ferreira, M., Figureiredo, B., et al. (2019). Isolation in globalizing academic fields: A collaborative autoethnography of early career researchers. *Academy of Management Learning and Education, 18*(2), 261–285. https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2017.0329.

Canadian Association of University Teachers. (2016). *Nature of academic work* [CAUT policy statement]. Retrieved from https://www.caut.ca/about-us/caut-policy/lists/caut-policy-statements/policy-statement-on-the-nature-of-academic-work.

Davis, B. (2005). Teacher as "consciousness of the collective." *Complicity: An International Journal of Complexity and Education*. *2*(1), 85–88.

Fitzgerald, L., Ferlie, E., McGivern, G., & Buchanan, D. (2013). Distributed leadership patterns and service improvement: Evidence and argument from English healthcare. *The Leadership Quarterly, 24*(1), 227–239. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.10.012.

Freidson, E. (1985). The reorganization of the medical profession. *Medical Care Review 42*, 11–35. Retrieved from https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/107755878504200103.

Hazel, S. L. (2012). *Mid-level administrative-professional staff in an American research university: Expertise, gender, and changing patterns of professional labor (Doctoral dissertation)*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia.

Hein, J. (2005). *Invisible labyrinth*. Retrieved from https://www.jeppehein.net.

Hirsch, E. (1972). Three dimensions of hermeneutics. *New Literary History, 3*(2), 245–261. https://doi.org/10.2307/468314.

Johansen, S., Olsen, T., Solstad, E., & Torsteinsen, H. (2015). An insider view of the hybrid organisation: How managers respond to challenges of efficiency, legitimacy and meaning. *Journal of Management and Organization, 21*(6), 725–740. https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2015.1.

Kaplan, R. (2018). *The hybrid track*. Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com.

Kirkpatrick, I. (2016). Hybrid managers and professional leadership. In M. Dent, I. Bourgeault, J. Denis, & E. Kuhlmann (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to the professions and professionalism*. New York: Routledge.

Lawrence. (2012). Invisible: Art about the unseen, 1957–2012 (Hayward Gallery, London). Retrieved from https://artseaterdotcom.wordpress.com.

Lee, Y., & Won, D. (2014). Trailblazing women in academia: Representation of women in senior faculty and the gender gap in junior faculty's salaries in higher educational institutions. *The Social Science Journal, 51,* 331–340. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soscij.2014.05.002.

Logsdon, A., Mars, A., & Tompkins, H. (2017). Claiming expertise from betwixt and between: Digital humanities librarians, emotional labor, and genre theory. *College and Undergraduate Libraries, 24*(2–4), 155–170. https://doi.org/10.1080/10691316.2017.1326862.

Lynch, K. (1960). *The image of the city*. Cambridge, USA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

McCaffery, Peter. (2018). *The higher education manager's handbook: Effective leadership and management in universities and colleges*. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351249744.

Middlehurst, R., & Kennie, T. (1997). Leading professionals towards new concepts of professionalism. In J. Broadbent, M. Dietrich, & J. Roberts (Eds.), *The end of the professions? The restructuring of professional work* (pp. 49–66). New York: Routledge.

O'Rourke, K. (2013). *Walking and mapping: Artists as cartographers*. Cambridge, USA: MIT Press.

Ryttberg, M., & Geschwind, L. (2017). Professional support staff at higher education institutions in Sweden: Roles and success factors for the job. *Tertiary Education and Management, 23*(4), 334–346. https://doi.org/10.1080/13583883.2017.1322631.

Sumara, D., & Davis, B. (2009). Using complexity science to study the impact of AISI on cultures of education in Alberta. In *The learning mosaic: A multiple perspectives review of the Alberta initiative for school improvement (AISI)* (pp. 34–50). Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education.

Waring, J. (2014). Restratification, hybridity and professional elites: Questions of power, identity and relational contingency at the points of "professional-organisational intersection". *Sociology Compass, 8*(6), 688–704.

Wiek, A., Bernstein, M., Foley, R., Cohen, M., Forrest, N., Kuzdas, C., Kay, B., & Withycombe Keeler, L. (2015). Operationalising competencies in higher education for sustainable development. In: M. Barth, G. Michelsen, M. Rieckmann, I. Thomas (Eds.), *Handbook of higher education for sustainable development* (pp. 241–260). London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315852249.ch16.

Winter, R. (2017). *Managing academics: A question of perspective*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Whitchurch, C. (2009). The rise of the "Blended Professional" in higher education: A comparison between the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States. *Higher Education, 58*(3), 407–418. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40269191.

Whitchurch, C. (2015). The rise of third space professionals: Paradoxes and dilemmas. In U. Teichler & W. C. Cummings (Eds.), *Forming, recruiting and managing the academic profession* (pp. 79–99). Dordrecht: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-16080-1_5.

Violet Baron, Ph.D., works in a blended academic and administrative role as the Director, Strategic Education Initiatives with the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary. She has spent 20 years teaching and leading in the K-12 public school system in diverse national and international contexts as well as five years working with vulnerable and marginalized populations in emergency humanitarian contexts. Her research interests focus on policy and practice in K-12 and higher education settings.

First Wave, Second Wave, Third Wave: Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Kristine Bauer, Lahleh Behjat, Jo-Anne Brown, Marina L. Gavrilova, Jocelyn L. Hayley and Emily A. Marasco

Abstract Countess Lovelace imagined a world of artificial intelligence a century before modern computers were made. Madame Germaine, a notable mathematician, was barred from entering university. Dr. Meitner, a Jewish physicist, discovered nuclear fission during the second world war. Dr. McGill, who had polio as a teenager and was wheelchair bound, worked as an aeronautical engineer and designed the Hurricane airplanes. Admiral Hopper coined the phrase computer bug by finding an actual bug in a computer. The admiral also designed the first computer programming language making it easier for future generations to interact with computers. This first wave of women scientists and engineers should be known by every student in STEM, but unfortunately their names are being slowly forgotten. Over the last few years, there has been a push to attract more women in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Despite all these efforts, the percentage of women has been constant or in some cases, such as computer science, has decreased. In this work, we will tell the stories of the first wave of the notable women in STEM, and the effects they have had on our careers. We conclude with observations of the present and a call to action for increasing the visibility of women in STEM.

Keywords Women in STEM · Gender equity · Gender gap · Feminism · Advancement

K. Bauer (✉) · L. Behjat · J. Brown · M. L. Gavrilova · J. L. Hayley · E. A. Marasco
University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: bauerk@ucalgary.ca

L. Behjat
e-mail: laleh@ucalgary.ca

J. Brown
e-mail: jocat@ucalgary.ca

M. L. Gavrilova
e-mail: mgavrilo@ucalgary.ca

J. L. Hayley
e-mail: jhayley@ucalgary.ca

E. A. Marasco
e-mail: eamarasc@ucalgary.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_9

Introduction

Carrie Derick's appointment as an assistant professor at the McGill University in 1905 started the first wave of female academics in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). This first wave of female academics faced grave challenges. They went against all odds to get an education and were constantly denied opportunities. For example, Professor Derick had performed academic duties for seven years without an official appointment or pay before being appointed at a third of the salary of her male counterparts. Until 1960, female academics were rare, especially in STEM areas. However, advocacy on the part of many women in STEM resulted in some advancements. In 1960, only 11% of the full-time faculty members were female (Lee, 1993). Over the next two decades, this percentage doubled and almost 20% of the academics in Canada were female. Interestingly, this growth was mostly seen in "the areas of humanities, health, education and social science," (Lee, 1993). STEM areas, especially engineering, mathematics and physics saw almost no increase in the number of female faculty members. According to Lee (1993), the percentage of female academics in engineering in 1989 was only 1% and in mathematics and physical sciences this number was less than 5%.

In the 1990s, the second wave of the female academics in STEM started to arrive in Canadian universities. This wave was powered by several programs such as NSERC Women in Science and Engineering Chairs (NSERC Chairs, 2018). These efforts finally brought the percentage of female academics in STEM to double digits. The pinnacle of the second wave of the achievements of women in STEM came when Donna Strickland became the first woman to win the Noble prize in Physics in 55 years, and only one of the three women who have won this coveted prize. In spite of these success stories, the percentage of women in these areas has been constant or in some cases, such as computer science, has decreased over the past decade. In the academic Canadian landscape, full-time faculty positions held by female professors in 2011 in engineering, physics, and mathematics and computer science, were 12%, 16%, and 18%, respectively (NSERC Report, 2017). These numbers will not be improving in the short term as the number of females entering these areas has not increased. For example, in 2016 only 21% of the doctoral degrees awarded in engineering and 28% of the degrees awarded in mathematics and computer science were awarded to female students (Engineers Canada, 2018). The problem is much worse in physics where there has been a sharp drop of female graduates in recent years. For example, in the year 2000, 30% of the bachelor's degrees in physics were awarded to women, while a decade later, this percentage dropped to 12% (NSERC Chairs, 2018). The female academics from the second wave now have the responsibility of educating and enabling the third wave of female professionals in STEM. At the same time, they should keep the stories of the first wave heroes alive.

In this chapter, five female academics from the second wave, Laleh Behjat, Kristine Bauer, Jo-Anne Brown, Jocelyn Hayley and Marina Gavrilova, will discuss stories of the first wave of female scientists and engineers in STEM and how each

one of them impacted our work and life. We will draw parallels between our experiences and those of the notable female scientists and engineers from the past. In our discussion, we will combine historical context of the women of the first wave with our personal narratives to show the past and the present. Then, we will build a bridge to the future. Dr. Emily Marasco discusses her point of view of the third wave of women in STEM to show a vision of the future.

Design, Against the Odds—Contributed by Laleh Behjat, Computer Engineering

We live in a world that is designed by men and for men. As an example, when the Swedish city of Karlskoga reviewed its snow removal policy, they realized that the official policy of cleaning the highways first meant that the roads that were mostly used by men were cleared first, and the side roads and sidewalks which were more frequently used by women were cleared after the main roads were cleared (Include Gender, 2014). Changing this policy to a gender-neutral policy meant sidewalks and smaller roads were cleared before the major highways. The implementation of the gender-neutral policy had the positive side-effect of fewer injuries after snowstorms. Another example showing how our society is designed for men was done by (Bose, Segui-Gomez, & Crandall, 2011), where they showed that female drivers had a 47% higher chance of severe injury and 71% higher chance of moderate injuries compared to their male counterparts when both populations were wearing seatbelts. The authors show that this higher increase is due to having crash test dummies that were only based on the average height and weight of male drivers. These are just two examples that show how absence of diversity (i.e., height, weight, gender, ability, age, …) in design teams means that the wants, needs, and perspectives of different groups of people are ignored, leading to potentially catastrophic effects.

Research shows that having more females in teams and groups can improve the performance and outcomes of the group. The best example is the seminal study on group IQ or *collective intelligence* that has showed that teams with more female members can perform better and have higher group intelligence (Woolley, Chabris, & Malone, 2010). The goal for the researchers in this study was to find out the characteristics of best performing teams. They asked volunteers in small groups to perform complicated tasks. Then, they measured the characteristics of the teams and their performance. They realized that the high-performing teams did not necessarily have the people with the highest IQ, the highest average IQ, more extroverted people, more motivated people, or more competitive people. The top qualities of the high-performing teams were: (*i*) members who contributed equally; (*ii*) members who could read complex emotions by looking at the eyes; (*iii*) teams containing more women. As we will see in the rest of this chapter, historically, women have been actively discouraged from achieving their potential in STEM fields. This has had a detrimental effect on our personal and work life.

The first wave of women in computing started when Charles Babbage designed the first general-purpose computer, the Analytical Engine, in 1837 (Copeland, 2000). At the time, the anticipation was that this machine would enable scientists to perform calculations faster. Augusta Ada King, Countess of Lovelace (1815–1852) was the first person to realize the potential of these machines and she developed algorithms that could be used by the devices, hence becoming the first computer programmer (Hollings, Martin, & Rice, 2018). Lovelace was a British mathematician, and the only legitimate child of poet Lord Byron who left the family when she was a baby. Lovelace's mother decided that she should never become a poet and made sure that she was heavily tutored in mathematics. Due to this upbringing, she was able to work with scientists and mathematicians of the time and make contributions to STEM.

Lovelace was also able to bring new perspectives into the world of computer engineering. Babbage was only interested in how the machine could use numbers, while Lovelace was seeing beyond that. She wrote in her notes: "[*The Analytical Engine] might act upon other things besides number, were objects found whose mutual fundamental relations could be expressed by those of the abstract science of operations, and which should be also susceptible of adaptations to the action of the operating notation and mechanism of the engine…Supposing, for instance, that the fundamental relations of pitched sounds in the science of harmony and of musical composition were susceptible of such expression and adaptations, the engine might compose elaborate and scientific pieces of music of any degree of complexity or extent.*" (Lovelace & Menabrea, 1842). This shows Lovelace's ability to go beyond the confines of her time and imagine machines making music—something that has finally happened 200 years after her birth (Hadjeres, Pachet, & Nielsen, 2016). Babbage's computer never fully worked, but Ada's algorithm and dreams of new designs still live on.

"So, here you are too foreign for home, too foreign for here. Never enough for both."—Ijeoma Umebinyuo, Questions for Ada (Umebinyuo, 2015).

I (Laleh) am an immigrant from Iran. I lived through a revolution and a war. Today, I am a Professor in Electrical and Computer Engineering. In my work, I use mathematics and computer science, and engineering to build faster and more power-efficient computers. I am also a mother of three who likes skiing, hiking, good food, sunsets, and fancy shoes.

When I talk about my experiences of war and revolution, or the engineering work I do every day, people look at me as if I have come from another planet. But, when I tell them about the messages I received growing up, they nod their head in understanding. Growing up, I was told that I might be able to do whatever boys can, but I have to also remember that men are, and have always been, best in everything. The best mathematicians, physicist, engineers, programmers, musicians, painters, writers, and even chefs, are men. This set me on a path to try to change how we design the world so that against all odds, we can give everyone equal opportunities.

I am now also applying algorithms that were designed to make computers better to find out what infrastructure features in our cities result in having safer neighborhoods (Cao & Behjat, 2019), or how the words used in engineering job advertisements discourage female applicants from applying to those jobs (Canadian Women in Science

and Engineering, 2019). I hope that my research not only advances science and engineering, but also inspires the third wave of female academics in this area.

Disguise, the Prodigy Femme Savant—Contributed by Kristine Bauer, Pure Mathematics

In the late eighteenth and early seventeenth century, France was the center of mathematics. Antoine-August Le Blanc was an eighteenth-century French mathematician, physicist, and philosopher. LeBlanc's work was essential in solving a 350-year-old mathematics problem called Fermat's Last Theorem (Boston, 2003). LeBlanc also pioneered models of vibrations which enabled engineering feats such as the Eiffel Tower. This work earned a prize from the French Academy of Sciences.

But Antoine LeBlanc's development was unusual in many ways. Antoine's parents did not want their child to become interested in mathematics. They would turn off the fire at night to try to prevent Antoine from studying. In the morning they would find their child wrapped in a quilt with pen in hand and frozen ink nearby (Osen, 1974). Antoine was barred from attending the Ecole Polytechnique, but instead acquired lecture notes and was mentored at home by Joseph Louis Lagrange and educated via correspondence with the likes of Carl Friedrich Gauss, the most eminent mathematicians of that time (Osen, 1974). LeBlanc's contributions never gained the recognition they deserved. His name is conspicuously missing from a list of 72 scientists inscribed on the Eiffel Tower despite the prize-winning work done on vibrations.

During the Napoleonic wars, LeBlanc had a defining dramatic moment. When the French invaded Germany, LeBlanc feared that Gauss, a renowned mathematician, was in danger. A family friend who was a French commander was dispatched to retrieve Gauss and take him to safety. Gauss was very confused when he was told that the commander had been sent by Mme. Sophie Germain with whom Gauss had no prior acquaintance. The incident revealed that the aristocrat Mme. Germain and the mathematician M. LeBlanc were one and the same (Dunnington, Gray & Dohse, 2004).

When Sophie Germain first began to study mathematics, she feared "the ridicule associated to the name of femme savante" (Mackinnon, 1990). She would have been well aware of Moliere's play Les Femmes Savantes in which the aspirations of intellectual women were portrayed as pretensions. She adopted the pseudonym A. A. Le Blanc in her early correspondences. Later on, she revealed her true identity but thereafter her work was not critiqued or developed appropriately. Gauss himself said "How can I describe my astonishment and admiration on seeing my esteemed correspondent M. LeBlanc metamorphosed into this celebrated person?" (Mackinnon, 1990). Though his praise for her was high, he never again corresponded with her about mathematics.

The first wave of women in mathematics was not able to attend university nor have their work considered as valuable. Women still face bias in STEM careers: one

study has shown that 63% of white and 77% of black women in STEM have reported "having to provide more evidence of competence than others to prove themselves." (Williams, 2015). However, the next waves of women in STEM are working together to increase the retention of women. For example, the same study has shown that 77% of white and 56% of black women have indicated that "women in their work environment support one another."

I (Kristine) am a professor in the Department of Mathematics at the University of Calgary. My research is in pure mathematics, specifically, algebraic topology: the study of shapes using algebraic things like polynomials. As a pure mathematician, what I do is both science and art. When I was an undergraduate student and starting to consider mathematics as a career option, I learned the story of how Fermat's Last Theorem was solved and how Sophie Germain's contributions to mathematics enabled that achievement. Sophie Germain's story made a huge impression on me. She was the first mathematician whose life story I knew. During my first research experience at Vassar college in 1993, Andrew Wiles announced the proof of Fermat's Last Theorem, the problem that had started Sophie Germain's work in number theory. I learned about her story early, and to me everything about her and Fermat's Last Theorem spoke of DETERMINATION and TENACITY: in times of challenge, these lessons have kept me in math.

With a group of colleagues, I started the Women in Topology program, which seeks to improve the retention of women in mathematics by facilitating collaborative research projects.

Denial, Mother of the Bomb—Contributed by Jo-Anne Brown, Physics and Astronomy

For many women in STEM, denial is a double-edged sword: it is the embodiment of all the reasons their advancement is slowed and is as an effective strategy for survival in a field traditionally dominated by men.

As a woman in physics, I (Jo-Anne), too, have very often been the only woman in a room full of men (Pollack, 2015). I am an associate professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Calgary. My primary research interest is studying the magnetic field of the Galaxy. Until recently, there wasn't even a "full woman" faculty member in my department: the two female faculty members were both cross appointed to other programs. Recent hires have raised the percentage of women in the department to 18%.

Prior to the recent hires, I used denial as a way to cope with all the opportunities that I was being declined as one of the few women in the room. I denied I was different from my colleagues by convincing myself I was "one of the guys." Anything they could do I could do too. There was no need for "special treatment" since I was perfectly capable of competing on any intellectual front. It wasn't until I became

pregnant that I was forced to acknowledge that I was indeed fundamentally different from them: I could do something they could not.

I am not the first physicist to use denial to survive. One of the most influential physicists in the early twentieth century, Lise Meitner, used similar strategies (Sime, 1996). Despite not being widely known, even amongst physicists, Meitner was responsible for the discovery of the chemical Protactinium in 1918 (Wilson, 2012), the discovery of the Auger effect in 1922 (Meitner, 1923), and most importantly, the first interpreter and naming of the process of "fission" (Meitner & Frisch, 1939). Albert Einstein referred to her as the "German Marie Curie" (Frisch, 1970). In 1944, her collaborator, Otto Hahn won the noble prize for the work he had done with her (Hahn, 1946). Mietner's collaboration in the project was not mentioned in the nomination. She was nominated for the Nobel Prize 12 times, yet never won.

Meitner was born in Vienna on November 7, 1878. She was the third of eight children born to a Jewish family with a musician as a mother and a lawyer as a father. Typically, girls in Vienna were only educated until 14, but her parents ensured her a proper education through private tutors. She entered university in 1901, only four years after women were allowed entry into university in Austria. In 1906, she became the second woman to receive a Ph.D. in Physics from the University of Vienna. Shortly after graduation, in 1908, she converted to Lutheranism.

In 1919, Meitner became the first woman "Professor" in Germany, at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute (now known as the Max Planck Institute), an independent, non-government research facility. When Hitler came to power in 1933 and he began removing Jewish scientists from public institutions, she denied this was an issue for her. After all, she was Austrian (not German), Lutheran (not Jewish), and was employed at a private institution (not a public one). On July 13, 1938, she was forced to flee Germany, with nothing but a suitcase of belongings, and a diamond ring, given to her Otto Hahn, in case a bribe was needed on her journey. Meitner later admitted, "It was not only stupid, but also very wrong that I did not leave at once." (Sime, 1996).

Following her escape, Meitner worked for a few months in Holland and then finished her career in Sweden. At one point, she was offered a position at Los Alamos on the Manhattan Project, but turned down the position, saying she didn't want anything to do with the development of a nuclear bomb. She retired in 1960, and moved to Britain, where she passed away in 1968. As depicted on her tombstone inscription, she is remembered as "A physicist who never lost her humanity." (Sime, 1996).

Denial is an effective strategy to deal with seemingly impossible situations, though it typically comes with a price (it had almost cost Meitner her life). Psychologists have demonstrated repeatedly that ignoring the constraints that individuals or society would otherwise impose on a person can facilitate accomplishments well beyond those limiting expectations (Kilduff & Galinsky, 2013). Women in science and engineering know this phenomenon all too well, but the price is typically the feelings of imposter syndrome (Clance & Imes, 1978). Fortunately, as more women break down the barriers into STEM careers, the need to employ denial diminishes.

Advocacy, Queen of Hurricanes—Contributed by Jocelyn Hayley, Civil Engineering

The first wave of women in engineering also had to be advocates, and no one exemplifies this more than Elsie MacGill. Elsie MacGill was the first woman in the world to design an airplane! She was the first female to graduate in electrical engineering in Canada from the University of Toronto in 1927 and the first woman in North America to earn a master's degree in aeronautical engineering in 1929 (Sisson, 2007). Right near the end of her master's program, she contracted polio and began her lifelong promotion of women in STEM. While recuperating at home, Elsie began to contribute to some of her mother's feminist activities, including joining the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, in addition to designing airplanes and writing about aviation for popular women's magazines (Sisson, 2014). Not letting polio beat her, Elsie continued her path of aeronautical engineering with postgraduate work at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), returning to Canada in 1934 with a position in Quebec.

Two important events, both occurring in 1938, were to shape the life of Elsie MacGill and Canada's history. The first was her becoming Chief Aeronautical Engineer at the Canadian Car & Foundry (Can Car) in Fort William, Ontario. Here she designed, constructed, and tested the Maple Leaf Trainer II, and then in 1942 overhauled Can Car to be able to mass produce the Hawker Hurricane—one of the main fighters flown by Canadian and Allied forces in World War 2 (Sissons, 2007). This earned Elsie the nickname "Queen of the Hurricanes" and her own comic strip. The second was her application for membership in the Engineering Institute of Canada being accepted, making her officially the first woman member of the engineering professional association. Just a mere three years later in 1941, Elsie received the Engineering Institute of Canada's Gzowski medal.

Elsie was a prominent and active feminist. She wholeheartedly championed the role of women in society and advocated that Canada would improve with the proper consideration and use of "womanpower!" She devoted herself to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada between 1967 until 1970 (Bird et al., 1970). She spent the rest of her life working toward the implementation of the report's 167 recommendations, all while maintaining an active engineering career. Elsie quotes "I have received many engineering awards, but I hope I will also be remembered as an advocate for the rights of women and children."

Until 1970, well into her career and advocacy, Elsie MacGill rejected the label "woman engineer." Elsie was an engineer, period. She did not personally see the engineering profession as discriminatory. It was the publication of an article in 1970, proposing that women be trained as "engineering aides" because women lacked the interest and skills characteristic of engineering (Rimrott, 1970), that caused Elsie to re-think her career and acknowledge that she had indeed experienced discrimination and bias. Although already an advocate, Elsie turned her attention and efforts toward women in science and engineering from that point forward.

This trajectory from engineer to advocate parallels with the path many of her colleagues and I (Jocelyn) have taken. I believe geotechnical engineering was a calling for me. It seems that I always had a very fond appreciation for dirt—no question I was the kid that always went into the swamp and over my rubber boots. Therefore, this branch of civil engineering was the perfect combination of exploration, nature, and of course math and physics. Noticing, but not worrying too much, about being a minority in engineering, it was a surprise that the further my career progressed, the more of an advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion I became. As part of the second wave, I began to understand that science does not discriminate—society does. Thus, during the schooling and early years, when everyone is immersed in the technical aspects of science, engineering, and math, gender is not what differentiates us by a large degree. It is mostly the intellectual contributions that we make. Yet as the career progresses, interactions outside this comfortable technical bubble grow and female engineers begin to see the differences that were perhaps there all along. What is fantastic about this stage of awareness is that while we notice and remember the subtle biases, we also take note of those ahead of us that mentored, protected, and encouraged us along our chosen path. Advocates like Elsie MacGill that made a difference in our profession and our society, and mentors like our colleagues, friends, and even mothers who paved a much more personal path for us.

Elise MacGill was a fearless trailblazer who changed the way we view women. For many women in STEM, it is an honor to share with her the identities of "woman," "Canadian," "engineer," and for the second wave "mentor and advocate."

Advancements, Amazing Grace—Contributed by Marina Gavrilova, Computer Science

Perhaps no one exemplifies better the same inspiration that drives the new wave of women in science—to be a trailblazer and to lead the new discoveries—than Admiral Grace Brewster Murray-Hopper (1906–1992), with the loving nickname "Amazing Grace." She was a remarkable computer science pioneer, a highly accomplished naval officer, and the first woman to reach the rank of Commodore (Rear Admiral). She was also the inventor of the first compiler, computer programs that translate computer language to human language and vice versa. Before the invention of compilers, computer programmers needed to communicate their instructions to the computer through binary numbers, making the job very hard to understand for most people. Grace Hopper has said that she invented the compiler because she hoped to return to mathematics instead of working on programming (Hopper, 1952). She has also been credited with coining the term "debugging" when her team found an actual moth in a computer that physically caused hardware malfunctioning (Computer Bug, 1947).

As a child, Grace exhibited the same traits that all successful scientists possess: a love of reading, natural curiosity, asking questions, and never stopping her learning. She was known to disassemble a number of alarm clocks in her house to find out how

they work. Later on in life she had an alarm clock in her office that went backward to show people that the only way to advance is to change your point of view: "Humans are allergic to change. They love to say, 'We've always done it this way.' I try to fight that. That's why I have a clock on my wall that runs counter-clockwise." (Schieber, 1987).

Grace had a long, successful, and illustrious career as a professor of mathematics at Vassar College, USA, as a programmer working on the Harward Mark I computer, and as a Navy Rear Admiral (Beyer, 2012). Her career was not smooth, but any obstacles she encountered or unfairness or biases she saw she overcame with determination and grace (Schieber, 1987). She was a natural educator, known later in life for inspiring talks at high schools and research centers, and for her "nanoseconds" demonstration using a piece of wire to explain how radio signals travel through space. Grace was in the first wave of women in computer science, but her contributions made it easier for the future generations to interact with computers. Her inspirational lectures gave hope to many women that they can be highly successful in a male dominated field, such as computer programming or military careers, and her leadership made it possible for many women to advance in the field of computing. She has famously said that "You manage things, you lead people," and she has led many.

I (Marina) am a professor in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Calgary and a co-founder of two laboratories: The Biometric Technologies Laboratory and the SPARCS Laboratory. My first inspiration in life came as a modest gift from my parents: an elegant mahogany table clock with the thoughtful engraving—"Always Inspire Creativity". The clock has been my companion through the years: being an aspiring student at Lomonosov Moscow University, where I met my husband and a partner for life, getting a dual Ph.D. in Sciences and Engineering followed by an academic position at the University of Calgary, becoming founding editor in chief of a Springer journal Transactions on Computational Sciences, organizing conferences on computational geometry and biometric security, and having my research profiled in the exhibit at the National Museum of Civilization in Quebec, Canada. My team works on real-life problems, ones that can have a direct impact on Canadians' quality of life quality, security and health. In my opinion, one of the most important professions is being an educator, as one gets to influence young minds and pass on the knowledge and experience onto the next generations. I strive to do it every day in my professional life, as well as at home raising my two wonderful sons.

My scientific genealogy goes from my Ph.D. supervisor professor, Jon Rokne, to remarkable scientists such as Sir Isaac Newton (9 generations) and Gallileo Gallilei (14 generations), but I feel that having a role model and an inspiration such as Grace Hopper has enabled me to work on some of the most creative and inspiring discoveries in my career, such as my work on theoretical computational geometry, specifically Generalized Voronoi Diagrams (Gavrilova, 2008). I would like to bring the third wave of women to computing by telling the stories of the great role models and by contributing to women mentorship initiatives and organizations.

The advice I give to all inspiring trainees is:

"Be true to yourself. Find your own path. Never give up. Always create, lead and inspire." and "Just like traditional Russian doll Matreshka with multiple levels, the more we learn the more there is to discover."

Looking Ahead, Call to Action—Contributed by Emily Marasco, Electrical Engineering

What does it really mean to be an engineer or scientist? What defines us in our roles as STEM professionals?

Like many high school students (Smaill, 2010; Bussiere, Cartwright, & Knighton, 2004), I (Emily) entered engineering without really understanding what I was getting into. An undergraduate degree in engineering seemed like a good stepping-stone to my goal of intellectual property law, so I decided to give it a try. Once classes started, however, I felt disengaged and overwhelmed by the cascade of lectures, labs, and assignments, each more difficult than the last. I was surrounded by technical requirements and complicated formulas, and I longed to feel some sort of emotional connection with my studies. Playing oboe became my escape but playing at a postsecondary level also meant learning to make my own reeds—the small piece of double-sided cane that is used to make an oboe sound. I was particularly interested in using the precise and highly praised Landwell oboe reed knife. This unique and novel blade was a combination of metallurgical innovation and musical understanding.

My first class in engineering design started like every other lecture. Packed into the small seats of a large lecture hall with my peers, I got ready to take frantic notes, my careful color-coding system already abandoned. But when the professor stood to introduce himself, my hand stopped moving and my jaw dropped. He introduced himself not just as a mechanical engineer, but as a musician and inventor.

With a past career as a professional orchestral musician, Dr. Daryl Caswell was now combining his talent for music with his interest in mechanical devices. In his first lesson, Dr. Caswell described how years of French horn performance and engineering knowledge helped him to manufacture a type of brass mute that was more acoustically accurate. He wanted students to learn the importance behind the form and functionality of design, which was demonstrated seconds later when he picked up a regular garden hose and started to play music as if it were a classical French horn. The unorthodox lecture had already captured my attention, but then he revealed another surprise—he was the co-inventor of the Landwell oboe reed knife.

That single first-year lecture was enough to change my perceptions of engineering forever. Working with mentors such as Dr. Caswell allowed me to experience real-world applications of innovative engineering design and the impact within all areas of society. My training in music would prove to be an asset in engineering as I worked on problems in ultrasonic detection, urban noise control, and frequency analysis.

I was very fortunate to find my niche within engineering, despite feeling like an outsider who didn't belong. Unfortunately, other students are not always so lucky.

Engineering recruitment and retention continue to be concerns as industry leaders across all disciplines search for diverse engineers capable of creative thinking and innovation (Nisula, 2018; Google, 2018, Microsoft, 2020; Intel Education, 2018). The global grand challenges facing society require future engineers to be interdisciplinary problem-solvers and inventors (Kelly, 2016; Atwood, 2016; Genco, Holtta-Otto, & Seepersad, 2012; Tanner, 1992). This need for cognitive diversity requires action earlier in the recruitment pipeline. Studies show that young students, particularly female students, begin to lose interest in STEM subjects as early as grades 4–6 (Capobianco, Diefes-Dux, Mena, & Weller, 2011; Cunningham, Lachapelle, & Lindgren-Streicher, 2005; Arnot, 1998). Dr. Marasco's own research among hundreds of grade five students has shown that only 9% of students, regardless of gender identity, disagree that math and science are harder for women to learn than men (Marasco, 2013). The same students are also more likely to agree that men are less creative than women (Marasco, 2013). With these negative- and inaccurate- perceptions already being held at such a young age, it can be disheartening to realize the uphill battle still facing the third wave of women in STEM.

The good news is that interventions can positively impact these negative perceptions. For example, teaching students hands-on, cross-disciplinary activities that integrate engineering with other fields was seen to dramatically improve their perceptions of gender identity in STEM and creativity (Marasco, 2013). Providing students with authentic opportunities to engage in their own interests while learning about STEM topics celebrates the individuality and cognitive diversity present in each student. It is clear that leaders in STEM need to join the call to action as we support those who have been historically seen as too different, unusual, or non-traditional to excel.

As we move toward the future, we must remember the stories of the first wave of women such as Ada Lovelace, Sophie Germain, Lise Meitner, Elsie McGill, and Grace Hopper. We see parallels between their struggles and those of current STEM professionals who are fighting to bring their authentic selves into their work. Carrie Derrick was hired at a third of the salary of her male counterparts: Today, many universities have taken action to adjust the salaries of their female faculty members. However, the systems that enable disparities in the salaries still exist. When Donna Strickland won the Noble prize, she was still an associate professor. Even though she was promoted shortly after the announcements, the systems established for promotion are still the same.

With the crucial need for innovation, cognitive diversity, and creative problem-solvers, it is more important than ever to allow the third wave of female academics in STEM to come in numbers, show the future generations that being different is their greatest strength, and change the systems to be more equitable, diverse, and inclusive.

References

Arnot, M., James, M., Gray, J., Ruddick, J., & Duveen, G. (1998). Recent research on gender and educational performance. OFSTED, London.

Atwood, S. A., & Pretz, J. E. (2016). Creativity as a factor in persistence and academic achievement of engineering undergraduates. *Journal of Engineering Education, 105*, 540–559.

Beyer, K. (2012). *Grace hopper and the invention of the information age*, MIT Press.

Bird, F., Henripin, J., Humphrey, J., Lange, L., Lapointe, J., Elsie MacGill … Doris Ogilvie (1970). Report on the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada. Canada Privy Council Office.

Bose, D., Segui-Gomez, M., & Crandall, J. (2011). Vulnerability of female drivers involved in motor vehicle crashes: An analysis of US population at risk. *American Journal of Public Health, 101*(12), 2368–2373.

Boston, N. (2003). *The proof of Fermat's last theorem.* University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Bussiere, P., Cartwright, F., & Knighton, T. (2004). *The performance of Canada's youth in mathematics, reading, science and problem solving: 2003 first findings for Canadians aged 15* (p. 2004). Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and Statistics Canada, Ottawa: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

Canadian Women in Science and Engineering. (2019). A new research collaboration in computer science. *CWSE-prairies newsletter. 8*(1).

Cao, C., & Behjat, L. (2019). *A machine Learning framework for neighbourhood safety impact prediction, EURO 2019*. Ireland: Dublin.

Capobianco, B., Diefes-Dux, H., Mena, I., & Weller, J. (2011). What is an engineer? Implications of elementary school student conceptions for engineering education. *Journal of Engineering Education, 100*(2), 304–328.

Clance, P. R. & Imes, S. A. (1978). The imposter phenomenon in high achieving women: Dynamics and therapeutic intervention. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice*, *15*(3), 241–247.

Computer Bug. (1947). Log book with computer bug. National Museum of American History. https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_334663. Last Accessed 28 November 2019.

Copeland, B. J. (2000). The modern history of computing. *The modern history of computing (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University. Last accessed 28 November 2019.

Cunningham, C., Lachapelle, C., & Lindgren-Streicher, A. (2005). Assessing elementary school students' conceptions of engineering and technology. In *ASEE Annual Conference and Exposition*, Portland, OR.

Dunnington, G. W., Gray, J., Dohse, F.-E. (2004). *Carl friedrich gauss: Titan of science*. Mathematical Association of America. ISBN 978-0-88385-547-8.

Engineers Canada 2018 National Membership Report. (2018). https://engineerscanada.ca/reports/national-membership-report/2018-report. Last Accessed 19 December 2018.

Frisch, O. (1970), Lise Meitner, 1878–1968. Biographical memoirs of fellows of the royal society. Vol. 16. http://doi.org/10.1098/rsbm.1970.0016

Gavrilova, M., (2008). *Generalized voronoi diagram: A geometry-based approach to computational intelligence*, Springer.

Genco, N., Holtta-Otto, K., & Seepersad, C. (2012). An experimental investigation of the innovation capabilities of undergraduate engineering students. *Journal of Engineering Education, 101,* 60–81.

Google. (2019). Google for education. https://edu.google.com/. Last Accessed 28 November 2019.

Hadjeres, G., Pachet, F., & Nielsen, F. (2016). DeepBach: A steerable model for bach chorales generation. In *Proceedings of the 34th International Conference on Machine Learning*, PMLR (Vol. 70, pp. 1362–1371, 2017).

Hahn, O. (1946). Nobel Lecture. NobelPrize.org. Nobel Media. https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/chemistry/1944/hahn/lecture/. Last Accessed 28 November 2019.

Hollings, C., Martin, U., & Rice, A. (2018) A *da Lovelace: The making of a computer scientist*. University of Oxford.
Hopper, G. (1952). The education of a computer presentation in the first ACM conference, *Annals of the History of Computing*, *9*(¾), pp. 271–281 (Fall 1987).
Include Gender. (2014). Gender equal snow clearing in Karlskoga. https://www.includegender.org/gender-equality-in-practice/planning-and-urban-development/gender-equal-snow-clearing-in-karlskoga/.
Intel Education. (2018). Enhanced learning with educational technology. https://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/education/intel-ineducation.html. Last Accessed 28 November 2019.
Kelly, R. (2016). *Creative development: Transforming education through design thinking, innovation, and invention*. Canada: Brush Education Inc.
Kilduff, G. J., & Galinsky, A. D. (2013). From the ephemeral to the enduring: How approach-oriented mindsets lead to greater status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 105*(5), 816–831.
Lee, J. (1993). Women in academia—A growing minority, Perspectives on Labour and Income, Spring (Vol. 5, No 1, Article No. 3). https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/75-001-x/1993001/99-eng.pdf?st=O3DHtDV5.
Lovelace, A., & Menabrea, L. (1842). Sketch of the analytical engine invented by Charles Babbage Esq. *Scientific Memoirs* (p. 694), Richard Taylor.
Mackinnon, N. (1990). Sophie Germain, or, Was Gauss a feminist? *The Mathematical Gazette, 74*(470), 346–351. https://doi.org/10.2307/3618130.
Marasco, E. (2013). Development of a CDIO-based creative cross-disciplinary curriculum and associated projects for elementary education. Master's thesis, Schulich School of Engineering, University of Calgary. Supervisor: Dr. Laleh Behjat.
Meitner, L., Das β-Strahlenspektrum von UX_1 und seine Deutung. Z. Physik 17 (1923) 54–66. https://doi.org/10.1007/BFO1328663
Meitner, L., Frisch, O. (1939). Disintegration of Uranium by Neutrons: A new type of nuclear reaction. *Nature 143*, 239–240. https://doi.org/10.1038/143239a0
Microsoft in Education 2020: Empowering every student on the planet to achieve more. https://www.microsoft.com/en-ca/education
Nisula, A., & Kianto, A. (2018). Stimulating organisational creativity with theatrical improvisation. *Journal of Business Research, 85*, 484–493.
NSERC Report. (2017). Women in science and engineering in Canada, Corporate planning and Policy Division Report, Natural Science and Engineering Council of Canada (NSERC). http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Reports-Rapports/WISE2017_e.pdf. Last Accessed 23 November 2019.
NSERC Chairs. (2018). A. Perreault, analysis of the distribution of gender in STEM fields in Canada, NSERC Chairs for Women in Sciences and Engineering.
Osen, L. M. (1974). *Women in mathematics* (pp. 83–97), MIT Press.
Pollack, E. (2015). *The only woman in the room: Why science is still a Boy's club.* Beacon Press, Boston.
Rimrott, F. P. J. (1970). Women in engineering. *Canada from Canadian Aeronautics and Space Journal, 16*(6), 243–244.
Schieber, P. (1987). The wit and wisdom of grace hopper. The OCLC Newsletter, March/April 1987, No. 167.
Sime, R. L. (1996). *Lise meitner: A life in Physics*. University of California Press.
Sisson, C. (2007). Elsie MacGill. *The Canadian Encyclopedia.*
Sisson, C. (2014). *Queen of the hurricanes: The fearless Elsie MacGill.* Second Story Press.
Smaill, C. (2010). The implementation and evaluation of a university-based outreach program in electrical engineering. *IEEE Transactions of Education, 53*(1), 12–17.
Tanner, C. (1992). Applying creative thinking techniques to everyday problems. *Journal of Consumer Marketing, 9*(4), 23–28.
Umebinyuo, I. (2015). *Questions for ada.* Createspace independent publishing platform. 1st edn

Williams, J. (2015). The 5 Biases Pushing Women Out of STEM. *Harvard Business Review, 24*.
Wilson, R. (2012). *Nature chemistry*, Vol. 4 (p. 586).
Woolley, A., Chabris, C., & Malone, T. (2010). Evidence for a collective intelligence factor in the performance of human groups. *Science*. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1193147.

Negotiating Roles and Identities in Addition to the Academy

Looking Back While Moving Forward: A Narrative Journey Toward Self

Gabrielle Lindstrom

Abstract Negotiating life as a First Nations woman is often done on the fringes of society. Along the margins, my learning has involved a constant interplay between the trauma of colonization and the perseverance of my people to survive and thrive within a social context marred with systemic oppression. Despite these many challenges, higher education has offered a path toward personal empowerment that has enabled me to discover a unique, culturally grounded understanding of what it means to be resilient within the context of tribal self-determination. In this chapter, divided into two parts, I offer a personal narrative of resilience that draws on my experiences as a Blackfoot woman along my journey toward achieving my Ph.D. in Educational Research. In doing so, I conceptualize resilience from a uniquely Blackfoot perspective that also holds a deeply human relevance. In the first part of the chapter, I describe my experiences as an Indigenous post-secondary student in order to offer a glimpse into the lifeworld of a typical Indigenous student. In the second part, I offer up reflections on the lessons learned along my journey as a way to highlight the multiplicity of experiences that women must negotiate within the context of the academy.

Keywords Self-determination · Blackfoot resilience · Indigenous students · Indigenous women · Trauma narratives · Anti-colonial theory

Introduction

As a Blackfoot woman born and raised on the largest reserve in Canada, I have always been guided by the teachings of the elders in my community and although there were some points in my life when I willfully ignored this wisdom, it was only through re-centering the values encompassed in their teachings that I have been able to forge my own pathway in the academy. Negotiating life as a First Nations person is not an easy task and I am constantly reminded of how my own lifeworld has been relegated to the fringes of society. Within the margins, my learning has involved a

G. Lindstrom (✉)
Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: glindstrom@mtroyal.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_10

constant interplay between the trauma of colonization and the perseverance of my people to survive and thrive within a social context marred with systemic oppression. Despite these many challenges, higher education has offered a path toward personal empowerment that I had not anticipated in the sense that the learning opportunities have allowed me to discover a unique, culturally grounded understanding of what it means to be resilient within the context of tribal self-determination.

My research around resilience seeks to problematize common definitions of resilience that emerge from the Western, Euro-centered perspectives. These definitions include being able to bounce back from challenges and return to a previous state of wellness. Indeed, resilience increasingly becomes a frame for "grant funding, news stories, academic journals, and organization missions" (McGreavey, 2016, p. 104). Despite both its ubiquity in the scholarly literature and in reference to Indigenous culture, I did not have a clear understanding of what resilience actually meant on a personal or cultural level. Others such as Ungar (2013), Kirmayer et al. (2011) and Hansen and Antsanen (2016) have also raised critical issues around these simplified understandings of resilience arguing that these understandings fail to capture the more nuanced aspects of human experience that enable us to persevere throughout devastatingly challenging times. From my perspective, what remains clear is that resilience is fostered through relationships not only to other people and our environment, but also through a reconnection to self. This reconnection may allow us to see that within our own suffering, lay threads of hope, courage, and perseverance that push us onward. I have discovered that these threads are woven into my personal narrative and made tangible through the act of storytelling in-relation (Graveline, 1998) to others—a process referred to as narrative resilience (Denham, 2008). In this chapter, divided into two parts, I offer a personal narrative of resilience using my journey toward achieving my Ph.D. in Educational Research as the backdrop to my story. In doing so, I conceptualize resilience from a uniquely Blackfoot perspective that also holds a deeply human relevance. In the first part of the chapter, I describe my experiences as an Indigenous post-secondary student to not only offer a glimpse into the challenges faced by many Indigenous students but to also challenge the deficit perspective that is often applied to Indigenous peoples in general. In the second part and grounded in scholarly voices, both seminal (Bastien, 2003, 2004; Ermine, 1995, 2007) and more recent (Hansen & Antsanen, 2016), I offer own reflections on the lessons learned along my journey as a way to highlight the multiplicity of experiences that women must negotiate within the context of the academy.

Scholars such as Bonnycastle and Prentice (2011) have observed that taking up the learning journey as a mature student requires both courage and determination. As women, we carry other responsibilities such as caring for small children and the household further to gender-defined barriers that often make university attainment a difficult goal to achieve. As Indigenous women, we must also overcome additional obstacles that render full-time student status difficult to maintain let alone obtaining a university degree. The attainment rate for a post-secondary education degree for Indigenous peoples is currently just 11% compared to 29% for the general population (collegeandinstitutes.ca). The odds were stacked against me when I decided to enroll in a university.

Life as a Full-Time Student

This chapter of my story begins during a time when I had grown tired of working minimum wage jobs both on- and off-reserve. Finally, after much coaxing from a close relative who was finding success in university, I mustered up the courage and confidence to apply for post-secondary studies. In the Fall of 2002, my university journey began. After dropping my two-year-old daughter off at my parents' house on the reserve, then rushing to the city and frantically looking for parking on campus, I was ten minutes late when I walked into my first class, an introductory class to Native American Studies. At the time, I felt that it would be an easy pass. My course load was light that first semester and I was only enrolled in two other classes, English and Anthropology. I made it through the initial week of class despite my intense anxiety and a general feeling of not belonging. This was a feeling I was already quite familiar with while in the small prairie city where the university was located due to the numerous encounters with racism with the local White people. That weekend, my partner at the time and I decide to throw a house party to "celebrate" my acceptance and attendance at university. The next morning, I lay in bed recovering from a brutal physical assault. Later that day, my parents dropped my daughters off and my dad urged me to call the police to report the incident. My partner convinced me not to. That same evening, my older sister called me with news that her stepdaughter had just committed suicide which was devastating for my family. On Monday morning, I emailed my professors and let them know I could not attend class due to a death in the family as well as recovering from a physical assault. No one except my Anthropology professor, who was also a woman, emailed me back to acknowledge receipt of my message. Although this only compounded my feelings of isolation and not belonging, I remained grateful that at least one professor offered words of understanding.

Despite successfully completing the first year of university, my feelings of isolation on campus only increased. The following year, during Labour Day long weekend, my partner and I decided to celebrate the beginning of a new academic year. By Sunday, I was hobbling around on crutches recovering from a major leg injury. I emailed my professors to let them know I would be unable to attend classes for two weeks due to the physical trauma that left me physically unable to drive to campus. This time, none of my professors emailed me back to acknowledge receipt of my message. By the third year of university, it wasn't only violence and addictions that were marring a successful and smooth start to the new academic year since I then had to deal with legal issues due to my car being impounded because I was unable to afford insurance. I made it through that third year but just barely. My fourth year of university brought a new set of challenges as my oldest daughter, sixteen at the time, was diagnosed with a serious mental illness. She had been presenting with symptoms and behaviors for years prior to the diagnosis. After many trips to the emergency room and countless doctors' visits, she was finally receiving treatment. I felt as if I was walking in a daze and decided to seek on-campus counseling. After the counselor suggested I contact child welfare to see if they could "help" ease my burden, I realized quite quickly that the university was just another system of social

control. I truly felt I had no one to reach out to for support in academia. My final year culminated with the sudden and unexpected passing of my beloved maternal aunt the week I completed my last required courses to qualify for graduation. Her death made this milestone bittersweet. Having withdrawn from one semester, it took me five years to complete an undergraduate degree. While graduate studies brought equally challenging experiences, it was through this learning process that I slowly began to make meaning of my struggles.

Toward Transformation

After I graduated, I struggled to find a job and my degree in English did not appeal to potential employers. Graduate studies seemed the only alternative, but the university did not offer many resources to assist in applying. Fortunately, a former professor of mine put out a call for a graduate student in Native American Studies and without hesitation I applied. In the fall of 2008, I began my program. Although being a graduate student helped to increase my confidence, I was still caught in a cycle of violence that at the time seemed as normal to me as the air I was breathing. As I delved deeper into my research topic, an exploration of Indigenous homelessness relative to connections to traditional territory (Weasel Head, 2011), and began conducting interviews with Indigenous participants, my self-concept, perspectives on history, and my Blackfoot culture began to shift. My taken-for-granted way of making sense of the world and my place within it was insufficient in wresting the deeper complexities related to how my socio-cultural positioning shaped the person that I had become. In 2010, after a particularly draining weekend, I realized that the only thing that separated me from the Indigenous homeless people who participated in my study was the fact that I paid rent and had a physical roof over my head while they did not. Otherwise, I was as equally bereft of security and a sense of identity as many of them were. In a sense, my research was the impetus for a transformative shift in my perspective. From that point onward, I began a process of recovering parts of myself that I had not realized were lost.

Determined to complete my graduate program and create a different life for my daughters, I realized that letting go of relationships and places was an integral part of my self-discovery and growth. I moved from the small city to a much larger one. A few months later, I successfully finished a Master's degree in Native American Studies. Despite this accomplishment, I had trouble finding employment and was either over-qualified or did not have relevant experience. Small contract work allowed me to survive and pay my bills but I was left utterly discouraged. Throughout my teenage years and adult life, I was continuously given the message that if Indigenous people would just get educated, they would be successful in society. I was certainly educated but I was still struggling to find success. Many times, I felt like returning to my reserve and the lifestyle that I had known nearly all my adult life. I pushed through these feelings and began contract work on a project that addressed intergenerational trauma in Indigenous families.

The learnings around trauma and its impacts on the brain offered new insights that helped me to make sense of not only my life but the ways that colonization continues to impinge on the lives of Indigenous peoples. Although this contract was short-lived, it prepared me for a management position at a post-secondary technical institute. The institute housed an Indigenous student support center and with the help of a small team and much-needed resources, I felt blessed to set the programming direction and create an environment that would assist Indigenous students in achieving their goals. Despite our best efforts, the Indigenous students continued to drop out or found themselves struggling to stay in their programs. Many students who accessed the supports of the center shared stories with me that resonated with often unimaginable experiences of profound traumas. These narratives of suffering helped me to realize that my story was not unique and that trauma seemed to be a common theme throughout the learning journey of many Indigenous students attending post-secondary. Inspired by the stories of others and determined to further explore the connection between the impacts of trauma on learning and poor post-secondary outcomes for Indigenous students, I resigned from my full-time job and returned to the academy to pursue a doctorate in Educational Research with a specialization in Adult Learning.

Healing Through Learning

My educational experience while in the doctoral program enabled me to learn more about myself and create a relationship with my knowledge in ways I had never known before. The MA program offered a transformative shift in my perspective but the journey to completing my dissertation brought insights which changed not only my thinking around my identity as a Blackfoot woman, but my behaviors also reflected an altered frame of reference. Most notable to this shift was the stark realization of the extent that I had internalized colonial oppression through my encounters with racism and discrimination both on an interpersonal and systemic level. I feel these experiences led me down a path of self-destruction. Because I had lacked a critical frame of reference, I struggled to make sense of these experiences and often found myself feeling ashamed and angry for being born as a Blackfoot person. In one of the doctoral seminar courses that focused on language and identity, I was required to complete an assignment that expressed how I perceived myself by creating an identity text using both English and my traditional language of Blackfoot. This was the most difficult task that I undertook during my program because it forced me to deliberately express myself through a Blackfoot lens. When I first started the paper, I stared at the blank computer screen and I cried. I cried as I imagined my parents at the Indian Residential schools—very small, very confused, very afraid, and very lonely. I cried as I recalled being sixteen and terrified to tell my parents I was pregnant. I cried because I finally realized the extent of not only the loss of self but a loss of my culture and the devastation this wrought upon my people. I cried for my people. I

cried because I knew I could barely speak Blackfoot. I wondered how on earth I was supposed to complete the assignment.

I felt as though the tears would never stop flowing but eventually, they did. Through swollen eyes, I began to write my personal history and in doing so, I started to find myself. I felt a renewed sense of purpose. As I sat in front of my computer, my father held up my spirit as he translated my English words into Blackfoot—the breath of Creator. Never in my life had I felt so strong, so determined to tell my story and so absolutely Blackfoot! In that moment, I experienced the transformative power of learning through relationships and was keenly aware of how my own transformation began through a process of self-exploration—essentially fostering a relationship with my knowledge.

I completed my doctorate degree but will forever remain on my learning journey. Indeed, my personal transformation in graduate studies propelled me to explore how my personal suffering and struggle were necessary components of my growth. I was also inspired by other Indigenous students who had persisted in their journeys despite experiencing profound traumas. Their stories, in addition to mine, provided the context within which both my current classroom pedagogy and research pursuits are positioned. In the following section, I synthesize my experiences with the various critical theoretical perspectives emerging from the literature in order to highlight how the creation of a personal ethical space of engagement (Ermine, 2007) has been a necessary prerequisite enabling me to navigate the academy with a strong sense of identity and purpose. In doing so, I advance an understanding of resilience that is culturally determined and offers another way of conceptualizing the human capacity to persevere through suffering.

Lessons Learned

As demonstrated through my narrative, the path toward academic success for Indigenous women is one that all too often ends without successful program completion. To counteract this, many universities across Canada are committed to better understanding the barriers to post-secondary access and completion for Indigenous adult learners ages 18-years-old and beyond (Universities Canada, 2015). The release of the final report and Calls to Action put forth by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) often means that structural, academic, and cultural supports are being prioritized across campuses. Despite these shifts, the post-secondary completion gap between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population remains vast (Universities Canada, 2015). Complicating the educational landscape, specific Indigenous tribal perspectives are either not fully understood or overlooked in favor of a homogenous, or pan-Indian, approach that can be applied to all Indigenous peoples regardless of tribal orientation let alone gender-defined barriers. Working as a professional providing academic, social, mental, emotional, and spiritual support to Indigenous students, I found that much of the resources the institution allocated to the Indigenous student center was buttressed by a culturally responsive pedagogical approach. Cultural

responsiveness involves programming and policy development in reaction to the differences presented by Indigenous cultures within the context of the hegemony—a difference that is measured against Euro-centered perceptions of normalcy. The focus is on responding to differences rather than interrogating the colonial ideologies which define difference. Thus, the naturalization of a Euro-centered hegemony goes critically unexamined. Indigenous scholars such as St. Denis (2011, 2016) argues that too much time and resources have been put toward culturally responsive pedagogies and campus initiatives that focus on celebrating Indigenous culture through activities such as pow-wows and beading classes. Additionally, when taking courses focusing on Indigenous content, much of the learning advanced an objective understanding of Indigenous culture as opposed to critically confronting the roots of oppression. While these practices remain important identity pieces, they do little to confront or challenge colonial ideologies which continue to define the structure, policies, and practices of our academic institutions (Howard, 2006). Too many non-Indigenous people participate without any context as to the meaning of these activities (St. Denis, 2011, 2016).

Instead, critical scholars advocate for adopting an anti-colonial approach (Dei & Kempf, 2006) which can provide a conceptual framework to challenge the ways that academic institutions protect Western knowledge systems and methodologies. Although many agree that colonialism has not ended (Altamirano-Jiménez, 2011; Dei & Kempf, 2006; Hargreaves, 2009; Williams, 2018), it is a complex endeavor to translate anti-colonial tenets into classroom spaces within which non-Indigenous students are often unable or unwilling to critically acknowledge, let alone explore, how it continues to hold significant impacts in society (Caxaj & Berman, 2014; Neeganagwedgin, 2011). Reconceptualizing and reframing common definitions that are often applied to Indigenous socio-historical and cultural contexts offer a way to embed tribal self-determination that is both inspired by anti-colonial theory and Indigenous philosophies.

My dissertation research (Lindstrom, 2018) taught me that in order to complete my degree and, today, hold an academic position, I need to create my own sense of belonging. I achieve this through scholarly pursuits that serve to validate my tribal identity via a process of reclamation. I have come to realize that my own suffering and sacrifice are part of a process of resilience that, from a Blackfoot perspective, can be encapsulated through the concept of "mokakit iyikakimaat," which, when loosely translated, means to become wise and persevere. I arrived at this understanding by exploring both the inherent tensions between Western and Indigenous paradigms and the ways that critical theory and Indigenous philosophies intersect, an exploration that has illuminated what Ermine (2007) conceptualizes as the ethical space of engagement. Importantly, Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers such as Ray and Johnson have identified a need to examine ways to integrate Western and Indigenous ways of knowing in research to not only better understand social issues from a more well-rounded perspective, but also to work toward improving relationships.

Transformative Understanding of Indigenous Resilience

Bridging the disconnects in culturally-informed understandings of resilience is a significant challenge requiring engagement from both Indigenous and Western perspectives, a challenge that, as of yet, has not been deliberately responded to. In response to this silent area in the scholarship, my current research around tribal resilience is informed by transformative learning theory and Indigenous pedagogy. Developed by Mezirow and employed within an adult learning context, transformative learning theory has been used to conceptualize how adults make meaning of experience through a process of critical self-reflection that offers profound shifts in understanding which lead to new insights, and interpretations of the world around us (Taylor, 2008). Alternately, Indigenous epistemology posits that individual growth is premised within a pursuit of personal self-development through which individuals aim to reach their full potential in life through acts of inward reflection (Bastien, 2003, 2004; Ermine, 1995, 2007). Notable to transformative learning theory is the notion of a disorienting dilemma—which can either be a cumulative series of stressful events, or a single event such as a natural disaster, car crash or other major trauma—that serves as the impetus for learners to critically re-evaluate their existing frame of reference. Critical self-reflection becomes a way for adult learners to interrogate deficiencies in their previous understandings and integrate new insights based on a transformed perspective. I argue that these disorientating dilemmas are embedded in the stories of Indigenous peoples' experiences of colonial violence. The violence, according to Haskell and Randal (2009), is both historically positioned and is now reproduced and lived out through Indigenous peoples' encounters with racial violence, discrimination, and marginalization. Others such as Cote-Meek and Aguiar and Halseth (2015) point to the difficulties that students encounter when examining the history and issues related to the impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples.

As an Indigenous woman in academia, I needed to first reflect on my history, identity, and cumulative traumas in order to reframe my self-concept. Moreover, an emphasis on critical reflection that is geared toward action offers a parallel path to envisioning Indigenous and Western epistemological perspectives. However, engaging the ethical space does not simply involve emphasizing parallels and intersecting concepts between the two worldviews. Rather, it also requires a critical exploration and theorizing in relation to the disparities in thought worlds that will illuminate both the ways through which colonial ideologies serve to further subjugate Indigenous peoples and how Indigenous peoples are liberating themselves from the yoke of oppression. Thus, resilience offers a critical conceptual site to take up this theorizing that is informed by unique tribal paradigms.

Challenging Deficits

Strength-based discourses in education, health, and social service fields may offer an understanding of Indigenous histories and issues using resilience as the framework for analysis based in a Western, Euro-centered paradigm. However, common notions around resilience are insufficient (Scarpino, 2007; Stout & Kipling, 2003) in helping to reframe deficit thinking with respect to Indigenous peoples given that the ways we use to measure resilience levels reduce human-experiences of suffering and strength to person-centered, individually conceptualized protective and/or risk factors. Since the philosophical paradigm used to interpret strength is advanced through Western perspectives, resiliency discourses continually marginalize the voices of Indigenous peoples in the very development of resilience-based frameworks of analysis which are then applied to Indigenous experiences of colonial violence and systemic oppressions. Indeed, the ways that Indigenous history and current reality are analyzed and interpreted by Western understandings and then translated to social systems' approaches adds another layer of complexity to my research.

As demonstrated through my personal narrative, trauma, both historical and current, was a dominant theme. Unbeknownst to me at the time, my suffering and struggle served to position my identity within a particular context in Canadian society. For example, statistics and anecdotal evidence used to better define and understand the educational gap between Indigenous and mainstream populations are framed within a deficit perspective with respect to Indigenous peoples (Greidanus & Johnson, 2016; Ponting & Voyageur, 2001) which serves to represent Indigenous adult learners in specifically negative ways. This deficit perspective is framed by the sorrow-stories, barriers, and perceived challenges to advancement in society that become the hallmark of Indigenous students' experiences. Much of the programming and supports that are put in place for Indigenous students are approached from this deficit perspective (Aguiar & Halseth, 2015). From a pedagogical standpoint, it is well documented in the literature that non-Indigenous, Euro-centered educators often hold expectations of their Indigenous students that are informed by deficit understandings of Indigenous culture (Bastien, 2016; St. Denis, 2011, 2016). I argue that sacrifice and suffering are not new conditions for Indigenous peoples. Indeed, our environmental context essentially guaranteed that suffering was inevitable. Our ceremonies, particularly those related to physical trials, and moral and social ethics dictated a great degree of personal sacrifice. Yet, it was through processes of suffering and hardship that Indigenous peoples were able to maintain balance on an individual, personal, collective, and ecological level. Today, Indigenous peoples continue to exist within a social and historical context of hardship that is continuously imposed by colonial forces. Western society, however, has distilled current-day struggles to a deficit paradigm of failure and primitivism (Bastien, 2016). These perspectives must be challenged by shifting to strength-based conceptualizations. I stress an important caveat here: Western strength-based frameworks cannot authentically capture what success and resilience mean from a distinct tribal perspective informed by lived-experience and

oral traditions. Although previous research done around Indigenous conceptualizations of resilience (Denham, 2008; Hansen & Antsanen, 2016; Scarpino; 2007; Stout & Kipling, 2003) offers a broad approach to understanding resilience, there remains a need to move away from pan-Indigenous frameworks for conceptualizing Indigenous life-worlds in order to foster Indigenous self-determination from a uniquely defined tribal perspective (Johnson & Beamer, 2013; Kirmayer et al., 2011).

Conclusion

Writing this chapter has enabled me to not only share my story of trauma and resilience, but also demonstrate how the academy has been the site of my personal transformation as an Indigenous woman. Theorizing within the ethical space has been a critical component of my growth which in turn has informed my scholarly and pedagogical pursuits. Exploring Indigenous epistemology within academia has revealed a holistic realm of learning within which individual learners, including myself, are challenged to meet their full potential as they move through life (Ermine, 1995). Further, within an Indigenous epistemology, it is emphasized that all life experiences, including traumatic ones, can be considered learning opportunities. Making meaning of these experiences enables us to persevere. My research is revealing how resilience can be thought of as a process-oriented journey on which one encounters sources of inspiration that motivate individuals to persevere and reach goals (Lindstrom, 2018). Indigenous pedagogy that is purposely positioned within an approach that highlights the resiliency of Indigenous cultures as evidenced in Indigenous history and issues can effectively foster Indigenous women's agency to persevere in academia. Hence, instead of a trauma-informed approach to education (Brunzell, Stokes & Walters, 2015), I envision a resilience-informed pedagogy that inspires "mokakit iyikakimaat," out of which emerge transformed perspectives. As I turn new corners along my learning path, I am sure to be met with a multitude of obstacles, yet I know I will persevere for I am guided by the relationships I hold to my ancestral past, my current struggles, and my future aspirations.

References

Aguiar, W., & Halseth, R. (2015). *Addressing the healing of Aboriginal adults and families within a community-owned college model*. National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health. Prince George, BC: University of Northern British Columbia.

Altamirano-Jiménez, I. (2011). Settler colonialism, human rights and indigenous women. *Prairie Forum, 36*(2), 105–125.

Bastien, B. (2003). The cultural practise of participatory transpersonal visions. *Revision, 26*(2), 41–48.

Bastien, B. (2004). *Blackfoot ways of knowing: The worldview of the Siksikaitsitapi*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

Bastien, B. (2016). Indigenous pedagogy: A way out of dependence. In K. Burnett & G. Read (Eds.), *Aboriginal history: A reader*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Bonnycastle, C., & Prentice, S. (2011). Childcare and caregiving: Overlooked barriers for northern post-secondary women learners. *Canadian Journal of Native Studies, 31*(1), 1–16.

Brunzell, T., Stokes, H., & Waters, L. (2016/2015). Trauma-informed positive education: Using positive psychology to strengthen vulnerable students. *Contemporary School Psychology*, *20*(1), 63–83. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-015-0070-x.

Calls to Action. (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Retrieved from http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf.

Caxaj, C., & Berman, H. (2014). Anti-colonial pedagogy and praxis: Unraveling dilemmas and dichotomies. In M. C. Smith & P. L. Chinn (Eds.), *Philosophies and practices of emancipatory nursing: Social justice as praxis* (pp. 175–186). https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203069097.

College and Institutes Canada. (2019). Reconciliation through education. Retrieved from https://www.collegesinstitutes.ca/policyfocus/indigenous-learners/.

Dei, G., & Kempf, A. (2006). *Anti-colonialism and education: The politics of resistance*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Denham, A. (2008). Rethinking historical trauma: Narratives of resilience. *Transcultural Psychiatry, 45*(3), 391–414. https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461508094673.

Ermine, W. (1995). Aboriginal Epistemology. In M. Battiste & J. Barman (Eds.), *First Nation education in Canada: The circle unfolds*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Ermine, W. (2007). Ethical space of engagement. *Indigenous Law Journal, 6*(1), 193–203.

Graveline, F. J. (1998). *Circle works: Transforming eurocentric consciousness*. Halifax, N.S: Fernwood.

Greidanus, E., & Johnson, J. L. (2016). Knowledge as medicine: The use and efficacy of a youth treatment program integrating Aboriginal cultural education. In F. Deer & T. Falkenberg (Eds.), *Indigenous perspectives on education for well-being in Canada*. Winnipeg, MN: ESWB Press, University of Manitoba.

Hansen, J. G., & Antsanen, R. (2016). Elders' teachings about resilience and its implications for education in Dene and Cree communities. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, *7*(1). Retrieved from http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/iipj/vol7/iss1/2. https://doi.org/10.18584/iipj.2016.7.1.2.

Hargreaves, A. (2009). Compelling disclosures: Colonial violence and the narrative imperative in feminist anti-violence discourse and Indigenous women's writing. *Canadian Women's Studies, 27*(2/3), 107–113.

Haskell, L., & Randall, M. (2009). Disrupted attachments: A social context complex trauma framework and the lives of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. *Journal of Aboriginal Health, 5*(3), 48–99.

Howard, P. S. S. (2006). On silent and dominant accountability: A critical anti-colonial investigation of the anti-racism classroom. In G. Dei, & A. Kempf (Eds.), *Anti-colonialism and education: The politics of resistance.* Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Johnson, J. L., & Beamer, K. (2013). Chapter 8. An indigenous narrative of resilience: Malama ko Aloha. *Substance Use & Misuse*, *48*(13), 1369–1376. https://doi.org/10.3109/10826084.2013.814998.

Kirmayer, L. J., Dandeneau, S., Marshall, E., & Phillips, M. K. (2011). Rethinking resilience from an Indigenous perspective. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 56*(2), 84–91.

Lindstrom, G. (2018). *Trauma and resilience in Aboriginal adult learners' post-secondary experience*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Calgary, AB.: University of Calgary.

McGreavey, B. (2016). Resilience as discourse. *Environmental Communication, 10*(1), 104–121. https://doi.org/10.1080/17524032.2015.1014390.

Neeganagwedgin, E. (2011). A critical review of Aboriginal education in Canada: Eurocentric dominance impact and everyday denial. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 17*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2011.580461.

Ponting, J. R., & Voyageur, C. J. (2001). Challenging the deficit paradigm: Grounds for optimism among First Nations in Canada. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies, 21*(2), 275–307.

Scarpino, G. (2007). Resilience and urban Aboriginal woman. *Native Social Work Journal, 6,* 33–55.
Skrim, K. (2017). Aboriginal victimization in Canada: A summary of the literature. Retrieved from http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/victim/rd3-rr3/p3.html.
St. Denis, V. (2011). Silencing Aboriginal curricular content and perspectives through multiculturalism: "There are other children here." *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, *33*(4), 306–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714413.2011.597638.
St. Denis, V. (2016). Rethinking cultural theory in Aboriginal education. In M. J. Cannon & L. Sunseri (Eds.), *Racism, colonialism, and Indigeneity in Canada: A reader*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.
Stout, M. D., & Kipling, G. D. (2003). *Aboriginal people, resiliency, and the Residential School legacy*. Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation.
Taylor, E. W. (2008). Transformative learning theory. In S. B. Merriam (Ed.), *Third update on adult learning theory* (pp. 5–15). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
Ungar, M. (2013). Resilience, trauma, context, and culture. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 14*(3), 255–266.
Universities Canada. (2015). New principles on Indigenous education. Universities Canada. Retrieved from http://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-on-indigenous-education/.
Weasel Head, G. (2011). "*All we need is our land*"*: An exploration of urban Aboriginal homelessness* (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing). Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/896355904/.
Williams, M. (2018). Innervating colonialism: Exploring the retraction of indigenous rights through two sentencing provisions. *Australian Feminist Law Journal, 44*(2), 203–220. https://doi.org/10.1080/13200968.2018.

Driving: The Unseen Responsibilities of a Doctoral Student, Mother, and More

Jennifer Markides

Abstract I have gone from driving one hundred forty kilometres roundtrip to campus once a week for my graduate courses to making the trip 5 days a week for graduate assistant and sessional teaching responsibilities. Add to this my driving as a parent, and I find myself questioning: How did I get from spending most days at home, writing; to spending so much time in my car, driving? In this chapter, I utilise poetic narrative (Graveline, 2000) and storytelling in an evocative autoethnographic account (Ellis, 1997; Bochner & Ellis, 2016)—or *mileage claim*. In my own meandering way, I share what I have *come to know* (Kovach, 2009) from my time on the road to and from the academy. I traverse the ground of responsibilities, deadlines, expectations, and commitments, *daily*. Fortunately, I have learned tricks to listening in multiple ways and navigating the familiar terrain, over many miles and under many moons. The stories of these travels reveal my questions, doubts, vulnerabilities, strengths, and learnings as I journey in/to the academic world. Just as Cole (2002) welcomes the audience into his canoe, I, too, invite readers along for the drive—to take in familiar ground, anew.

Keywords Evocative autoethnography · Poetic narrative · Doctoral student · Indigenous resistance · Responsibilities

Navigating Geographic and Academic Terrains

I live seventy kilometres from campus, seventy kilometres each way. I did not give this much thought when I began my doctoral studies nearly 5 years ago, *I did not need to be on campus every day*. Fifty minutes to an hour seemed like a reasonable commute.

I like where we live in High River, Alberta, Canada. It does not make sense for us to move from our home community. I walk my kids to school and pick them up, to save on the cost of childcare while paying for tuition. If someone told me that I would eventually be driving 3–4 h a day, I would never have believed them; yet here

J. Markides (✉)
Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: jmmarkid@ucalgary.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_11

I am, having logged over one hundred thousand kilometres in the last 2 years. How did I get from spending most days at home working on my studies to spending long days in my car, driving?

In this autoethnographic account (Ellis & Bochner, 2000)—or mileage claim—I share what I have *come to know* (Kovach, 2009) from my time on the road to and from the academy. Through pointed stories (Ellis, 2000) and critical reflexivity (Alexander, 2011; Lyle, 2017; Madison, 2012), I travel my experiences of self with/in the culture of the institution (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Kovach 2009; Wall 2006) and my life beyond work and studies.

Drawing on Ellis's (1997) conception of evocative autoethnography, I allow myself to write emotionally about my life. This approach is both cathartic and elucidating, personal and public. Ellis uses storytelling to blur the boundaries of social science and literature to reimagine research in ways that may impel readers to learn from and through engagement with everyday experiences. She gives herself permission to connect to her many voices, honouring the multifaceted dimensions of self. Similarly, I bring my whole self—mother, writer, Métis, student, and more—to this academic world. Like Ellis, I want my story to be accessible to a wider audience *and* I hope that the story will be—I will be—taken seriously by the academic audience.

My writing also reflects the influences of Cole (2002) and Graveline (2000). Cole taught an elective Indigenous Education course that I took in my undergraduate teacher education program. He shared, "aboriginalizing methodology: considering the canoe," which speaks back to the dominant discourse of western epistemologies and calls into question the taken-for-granted conventions of what can/should be seen as legitimate academic work. He introduced me to critical and Indigenous pedagogies long before I could formally appreciate their affordances, and opened up spaces of endless possibility. Listening to Cole read his lyrically poetic verse aloud in class, changed my understanding of what academic writing could be. The influence of Cole's work has become a tacit aspect of my writing style—I have long been freed to break from academic conventions and to bring my critical and Indigenous perspectives forward.

Similarly, Graveline's (2000) "Circle as methodology: Enacting an Aboriginal paradigm" utilises poetic narrative to "resist the oppressive eurocentric attitudes and practices currently shaping research norms" (p. 361). Both of the aforementioned works by Graveline (2000) and Cole (2002) pushed boundaries within the academy and *paved the way* for up-and-coming scholars like myself. With reverence for those who have come before me, I combine forms of poetry and storytelling in an evocative autoethnography (Ellis, 1997; Bochner & Ellis, 2016) as my vehicle to interrogating and sharing the experiences of my daily commute. I manipulate the text to disrupt the "accepted" structures of the page. *Perhaps the narration on the right might be taken-as a voice from the passenger seat of my travels. In*

other places, I will beg you to keep your eyes on the road, while letting your vision wander—left and right—to take in the world as it passes by.

Caution
While time on the road
may be inspiring,
creative driving
is not recommended

Making High-Speed Lane Changes, while Sitting Still

My identity is in flux between my roles as teacher and student, wife and mother, writer and researcher, Métis and activist, chauffeur and more. I traverse the ground of responsibilities, deadlines, expectations, and commitments, *daily*. The competing demands take a toll on my physical body. I am constantly sitting: behind the wheel of the car or at my computer—both are making a lot of miles, as I traverse landscapes literally and temporally. *Corporeally, my engine needs conditioning, a service, and perhaps a tune up.*

I have covered a lot of ground in my scholarship and enjoyed many successes along the way; yet, somehow, my boys see my skill set as best-suited to delivery driver. In my role as a wife and mother, I am particularly self-conscious and self-critical. *Why am I carrying around the weighty cargo of guilt and insufficiency? It cannot be very good for my fuel economy.*

While some aspects of my travels are specific to me, the process of commuting—mind, body, and soul—may be shared by other academics, thus warranting deeper examination. I am grateful to have picked up a few tricks for efficiency along the way, such as listening in multiple ways. I use text to speech—*spending my time wisely* with articles and papers. I listen to the land as I navigate the familiar terrain amidst seasonal change and passing moons. I engage in dialogue with my kids, my colleagues, my distant family members, and my thoughts. The stories of these travels reveal my questions, doubts, vulnerabilities, strengths, and learnings as I journey in/to the academic world. *If you have some time, I invite you to come along for the ride.*

High River to Calgary
Driving
Fifty minutes without traffic
Over an hour with traffic
Or construction
accidents
or snow
Fifty minutes or more
Each way
Driving

Travelling in Someone Else's Blindspot

On any given day, my family is spread across three different communities: High River, Okotoks, and Calgary. There are many moving parts to our life, which make each moment precarious with small margins for error in traffic and timing.

In the third year of my doctoral studies, someone in the academy told me that it was good for me to see how busy they were with work in case that was the job I wanted to have one day.

At the time and unbeknownst to them, I was working as a graduate assistant researcher on three research projects; I had recently completed co-editing a book (Markides & Forsythe, 2018) and had since proposed and been accepted for a second book (Markides & Forsythe, 2019); I was working with a peer over the previous 2 months to re-write two journal article submissions—one accepted (MacDonald & Markides, 2018), and one welcomed to be re-submitted with revisions (MacDonald & Markides, 2019); and I had another accepted chapter due in the subsequent month (Markides, 2018).

It was the start of the conference season and I had just returned from presenting at an Early Years Conference in Vancouver with over a hundred people in my session, plus a poster presentation. I was looking forward to three conference presentations over two conferences the following week, one the next month, and at least three the month after.

I was coming off teaching a 5-week condensed course and was preparing for field experience supervision. My sessional instructor evaluation—due the previous Monday—became a 171-page document, as this was my third year teaching nearly full-time with the undergraduate programs in education. I was in the midst of deadlines for scholarships, conference proposals, calls for papers, research assistant responsibilities, and more.

Add to this my responsibilities as a mother, driving 3–4 hours a day between school, university, and my kids' extra-curricular activities in the city. And, I was still somehow finding time to attend meetings and maintain my volunteer commitments outside of school.

While I am not a single parent, all of the driving had fallen on me when my husband changed schools. He is a vice principal, who is also working towards an education doctorate.

Maybe I should have been flattered that, on appearance, my life appeared less full than that of an academic. Instead, I was crushed to be seen as utterly unknowing. In hindsight, I believe it was the driving that pushed me over my limits of capacity, patience, and grace. *I needed a rest stop, rather than a road check—understanding, not judgement.*

Tips for Fellow Commuters:
Using the text-to-speech feature
on your computer or phone
can be a helpful way to review
papers and presentations
while on the road.

Thanks to the technical wonders of
"Accessibility"

I'll admit
the pre-set voice is
pain-ful-ly
mon-ot-on-ous
at first.

I prefer Samantha
or Siri Female
depending on the device.

If you can bear it,
push through.
Once you are
comfortable
speed her up.

Efficiency is key.

Listening
can be
an effective
editing
practice.

Taking in the World at 110+ km/h: A Fast Pace, Juxtaposed Against Slow-Moving Scenery

In addition to listening to articles and chapters, I am mindful of the ever-changing prairie landscape. The highway portion of the drive is lined with wide expanses of farmland. On clear days, the Rocky Mountains stretch out along the skyline to the west. The snow level creeps upward, as winter turns to spring. When the snow disappears from the fields, the coyotes become more noticeable. There are a few weeks in early spring when flocks of swans have stopovers in the fields to the west of the highway—hundreds of large white forms in the fleeting ponds of melted snow.

Pelicans in Flight
American white pelicans
should be returning
soon,

I watch the skies
and within days
the flocks pass overhead.
Reminiscent of pterosaurs
in size
and flight.

As the grasses and crops grow taller, the four-legged relations are less visible again. Under bright blue skies, canola brightens the rural topography. July and August, the summer months are my greatest reprieve from the commute, as our family travels south along the coasts of Washington and Oregon. Thankfully, I do not drive. Instead, I watch out my window, more fully, looking for seals, whales, heron, and other ocean life. Rolling waves bring peace to my soul.

Returning to my commute in the fall, I encounter farm equipment on the move. Dust tumbling off altered fields. The newly formed hay bales make for glorious photos, until the skies grey and rain persists. Wet hawks rest along fence posts and power poles, waiting out the downpours. In my mind, I have affectionately dubbed this moon: wet hawk moon, but I know that the Cree moon calendar refers to it as Nocihtowpisim, breeding, or mating moon. This is a small sliver of my learning from Elder Bob Cardinal of the Maskekosihk Enoch Cree Nation. His teachings spill over into all aspects of my daily experience. I am more attuned to the cycles and relationships in the world; but as I drive further from these treasured experiences, I am called to question: *how am I attending to my whole self; upholding my commitments to community; honouring new and existing relationships; and (not) prioritizing/living-in ceremony.*

Grandmother moon is a regular travelling companion. She appears in the east on my southbound journey, arcing westward as the hours pass. Sometimes, I spy her in the daytime skies—a seasoned commuter in her own rite. Waxing. Waning. Ever present. As snow blankets the ground, her light reflects and brightens the landscape such that figures of deer become visible despite the darkness.

Toward the end of the fall term, I look forward to the return of Christmas lights. I arrive home from campus by 3:00 pm and return to Calgary for 4:00 pm, gymnastics. Sometimes my boys eat dinner, read, or sleep on the return drive. As travelling companions, they have become adept at spotting wildlife, the moon, and "awesome" vehicles along the way. We watch for northern lights in our eastbound stretch, just north of the turn to Mazeppa. Seeing them once has created a touchstone memory of where to look on all drives since.

Cruise Control

cruise control
keeps me from getting tickets
the automaticity
frees me

to see
deer

the cloud stretched sky
house for sale
with heated Quonset

a lane change
before the turn
and the bridge
avoids the bumps

familiar sights
waterfowl on pond

land being sold
at auction

attention redirected
noticing
my speed has slowed
technological wonders
of adaptive
cruise control

manually passing
before
cruising again

looking left

then right

and left again

extra attention paid
at level crossings

35 minutes to my destination
according to GoogleMaps

while I know the drive well
I appreciate the updates
knowing if there is
an accident
or slow down
makes my choice
between
Mcleod Trail and Deerfoot

crossing the river
acts as a clear boundary
between highway
and city
driving

Construction ahead
Slow to 80km/h
Speed fines double
in work zones

progress being made

adjusting cruise control
more vehicles to contend with
passing me as though
I am going too slow

awareness heightened
as lane changes increase
some begin merging
before signalling
or looking
evasive maneuvers
required

familiar turns and slow downs
near Douglasdale
and Ivor Strong

exit right

watch for eagles
in the trees
along the Bow

merge left
across two lanes

as others merge right

a dangerous dance
at 80km/h

mountains on the horizon

more concrete

and malls

concrete salmon

Chinook

vehicles swimming
upstream

strategic

lane

changes
at the Reservoir

then merge
and exit

construction
slow to 50km/h

resume speed
80km/h

avoid potholes

quirky community signboard
Canning, Taxes, Samba

Speed Limit
70km/h
then
50km/h
bridge construction
inevitable and unending

keeping left
opens up
into the homestretch
University Drive
lights
and pedestrian crossings

watch for speed traps
on the right

minutes away
deciding
where to park
$5/hour to be close
$7/day, but a further walk
$10/day in the Art Parkade
asking:
how late am I, already?
and, how long do I need to stay?

no longer cruising
and somehow always
running
behind

Pulling into the Driveway

Sharing my experiences of travelling to and from the university, I am reminded of how little time I actually spend at home. It is the place we sleep, prepare for the next day, store things, and occasionally clean.

Everyone contributes in our house. The kids help with laundry, their rooms, and emptying the dishwasher. My husband does all of the yard maintenance, household repairs and renovations, and looks after both vehicles—changing oil, fuel filters, and tyres. He cooks, cleans, makes lunches, sorts the kids' rooms, and does laundry, especially when he sees that I am busy with deadlines. Likewise, I pick up added responsibilities when my workload lessens. As educators, parents, and partners, we make a good team—working towards shared goals.

Our house is tidy, minimalist, and mostly organised. As the weeks get busier, sometimes the counters pile up with articles, school newsletters, paperwork, and mail. The kids' robots and technology sit charging, waiting be used; their art pieces from school and homemade crafts are brought into the kitchen, waiting to be celebrated.

When people come to visit, I have a frenzied reaction. I become keenly aware of the state of the counters, floors, bathrooms, and flower beds—*as if I ever have time to weed*. I know that my reaction is not logical or productive, but I cannot help my panic and flitting. While many people know that we are busy with school, and that my husband and I share the household duties, I somehow hold onto the belief that the house is a reflection on me—as the woman of the house.

The family members and friends that ascribe to more traditional gendered roles see me as responsible for weeding, cleaning, and the like. Despite breaking from these roles, I cannot escape the judgement—if only in my mind.

Efficiencies for Car Travel with Kids
ensure all gym wear is in the car, before leaving town
cut up apples, for a quick (and tidy) after school snack
home reading can be completed en route,
if older siblings help with the tricky words
backseat arguments are rare, but inevitable
sometimes you have to give in
(and go through the McDonalds drive-thru)
unpacking the backseat may require several trips

Looking in the Review Mirror

Reflecting on the stories of my travels feels self-indulgent. My experiences are not unique. Countless women work outside the home and juggle responsibilities, every day. *Hearing the washer stop, the computer is abandoned to put clothes in the dryer. Dress clothes are hung to dry.*

Papers are written in the between times. The coffee shop is my office while the kids are at gymnastics. It is easiest to work at night while everyone is sleeping. *Stopping again to fold the clothes.*

I am well supported by my family and friends. They keep me company on the drives, via hands-free calling. I know that my life is privileged: continuing my education full-time, walking my kids to and from school every day, travelling to conferences, and teaching courses that fit between the hours of 10:00 am and 2:00 pm—allowing for travel time, between drop off and pick up. Precarious and privileged. The neighbours come to the rescue when my meetings run late, or if I get stuck in traffic. *This will not be forever.*

Fall Mileage Claim
home to school
71 km
53 minutes
school to home
53 minutes
71 km

home to gymnastics
54 km
38 minutes
gymnastics to home
38 minutes
54 km

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays
250 km
3 hours
(or more)
per day

Wednesdays, Fridays
142 km
(nearly)
2 hours

10 minute
slow downs
or
scheduled stops
add up

parking
$50–$75
per week

Saturdays, vary
Sundays, are predictable
108 km, 1 hour 15+

Weekly
1142+ km
840+ minutes

minutes spent:
not writing
not exercising
not cleaning

simply,
time spent

Travel Time and *Time Travel*

I always know what time I need to leave by, and roughly when I will arrive. I never account for slows or stops. Being *on time* is challenging, but not impossible—desirable, but not guaranteed.

In a study of working mothers in Australia, Rose (2017) asked "How do employed mothers perceive and manage time pressure in their daily lives?" (p. 117). Her findings spoke to my experience in many ways; but rather than paraphrasing her words, I found her work to be fertile ground for a blackout poem, as follows (Fig. 1):

The Check Engine Light Is on

The pace of academic and familial life, I have described, is not sustainable. As I account for my time, I list the values in terms of quantity: distance, dollars, minutes, and hours. Moving forward, I will look to shift my responsibilities/priorities (and localities) in order to reclaim the quality of life we desire as a family. I am more than the sum of my academic accomplishments: more than my trips to the university for teaching; more than my research journeys and conference travels; and more than my accumulated publications. While I see that passing these mileage markers may be necessary for procuring an academic position, I question the overall depreciation I may be experiencing on the road.

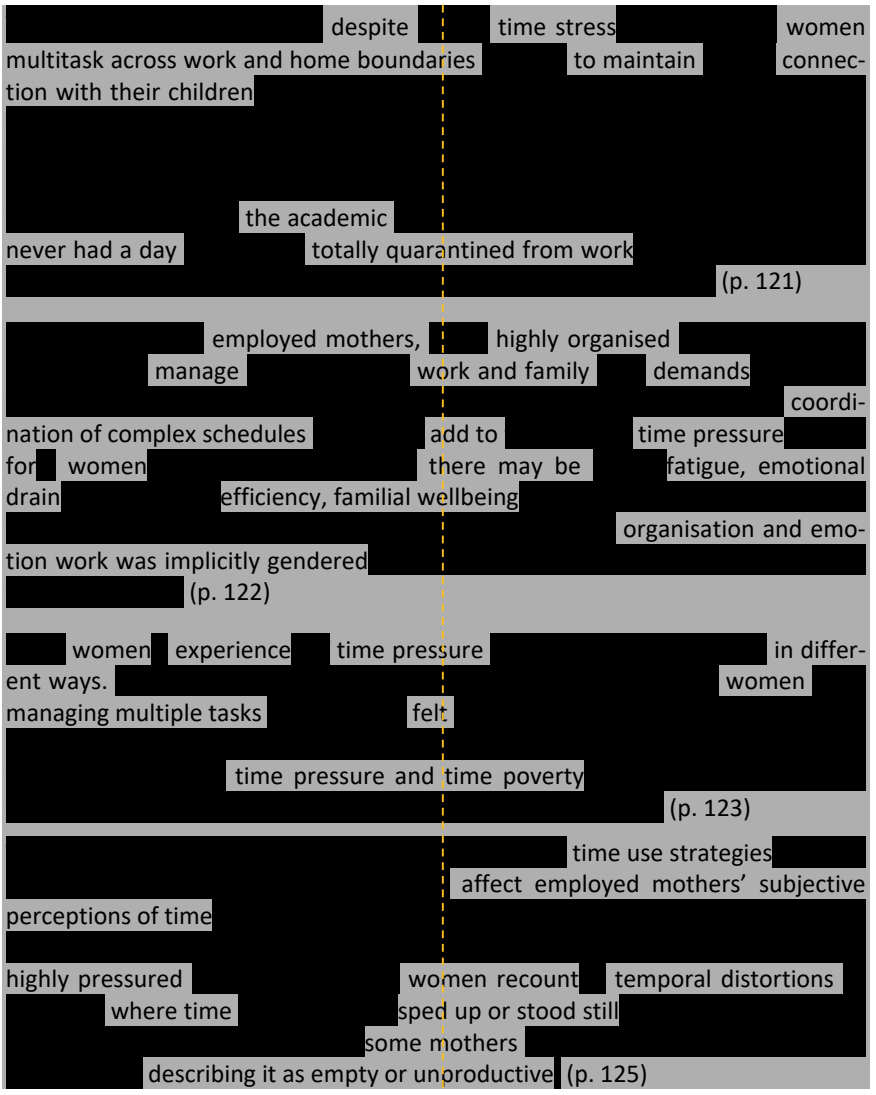

Fig. 1 Blacktop (blackout poem)

My Odometer
rolling over
122,817 km
and counting

on this,
my second car

since embarking
on this academic trek

racking up the miles
and lines
on my CV

covering terrain
at breakneck
speeds

losing tread
while gaining traction
on my career

at times,
wishing for
a tow

References

Alexander, B. K. (2011). Standing in the wake: A critical auto/ethnographic exercise on reflexivity in three movements. *Cultural Studies Critical Methodologies, 11*(2), 98–107.

Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. (2016). *Evocative autoethnography: Writing lives and telling stories*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Cole, P. (2002). aboriginalizing methodology: considering the canoe. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 15*(4), 447–459.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2003). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (2nd ed., pp. 1–45). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ellis, C. (1997). Evocative autoethnography: Writing emotionally about our lives. In W. Tierney & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Representation and the text: Reframing the narrative voice* (pp. 115–139). New York: State University of New York Press.

Ellis, C. (2000). Creating criteria: An ethnographic short story. *Qualitative Inquiry, 6*(2), 273–277.

Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. P. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 733–768). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Graveline, F. J. (2000). Circle as methodology: Enacting an Aboriginal paradigm. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 13*(4), 361–370.

Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Lyle, E. (2017). *Of books, barns, and boardrooms: Exploring praxis through reflexive inquiry*. Rotterdam, NL: Sense.

Madison, D. S. (2012). *Critical ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

MacDonald, J., & Markides, J. (2018). Called to action: Dialogue around praxis for reconciliation. In L. Daniels, S. Deer, D. Donald, B. Low & D. Wiseman (Eds.) MJE Special Issue: Taking up the Calls to Action of the TRC in Teacher Education. *McGill Journal of Education, 53*(2), 213–232.

MacDonald, J., & Markides, J. (2019). Duoethnography for reconciliation: Learning through conversations. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 65*(2), 1–16.

Markides, J. (2018). *Being* Indigenous in the Indigenous education classroom: A critical self-study of teaching in an impossible and imperative assignment. In E. Lyle (Ed.) *Fostering a Relational Pedagogy: Self-Study as Transformative Praxis.* Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Sense.

Markides, J. & Forsythe, L. (2018) *Looking Back and Living Forward: Indigenous Research Rising Up.* Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Sense.

Markides, J., & Forsythe, L. (2019). *Research Journeys in/to Multiple Ways of Knowing*. New York, NY: DIO.

Rose, J. (2017). Never enough hours in the day: Employed mothers' perceptions of time pressure. *Australian Journal of Social Issues, 52*(2), 116–130.

Wall, S. (2006). An autoethnography on learning about autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*(2), 1–12.

Shaping Love as Experience: Travelling Within and Across (Academic) Worlds as Women of Colour

Hiroko Kubota, Muna Saleh and Jinny Menon

Abstract Thinking narratively (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin, 2013), and drawing upon our experiential knowings as women scholars of colour, we inquire into our autobiographical stories of attempting to traverse the academic worlds we inhabit alongside one another (Kubota, 2017; Menon, 2018; Saleh, 2019b). Building upon Lugones' (1987) notion of love, we foreground educative (Dewey, 1938/1997) possibilities in crossing borders, and travelling across worlds, with loving rather than arrogant perception (Lugones, 1987). In doing so, we actively imagine (Sarbin, 2004) how borders can be experienced as shaping bridges and borderland spaces (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999) between and among (academic) worlds.

Keywords Women of colour · World-travelling · Loving perception · Autobiographical narrative inquiry · Borderland spaces

> *Love is seen not as fusion and erasure of difference but as incompatible with them. Love reveals plurality*.
> Lugones (1987, p. 3)

As women and scholars of colour, Lugones' (1987) words resonate profoundly with each of us. Similar to Lugones, we view love as the honouring of difference(s). We perceive difference(s) as profoundly embodied (Johnson, 1989; Waheed, 2013) and experiential. For us, love is a relational way of being that lives at the intersection and multiplicity of experience.

Several years ago, in the midst of our doctoral studies, we shaped a response community (Clandinin, 2013; Kubota et al., 2015), recognizing, "Interdependency

H. Kubota (✉) · J. Menon
University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada
e-mail: hyamane@ualberta.ca

J. Menon
e-mail: sajani@ualberta.ca

M. Saleh
Concordia University of Edmonton, Edmonton, AB, Canada
e-mail: muna.saleh@concordia.ab.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_12

between women is the way to a freedom which allows the I to be, not in order to be used, but in order to be creative" (Lorde, 1984/2007, p. 111). Over time, as a chosen community (Lindemann Nelson, 1995; Kubota et al., 2015; Menon et al., 2015; Saleh et al., 2018) we awakened to how we are storied in myriad "worlds" (Lugones, 1987) and moreover, how we story ourselves and others. A "world," Lugones (1987) clarified, "need not be a construction of a whole society. It may be a construction of a tiny portion of a particular society. It may be inhabited by just a few people. Some 'worlds' are bigger than others" (p. 10). Interweaving her experiences of "coming to consciousness as a daughter and … as a woman of color" (p. 3), Lugones differentiated between "world"-travelling with loving or arrogant perception. For Lugones, loving perception is characterized by a spirit of identification, appreciation, and *willful* travel to another's world(s). It is a form of lovingly being and becoming alongside one another. Grounding her work in the contention that women can simultaneously be the objects and perpetrators of arrogant perception, Lugones asserted that it is not possible to "world"-travel with arrogant perception, because this form of perception entails a controlling, agonistic, and/or colonizing gaze and spirit. Too often, we have experienced the arrogant gaze in academia. This is the gaze that constructs us and our worlds in ways that we do not recognize. Frequently, our worlds are storied by other people *for* us without our permission and without our voices.

We are also drawn close to Adichie (2009) who suggests in her TED talk, "The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story." These single stories or silencing stories tend to dehumanize and trivialize experience, especially, we contend in this chapter, the experiences of women of colour in academic worlds. We believe such imposed stories can act as (im)penetrable borders (Menon & Saleh, 2018) which at times, serve to uphold and/or silence diverse ways of knowing, being, and living in (our) world(s).

Thinking narratively (Clandinin, 2013) in the following sections, and drawing upon our experiential knowings, we inquire into our autobiographical stories of attempting to traverse the multiplicities of (academic) worlds we inhabit alongside one another (Kubota, 2017; Menon, 2018; Saleh, 2019b). We do so because, like Bhattacharya (2016),

> we crave discourses of vulnerability, in which we unmask, allow ourselves to be genuinely seen, without the need to wield weapons for our safety. Discourses that enable us to work with honesty; to address prejudices, belief systems, and pain; and to discuss possibilities for discovering a way forward based on connection, interrelatedness, and our shared humanity. (p. 311).

With Bhattacharya's words in mind, and building upon Lugones' (1987) notion of love, we foreground educative (Dewey, 1938/1997) possibilities in crossing borders, and travelling across worlds, with loving perception. For us, this inherently entails (re)telling our stories of experiences as women of colour in academia, from where we invite readers to live and travel alongside us and consider how the concept and the practice of love can persist in academic world(s). In doing so, we actively imagine (Sarbin, 2004) borders can be experienced as shaping bridges and borderland spaces (Anzaldua, 1987/1999; Menon & Saleh, 2018) between and among worlds.

Hiroko: Embracing Multiplicity as My Integrity

> Do you understand the importance of stories? I don't think you respect your participants' stories.

I got this comment right after I finished my oral presentation at a conference in Japan. I was very confused at that moment and not sure about what made that person reach this impression. I went back to my home country, Japan, to attend a conference and share some of my findings from my dissertation which I had written during my doctoral study in Canada. For a few seconds of silence, I looked around and became even more worried if that was a shared impression among the majority of people in the room. The silence continued, which made me feel more awkward and foreign in this particular place. I carefully chose my words and began to talk, "That was totally not my intention to disrespect my participants' stories, of course …" That person pointed out that my tone of voice did not really represent the respect. Again, I got confused and was very saddened to hear that comment. In my doctoral research, I engaged in narrative inquiry with three older men who are homeless in Japan. I had spent more than 3 months with them to listen to their stories and live alongside them through building a relational space; these experiences have been profoundly living in me since then and shaped who I am now (Kubota, 2017). The other audience members kept looking at me with distant eyes. The silence weighed on me.

This was my first time attending an academic conference in Japan and delivering an oral presentation in my mother tongue, Japanese. Since I was not familiar with expectations and manners according to the Japanese implied standards, I might have inadvertently missed demonstrating some important elements required for an academic presentation in Japan. Or, perhaps, since I have not spoken academic language, nor engaged in academic conversations in Japanese for more than 10 years, perhaps my Japanese had become awkward in addition to my nervousness to present at a Japanese academic conference. Amid swirling thoughts, I was about to share all these reasons to the audience, but all of sudden I decided to hold back. In a blink of a moment, I wondered if they would really understand my situation. Looking Japanese and apparently speaking Japanese without any major problems, I questioned if the audience would realize the complexity of my situation, my braveness, my fear, and my uncertainty to step into this unfamiliar context and stand in front of the audience to share my research. Who am I? Am I supposed to be here? I felt torn apart not only between the audience and myself without a sense of belonging, but also within myself with a sense of helplessness.

> Feeling of not belonging
>
> Having two different identities in one body
>
> Using different names depending on places
>
> How can I be one person?
>
> How can my diverse life stories be told in one whole story?
>
> How can I be called by one unchangeable name?

Coming from Japan and having lived in Canada for 10 years, I have come to realize that my identity no longer finds comfort and congruency in one geographical place. As I continuously make sense of who I was, who I am, and who I am becoming while I keep traversing different contexts between Japan and Canada and across my memories, I find myself standing within a borderland filled with tension and possibility (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). When I am in Canada, people often ask me about what is going on in the current Japanese society, and I am not quite sure. When I return to Japan, people often think I know everything about the history, politics, or culture in Canada, none of which I am familiar with extensively, or in detail. When I am in Canada, I miss my home and my family in Japan. Yet, when I am in Japan, I feel like I am a visitor and miss my familiar life in Canada. Wherever I go, I feel as if I am an incomplete half, always missing something that importantly shapes my identity, like a half of the moon being covered by shadow.

Reflecting on my experience at a conference in Japan, I became aware that I might not have been allowed to stand within a borderland where I could hold my multiplicity as my integrity—a space where my diverse and intricate dimensions of the self can exist altogether and be seen as a whole. In the midst of the silence, I felt that I was confined within and defined by a border demarcated by the expectations in the academic contexts in Japan. In addition, at such a moment when I decided to hold back revealing myself to the audience anymore, I might also have refused to travel to their worlds (Lugones, 1987). As Lugones (1987) said, "[T]ravelling to each other's 'worlds' would enable us to *be* through loving each other" (p. 8). Through travelling to each other's world, we identify ourselves; this dependency on others is an indispensable element for embodying who we are, underpinned by a loving perception (Lugones, 1987). In that specific moment when both the audience and I stopped seeing each other through loving perception, the only thing we shared might have been the silencing of our voices.

Stepping off the podium after the presentation, I silently internalized a pain and a feeling of isolation caught in the entanglement and abstraction. The silence that I experienced still perpetuates in my memory. In the silence, my multiplicity and simplicity lost an opportunity to establish a relationship with other audience members. The space between us was no longer an interactive and mutual tie, but transformed into a constrained and incommunicable distance. We are dependent upon others to become who we are. To make this possible, it is important for us to appear to others in our distinctness and uniqueness as individuals. A German thinker, Arendt (1958), elaborates that while love "destroys the in-between which relates us to and separates us from others" (p. 242), respect "is a regard for the person from the distance which the space of the world puts between us" (p. 243).

In addition to seeing others through loving perception, in academic worlds, we also need to have a respectful space where we have our stories told and heard, as we appear to and are seen by others through various roles and identities including a woman and a scholar. Respect for others reinforces the public realm where each of us is equal and related to, yet distinct from each other (Arendt, 1958). As our unique physical existence marks the plurality of beings in the world, it is significant to recognize people through diversity that each of us live and embody, which can be

attentively brought forth by having a space to tell and listen to stories. Such space respects the distance that makes us different from others, yet upholds the promise that we will continue shifting and being affected alongside others. I wonder how I, as a woman in academia and as an immigrant, will weave my stories in academia and contribute to incorporating the practice of love, care, and respect into the world of academia. As we dwell in and co-construct an academic world together with others, I believe we can start speaking up and/or taking action to create an open, interactive, and inclusive space.

Muna: A Lifetime of (Painful) Storied Moments

Moment 1

> Congratulations on the award! I wish my research topic was half as interesting as yours!
>
> Sigh.
>
> I wonder if she realizes how condescending she's being.
>
> I don't voice my pained exasperation.
>
> Instead, I awkwardly say, "Thank you."

As I contemplated how to represent my many experiences with feeling arrogantly perceived (Lugones, 1987) by other women in the academy, I felt that I needed to *show*, not just tell about, some of these experiences. So, I begin with this storied moment from several years ago. It is one that lives deep within me. I am not sure why.

Actually, that's not entirely true.

I think it continues to live within me because this comment is one that has been, in some form, expressed countless times over the years. And because I never know how or if to (honestly) respond. For, as Ahmed (2012) so powerfully illuminated.

> There is a labour in having to respond to a situation that others are protected from, a situation that does not come up for those whose residence is assumed. Do you point it out? Do you say anything? Will you cause a problem by describing a problem? (pp. 176–177)

The woman was congratulating me because I had recently been awarded the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship, an award intended to fund doctoral research. For her, the award was an indication that my doctoral research, a narrative inquiry alongside Canadian Muslim girls and their mothers as daughter co-inquirers transitioned into adolescence (Saleh, 2017, 2019a, b), was an "interesting" "research topic". For me, it was, *is*, life.

Allow me to explain.

I am a Canadian Muslim woman, daughter, and mother. As a narrative inquirer (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I believe in rooting my teaching and

research, indeed my life, with the experiential. To do this, I engage(d) in autobiographical narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013; Saleh, Menon, & Clandinin, 2014). As I embarked upon my doctoral research, my eldest daughter was in the midst of transitioning into adolescence. I had many wonders about her experiences, my experiences, and our experiences alongside one another as she grows into womanhood (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). I wondered about the stories we live *by*, *with*, and *in* as we negotiated this major life transition amid other life transitions—particularly as Muslim girls and women in an increasingly troubling sociopolitical climate. So, for over 2 years, I engaged in research alongside three other Canadian Muslim mother and daughter pairs—originally from Somalia, Afghanistan, and Lebanon, respectively—in relational inquiries into our experiences. My work has always centred around increased understanding of our experiences as Muslim girls and women, experiences that are often reduced to single stories (Adichie, 2009) of disempowerment, with the ultimate goal of personal and social growth. For me, this work is profoundly more than an "interesting topic" for the reductionist purposes of any form of external recognition or award. It is life giving, affirming, and sustaining. It is life.

Moment 2

> I love hearing you speak. You are so articulate!
>
> Sigh.
>
> I wonder if she realizes how condescending she's being.
>
> I don't voice my pained exasperation.
>
> Instead, I awkwardly say, "Thank you."

As a granddaughter of Palestinian refugees, daughter of immigrants to Canada, Muslim woman in hijab, and mother to a child with a disability, I have unfortunately experienced multiple forms of discrimination. Yet, I cannot fathom the level of self-assured arrogance it requires for someone to voice these words to a woman of colour in any context, let alone an academic one. While this "compliment" was expressed by a more established scholar following an academic conference for graduate students several years ago, I have heard variations of this sentiment throughout my life, usually by someone noticeably surprised by my comfort with the English language.

The politics and valuation of language(s), like so many aspects of life, is context-dependent. Although I have at times been regarded with curiosity, suspicion, and even disgust, when I speak Arabic in public, I have also been told that I am "lucky to have a second language" because this apparently signifies that I will be more likely to secure employment in educational systems. It baffles me that other educators and scholars can consider such an integral part of my being in such opportunistic terms. My language is not a *thing* I *own*. It lives in me, in my relationships with loved ones, in the stories of my ancestors. Although I have learned to traverse the spaces among and between the various linguistic worlds I inhabit with relative ease, my earliest

experiences of my ancestral language in educational systems were of being made to feel strange (Saleh, Menon, & Kubota, 2018). This lifelong journey of becoming increasingly comfortable and secure in my linguistic knowing now allows me to appreciate and artfully (re)compose the many beautiful languages that live in me. For, as Lyiscott (2014) so powerfully asserted in her TED talk:

> I may not always come before you with excellency of speech, but do not judge me by my language and assume that I'm too ignorant to teach. 'Cause I speak three tongues. One for each: home, school, and friends. I'm a trilingual orator.

Moment 3

> The story you shared is powerful, but a more robust way of thinking about it might be …
>
> Sigh.
>
> I wonder if she realizes how condescending she's being.
>
> I don't voice my pained exasperation.
>
> Instead, I awkwardly say, "Thank you."

Ah yes, the gatekeepers of experience. The gatekeepers are those who inexplicably feel the need to police the kind of woman, mother, teacher, scholar, narrative inquirer, and human *they* believe I need to be in order to rightfully claim these aspects of my identity. As educators and scholars, some of my more established colleagues seem to forget that a prerequisite to learning from and with educators and scholars of colour is to *listen* to us and our experiences. Not to try to *manage* them … or us. I have come across entirely too many experiential gatekeepers in my short time as an emerging scholar.

Troubled, and looking for inspiration among my (feminist) foremothers, I turned to Wollstonecraft (1792/1975) for inspiration for the sort of rallying cry I felt I needed in the midst of ongoing pain. My colleague lent me Wollstonecraft's book, *A Vindication of The Rights of Woman*, after I spied it on his bookshelf a few months ago. I smiled as I read Wollstonecraft's scathing rebuke of eighteenth century attitudes towards women, and the consequent lack of growth imposed upon many of us at that time, in the opening paragraph. I lost my smile, however, when, in the second paragraph, she contended that "in the true spirit of Mahometanism, [women in the 18th century] are treated as a kind of subordinate beings, and not as a part of the human species" (p. 2). Shutting the book, I sigh. Here, alone with my thoughts, I do not awkwardly say "thank you." Here, I shake my head and resolve to speak my truth in these pained moments and continue working towards a world where *all* women, including those who happen to be Muslim or are deemed to be (too) different, may be seen and heard in the fullness of our humanity. A world where I, nay, *we*, do not feel forced—for whatever reason—to say "thank you" in response to condescension. Where *all* my sisters feel free to be—and to become—themselves.

Jinny: Colouring Experiences

Let me begin by sharing three perspectives which I resonated with in musing about this piece. First, a passage that jumped out at me in Lugones and Spelman's (1983) dialogue, spoke to the (in)visibility and silencing of difference for women of colour.

> For it matters to us what is said about us, who says it, and to whom it is said: having the opportunity to talk about one's life, to give an account of it, to interpret it, is integral to leading that life rather than being led through it. (p. 573)

Their words help me to better frame my experiences as a woman of colour negotiating academia. However, I also feel connected to Narayan (1988) who takes up the vital work of what it means to work together across difference. In elucidating the emotional costs associated with working across difference, Narayan (1988) reveals:

> Although being an insider to a form of oppression may confer epistemic privilege, it certainly constitutes a burden, the insider lives with all the forms the oppression takes, from everyday and trivial manifestations to life-threatening ones.
>
> The insider pays a heavy social and psychological price that no outsider pays. For insiders to work together with outsiders is a project that is often fraught with difficulty, for, in any communication, the two groups do not function as equally vulnerable. (p. 40)

Within this context, being vulnerable, hints at the complexity of being a woman of colour working in academia alongside both friends and strangers. Puwar (2000) expresses this vulnerability for South Asian insiders.

> As South Asian women enter academia it is important to think of the terms upon which they enter and what kind of intellectual environments they are exposed to. We are not only infantilized as objects of research, but now that we are in the academy, we are infantilized and exoticized in person. We are less likely to be trusted with positions of authority. (p. 135)

As a South Asian doctoral student engaged in a multiperspectival narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin, 2013) into the curriculum-making experiences of South Asian girls, their mothers, and teachers, my interest in these issues are more than academic (Menon 2018, 2019; Menon & Saleh, 2018). In what follows, I proffer several scenarios for consideration. This is in part to convey my experiences and in part to render visible intersections that people might dwell within while contemplating these scenarios. My hope is for readers to ponder the commonalities alongside the differences to be found within their own and others' experiences.

You Walk into a Room Assigned for You and Fellow Presenters

(a) You scope out the room to see if there are other people of colour in attendance.
(b) Your fellow presenters entertain questions from the audience, your work is not taken up.

(c) You receive comments from other people of colour who suggest your work is important.
(d) All of the above reflect (aspects of) your experience(s).

Presenting in Academic Worlds

(a) Recognizing that you will be going against the norm, you nevertheless choose to intertwine experience alongside the theoretical in artful ways.
(b) People seek you out to comment on how appreciative they are of your alternative take.
(c) Your work is interrogated along lines of an academic trope and subsequently, dismissed.
(d) All of the above reflect (aspects of) your experience(s).

Speaking About Your Research to (Un)Familiar Colleagues

(a) An older man, affronted, asks, "Aren't we done with identity work?"
(b) People query why you have chosen to "investigate" an "ethnic group" and a "model minority" at that, rather than "a sample of the general population".
(c) Your work is characterized at turns: flowery…very critical race theory…too personal… (as in, not right for academia and more).
(d) All of the above reflect (aspects of) your experience(s).

You Are Sitting at a Table with Colleagues and the Conversation Takes an Abrupt Turn

(a) A woman notes the existence of racism abroad and comments "Thankfully, here, in Canada, it's not like this."
(b) A woman suggests that certain groups of ethnicities are smarter than others in that they make the system work for them. To bolster this point, a man suggests that certain immigrants are hired even when there are other contenders for the same job.
(c) Recognizing once more that you are the sole person of colour present, you make the uncomfortable decision to share one of many experiences which hint at a more complex understanding of race relations in Canada, only to be deemed as thin-skinned.
(d) All of the above reflect (aspects of) your experience(s).

You and Your (Academic) Work Have Been Shaped in Nuanced Ways

(a) Your scholarly work is taken up in (un)intended ways and elicits strong responses from you and others.
(b) Coming across other people who use diverse mediums (e.g. music, TV, art, novels, academic journals, etc.) to share (their) stories of experiences helps you to think and contour who you are and who you would like to be as a scholar.
(c) You work in community with mentors, colleagues, and friends. You learn alongside them and from them. They help you shape sustaining stories of experience, care, and love.
(d) All of the above reflect (aspects of) your experience(s).

Difference in academic worlds matters. Difference matters very much, and here, I attempt to give a sense of how an over-magnification and/or disavowal of this significance can serve to colour and yes, even erode one's identification of self, one's self-worth, and belief in one's own power. Put another way, "Given the way difference works, it is hardly surprising that insiders and outsiders may often have very different understandings of what is involved in a situation or issue" (Narayan, 1988, p. 41). So, noting the difficulty of appreciating difference in its unique manifestations, what can be done? The simple yet complicated response of love, begs the question—as the popular song demands—"What's love got to do with it?" Well, quite a bit. I am not talking about a romantic type of love but the love that creates connections with one another. This kind of love does not seek to disguise difference with tolerance. This love is where diversity lives and breathes. This love is a commitment to ongoing dialogue. It is a love that requires each of us to honour the luminescence of our mutual humanity. For like Minh-ha (1986), I also am convinced that "the understanding of difference is a shared responsibility, which requires a minimum of willingness to reach out to the unknown" (p. 10).

Shaping Love as Experience

As we engage(d) in (re)imagining academic worlds, our respective autobiographical narrative inquiries (Clandinin, 2013; Saleh, Menon, & Clandinin, 2013) underscores how we have come to understand the honouring of experiences in academic spaces as being shaped by loving, rather than arrogant, perception (Lugones, 1987). In her piece, Hiroko was confronted with a helpless feeling of isolation when she realized that a space between the audience and herself does not allow a relational dialogue at a conference. Hiroko further contemplates the necessity of "incorporating the practice of love, care, and respect into the world of academia we dwell in" as a means "to create an open, interactive, and inclusive space." In (re)telling several moments of feeling arrogantly perceived by other women in academic spaces, Muna foregrounded the intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) of her experiences as a Palestinian Muslim woman

in hijab composing a life in Canada. Drawing upon Lugones' (1987) argument that women can simultaneously be perpetrators and victims of arrogant perception, Muna makes visible the painful microaggressions (Dodge, 2019; Premack, 2018; Sue et al., 2007) she sometimes experiences by other women in academic world(s). Employing the thoughtful words of several women of colour scholars as a beginning point, Jinny attempts to shape connection across difference. Through a (re)presentation of scenarios, Jinny accentuates the complexity and nuances of (y)our) experiences in certain worlds of academia.

Interwoven in some ways and not in others, threaded throughout our experiential narratives are

> the stories of survival told by women of colo[u]r in higher education [which] reveal the numerous subtle forms of marginalization that cumulatively constitute academic bullying and abuse, leading to isolation. Yet despite these conditions, we have nevertheless carved out secret, safe spaces in which we can be vulnerable. Our narratives, when we share them, are fragmented, similar, intersected, entangled. (Bhattacharya, 2016, p. 310)

However, in eschewing single (silencing) stories (Adichie, 2009) of who we are and relationally (re)telling our own stories of experience, we also illuminate how

> our conversations are not always protests against these oppressive structures, nor do we exist in narratives of victimization. Rather, some of us have discovered the strength that can be found in vulnerability. We offer each other that strength by being vulnerable together, by connecting with each other, by finding ourselves in each other's stories. (Bhattacharya, 2016, p. 310)

We purposely engage in the difficult, yet necessary, work of sharing our stories of experiences in academic spaces and other worlds not yet accustomed to us and our stories as women, scholars, and narrative inquirers of colour. We do not do so in a bid for sympathy, nor as a claim to victimhood. We wholeheartedly reject this interpretation and understanding of our work. Rather, we bravely engage in this vulnerable work to illustrate how sharing and inquiring into our stories of experiences in academic worlds—worlds that too often stories "rigorous" scholarly work as that which focuses upon studying (the experiences of) others from a distance—can be educative (Dewey, 1938/1997) and generative. Perhaps most importantly, this vulnerable work gifts us and can gift others, the wondrous possibility of co-composing affirming and sustaining worlds and relationships characterized by mutual recognition and loving perception.

Indeed, by leading with vulnerability, by allowing ourselves and demanding to be truly seen and heard as women and emerging scholars of colour, we simultaneously give ourselves the freedom to hopefully and lovingly reimagine imposed borders (Menon & Saleh, 2018) within and across our (academic) worlds and to also, dwell within liminal borderland spaces (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999). These borderland spaces, as Anzaldúa (1987/1999) reminds us, are not comfortable. They are liminal spaces marked by dis/ease, ambiguity, and uncertainty. Nonetheless, their very liminality concurrently offers the possibility of imagining (Sarbin, 2004) and living new stories as women and scholars of colour—narratives that may be lovingly (re)shaped by experiences alongside others too, traversing myriad (academic) worlds.

References

Adichie, C. N. (2009, July). *The danger of a single story* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

Ahmed, S. (2012). *On being included: Racism and diversity in institutional life*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Anzaldúa, G. (1987/1999). *Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza*. San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books.

Arendt, H. (1958). *The human condition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Bhattacharya, K. (2016). The vulnerable academic: Personal narratives and strategic de/colonizing of academic structures. *Qualitative Inquiry, 22*(5), 309–321. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800415615619.

Brown, L. M., & Gilligan, C. (1992). *Meeting at the crossroads: Women's psychology and girls' development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland spaces and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology* (pp. 35–75). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black Feminist critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrines, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *The University of Chicago Legal Forum, 1*(8), 139–167. Retrieved from http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8.

Dewey, J. (1938/1997). *Experience and education*. New York: NY: Simon & Schuster.

Dodge, A. M. (2019). Leveraging microaggressions in the classroom as teachable moments: Engaging in difficult conversations as a starting point for change. *The Politics of Contemporary Education, 11*(2), 53–66. https://doi.org/10.18733/cpi29484.

Johnson, M. (1989). Embodied Knowledge. *Curriculum Inquiry, 19*(4), 361–377. https://doi.org/10.2307/1179358.

Kubota, H. (2017). *A narrative inquiry into the experiences of people who are homeless in Japan (Unpublished doctoral dissertation)*. Canada: University of Alberta.

Kubota, H., Menon, J., Redlich-Amirav, D., & Saleh, M. (2015). A narrative conception of professional development as a nested community. *LEARNing Landscapes, 9*, 161–176. Available at http://www.learninglandscapes.ca/index.php/learnland/article/view/751/751.

Lightfoot (Eds.), *Narrative analysis: Studying the development of individuals in society* (pp. 5–20). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lindemann Nelson, H. (1995). Resistance and insubordination. *Hypatia, 10*(2), 23–40.

Lorde, A. (1984/2007). *Sister outsider.* Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press.

Lugones, M. (1987). Playfulness, "world"-travelling, and loving perception. *Hypatia, 2*(2), 3–19. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.1987.tb01062.x.

Lugones, M. C., & Spelman, E. V. (1983). Have we got a theory for you: feminist theory, cultural imperialism and the demand for "the woman's voice". *Hypatia WSIF, 1,* 573–581.

Lyiscott, J. (2014, Feb). *3 ways to speak English* [video file]. Retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/jamila_lyiscott_3_ways_to_speak_english?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare.

Menon, J. (2019). A story cloth of curriculum making: Narratively *s-t-i-t-c-h-i-n-g* understandings through arts-informed work. In B. W. Andrews (Ed.), *Perspectives on Arts Education Research in Canada, Vol. I: Surveying the Landscape* (chapter 7). Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.

Menon, J. (2018). Making masala: Shaping a multiperspectival narrative inquiry through a re-search of and for storied images. In D. J. Clandinin, V. Caine, & S. Lessard (Eds.), *The relational ethics of narrative inquiry* (pp. 70–87). Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge.

Menon, J., Redlich-Amirav, D., Saleh, M., & Kubota, H. (2015). Embracing lived multiplicities as beginning narrative inquirers. *Creative Approaches to Research, 8*(3), 80–101. Retrieved from http://iaqr.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/CAR8_3_Menon_RedlichAmirav_Saleh_Kubota.pdf

Menon, J., & Saleh, M. (2018). Borders. In D. G. Krutka, A. M. Whitlock, & M. Helmsing (Eds.), *Keywords in the social studies: Concepts and conversations* (pp. 53–64). New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.

Minh-ha, T. T. (1986). Difference: "A special third world women issue". *Feminist Review, 25,* 5–22.

Narayan, U. (1988). Working together across difference: Some considerations on emotions and political practice. *Hypatia, 3*(2), 31–48.

Premack, R. (2018, September 18). 14 things people think are fine to say at work — but are actually racist, sexist, or offensive. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from https://www.businessinsider.com/microaggression-unconscious-bias-at-work-2018-6.

Puwar, N. (2000). Making space for South Asian women: What has changed since feminist review issue 17? *Feminist Review, 66,* 131–138.

Saleh, M. (2019a). Relational Resistance: Canadian Muslim mothers and daughters (re)telling and (re)living our stories. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative, 10*(1/2), 101–116.

Saleh, M. (2019b). *Stories we live and grow by: (Re)telling our experiences as Muslim mothers and daughters*. Toronto: Demeter Press.

Saleh, M. (2017). *Stories we live by, with, and in: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of Canadian Muslim girls and their mothers* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Alberta. Available at https://doi.org/10.7939/R3JH3DG7R.

Saleh, M., Menon, J., & Clandinin, D. J. (2014). Autobiographical narrative inquiry: Tellings and retellings. *Learning Landscapes, 7*(2), 271–282. Available at http://www.learninglandscapes.ca/.

Saleh, M., Menon, J. & Kubota, H. (2018). Stories to (re)name by: Relationally living (and inquiring) within the multilayered midst. *LEARNing Landscapes, 11*(2), 331–344. Available at https://www.learninglandscapes.ca/index.php/learnland/article/view/966/963.

Sarbin, T. R. (2004). The role of imagination in narrative construction. In C. Daiute & C. Lightfoot (Eds.), Sage Research Methods: Sage.

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. M., et al. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist, 62*(4), 271–286. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.4.271.

Waheed, N. (2013). *Salt*. San Bernardino, CA: Createspace.

Wollstonecraft, M. (1792/1975). *A vindication of the rights of woman.* London, UK: Penguin Books.

Becoming a Mother in the Academy: A Letter to My Children

Mairi McDermott

Abstract What is it like becoming a mother in the academy? I engage this question in the form of a letter to my children. I begin by unraveling two threads forming the fabric of my being—motherhood and academia—to make sense of how blending these worlds contours my experiences and expectations. I had both of my children during my doctoral program, as such, I only know what motherhood is like in academia. I share how the process of writing about becoming a mother in the academy played a role in reassembling these two worlds—frequently made to be at odds with one another. In sharing my story, I recognize that I am in a privileged space to be able to blend these worlds of motherhood and academia. The nature of the work I do as an education scholar allows for certain freedoms and alignments—e.g., relative autonomy over when and where I "do" work and thinking about and learning with children as a core professional commitment. Instead of perpetuating the discourses pressuring us to keep the personal and the public discrete, the writing process amplified the personal and professional importance of being mother and academic *simultaneously*.

Keywords Motherhood/mothering · Academia · Gender and work · Tenure track · Feminist inquiry

Dear Altea and Roland Fireman,[1]

I know I was distracted the first few weeks of summer, and I want to unpack what caused my distractions in this letter to you. Something was bothering me and inhibiting me from being able to start this piece of writing for a chapter in a book about how women negotiate academic life. The topic matters greatly to me, has

[1] Although a future-oriented letter, I shared parts of it with my children and asked if they would prefer that I use their given names or if I changed their names for anonymity. After a brief discussion about what anonymity is and why they might seek it, my son—who often tells me "My name is not x. It is y" or "Don't call me x. I'm fireman or construction worker now"—said he wanted me to address him as Roland Fireman. My daughter then asked me to read more to her. She looked at me earnestly and said, "Okay, you can call me Altea, because I like that name." So, throughout the paper, I honor their wishes and will address them as Altea and Roland Fireman.

M. McDermott (✉)
University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: Mairi.mcdermott@ucalgary.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_13

become a passion project, and yet every attempt to start writing fell flat. One night, when reading on the porch while you slept in the room above me, I sensed an entry point to begin writing on the daily rhythms of becoming a mother in the academy. Through the cacophony of ideas and stalled writing efforts over the last few weeks, I suddenly realized that to reassemble the worlds of mothering and academia for this chapter, I needed to be in conversation with you. I want you to know how much I am learning about myself, about education, as well as research and life in the academy *because* of you, rather than in spite of you.

As you will learn, in this letter and in life, multiple elements push to keep the worlds of family and paid work distinct, not the least of which is androcentrism and capitalist economies (Lewis, 2013). Governed by patriarchal and humanist epistemologies (systems that shape what counts as knowledge and how we come to know) that assume some universal rational *man* as the measure of all things, dominant Euro-American culture rests on divisive hierarchies: man/woman, public/private, reason/emotion, mind/body, good/bad, us/them. When you run down the list of binaries and their social valuation, you may begin to notice a pattern of association: man-public-reason-mind-good-us; woman-private-emotion-body-bad-them. We are socialized into these associations by way of messages repeated through various institutions (media, education, family, and religion, for example). This is why when you laugh because a boy is wearing a pink shirt, or with certainty claim a toy to be a "girl" toy, I always ask you what makes you say that to get underneath and disrupt the common assumptions embedded in those statements. Socialization, however, need not be totalizing, and part of what I want to relay to you in this letter, and in raising you, is the importance of recognizing the circulating narratives that shape our possibilities and limitations, and perhaps to critically intervene through counter stories.

In much of the academic work I do, I am interested in a concept called discourse. I am curious about how the structures, narratives, stories, and language "out there" get "in here", how we, as individuals attempt to take up and embody the norms of dominant society. Others have written about the many discourses that uphold the narrative that parents are successful only if they can separate their work selves from their mother-selves, and that children make us less reliable colleagues, particularly in the academy (Casteñeda & Isgro, 2013a, b). These discourses have variously addressed "intensive mothering" (Hays, 1996), "new momism" (Douglas & Michaels, 2004), the gendered nature of academia (see Acker & Armenti, 2004; Bushouse, 2013; Huopalein & Satama, 2019; Mata, 2013; O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly, 2012; O'Reilly, 2016; Pillay, 2009), and ideal worker norms more generally (de Laat & Baumann, 2016; O'Meara, 2015; Powell, 2013; Raddon, 2002). I am interested in the ways in which these discourses have come to shape my experiences in and expectations of the worlds of motherhood and academia.

On the other hand, I grew up with a counter story—a working mother with a Ph.D who increasingly took on leadership roles and responsibilities moving from being a high school teacher, to a principal, and finally the *first* and *only* woman superintendent in the district to date. Reflecting on my experiences, I realized that my upbringing, that the work that your Nana (and Papa) did both inside and outside of the home, created the conditions that enabled me to consider–without question–the possibility

of becoming, being, and doing mothering *and* academic work. As O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly (2016) clarify, I benefitted from the work that was done in the Western white second-wave feminism paving the way for women to engage in paid work outside the home in ways that differed from the patriarchal pressure to keep women, particularly mothers, in the home.

I never questioned the ability to be both mother and scholar until living the tensions and realities, until feelings of guilt swelled through my body for not spending enough time with you, particularly in the very early years. Dominant narratives suggest mothers should be unencumbered, totally present—and entirely fulfilled—in your first five years of life (see, for example, de Laat & Baumann, 2016; French & Baker-Webster, 2013; O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly, 2012; O'Reilly, 2016; Rich, 1987/1995). I also felt pressures to perform the ideal worker who is figured as male, fully committed to my work as an academic, 24/7 (Acker, 1990; Acker & Armenti, 2004; Powell, 2013; Raddon, 2002). I realized, through these reflections, that I have so many questions for my mother: How did she feel balancing young children while building her career? What were her struggles and how did she manage them? Did she, indeed, struggle as I was? Thinking about my questions for your Nana, I am writing you a letter that captures some of the lived sensations of what it is like becoming a mother in the academy for me.

In the first section of my letter to you, I write about coming to terms with the two worlds of motherhood and academia. Reading the literature in preparation for writing this letter uncovered, mapped, and shaped the contours of these lifeworlds and became a vital and rejuvenating process. I then turn towards the promises (now better realized through the act of writing this chapter) of mixing these worlds together into a unified multiplicity, for myself, for you, and for those who may question the made to be distinct roles of mother and scholar.

Coming to Terms with Motherhood and Academia

When I defended my doctoral dissertation, Altea, you were two and a half, and Roland Fireman, you were 6 months old. The timing of your births (2012 and 2014) also marked a particular shift in the discourses putting pressures on mothers in the "mommy wars" where the media and expert texts pitted working moms against stay-at-home moms (O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly, 2012; and O'Reilly, 2016). Judgment on the proper way to mother and raise your family turned attention towards broader cultural competition on which society mothers best. For example, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mom* was published in 2011 (Chua). In this mother-book, the academic "success" of Asian children is attributed to a particularly strict and rigid, rule-driven approach to mothering. Or, in 2012 the publication of, *Bringing up Bébé: One American Mother Discovers the Wisdom of French Parenting*, where Drukerman proposes that French children eat more variety, are encouraged to attempt difficult and complex tasks on their own, and, importantly, respect the need for adults-only time. The

French mothering culture, Drukerman (2012) suggests, leads to children and adolescents who are more mature and independent, as well as happier and more fulfilled parents (all in relation to American cultural mothering/parenting styles).

Within this discursive context, in the literature I read, I have learned a great deal from other women who have graciously shared their stories and mapped the terrain upon which mothers navigate and assemble potentially divided worlds of mothering and academia. Not only are the stories important in consciousness raising, but also coming into a language to name and mark my experiences has been critical for opening alternative understandings about what I was feeling that were previously not perceptible to me. Others (Evans & Grant, 2008; Hellsten et al., 2011; Kuhl et al., 2013) also note the importance of telling our stories to provide a language and clarity around feelings we may have trouble naming within dominant scripts (Fricker, 2007; Heilbrun, 1988; Weedon, 1987). In particular, while I will share the ways in which I have felt the pressures to divide my mother self with my academic self, I am re-enlivened by others who have named "the flimsiness of differentiating between academic and mother" (Pillay, 2009, p. 501). Reading Pillay (2009) cultivated a space for me to orient myself to this chapter differently. I committed, early on, to avoid telling one of two narratives: 1. The impossibility of blending the worlds of academe and motherhood; or 2. Promoting a singular exemplar of the "successful" blending of these worlds, when in reality there are so many complex and inequitable factors at play, non-the-least being social identity positions. Through Pillay (2009), I came to see the writing as an ethical–political project of refusing dominant narratives pressuring us to keep these two worlds separate. As she says, "The consciousness of two worlds needs to be assailed since the two worlds do not simply occupy two physical spaces. Their more profound presence lies in the internal spaces they occupy in ourselves as academic mothers" (Pillay, 2009, p. 502).

Before I get too involved in reassembling these two worlds, I amplify the ways in which the worlds are made to be distinct through various processes and discourses, lived, felt, and desired.

Configuring Mothers, Motherhood, and Mothering

Altea and Roland Fireman, in this section, I want to describe the world of motherhood I entered into, both in becoming a mother to you and in coming into scholarship that resonates with my experiences of motherhood. From the moment I announced my pregnancies, became visibly pregnant, and entered into conversations with other mothers in playgroups after each of your births, I sensed the judgment that comes with the very idea of *mother*. Bombarded with opinions, advice, and book recommendations to ensure I raised you properly, I began to feel uneasy. I watched as other mothers drew on recognizable scripts about the "correct" way to raise children—who subscribed to sleep training, who over-parented by refusing to let their infant scream themselves to sleep, who started offering solid food before the recommended

age—and how each decision became attached to different theories of parenting underpinned by assumptions for the future and society. I previously mentioned Chua (2011) and Drukerman (2012), just two examples that essentialize particular cultural articulations of "proper" parenting. Perhaps you, too, can sense the judgment imbued in the ways I am writing about these scripts. It is worth noting that these scripts are specifically directed at Western, white, middle-upper class conversations about mothering and child-rearing (de Laat & Bauman, 2016; Hill Collins, 2000; Lawson, 2011; Matta, 2013; O'Reilly, 2016). Patricia Hill Collins (2000) and Erica Lawson (2011) articulate the many ways in which *other* mothers have been positioned and (mis)recognized as "ideal mothers." At another time, I will unpack these racialized dimensions of motherhood to you. Here I will only add that the desire to be recognized as a "good mother" exists even for those of us, like myself, who fit within the cultured, raced, and classed expectations for enacting recognizable motherhood, and it is to that idea more broadly that I turn.

Over the past 40 years, there has been an increasing idealization of motherhood, accompanied by unrealistic expectations being foisted on women as they balance competing demands for their time and emotional energy (de Laat and Baumann, 2016). Some of the languages that I named earlier punctuates this idealization, including, "intensive mothering" (Hays, 1996) and "new momism" (Douglas & Michaels, 2004) which draw on discourses of the "selfless mother" who always puts her children and their needs first (Raddon, 2002). This is difficult for me to write to you, but until I learned to tend to my needs and desires *as well as* yours, I wasn't able to enact the kind of mother I wanted to be (more often short tempered and distracted when with you—see also, Matta, 2013). According to Hays (1996), intensive mothering is "child-centered, expert-guided, emotionally absorbing, labor-intensive, and financially expensive" (p. 8), all of which produces "a set of ideals, norms, and practices most frequently and powerfully represented in the media, that seem on the surface to celebrate motherhood, but which in reality promulgate standards of perfection that are beyond your reach" (Douglas & Michaels, 2004, p. 5).

In a media-saturated twenty-first century, the media is a compelling force in driving and sustaining the mommy wars. The high ratings received by "explicitly pitting working moms against stay-at-home moms on TV programs" (Kuhl et al., 2013, p. 17) and in prime-time television commercials (de Laat & Baumann, 2016) amplifies the tensions and judgments on performing motherhood in a recognizable way. Mothers now express joy, exasperation, gratefulness, and overwhelming pressures to *do it all* and *have it all,* myself included (see also the contributions to the edited volumes, Castañega & Isgro, 2013; O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly, 2012).

In the particular context of academia, even though much has shifted since the second-wave feminist push to unbind white, middle-class women from the home and into professional work worlds, including universities, a study noted that "women between the ages of thirty and fifty put in the longest combined hours of professional, caregiving, and household responsibilities" (Bushouse, 2013, p. 219). Mothers face time intensification as they negotiate what feels like exponentially expanding social role expectations in becoming ideal workers and successful mothers (Maher, 2009). While spaces for women to enter the professional work worlds opened, and we

witnessed an increase in a particular class and race of women in those fields, this role was added to the societal expectations of women (particularly mothers), rather than shifting the institutions of womanhood and motherhood.

In a seminal feminist text that disrupts the dominant ways in which knowledge is produced and valued, Rich (1987/1995) theorized through her lived experience. This book challenged the androcentric practice of academic knowledge production that tends towards disembodied and "objective" orientations that are both impossible (we are always making sense of things through our experiences) and objectifying (turning those who are under study into objects with little agency or voice themselves). Importantly, Rich (1987/1995) also critically interrupted the "naturalness" of motherhood, explicating the ways in which it is a concept imbued with history and ideology. Others at this time, (see Heilbrun, 1988) also noted the ways in which conventional approaches to writing and knowledge production could not capture a woman's life, that we require alternative methods to do this work (see also, Hellsten et al., 2011; Jubas & Seidel, 2016; Weedon, 1987). Indeed, Rich's tome helped me understand a radically freeing notion that perhaps mothering is not fully encompassed by "natural instincts". All those times when I didn't know what to do, when I had to learn how to nurse you or how to hold you, to learn how our bodies worked together, admittedly caused me some doubt about my ability to do mothering well. O'Reilly (2016), in her expression of Rich's (1987/1995) work on motherhood as an institution, and mothering as a practice, further supported this rearticulation of mothering as a learned capacity, rather than an innate ability. Indeed, I am still learning how to enact practices of mothering with each of you. The process of untangling the different influences that can overdetermine "the right" way to mother is further propelling ongoing unlearnings for me. I am reminded in this project that discourses on motherhood configure our worlds through repetition (e.g., socialization) and, thus, can be reconfigured when we have alternative languages to work with; an important lesson, I hope, for times when you sense you cannot change the socially limiting conditions of your possibility!

Temporalities of Mothering on the Tenure Track

I regularly remind myself that I want to imbue a pedagogy of possibility, a pedagogy of hope for you, particularly as we are in times where there is an increase in anxiety and mental health issues among children and youth (Simmons et al., 2019). I ended the previous section, therefore with a reminder that these configurations of motherhood are social constructions, and thereby can be reimagined. Even though much of my academic work involves critical questions of identity, belonging and inequity, I appreciate the reminder from David et al. (1996), that "while, as academics, we may theorize about and deconstruct such issues, as mothers *we are not immune to their force*" (p. 209, emphasis added). In other words, while I feel I should "know better" how discourses "out there" come to be embodied, and therefore not be affected by them, I am, indeed affected. That said, I am not the only mother in the academy

who feels like having these two particular roles in my life (among the many others we embody) means that at times I feel I am doing neither as well as I would like (Eversole, Hantzis, & Reid, 2013; French & Baker-Webster, 2013; Kuhl et al., 2013; Lewis, 2013; Matta, 2013; Mercado-Lopez, 2013; Powell, 2013).

Both worlds demand everything from us. Motherhood and academia are "greedy institutions" (Raddon, 2002, p. 390; see also, O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly, 2012, and O'Reilly, 2016). Moving between these worlds at times feels like my consciousness and being are bifurcated. I wrote earlier of the ways that second-wave feminism, in reality, further intensified mothers' time, work, and expectations, what does this feel like specifically in the world of academia? Increasing numbers of women have entered academe in recent years (Evans & Grant, 2008), the question is, under what conditions are women being admitted? Motherhood and mothering are positioned in opposition to the university and knowledge production—the former articulated through feminized characteristics of nurturance, dependence, and sacrifice, the latter characterized by masculinist norms, independence, and production (see, Acker & Armenti; Casteñeda & Isgro, 2013; Huopalainen & Satama, 2019; O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly, 2012; O'Reilly, 2016; Raddon, 2002). When colleges and universities finally opened to women in the mid-nineteenth century, marriage bans were in place (lasting until the 1950s!) requiring women to be unmarried if they were teaching (Evans & Grant, 2008). Thus, "inequality is built into the bureaucracies created with long-standing male-centered model that makes it tremendously difficult to achieve both motherhood and academic success" according to Bushouse (2013, p. 214). How, then, can I feel at home in a space that is historically designed to exclude me and devalue my presence (Eversole, Hantzis, & Reid, 2013)?

While the numbers of women and mothers have increased in both the student-ship and the professorate, the numbers of women decreases as one goes through the ranks, something Mason and Goulden (2002, 2004) call the "pyramid problem", with more women earning doctoral degrees than men, while male faculty significantly outnumber female faculty in tenured, full professor, and leadership positions (see also, Casteñeda & Isgro, 2013a, b; Evans & Grant, 2008; O'Meara, 2015).

Many have argued that this is a gendered division of labor (see Acker, 1990), and it is, but there are other conditions that speak to the particular difficulties women with young families face in the academy. Casteñeda and Isgro (2013a, b) describe the "double bind" that faculty members who are becoming mothers find themselves in because the most intense and vulnerable time of building their careers overlaps with the time they are more likely to be bearing and raising young children. At first I thought to myself, sure, but that is about parenting, not just mothering. Then I read about research by Mason and Gould (2002, pp. 4–5) which found that men who have children within 5 years after completing their doctorate are substantially *more* likely to achieve tenure than women who have children in the early portion of their academic careers. In addition, women with babies are 29 percent less likely than childless women to enter the tenure track. This phenomenon is sometimes called the "mommy track" where mothers "opt in" for contingent, part-time, teaching-only positions.

While I personally worried about being on the "mommy track" instead of the tenure track, I ought to note that some mothers do choose this path as an act of resistance to the dominant storyline for being and doing academia and motherhood (see, for example, Ennis, 2012; French & Baker-Webster, 2013; Wood, 2012). I don't know if you will remember the days when you were toddlers, but the 2 years after earning my doctorate, working as contingent staff continually applying for and securing sessional teaching every few months was a particularly difficult time in my life. The uncertainty about being able to provide for you, the pressures to say yes to every course offered, even if that meant teaching upwards of 12 courses in a year all while trying to keep an active research program as a postdoctoral scholar wore me down and made it very difficult to be the kind of mother I wanted to be. During that time, my confidence in being able to balance mothering and secure an academic position was quite fragile, worry creeping into my ability to interact with you in the ways I dreamed of (which is one example of how the boundaries between the two worlds are much more porous than frequently indicated, each having an effect on the other as my body moved between them).

When considering the likelihood of the overlapping of the tenure clock and the biological clock, other women (and families) make the decision to defer having children until they achieve the job security tenure offers (see, Acker & Armenti, 2004; Eversole, Hantzis, & Reid, 2013; Shahjanan, 2015; Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006). Reading about the difficult decisions some women make in 'choosing' motherhood or academic work frustrates me. Furthermore, it is often presented as an individual choice without consideration of the structural factors shaping the "decision". Interestingly, you have both been asking recently about whether you will have children when you grow up, and while I have indicated it is complicated, the layers of complexity go well-beyond choice and desire to have children, but again, this is a conversation for another time as the focus of this letter to you will become unwieldy if I attempt to delve into the various sociopolitical-biological considerations around starting a family. That said, through the reflective learning process in writing this letter to you, even as I bracket two nodal points—academe and mothering—within the complex terrain, I am coming to recognize ways in which I am living in both of these lifeworlds simultaneously and gaining confidence in my two roles.

Towards Assembling Motherhood and Academia

In the academy, I have always been open about my role as a mother. Whether teaching or researching in a faculty of education, I share stories about you, Altea and Roland Fireman, to enliven the concepts in courses. For example, in a course for perspective teachers that focuses on diversity and social justice in education, socialization is a concept I take up. Much like I encourage you to question how a toy or a color can be gendered, I urge the pre-service teachers to consider how stories, narratives, discourses circulate and teach us ways to behave, relate to one another, and interpret our worlds. I suggest to the undergraduate students that at a very young age, children

begin reading and making sense of their worlds through repeated messages. I remember this striking me when doing a coloring activity with you, Altea, which asked you to identify which image "does not belong." There were three images on the page, one with Donald Duck snowboarding, another with Mickey Mouse at the beach, and a third with Minnie Mouse building a snowman. It was an activity in noticing patterns and learning to classify, identifying things that are alike and different. However, the question, *which one does not belong?,* is filled with cultural assumptions about difference. I share this image with the students in my class when discussing socialization and by the end of our discussion, we usually come to the understanding of the underlying message: to be different means you do not belong. Furthermore, is it Minnie Mouse who "does not belong" because she is the only female portrayed, or is it Mickey Mouse, who is at the beach instead of in snow activities, that doesn't belong, perhaps it is Donald Duck, because he is a duck, while both Minnie and Mickey are mice! Other times I share of a time when I was a parent volunteer in your pre-school, Roland Fireman. I remember standing back in disbelief as your teacher, who I respect on many levels, asked the same question: which object doesn't belong? Once the object was identified by one of your classmates, she picked it up from the floor, flung it over her shoulder and shouted emphatically, "Get out of here!" With passion similar to her energic emphasis, I share how this pedagogical decision draws from socialized norms of belonging. Some of my students respond in horror, both at the story, and at how "normal" the activity seems, and they begin to consider other ways to get at the core message of learning to differentiate and group objects and concepts in the early years without drawing on this narrative of exclusion. I remember feeling concerned when sharing these stories of you, for the personal is not always recognized as a measure of "quality" teaching. Actually, a question on an instructor rating instrument administered by the university asks students about whether the instructor uses research to guide the course. Telling stories about my children does not necessarily check this box!

Yet, you inspire and animate my teaching in important ways. Bringing you into the classroom through stories such as these helps build relations and community with students; it humanizes and personalizes teaching and learning, a core value in my teaching practice. It resonates with who I envision myself to be as a mother and a scholar. Furthermore, it has opened the space for some women students to ask me the profound question of "When is the right time to start a family in the academy?", to which I have answered "There is no right time" (see also, O'Reilly, 2016; Patterson, 2012). I usually follow this up by sharing that the timing of your births, while in graduate school, worked for me. I thrived on the bounded time to get the writing done while you slept as infants in an otherwise unbounded space of academic writing (which is rarely "done", until the approaching deadline!). In fact, as a way to bond with each of you, I spent a lot of time wearing you in cloth carriers while you napped, keeping you close to me, feeling our chests undulate together in the rise and fall of each breath, typing my dissertation swaying at the counter. The flexible schedule and autonomy that comes with academic life (Christopher & Kolers, 2012; Kuhl et al., 2013; Potnieks, 2012), while requiring substantial self-discipline and organization, allowed me to stay home, be mother and build an academic career

simultaneously. This very privileged flexibility produces a double bind though (see also, Kuhl et al., 2013, p. 18), work easily seeping into and encroaching on family time.

Coda

As I learn to pace myself across the uneven temporalities throughout the academic year (Clegg, 2010), I have to remind myself to engage the creative potential within the flexibility offered in my profession. It may not always work, and, indeed, sometimes I am short with you when an unexpected deadline creeps up and the worry about whether I can truly be mother in the academy begins to swell, all while on the steep and precarious learning curve on the tenure track (Hellsten et al., 2011; Jubas & Seidel, 2016; Mata, 2013). But I take solace in knowing that these feelings are a consequence of social scripts determining what we *should* feel like when enacting excellence in motherhood and academia.

I wrote most of this chapter behind the glass viewing area of the gymnastics camp you are both enrolled in. I have allowed myself to take advantage of the ability to do my work outside of the office, to be present with you while also completing my work expectations (Christopher & Kolers, 2012; O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly, 2012; O'Reilly, 2016; Podneiks, 2012). I am privileged to be able to organize my days around your schedules, desires, and needs (as much as possible and with the understanding and support of your daddy, that is), yet, I am still learning how to do this. Furthermore, I am becoming more confident in thinking through my experiences as a mother to shape my research interests and using those research experiences to provide time and space to reflect critically on who I want to be as a mother to you. This chapter is an example of dwelling in the dual spaces of mothering and academia simultaneously. Writing at the gymnastics center, I know I missed many of your new moves because I am focused on my computer, but being able to be here with you is allowing me to strengthen my core roles and identities. Along with the mother-scholars who graciously shared their narratives in the literature I read while writing this paper, I humbly hope that in the privileged space of academia, we can use our voices and positions to critically intervene in the structures shaping lives of other working mothers, both within and outside of academia. Altea, as a young girl, it is crucial for you to recognize the ways these scripts shape your possibilities. Roland Fireman, while the critical conversations that question patriarchal gender inequities embedded in the fabric of society tend to focus on supporting girls, we also must recognize the ways in which these scripts limit boys' potentialities as well. Altea, I want you to believe that you *can* have it all, but that there is much work to be done in undoing the scripts dividing and gendering labor; and Roland Fireman, I want you to believe that you have an important role to play in disrupting these narratives for a better and more just future for you both to enter into.

Acknowledgements I would like to acknowledge my children, partner, and parents for their love and support as I delved into these aspects of myself. I would be remiss, too, if I didn't thank Dr. Kim de Laat for her incisive feedback that both grounded and moved me early on in coming into my writing for this piece. With love and gratitude.

References

Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender & society, 4*(2), 139–158.

Acker, S., & Armenti, C. (2004). Sleepless in academia. *Gender and Education, 16*(1), 3–24.

Bushouse, B. K. (2013). Supporting academic mothers: Creating a work environment with choices. In M. Casteñeda and K. Isgro (Eds.). *Mothers in academia* (pp. 213). New York: Columbia University Press.

Castañeda, M., & Isgro, K. (Eds.). (2013a). *Mothers in academia*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Castañeda, M., & Isgro, K. (2013b). Introduction: Speaking truth to power to change the ivory tower. In M. Castañeda & K. Isgro (Eds.), *Mothers in academia* (pp. 1–14). New York: Columbia University Press.

Christopher, K., and Kolers, A. (2012). Having it both ways: Co-parenting in an academic couple. In D. L. O'Brien Hallstein, and A. O'Reilly (Eds.) *Academic motherhood in a post-second wave context: Challenges, strategies, and possibilities* (pp. 298–308). Toronto, ON: Demeter Press.

Chua, A. (2011). *Battle hymn of the tiger mom*. New York: Penguin Books.

Clegg, S. (2010). Time future: The dominant discourse of higher education. *Time & Society, 19*(3), 345–364.

David, M., Davies, J., Edwards, R., Reay, D., and Standing, K. (1996). Mothering and education: Reflexivity and feminist methodology. In V. Walsh and L. Morley (Eds.) *Breaking boundaries: Women in higher education* (pp. 205–220).

de Laat, K., & Baumann, S. (2016). Caring consumption as marketing schema: Representations of motherhood in an era of hyperconsumption. *Journal of Gender Studies, 25*(2), 183–199.

Douglas, S., & Michaels, M. (2004). *The mommy myth: The idealization of motherhood and how it has undermined women*. New York: Free Press.

Drukerman (2012). *Bringing up bébé: One American mother discovers the wisdom of French parenting*. New York: Penguin Press.

Ennis, L. (2012). Contract-faculty mothers: On the track to nowhere. In D. L. O'Brien Hallstein, and A. O'Reilly (Eds.) *Academic motherhood in a post-second wave context: Challenges, strategies, and possibilities* (pp. 177–196). Toronto, ON: Demeter Press.

Evans, E., & Grant, C. (Eds.). (2008). *Mama, PhD: Women write about motherhood and academic life*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Eversole, B. A. W., Hantzis, D. M., & Reid, M. A. (2013). Reimagining the fairytale of motherhood in the academy. In M. Casteñeda & K. Isgro (Eds.), *Mothers in academia* (pp. 160–169). New York: Columbia University Press.

French, S. L., & Baker-Webster, L. (2013). Tales from the tenure track: The necessity of social support in balancing the challenges of tenure and motherhood. In M. Casteñeda & K. Isgro (Eds.), *Mothers in academia* (pp. 170–180). New York: Columbia University Press.

Fricker, M. (2007). *Epistemic injustice: Power and ethics of knowing*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Hays, S. (1996). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Heilbrun, C. (1988). *Writing a woman's life*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Hellsten, L.-A. M., Martin, S., McIntyre, L. J., & Kinzel, A. L. (2011). Women on the academic tenure track: An autoethnographic inquiry. *International journal for cross-disciplinary subjects in education, 2*(1), 271–275.

Hill Collins, P. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Huopalien, A. S., & Satama, S. T. (2019). Mothers and researchers in the making: Negotiating 'new' motherhood within the 'new' academia. *Human Relations, 72*(1), 98–121.

Jubas, K., & Seidel, J. (2016). Autoethnography to surface tensions of visibility and invisibility in the neoliberal academy. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 45*(1), 60–84.

Kuhl, M., Mouton, M., Hostetler, H., Scribner, D., Slagter, T., & Hauser, O. (2013). How we learned to stop worrying and to enjoy having it all. In M. Casteñeda & K. Isgro (Eds.), *Mothers in academia* (pp. 17–25). New York: Columbia University Press.

Lawson, E. (2011). Black women's mothering in a historical and contemporary perspective: Understanding the past, forging the future. *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering, 2*(2), 21–30.

Lewis, V. L. (2013). To tell or not to tell: Single motherhood and the academic job market. In M. Casteñeda & K. Isgro (Eds.), *Mothers in academia* (pp. 57–65). New York: Columbia University Press.

Maher, J. (2009). Accumulating care: Mothers beyond the conflicting temporalities of caring and work. *Time & Society, 18*(3), 231–245.

Mason, M. A., & Goulden, M. (2002). Do babies matter? The effect of family formation on the lifelong careers of academic men and women. *Academe, 88*(6), 21–27.

Mason, M. A., & Goulden, M. (2004). Do babies matter (part II)? *Closing the baby gap. Aacademe, 90*(6), 10–15.

Mata, I. (2013). Class, race, and motherhood: Raising children of color in a space of privilege. In M. Casteñeda & K. Isgro (Eds.), *Mothers in academia* (pp. 66–80). New York: Columbia University Press.

Matta, A. A. (2013). Revolving doors: Mother-woman rhythms in academic space. In M. Casteñeda & K. Isgro (Eds.), *Mothers in academia* (pp. 137–147). New York: Columbia University Press.

Mercado-Lopez, L. M. (2013). Academia or bust: Feeding the hungry mouths of the university, babies, and ourselves. In M. Casteñeda & K. Isgro (Eds.), *Mothers in academia* (pp. 27–36). New York: Columbia University Press.

O'Brien Hallstein, D. L., & O'Reilly, A. (2012). *Academic motherhood in a post-second wave context*. Toronto: Demeter Press.

O'Meara, K. (2015). A career with a view: Agentic perspectives of women faculty. *Journal of Higher Education, 86*(3), 331–359.

O'Reilly, A. (2016). *Matricentric feminism: Theory, activism, and practice*. Bradford, ON: Demeter Press.

Patterson, S. (2012). "You can slip one in between your thesis and comps": Unanticipated consequences of having a baby in graduate school. In D. L. O'Brien Hallstein, and A. O'Reilly (Eds.) *Academic motherhood in a post-second wave context: Challenges, strategies, and possibilities* (pp. 97–107). Toronto, ON: Demeter Press.

Pillay, V. (2009). Academic mothers finding rhyme and reason. *Gender and Education, 21*(5), 501–515.

Potneiks, E. (2012). Basketball, skating, and scholarship: Or, how to do research from the bench, the rink, and the car. In D. L. O'Brien Hallstein, and A. O'Reilly (Eds.) *Academic motherhood in a post-second wave context: Challenges, strategies, and possibilities* (pp. 394–413). Toronto, ON: Demeter Press.

Powell, K. (2013). Breaking the glass ceiling while being a mother: Parenting, teaching, research, and administration. In M. Casteñeda & K. Isgro (Eds.), *Mothers in academia* (pp. 46–56). New York: Columbia University Press.

Raddon, A. (2002). Mothers in the academy: Positioned and positioning within discourses of the 'successful academic' and the 'good mother'. *Studies in Higher Education, 27*(4), 387–403.

Rich, A. (1987/1995). *Of woman born: Motherhood as experience and institution*. New York – London: Norton Press.

Shahjanan, R. A. (2015). Being 'lazy' and slowing down: Toward decolonizing time, our body, and pedagogy. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 47*(5), 488–501.

Simmons, M., McDermott, M., Lock, J., Crowder, R., Hickey, E., De Silva, N., et al. (2019). When educators come together to speak about well-being: An invitation to talk. *Canadian Journal of Education, 42*(3), 850–872.

Weedon, C. (1987). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory*. Masden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Wolf-Wendel, L. E., & Ward, K. (2006). Academic life and motherhood: Variations by institutional type. *Higher Education, 52,* 487–521.

Wood, J. M. (2012). Non-tenure-track academic work: The 'mommy track' or a strategy for resistance? In D. L. O'Brien Hallstein, and A. O'Reilly (Eds.) *Academic motherhood in a post-second wave context: Challenges, strategies, and possibilities* (pp. 231–252). Toronto, ON: Demeter Press.

Gendered Inequities in the Academy

Dianne Gereluk

Abstract In this chapter, I reflect on my progression as a woman academic over 25 years. Drawing upon Margaret Kovach's/Bonnie Stelmach's approach of a letter-chapter, I write letters to myself that were pivotal moments during my career. There is a growing self-awareness from these moments that move beyond the personal to uncovering particular complicity in the gender inequities of the academy. The chapter, while personal, is intended to reveal those elements of vulnerability, insecurities, and complicity. As such, while the story is about myself, there is an invitation for other women scholars to self-reflect on their practices, hoping to create an explicit interruption to elements of gendered inequities in the academy.

Keywords Women academics · Gendered roles · Gendered leadership · Academy · Higher education · Prestige economy

> 5:00 am and the alarm goes off. My body tells me to go back to sleep, but my mind races to consider how I am going to make a high energy, protein-filled, and quick breakfast before getting my daughter to the rink for her early morning figure skating practice. That is not all that is racing. My mind is also frantically considering what the kids need to bring for school—assignments, field trip forms, lunches, gym kit. The after-school activities involve a chauffeuring schedule that requires an excel spreadsheet: the son's hockey schedule that seems to change within 24-hour notice; the after-school practices for the play, and the group science project that requires the children to work together. Despite the run through the night before and the planned attack, 5:30 am requires one final check of any work emails and calendar invites to see what the meetings and academic work deadlines require. It is not even 6:00 am, and I am trying to bracket out the duties of life as a mom with active children, and the life of an academic. One thinks the weekend will bring reprieve, but all too often the activities commence at 6:00 am with hockey, with the other racing from figure skating, training, and ballet. By 6:00 pm, after a full day of driving from rink to rink, I am shattered.

The nostalgic view of entering academia is one of a privileged profession. It harkens to the idea of working through complex and challenging ideas, interrupting dominant norms and practices, and hoping to advance new ideas for the betterment of

D. Gereluk (✉)
University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada
e-mail: dtgerelu@ucalgary.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_14

society. There is excitement over the travel for conferences, networking, and public presentations. Ultimately, most academics hope that their knowledge, ideas, and innovations will lead in some way to the advancement of the lives of individuals and their communities. There is a tension that exists in the well-being of academia with the competing and often conflicting aims of our roles (Gereluk, 2018), and that is exacerbated among women scholars (Lester, 2013, 2015; Lester & Sallee, 2009; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011). When I was initially invited to contribute to this collection of essays on women academics, the narrative above was occurring in real time on a Wednesday morning otherwise known as *hump day*.

I reflect on my own journey of my academic career and increased leadership portfolios while raising two children. The nature of the paper will provide personal letters to myself of key moments of navigating academia as a woman while trying to sustain and thrive in academia. This is reminiscent of Acker's (2012) personal narrative experience that draws upon critical incidents to form and reflect on her own gendered leadership pulling together theory to make sense of the lived experience. This approach draws upon the emotional affective elements that are commonly silenced in the traditional institutional emphasis of scholarly research. Similarly, Kovach (2018) speaks to the notion of a "letter-chapter", which is intended to disrupt the traditional hierarchy that research has sometimes been blamed in the separation of self and knowledge. This reflection is advice to my younger self, the mistakes that I was not self-aware in being complicit about how my decisions would be part of a larger gendered discourse. Drawing upon my personal experiences, I examine my own bias avoidance (Bardoel, Drago, Copper, & Colbeck, 2011)—a form of covering up other duties beyond the profession—in trying to minimize the role that I am as a mother. In doing so, I argue that there is a need to make explicit a more holistic notion of gendered leadership that honors and recognizes our multiple roles both within and beyond the academy.

When I first began writing this chapter, I did not want to directly address the broader gender inequities in higher education. I take that as an *a priori* assumption about the broader debate on gender inequality. Rather, the emphasis had been to take a reflective personal stance on how part of striving to "make it" in academia has involved a quiet silencing of the lives that we hold beyond our workplace. To pretend that we have partners, children, and ailing parents is to acknowledge that we are not fully committed to the unrealistic ideals of what being a scholar entails. In this small sense, I want to disrupt and embrace our whole selves within life in the academy. Yet, in delving deeper into the barriers that young women may encounter in academia, I could not but realize that the very nature of what was occurring was a gendered notion, built upon structures and institutions that have been historically run by men. The gendered nature of my own lack of awareness was evident in the broader gendered debates of women in academia, and I could not simply be complicit by not engaging with this broader gender discussion.

With that, I turn to my beginning scholarly self—a young 24 year-old hoping to make greater systemic change.

> Dear 24-year self,
>
> You are nervous to enter the profession. I appreciate it. Your peers have come with significantly more years of professional experience in teaching and education, and you feel you are a fish out of water. You compensate by working hard and longer, reading more, knowing that you can play off your youth and lack of other personal commitments and use it to your advantage. You will cut your hair short, wear glasses and business clothes to mask any insecurities that you may harbor. This, you hope, will help to mitigate the sense of feeling like an imposter in a tradition that has traditionally favored the privileged—male, white, older.
>
> If I could turn back time and offer myself advice, I would say that feeling like an imposter never leaves. And sadly, with increased responsibility, there is a perception of increased expectations. This race to do more, better, faster is a dangerous one, which takes you down a rabbit hole. If you are truly to have a sense of flourishing in a career as an academic, there is a different, more mindful pace about thinking deeply—slowly—that makes this profession so interesting and rejuvenating. It is okay to be wrong, to recant, to make mistakes. And in this, there is a sense of agency, play, and creativity that academics may forget is at the core of the kind of scholarly work that we are tasked to do.
>
> Enjoy the moment. Take a breath. There is time.

Many studies have attempted to capture the career trajectory of women academics, noting personal dispositions (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Williams, 2019), and the opportunities and barriers that present themselves to women (Heilmann & Okimoto, 2007; Morley & Walsh, 1995; Skelton, 1997). For instance, high-flying women academics may be positioned as, "young, upwardly mobile women lectures, often equipped with good track records and on their way to top positions in academia. Their ability to move fast and to seize opportunities in their career progression is a distinct quality of a high flyer" (Ismail & Rasdi, 2006, 157). There is a sense of upward trajectory, particularly in the early years of one's academic career, showing the positive factors that contribute to one's success.

The personal nervousness about embarking on graduate studies is not unique, yet there is an odd quiet silence about feelings of inadequacy. The imposter phenomenon is fairly well documented, and is more prevalent in women (Studdard, 2002), yet is unspoken or disrupted. There is a sense of lacking a presence, and the burden is placed on the individual to either challenge or disrupt one's own self-doubt, or to remain on the academic periphery with feels of insecurity and marginalization. It is the first of many crossroads that I have felt. Is there a way in which to create a space with the acknowledgement that I belong to? Is there a place for one's voice to be heard?

As a young woman, the choice was to prove that one's ability to find a space within the hierarchical academic structure was to provide service, implicitly believing that my service would help to compensate with my feelings of inadequacy as an emergent female scholar. It perpetuates a broader systemic issue of gender inequality of campus service (O'Meara, 2016). For me, there was a correlation between having felt like being an imposter with the overcompensation to provide service. It is the beginning of how I start to position myself as an academic, yet not fully understanding how I am replicating the discrepancies between men and women academics. It is the beginning of how I may be potentially setting myself to become more emotionally exhausted in relation to my male counterparts (Purvanova & Muros, 2010).

> Dear 32-year-old self,
>
> Well, despite your self-doubt, you have made it. You have secured an academic position. It is not full-time, but you have gotten into the front door of academia. You feel as if you have hit the lottery, and in many respects, you have. Many completed doctoral students will never be able to secure any academic position, or at best, a dangerous sessional spiral that can leave you in an unsecure trajectory. So make the best of it. You do not work full-time, so you have more time to write, more time to contribute to the faculty. Use this as a springboard to define yourself as an academic, and try to secure yourself as an established scholar. Your first lecture is in a large lecture hall of the great Deans of the past. You are nervous as hell as you face 200 Undergraduate students, some of whom are older than you. You've got this!

There is a sense of initial relief that you were able to secure an academic position. Numerous studies indicate the high sessional and casual hirers are common, creating academic instability and financial insecurity, and more problematically, invisibility of presence (Crimmins, 2016; Junor, 2004). In some respects, the high risk associated with embarking on an academic career is not lost on me. To ensure that this opportunity is not lost, I am quick to jump into a full faculty curriculum review, with long nights and quick turnaround to complete the review. As a new faculty member, all of my teaching load is with undergraduate students, approximately 200 students in each class. In this case, there is a personal relief that I have not been assigned to teach graduate students, but the workload is profound. Given that I am not working full-time, there is the ability to relatively stay on top of the deadlines, but the aspiration to write academically is relegated to an afterthought.

I am grateful, nonetheless. The hours are long, but I am standing among established scholars, and they are appreciative of my willingness to jump in. Yet, there is a problematic discourse of which I am completely complicit and willingly, and appreciatively, creating. I am untroubled by the disconnect between my part-time status and the long work hours that I am giving in the name of being a contributing member of the faculty. The intent to publish and build one's research agenda as an emergent scholar is of less priority, along with the staff to student ratio with increased workload associated with large classes.

This is the first of many tensions that play out. As a new scholar, it is my chance to really establish my research agenda. And there is a necessity to do so. The expectation is that you will publish all that you can from your dissertation. From there, the question is how one moves forward based on that initial research, to deepen it, make it more robust, and to set the stages for one's career. There are competing demands. As a new scholar, you are also trying to make a positive impression with your colleagues, your students, and your faculty. The norms and discourses of the academic institution are unfamiliar, and in trying to navigate this new culture, there is the notion of how you will learn the ropes (Acker, 1997). The feminization of education, and thus by association, education faculties, exacerbates the unsaid, but felt, hierarchy and power, in the rightful place of both women scholars in education faculties who may feel the extra burden to feel valued among other scholars and faculties across campus. And so there is a double dynamic at play, whether warranted or otherwise. Your own self-doubt as a woman academic is heightened by the perceived status of your faculty at the post-secondary institution. And while there is research to suggest that

the perceptions of self-doubt and finding one's professional identity are common in the academy (Driscoll, Parkes, Tilley-Lubbs, Brill, & Bannister, 2009), the personal burden is no less onerous knowing that it exists beyond myself.

So, to hedge my bets, I try to do it all. I spend late nights supporting the faculty on service. I sign up willingly to sit on committees as part of my service, a trend that seems evident among women more so than men (O'Meara, 2016). There is no template on the key to success, and the complex and multiple demands of an academic, only now begin to surface. So given my chance, my demands at home are still very minimal. I am married, but with no children. It is my highest priority to be the best at my profession, and so I do a splatter approach, trying to do everything and anything to make a positive and lasting impression. The enthusiasm and energy are there. Yet, in reflection, my research agenda and alignment between teaching, research, and service seems unfocused. The depth has been compromised by breadth, and while the performance reviews are positive, in hindsight, I have started down a path of doing everything.

> Dear 40-year-old self,
>
> You were riding high as an academic. You published, gave birth to two beautiful children, and were being promoted in the academy. Your work was being recognized in national papers, and you feel that your research was having a palpable and notable impact in the field. You proudly told your colleagues and friends how you gave birth, and two hours later, finished off edits to an article to be submitted to the editor the very next day. You used your maternity leaves to write books during the children's nap times. You went to conferences, babies in tow, presenting on a panel, and then racing to either breastfeed or pump milk in time for the next feeding. You felt like nothing could go wrong.
>
> But it did. The economy crashed, and you made the difficult decision with your husband to return back to Canada where there was more financial security than in England. You were devastated. And now, after you thought you had the world by the hands, you were now at home with two toddlers, with little mobility to apply for academic positions beyond your new home. Your ten years as an academic have come crashing down, and you do not see the light. You feel like you have to start from scratch, or contemplate changing your career path.

I have bought into the culture of the academy. I believe that while my life is hectic, I have not compromised my rightful position as a scholar, and can still be a superhero mother. I will not let my gender define me, and think that if I keep up the same pace as I did when I entered the profession, nothing will stop me. My sense of what is valued is not unlike what Kandiko Howson, Coate, and de St. Croix (2018) note in my positioning of what is valued under the "prestige economy". Prestige economy are the motivators that academics often use to measure the success of one's esteem, which then influences hiring and promotion decisions (Blackmore & Kandiko, 2011). Kandiko Howson et al. (2018) broaden that view to describe:

> the collection of beliefs, values, and behaviors that characterize and express what a group of people prizes highly. Within academic work, the prestige economy operates through such indicators as publication rates, first/last (depending on the field), author status, international keynotes and editorial roles (pp. 534-535).

I am fully complicit. I have begun to understand the game of academia. I am more strategic on the talks that I give, and with whom in attempts to create more currency for myself. I have not acknowledged how I am furthering the particular norms and

discourses that call into question the gender disparities that occur in academia, nor the particular positioning of knowledge that the modern university has created. It is creating a particular privileging of knowledge and ideas to the exclusion of others. And in the process, it is creating some long-term uncomfortable tactics of how to game the system.

The nature of the prestige economy, however, suggests that such advantages are commonly afforded to men than women. Kandiko Howson and colleagues argue that the prestige economy is a gendered concept; the research supports this claim with men being cited more than women, men are invited to more keynotes, and men tend to be asked onto more editorial boards (Malianik, Powers, & Walter, 2013; Morley, 2015).

And yet in one instant, your climb through the prestige economy is over. The economic crash has meant that you had to forego and step down from your academic position. It is both brutal and humbling, and there is an undeniable grief at how one's career can simply be gone. You are a stay-at-home mother, with no idea of whether your 20 years of preparing to become and rise as an established academic is simply now a thing of the past.

> Dear 48-year-old self,
>
> You are a Dean of Education with a fresh perspective. You managed to secure a position two years after returning back to Canada, and you jumped into administration quite quickly thereafter. You feel as if you need to catch up with your research and your academic CV, and I see you haven't learnt. You were close to burn out, and a harsh and candid conversation about balance from your physician provided a stark reminder that if you are going to flourish in academia, we need to be more honest about our entire lives, not just our life as a scholar.
>
> In the interview for this post, you speak to this. It is refreshing. You decide that if you are going to be able to lead a young faculty, together with your colleagues, we need to have honest discussions about how together we need to flourish as academics both within the institution, but also in our personal lives beyond this wonderful, but complex, profession. If you are to provide the oversight and leadership, you are going to have to start from a holistic perspective of how to care for oneself, in order to collectively inspire and engage others. The hope is that by speaking about how you have become increasingly aware, your intent is to model and create spaces and places for scholars across one's career to flourish in what they do. You know that there will be mistakes, and more that you will not even foresee or that you could have avoided in hindsight, but entering with a sense of intellectual humility may help in those missteps. However, if there is one thing that you can commit to is for people to be honest about their struggles, both at work and in their personal lives. You can do this.

In this final letter to myself, I want to reflect on how institutionally we might conceptualize the way in which we can support women's career progression in higher education. As a leader now, I cannot shift the responsibility to others but need to advocate and reposition the discourses that hinder and silence the well-being of my colleagues in the academy. My increasing awareness to what Bardoel et al. (2011) call "bias avoidance"—the ways in which individuals, and particularly women, minimize the family commitments there required of women in order to not be left behind in the academic career trajectory—actually creates a form of complicity in allowing this gender division to occur at an institutional level. Some studies indicate that when women enter leadership roles, the nature of these roles tend to be service heavy,

inward looking, particularly related to the needs and care of students (Bagihole & White, 2011; Morley, 2013a, 2013b; UNESCO, 2012). And yet in troubling this narrative, I now have become part of the leadership elite—an exception—to the broader international trends.

So there is an opportunity for me to consider how best one might reposition and make explicit the processes, policies, that create barriers for women in the academy. While there is a global need for making explicit the discursive practices that impede women in academy, at a meso level, there is the opportunity to disrupt such practices that are taken for granted as part of the identity of scholars, and make more transparent the ways in which we appoint individuals onto editorial boards, invited keynotes, principal investigators for large grants, that perpetuates gender biases in the academy.

In writing this, there is also a weight that I find looming of the overarching institutional and global structures that will impede my ability to shift these discussions on a systemic level. It further requires a form of trust and vulnerability for colleagues to begin to make explicit the ways in which women have traditionally hidden their extra demands. As such, there is a potential naivety in shifting the ways in which to create spaces for individuals to acknowledge, recognize the ways in which we might engage in our scholarly endeavors differently that does not lead to shame, guilt, or burn out. Morley (2014) calls this a form of cruel optimism. Her candidness speaks to this potentially unrealistic positioning of those women who do assume leadership roles:

Women's relationship with leadership can be a form of cruel optimism insofar as desiring it seldom leads to its acquisition. While some women do enter and flourish in leadership, for others, the belief that they will be able to lead differently in today's managerialized global academy can also be a form of cruel optimism (p. 120).

There is a caution here then for me like other women who have entered into this territory. In positioning myself as a leader who wants to reconceptualize the ways in which to create a more holistic, inclusive scholarship in the academy, there might be a particular naivety given the structures of the institution and of the profession. I am aware of this, but even in its enormous task, making visible what has been hidden, unsaid, and implicit may be a worthy first step.

Women in Academy

The nature of women in the academy has historically been a fairly recent affair with women being able to earn doctorates, secure academic appointments, and participate in scholarly research and teaching. In some respects, one should not be surprised that there are a disproportionate number of men who hold senior academic positions in higher education. However, simply looking at the ratio of men and women only tells a part of the story. If women enter these increasingly senior academic roles, by forgoing personal aspects of their life, then this seems to be missing the mark. My own ascendency into a senior academic role is one that until very recently was to adjust and overcompensate to see that I could keep up with my male counterparts

despite the roles that we may find in our personal lives. And in this reflective letter writing to myself, it becomes increasing apparent that "gender is neither merely an individual trait nor a structural feature of organizational life; rather, it is an ongoing interactive accomplishment that creates possibilities for and limitations to the process of organizing" (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004, p. xxviii).

I am increasingly less willing to pretend that I do not have children or an elderly parent. Although the demands of the profession are ever apparent, I feel less burden or guilt to know that some things can wait, some things can take a lesser priority, and that in doing so, I am still able to be productive as a leader. Moreover, in being more open about my parameters, and my need for rest, it is of little surprise that my own ability to be more effective, thoughtful, and inspired, as an academic leader, is largely due to this recognition.

In 10 years' time, perhaps I will need to recant this reflective chapter. I hope not. I hope that I will model the ways in which both women and men can flourish in the academy. I hope that I will not conform to the normative practices that blind me to the systemic barriers that may negatively impact women in academia. There is a danger that my attempts to be more consensual or less authoritarian may simply place me in a more gendered leadership role (Collins & Singh, 2006). However, there is a need to reclaim these dispositions as not simply as a nurturer or weak, but in terms of creating a space for dialogue and debate.

I hope that my role as a mother who takes the children to skate is one of joy, rather than guilt, not marred with the guilt to keep working in the stands, but because at that moment, it provides the body a time to reclaim a more holistic conception of being present both at home and at work.

References

Acker, S. (1997). Becoming a teacher educator: Voices of women academics in Canadian faculties of education. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 13*(1), 63–74. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(96)00046-7.

Acker, S. (2012). Chairing and caring: Gendered dimensions of leadership in academe. *Gender and Education, 24*(3), 411–428.

Ashcraft, V., & Mumby, K. (2004). *Reworking gender: A feminist communicology of organization*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Amanatullah, E., & Morris, M. (2010). Negotiating gender roles: Gender differences in assertive negotiating are mediated by women's fear of backlash and attenuated when negotiating on behalf of others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 98*(2), 256–267. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017094.

Bagihole, B., & White, K. (Eds.). (2011). *Gender, power and management: A cross-cultural analysis of higher education*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bardoel, E. A., Drago, R., Copper, B., & Colbeck, C. (2011). Bias avoidance: Cross-cultural differences in the US and Australian academics. *Gender, Work and Organization, 18*(1), 157–170. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2009.00483.x.

Blackmore, J., & Kandiko, C. B. (2011). Motivation in academic life: A prestige economy. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education, 16*(4), 399–411. https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2011.626971.

Collins, J., & Singh, V. (2006). Exploring gendered leadership. In D. MacTavish & K. Miller (Eds.), *Women in leadership and management* (pp. 11–31). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Crimmins, G. (2016). The spaces and places that women casual academics (often fail to) inhabit. *Higher Education Research & Development, 35*(1), 45–57. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2015.1121211.

Driscoll, L., Parkes, K., Tilly-Lubbs, G., Brill, J., & Bannister, V. (2009). Navigating the lonely sea: peer mentoring and collaboration among aspiring women scholars. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 17*(1), 5–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/13611260802699532.

Gereluk, D. (2018). Flourishing and wellbeing in the academy: A capabilities Approach. *Philosophical Inquiry in Education*, *25*(2), 171–187.

Heilmann, M. E., & Okimoto, T. G. (2007). Why are women penalized for success at male tasks?: The implied communality deficit. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*(1), 81–92. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.1.81.

Ismail, M., & Rasdi, R. (2006). Career mobility of high-flying women academics: A study at selected universities in Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 26*(2), 155–171. https://doi.org/10.1080/02188790600932111.

Junor, A. (2004). Casual university work: Choice, risk, inequity and the case for regulation. *Economic and Labour Relations Review, 14*(2), 276–304. https://doi.org/10.1177/103530460401400208.

Kandiko Howson, C.B., Coate, K., & de St Croix, T. (2018). Mid-career academic women and the prestige economy. *Higher Education Research & Development, 37*(3), 533–548. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2017.1411337.

Kovach, M. (2018). Doing Indigenous methodologies: A letter to a research class. In N. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed., pp. 214–234). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Lester, J. (2013). Work-life balance and cultural change: A narrative of eligibility. *The Review of Higher Education, 36*(4), 463–488.

Lester, J. (2015). Cultures of work-life balance in higher education: A case of fragmentation. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 8*(3), 139–156.

Lester, J., & Sallee, M. (2009). *Establishing a family-friendly campus: Best practices*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Maliniak, D., Powers, R.W., & Walter, B.F. (2013). *The gender citation gap*. American Political Science Association 2013 Annual Meeting Paper. Available at SSRN. https://ssrn.com/abstract=2303311.

Morley, L. (2013a). The rules of the game: Women and the leaderist turn in higher education. *Gender and Education, 25*(1), 116–131.

Morley, L. (2013b). International trends in women's leadership in higher education. In T. Gore & M. Stiasny (Eds.), *Going global* (pp. 26–35). London: Taylor and Francis.

Morley, L. (2014). Lost leaders; women in the global academy. *Higher Education Research & Development, 33*(1), 114–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2013.864611.

Morley, L. (2015). Troubling intra-actions: Gender, neo-liberalism and research in the global academy. *Journal of Education Policy, 31*(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2015.1062919.

Morley, L., & Walsh, V. (1995). *Feminist academics: Creative agents for change*. Portsmouth, UK: Taylor and Francis.

O'Meara, K., & Campbell, C. M. (2011). Faculty sense of agency in decisions about work and family. *The Review of Higher Education, 34*(3), 447–476.

O'Meara, K. (2016). Whose problem is it? Gender differences in faculty thinking about campus service. *Teachers College Record, 118*(8), 1–38.

Purvanova, R. K., & Muros, J. P. (2010). Gender differences in burnout: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 77*(2), 168–185.

Skelton, C. (1997). Women and education. In V. Robinson & D. Richardson (Eds.), *Introducing women's studies: Feminist theory and practice* (2nd ed.). London: Macmillan Press.

Studdard, S. (2002). Adult women students in the academy: Imposters or members? *Journal of Continuing Higher Education, 50*(3), 17–24. ISSN-0737-7363.

UNESCO. (2012). *World atlas of gender equality in education.* United Nations educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. https://www.macfound.org/media/files/UNESCO-world-atlas-gender-education.pdf.

Williams, J. (2019, August 16). How women can escape the likability trap: Powerful women know how to flip feminine stereotypes to their advantage. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/16/opinion/sunday/gender-bias-work.html.

Trapped Between the Expectations of Others and Self and the Search for Balance and Freedom

Brenda M. Stoesz

Abstract My story begins in rural Manitoba rooted in a particular subdenomination of Mennonite cultural and religious customs and agricultural history, where conventional gender roles, a strong work ethic, self-reliance, and religion were valued. In this tradition, I learned the knowledge and skills required to run a household, care for children, and serve my elders at an early age. Family circumstances required me to learn additional skills traditionally reserved for boys and men. As I reflect on my past, I understand how early experiences led me to resist many aspects of the traditional family life that I was expected to assume and propelled me to further my education despite the obstacles that a rural upbringing often present. Using autoethnography, I explore how life experiences and perspectives have influenced my decision-making processes, shaped my professional path, and connect me to the wider cultural and social context, particularly with regards to traditional gender roles within the Mennonite culture. By engaging in this reflective exercise, a very difficult undertaking that often left me feeling vulnerable, my hope is that it will offer another perspective that may deepen the understanding of how cultural customs and beliefs influence how women negotiate life in the academy.

Keywords Autoethnography · Career barriers · Determination · Life balance · Mennonite culture

Introduction

When the book's editors asked me to consider writing a chapter about my experiences as a woman negotiating life in the academy, I was not sure how to respond. The prospect of sharing my personal story made my stomach flutter and my head buzz with anxious thoughts, doubts, and questions. *Would my story be of value to other women in academia? How would I share my experiences without appearing narcissistic or casting blame?* I was also unsure how to tie autobiographical accounts to a body of research literature that is unfamiliar to me (e.g., literature on feminism, gender issues,

B. M. Stoesz (✉)
University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB, Canada
e-mail: Brenda.Stoesz@umanitoba.ca

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9_15

Mennonite culture, and women in academia) as my formal research training was in experimental psychology. Despite my fears and worries, I decided to undertake the challenge of deep self-examination, which I hoped would facilitate my own appreciation for my journey.

I never kept a written diary so I could not draw from this type of source material to write this chapter, so I asked myself a series of broad and more narrowly focused questions to retrieve memories. *What events were foundational to my life path? What fears held me back? What motivated me to move forward? Who were my sources of support?* After this initial autobiographical process, I searched for ways in which other authors situated their personal narratives within the relevant peer-reviewed research (Averett & Soper, 2011; du Preez, 2008; Krahn, 2013; Wall, 2006) and discovered autoethnography.

Autoethnography is a qualitative, narrative research methodology in which autobiographies, personal perspectives, and emotionality are used to increase understanding of the social world (Dashper, 2015; Ellis et al., 2007; Kemp, Angell, & McLoughlin, 2015; Méndez, 2013; Wall, 2008). Autoethnography is distinct from autobiography in that "autoethnographers… retrospectively and selectively write about epiphanies that stem from, or are made possible by, being part of a culture and/or by possessing a particular cultural identity… [and then] analyze these experiences" to connect them to the relevant literature (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 276).

My understanding of the mechanics of this methodological approach is at the level of a novice, nonetheless, I attempted to use autoethnography to identify themes in my personal narrative and situate these within the broader literature. Recall of key life events and my attempts to connect themes did not emerge in chronological order; rather, as I reflected on one moment to determine its significance, I often flashbacked to earlier moments to add context resulting in a nonlinear narrative. As a result of this autoethnographic process, I gained a deeper understanding of the ways in which my experiences influenced my decision-making processes and perspectives, shaped my personal and professional paths, and connect to the wider cultural and social context.

Disappointing First Day

Fear. Failure. Loneliness. Three words that paint a picture of my emotional state on my first day as an 18-year-old university student. Everything seemed to go wrong despite my extensive preparations. I got lost on campus. I failed the chemistry diagnostic test. In such a big place with so many people, I did not have one conversation all day.

The 103-km drive home with my acquaintance carpoolers was not an ideal environment for shaking off my stress; however, stepping through the door of my parents' rural home where I still lived opened the "floodgates" and tears rained down my cheeks. *Who was I kidding? How could I have believed that I could do this?* My mother responded to my weeping with, "That's okay. You can quit." There were many times during my school age years when I did quit opportunities that made me

feel highly anxious. I did not want to quit this time. I had worked hard and giving up on getting an education was not an option for me; the alternative would mean going back to the narrow, dead-end path that I had been on. I distinctly remember feeling angry and growling, "You're not supposed to say that to me. You're supposed to encourage me," before storming off.

The messages I heard consistently during my adolescent years was that women were the *weaker sex* and being a woman gave me a *free pass to quit hard things* because a man could *rescue* me. I felt pressure to find a husband and adopt the role of the subservient wife and mother expected within the patriarchal system of Mennonite religion and culture (Penner, 1996). At a young age, I learned that "obedience to people in authority [e.g., men] over you [is] a virtue" (Penner, 1996, p. 2) and marriage would provide me with protection in exchange for devotion and obedience (Juhnke, 1986). These messages seemed contradictory to me as there was conflict between expectations and reality. For example, in traditional Mennonite culture, all men, women, and children are expected to work hard and persevere to benefit family *and* community (Weaver, 1993), but here I was encouraged to quit what I found challenging. Moreover, in my view, the men in my life did not seem to have *rescuing* ability—none were wealthy or had any real authority. I felt that relying too much on others to take care of me was a trap. Finding the freedom to make my own choices required an education.

I recognize now that the *you can quit* moment strengthened my resolve to *do* life differently than what others expected of me.

Growing Up Mennonite

I grew up in rural Manitoba rooted in the Sommerfelder subdenomination of Mennonite cultural and religious customs and agricultural history (Francis, 2019; Kulig et al., 2009; Swierenga, 1997). My great great-grandparents settled near the southeastern portion of the *West Reserve* (Fisher, 2017; P. V. Penner & Friesen, 1990) within Treaty 1 Territory (Hall, 2015; Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba, 2019). They were part of the 1870s wave of immigrants who built Mennonite-style house barns and reshaped the fertile tallgrass prairie landscape into "tamed" farmland (Kaye, 2011). To the Mennonite people, farming was "viewed as caring for God's earth" (Schmidt, 2001, p. 81) and was considered an act of devotion.

Conventional gender roles, strong work ethic, self-reliance, and conservative religious beliefs (Grant & Rosenstock, 2011; Thiessen, 1998; Weaver, 1993) were valued highly in the Mennonite environment in which I was raised. Life was to be lived simply, which meant the adoption of modest style of clothing and tidy homes and yards, and the *Plautdietsch* word *weltlijch* described events, clothing, and technologies that were considered worldly. My grandparents' rural home and the way they lived illustrated this Mennonite simplicity. My grandfather was an egg producer and cultivated the surrounding farmland that he owned, whereas my grandmother raised their children, tended gardens, prepared food, kept a small house tidy, and assisted

my grandfather. Although the house had running water drawn from a cistern that collected rainwater from the rooftop, it did not have a modern flush toilet. This was not unusual to me as we also lived in a house without an indoor toilet until we moved to an updated Mennonite-style house barn with a *real* bathroom.

My parents were less traditional in some ways than my grandparents were but many traditional Mennonite values about religion, child rearing, and managing a household were ingrained. As a result, I acquired many cooking, cleaning, and child-care skills at a very young age. I was also faced with the fact that my mother suffered from physical and mental health conditions that resulted in frequent hospitalizations. These hospitalizations were typically 2 weeks in duration and could occur up to 12 times per year.

When my mother was away and my Dad was at work at a local seed-crushing plant, my four younger siblings and I did the things that needed doing (Sieh, Meijer, Oort, Visser-Meily, & Van Der Leij, 2010). Neighbours, extended family, and occasionally someone hired by a social services agency would help my Dad with childcare when we were younger, but as I reached my preteen and teen years, childcare and house-keeping responsibilities shifted to me. At first this felt like freedom as we were not *shipped off* to stay elsewhere, and my mindset toward adult responsibilities morphed into determination, diligence, and a sense of duty (Weaver, 1994). House work and childcare were expected (Weaver, 1994), but our family circumstances also required me to complete tasks traditionally reserved for boys and men.

I would wake up early on weekdays to prepare for school, then wrangle my siblings into clean clothes, feed them breakfast, and make five school lunches. Shouting, name-calling, and "head-butting" were frequent. When we trampled off the school bus in the late afternoon, Dad had already left for his evening shift. While my brothers fed the pigs and chickens and collected eggs, I milked three cows using a machine. I carried each full, heavy three-gallon milk bucket to a small room in the barn, where I heaved it onto my shoulders to pour the milk into the bowl of the cream separator. The cream was stored for later sale and the milk was kept for making cottage cheese. Until my younger brothers were a little stronger, I was also required to *mest üt* (muck the stalls). After completing the barn chores, I prepared suppers of fried farmer sausage, *Kjielkje* or *Vereneki* (Mennonite-style noodles and pierogis), and *Schmaunt-fat* (cream gravy). Tidying the house and doing the laundry followed supper and clean up with some help from my younger sisters. After an exhausting struggle to put my siblings to bed, I retreated to my room to study for a few hours. Sometimes I greeted my Dad at the door just after midnight to tell him about our day, and then I would go to sleep, just to do it all again the next day.

My Dad was a hard-working, respected, and compassionate man. He worked alongside me (whether it was housework or barn chores) when he was not at his paid job and showed his appreciation for my efforts; this motivated me *do it all* to assist my parents in raising my four younger siblings. As a result, I developed a strong work ethic and have come to value the many practical skills that I learned (Weaver, 1993). It is also quite possible that my Dad's willingness to do "women's work" and the fact that I crossed the boundary into "men's work" contributed to my desire for a life path that was less traditional.

Hearing that my mother was returning home from her hospital stay would often fill me with a sense of dread. Upon her return, my mother would often reveal her disappointment with me for not continuing to fill her role. I can recall her saying with a look of disdain, "You can keep the house clean when I'm not around, but you can't do this when I'm here."

My childhood friends have commented that the number of responsibilities that my siblings and I had was atypical and they felt we had challenging childhoods. My friends (also growing up in Mennonite homes) contributed substantially to their parents' households and farm operations (see also Schmidt, 2001) but their experiences seemed to differ significantly from mine. This difference was likely due to the absence of my mother. Her chronic health conditions often required my siblings and I to take on more responsibilities than children in other families (Sieh et al., 2010) resulting in significant stresses and feeling trapped. Like other girls in similar situations, I took on the role of primary caregiver, which put me at risk for developing internalizing behaviors (e.g., depression, anxiety, and withdrawn behavior) (Korneluk & Lee, 1998). Even when my mother was home, she often evaded the traditional responsibilities of housekeeping and caregiving that she claimed to value. During these times, I often felt guilty for focusing on my homework and extracurricular activities rather than keeping the house tidy.

Juggling the many roles that I was expected to play was overwhelming and exhausting, and triggered my resistance to adopt the homemaker and caregiver aspects of traditional Mennonite culture. Indeed, teenagers raised within a Mennonite community are less likely to adopt the traditional values and ways of life if their parents do not model the values to a high degree and if the relationships between the parents and children are low in quality (Kauffman, 1961). Moreover, when adolescents are exposed to other cultures (and variations within the same cultural group), the development of their individual identity can be either congruent or incongruent with one's cultural group (Jensen, 2003).

Education as an Escape

Attending school made my world feel bigger and offered a brief yet meaningful escape from housework and childcare responsibilities (Weaver, 1993). I listened to my teachers, concentrated on learning, and did my homework as assigned. I loved to learn but I was also motivated to do well academically to show obedience to people in authority (e.g., teachers) (Penner, 1996). I knew that I would graduate from high school but believed that my education would end at that point. My parents did not encourage academic pursuits, which may have been because neither of them continued their education past junior high. Perhaps they also believed that higher education was a "worldly" endeavour. I was the first in my immediate family to graduate from high school and to complete postsecondary studies. Only one of my four siblings graduated from high school and completed postsecondary training to

pursue her chosen career in healthcare. As a working mother of three children, she also juggles the responsibilities of being a wife, mother, and breadwinner.

My education experiences were similar to those of other women who grew up within conservative working-class Mennonite families. For example, Weaver (1993), who holds Ph.D. and writes about ethnicity and gender issues, describes her successful graduation from high school in the midst of pressure from her Mennonite relatives to quit school. She recalls that postsecondary studies never even occurred to her until much later. My belief that my education would end early is also consistent with the Canadian findings of strong positive correlations between the decision to pursue postsecondary education and parents' education (Finnie, Laporte, & Lascelles, 2004) and income levels (Knighton & Mirza, 2002), and a negative relationship with distance to school (particularly for women; Frenette, 2006).

As many of my peers applied to college or university programs and planned to move nearer to their chosen postsecondary institution directly after high school, I spent my time thinking about how I would cope with living in my parents' basement for the *rest of my life*. My part-time job did not support independent living, so after high school graduation, I searched for a full-time job with greater earning potential. This was an exercise in frustration. Instead, I secured two minimum wage, part-time jobs in the retail sector and often worked up to 75 hours per week in an attempt to save enough money to move out of that basement. This work schedule left me feeling burnt out. I decided (with encouragement from my new university-educated boyfriend) that the only way to improve my future was to acquire credentials (Tate et al., 2015) and become a teacher.

Several experiences from my past influenced my decision to pursue a teaching degree. Throughout my school years, several of my teachers commented on my tutoring abilities and encouraged me to pursue a teaching career. Moreover, earning a bachelor of education seemed to make logical sense, as it required fewer years of postsecondary education than training for other careers that I had considered; teaching positions would be available in my community by the time I completed my studies; and it was a respectable career choice for women. Indeed, the majority of teachers around the globe are women (in 2016, 74.5% of teachers were women; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018). Historically, elementary school teaching has been defined as caring and fulfilling women's destiny to nurture and raise young children (see James, 2010). Not wanting my professional identity to be tied to gender role expectations, I rejected the idea of a career teaching young children and did not want it to define my professional life.

Upon graduation, I secured a position teaching general science and biology in my local high school but I had a strong desire to continue studying. I felt that I was not fully prepared to be a teacher and there was so much more to learn in order to be more effective. I enrolled in a post-baccalaureate education program. I thought that a stable, well-paying career with professional development opportunities to improve my teaching skills would be fulfilling. Unfortunately, teaching at the K-12 level was not enjoyable to me at the time so I decided to quit my secure job to return to "worldly" scholarly pursuits. This action came as a surprise to my extended family, perhaps because my decision challenged tradition.

Road to Academia

I was accepted into a Bachelor of Science program with the intention of pursuing medicine, but balancing the hectic course requirements with long daily commutes proved difficult and was extremely stressful. Fortunately, I discovered a love of psychology and a course load that was less grueling but was still challenging and exciting. I was introduced to research as a career choice, and was strongly encouraged by the department head to enroll in the honours program. He also suggested that I meet with a well-respected and successful researcher with interests that aligned with my own. She agreed to supervise my undergraduate research project. I applied myself to my undergraduate work with the same level of determination, diligence, and sense of duty as I did when carrying out my childcare and housekeeping responsibilities as a teen. After graduation, I dedicated my time to preparing my first journal article and applying to graduate school and for scholarships—to my surprise, my applications were successful. I began to feel that my hard work and perseverance were paying off, that my academic abilities were legitimate, and that I was more than a simple rural working-class Mennonite girl destined to be *barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen*.

It was somewhat ironic that, during this time, my partner and I decided to start a family. We made the decision to have children after deep constructive discussions about the probable scenarios that we would face and agreed that our family life would not function in the traditional Mennonite way (Perrone, Wright, & Jackson, 2009). Women's educational and career aspirations do not necessarily delay marriage, but they often postpone child bearing (Blossfeld & Huinink, 1991) until after graduate school completion or tenure has been secured (Armenti, 2004; Hirakata & Daniluk, 2009). For women pursuing academic careers, lack of time and financial resources are cited as primary reasons for delaying this life choice until after careers are secured by achieving tenure (Armenti, 2004; Hirakata & Daniluk, 2009).

Despite having a modern plan for how our nuclear family would function, the reality was that balancing the new-mom role with graduate studies was extremely challenging. At times, the lack of sleep and my long commute interfered with my ability to manage my responsibilities as a mother, partner, and student. I often felt like a failure for not being everything to everyone. Fortunately, my partner, close extended family, and childcare providers helped to make it possible to for me to earn a master's degree in less than two years, and to begin my doctoral studies immediately. To be as competitive as possible for a faculty position, I also participated in numerous (unpaid) service activities, and teaching and research assistantships to build a strong curriculum vita to meet the high expectations of hiring committees.

In the middle of my doctoral studies, we decided to add to our family, which added a level of stress that blind-sided us. Our second child was born with medical issues requiring numerous surgeries, appointments with specialists, and learning to use specialized medical equipment (e.g., feeding tubes and pumps, suction machines). We experienced the high levels of stress, anxiety, and guilt that are common in parents in similar situations (Le Gouëz et al., 2016). I also remember feeling cheated in life and worried that my children were *career-killers*. In my darkest moments,

I blamed my family (and myself) when I believed that my publication record was not strong enough to win a faculty position (Barthelemy, McCormick, & Henderson, 2015), and then I felt horrible for having those thoughts. Such fears and frustrations are expressed by many other women pursuing careers in academia (Armenti, 2004; Hirakata & Daniluk, 2009).

Academic Goals

Despite a strong desire to succeed professionally, I wanted to do right by my family—to love and care for them as they deserved and to be involved in their lives. I wanted to *have it all*. Notions of *having it all* and *doing it all* have very early beginnings developmentally. In research with Canadian adolescents, Lupart, Cannon, and Telfer (2004) found that girls reported greater confidence than did boys in thinking they could do it all, where *all* referred to earning more than one degree and getting married and having children. Other research has demonstrated that the relationship between egalitarian views of work and family life and the pursuit of postsecondary education is stronger for women and girls than for men and boys (Davis & Pearce, 2007). What is so easily forgotten is that men were never expected to attempt "the three-ball juggling act" (Swinth, 2018, p. 1).

In the post-feminism era, the message is clear that women *must* want it all; however, female faculty often question whether having it all is even possible (LaPan, Hodge, Peroff, & Henderson, 2013). The desire to have it all "often [results] in perceived tension between sacrifice and selfishness" (LaPan et al., 2013, p. 9) and feelings of guilt arise when women believe they are not be doing enough (or too much) in any one area to be successful at anything. In an effort to see how other busy women in academia succeed, women in academia confess to surrounding themselves with like-minded colleagues and seeking out role models who seem professionally and personally successful (LaPan et al., 2013). Women in academia are often encouraged to find (or be) a mentor (Hirakata & Daniluk, 2009; Newman & McGinn, 2012; Ortega et al., 2013) in addition to being flexible and realistic, managing competing professional and personal responsibilities; and establishing a support system in order to achieve success (e.g., Pomrenke, Peters, & Barg, 2008).

Although I do not remember consciously seeking out mentors during my graduate studies, I was fortunate to develop terrific relationships with several very successful women in academia. Each mentor has unique professional, research, and personal backgrounds and they shared their knowledge and experiences with me. These women introduced me to other researchers, supported travel to conferences, invited me to learn from and collaborate with them, encouraged me to take the lead on co-authored publications to hone my writing and problem-solving skills, and highlighted interesting professional opportunities for me to pursue. Each woman taught me the "ins-and-outs" of academia and demonstrated that they had confidence in my abilities. Each woman is smart, funny, kind, caring, compassionate, and hard working. Importantly, they showed me that professional and personal successes were possible.

It was not about having it all at once; rather, it was about having different priorities at different times and building personal and professional relationships and networks to facilitate support (LaPan et al., 2013; Newman & McGinn, 2012). Interestingly, even though I have known men whom I respected a great deal, I did not view them as trusted advisors to guide me through problems.

I admit, however, that while I respect and deeply appreciate my mentors, I sometimes (internally) question their ability to provide me with honest feedback about my abilities. Perhaps this is related to my deeply rooted feelings of distrust of women (my mother in particular) and guilt over rejecting my Mennonite past. Distrust, guilt, and doubt slither their way into my consciousness whenever the smallest shred of evidence suggests limitations in my skills and abilities. For example, my extensive participation in extra-curricular research activities did not result in the type of success that I had originally expected. Numerous failed applications for academic positions locally, nationally, and internationally, which I thought I was prepared to face (see also Ortega et al., 2013), have (at times) taken their toll on my confidence.

As with the other barriers that I have faced in my life, rather than stew in disappointment (for too long), I decided to take an alternative step forward. In doing so, I continue to find success—which I now define as personal fulfillment along with professional advancement and financial rewards. This definition of success, however, is contrary to the traditional "service-oriented" measure of success common in the Mennonite cultures, particularly for women pursuing jobs outside of the home (Weaver, 1994). My willingness to look beyond the traditional tenure-track academic position has allowed me to find other unlocked doors in academia. Opening and walking through them has led me to a position as a faculty specialist at a teaching and learning centre that provides professional development opportunities to faculty members who wish to advance their teaching skills. I have also had the opportunity to engage in research in the field of higher education. The activities related to my current position are proving to be interesting, rewarding, challenging, and enjoyable. I am also in a place now where I feel that the professional and personal aspects of my life are in balance. What the tipping point is, however, is becoming less about what others expect of me and more about what makes me feel happy and fulfilled at any given time. Consciously changing my frame of reference for expectations, however, is not easy and I must remind myself often that fumbling is normal.

Conclusions

As I grow older, I continue to reframe my negative experiences as positive life lessons (Jung, 2018). I try to think of my childhood responsibilities as supporting the development of resilience, determination, independence, self-reliance, and a strong work ethic (Ochs & Izquierdo, 2009). These qualities developed because of (or despite) the barriers, messages, and value systems that were imposed on me, but then have helped me to find ways to balance my interests and desires with expectations. My experiences have propelled me to further my education despite the lack of encouragement

from family (Weaver, 1993) and other obstacles that a rural upbringing can often present (Bourgeois & Kirby, 2012; Frenette, 2004, 2006). The wonderful moments that I have with my partner in our marriage and family, and how I interact with my loved ones as I navigate my own expectations and roles are important reminders of just how far I have come.

I am keenly aware that in telling certain aspects of my story, I have implicated others (Ellis et al., 2011), which may be hurtful. My intent, however, is to understand (though autoethnography) the patterns in my ways of thinking, choices, and behaviors in the past and how this might guide me in my future navigation of barriers and helping me to set my own explications, build on the good values, but give me the "freedom" to apply these in non-traditional ways. Autoethnography can also be helpful for increasing empathy for others (Averett & Soper, 2011), and in my particular narrative, developing a deeper understanding of the perspectives, feelings, and actions of the women in my past, present, and future.

My experiences are not unlike the personal narratives of other women in that the pathway toward a fulfilling family life and career is often meandering and stressful, and fraught with doubt, disappointment, and failure (Hirakata & Daniluk, 2009). Despite challenges, the support from family, friends, and mentors, and the unexpected, interesting opportunities encountered along the way have helped me to feel hopeful about balancing expectations and what it means to be successful and happy in academia.

Acknowledgements Thank you to Piper, Kiera, and Keith for your joy, humour, and understanding. Thanks to my siblings, Matt, Steve, and Jennifer, for your love and support. Special thanks to my dear friends, Wanda Snow and Janine Newton Montgomery, for providing feedback on early and final versions of this chapter, respectively. A heartfelt thanks to my mentors and friends, Drs. Lorna Jakobson, Janine Newton Montgomery, and Shahin Shooshtari for *showing me the ropes*. All of you mean so very much to me and without your support and encouragement, I just couldn't have done any of it.

This chapter is dedicated to my Dad. I miss you every day!

References

Armenti, C. (2004). Women faculty seeking tenure and parenthood: Lessons from previous generations. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 34*(1), 65–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764042000183133.

Averett, P., & Soper, D. (2011). Sometimes I am afraid: An autoethnography of resistance and compliance. *The Qualitative Report*, *16*(2), 358. Retrieved from https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol16/iss2/3

Barthelemy, R., McCormick, M., & Henderson, C. (2015). Barriers Beyond Equity: An Exploratory Study of Women Graduate Students' Career Pathways in Astronomy. *International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology, 7*(1), 57–73.

Blossfeld, H.-P., & Huinink, J. (1991). Human capital investments or norms of role transition? How women's schooling and career affect the process of family formation. *American Journal of Sociology, 97*(1), 143–168.

Bourgeois, M., & Kirby, D. (2012). Post-secondary education and rural women enrolled in liberal arts undergraduate degrees. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 42*(3), 143–169.

Dashper, K. (2015). Revise, resubmit and reveal? An autoethnographer's story of facing the challenges of revealing the self through publication. *Current Sociology, 63*(4), 511–527. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392115583879.

Davis, S. N., & Pearce, L. D. (2007). Adolescents' work-family gender ideologies and educational expectations. *Sociological Perspectives, 50*(2), 249–271. https://doi.org/10.1525/sop.2007.50.2.249.

du Preez, J. (2008). Locating the researcher in the research: Personal narrative and reflective practice. *Reflective Practice, 9*(4), 509–519. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623940802431499.

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoethnography: An overview. *Historical Social Research*, *36*(4), 273–290. https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.36.2011.4.273-290.

Ellis, C., Bochner, A. P., Denzin, N. K., JR., H. L. B. G., Pelias, R., & Richardson, L. (2007). Coda: Talking and thinking about qualitative research. In M. D. G. N. K. Denzin (Ed.), *Ethical futures in qualitative research: Decolonizing the politics of knowledge* (pp. 229–267). Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Finnie, R., Laporte, C., & Lascelles, E. (2004). *Family background and access to post-secondary education: What happened over the 1990s?*. Retrieved March 14, 2020 from https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/catalogue/11F0019M2004226.

Fisher, S. J. (2017). *Seeds from the steppe: Mennonites, horticulture, and the constructions of landscapes on Manitoba's West Reserve, 1870–1950*. *Dissertation*. Winnipeg, MB.

Francis, E. K. (2019). Mennonite institutions in early Manitoba: A study of their origins. *Agricultural History*, *22*(3), 144–155. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3739274

Frenette, M. (2004). Access to college and university: Does distance to school matter? *Canadian Public Policy, 30*(4), 427–443.

Frenette, M. (2006). Too far to go on? Distance to school and university participation. *Education Economics, 14*(1), 31–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/09645290500481865.

Grant, H., & Rosenstock, M. (2011). Do Mennonites earn less than other Canadians? The role of religion in the determination of income. *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, *24*, 73–92. Retrieved from http://jms.uwinnipeg.ca/index.php/jms/article/view/1173/1166.

Hall, N. (2015). A casualty of colonialism: Red River Métis farming, 1810–1870. Retrieved February 2, 2019, from https://casualtyofcolonialism.wordpress.com.

Hirakata, P. E., & Daniluk, J. C. (2009). Swimming upstream: The experience of academic mothers of young children. *Canadian Journal of Counselling/Revue canadienne de counseling* (Vol. 43). Retrieved from https://www.mentalhealthacademy.net/journal_archive/ucp0911.pdf.

James, J. H. (2010). Gender and education teachers as mothers in the elementary classroom: Negotiating the needs of self and other. *Gender and Education, 22*(5), 521–534. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540250903519436.

Jensen, L. A. (2003). Coming of age in a multicultural world: Globalization and adolescent cultural identity formation. *Applied Developmental Science, 7*(3), 189–196. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532480XADS0703_10.

Juhnke, J. (1986). The role of women in the Mennonite transition from traditionalism to denominationalism. *Mennonite Life*, (September), 17–20.

Jung, J. H. (2018). Childhood adversity, religion, and change in adult mental health. *Research on Aging, 40*(2), 155–179. https://doi.org/10.1177/0164027516686662.

Kauffman, H. (1961). A comparative study of traditional and emergent family types among midwest Mennonites. *Mennonite Quarterly Review, 35*(2), 171.

Kaye, F. W. (2011). *Goodlands: A meditation and history on the Great Plains*. Edmonton: AU Press, Athabasca University. Retrieved from http://www.aupress.ca/index.php/books/120192.

Kemp, L. J., Angell, L., & McLoughlin, L. (2015). The symbolic meaning of artifacts for the workplace identity of women in academia. *Gender in Management, 30*(5), 379–396. https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-07-2013-0080.

Knighton, T., & Mirza, S. (2002). Postsecondary participation: The effects of parents' education and household income. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 81-003-XIE. *Education Quarterly Review*, *8*(3), 25–32.

Korneluk, Y. G., & Lee, C. M. (1998). Children's adjustment of parental physical illness. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 1*(3), 179–193.

Krahn, E. (2013). Transcending the "black raven": An autoethnographic and intergenerational exploration of Stalinist oppression. *Qualitative Sociology Review, 9*(3), 46–73.

Kulig, J. C., Babcock, R., Wall, M., & Hill, S. (2009). Being a woman: Perspectives of low-German-speaking Mennonite women. *Health Care Women International, 30*(2), 324–338. https://doi.org/10.1080/07399330802694989.

LaPan, C., Hodge, C., Peroff, D., & Henderson, K. A. (2013). Female faculty in higher education the politics of hope. *Schole: A Journal of Leisure Studies and Recreation Education*, *2*(2), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/1937156X.2013.11949702.

Le Gouëz, M., Alvarez, L., Rousseau, V., Hubert, P., Abadie, V., Lapillonne, A., & Kermorvant-Duchemin, E. (2016). Posttraumatic stress reactions in parents of children esophageal atresia. *PLOS ONE*, *11*(3), e0150760. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0150760.

Lupart, J. L., Cannon, E., & Telfer, J. A. (2004). Gender differences in adolescent academic achievement, interests, values and life-role expectations. *High Ability Studies, 15*(1), 25–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359813042000225320.

Méndez, M. (2013). Autoethnography as a research method: Advantages, limitations and criticisms. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *15*(2), 279–287. Retrieved from http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0123-46412013000200010.

Newman, M. G., & McGinn, L. K. (2012). Inspiration from role models and advice for moving forward. *Behavior Therapy, 43*(4), 721–723. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.beth.2012.03.001.

Ochs, E., & Izquierdo, C. (2009). Responsibility in childhood: Three developmental trajectories. *Ethos, 37*(4), 391–413. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1352.2009.01066.x.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2018). OECD Handbook for internationally comparative education statistics 2018. *OECD*. https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264304444-en.

Ortega, R., Marina, B. L. H., Darwich, L. B., Rho, E., Rodriquez-soto, I., & Berry-James, R. (2013). The voices and choices of women in the academy. *Journal of the International Association for the Study of the Global Achievement Gap, 9,* 5–28.

Penner, C. J. (1996). *Mennonite silences and feminist voice: Peace theology and violence against women*. Doctoral Thesis. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto.

Penner, P. V., & Friesen, T. (1990). *Altona: A pictorial history*. Altona, MB: Friesen Printers, DW Friesen.

Perrone, K. M., Wright, S. L., & Jackson, Z. V. (2009). Traditional and nontraditional gender roles and work-family interface for men and women. *Journal of Career Development, 36*(1), 8–24. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845308327736.

Pomrenke, M., Peters, C., & Barg, R. (2008). Women academics: Five strategies for success | University Affairs. Retrieved January 7, 2019, from https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/career-advice-article/women-academics-five-strategies-for-success/

Schmidt, K. D. (2001). "Sacred farming" or "working out": The negotiated lives of conservative Mennonite farm women. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, *22*(1), 79–102.

Sieh, D. S., Meijer, A. M., Oort, F. J., Visser-Meily, J. M. A., & Van Der Leij, D. A. V. (2010). Problem behavior in children of chronically ill parents: A meta-analysis. *Clinical Child and Family Psycology Review, 13,* 384–397. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-010-0074-z.

Swierenga, R. P. (1997). The little white church: Religion in rural America. *Agricultural History*, *71*(4), 415–441. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3744470

Swinth, K. (2018). *Feminism's forgotten fight: The unfinished struggle for work and family*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Tate, K. A., Fouad, N. A., Marks, L. R., Young, G., Guzman, E., & Williams, E. G. (2015). Underrepresented first-generation, low-income college students' pursuit of a graduate education: Investigating the influence of self-efficacy, coping efficacy, and family influence. *Journal of Career Assessment, 23*(3), 427–441. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072714547498.

Thiessen, J. (1998). Mennonite business and labour relations: Friesens Corporation of Altona, Manitoba, 1933-1973. *Journal of Mennonite Studies, 16,* 181–202.

Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba. (2019). Treaties in Manitoba. Retrieved January 21, 2019, from http://www.trcm.ca/

Vickers, M. H. (2002). Researchers as storytellers: Writing on the edge—and without a safety net. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*(5), 608–621. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780002237007.

Wall, S. (2006). *An autoethnography on learning about autoethnography*. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* (Vol. 5). Retrieved from http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/5_2/pdf/wall.pdf

Wall, S. (2008). *Easier said than done: Writing an autoethnography*. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* (Vol. 7). Retrieved from https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/160940690800700103

Weaver, L. H. (1993). A Mennonite, "hard worker" moves from the working class and the religious/ethnic community to the academy: A conflict between definitions of "work". In M. M. Tokarczyk & E. A. Fay (Eds.), *Working-class women in the academy: Laborers in the knowledge factory* (p. 344). Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Weaver, L. H. (1994). "Hard workers": Mennonite women in academic and other professional fields. In C. Redekop, S. J. Steiner, & V. A. Krahn (Eds.), *Anabaptist/Mennonite Faith and Economics*. Lanham, MD: Institute of Anabaptist and Mennonite Studies and University Press of America. Retrieved from https://books.google.ca/books?id=-mArVVlO02MC&pg=PA223&lpg=PA223&dq=Laura+H+Weaver&source=bl&ots=aUiehK7uGh&sig=ACfU3U3ky8Qr92wkhFkPsLMhhhY7GeOSxA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjI-JS71qDkAhVBPq0KHS5IBfcQ6AEwB3oECAkQAg#v=onepage&q=LauraHWeaver&f=false

Postscript: Conclusions Drawn from the Exercise of Writing a Book

The chapters contained in this volume, while recorded on paper and screens over the period of about a year, have been written over the course of childhoods, of adulthoods and of careers. From stories of raising children and the impact that a life negotiated in the academy can have on familial expectations (see in this volume, for example, McDermott) to the academic structures that tend to negotiate our experiences in the academy for us (see in this volume, for example, Eaton or Gereluk), bringing together the narratives contained in this volume illustrates that a life in the academy is fraught with complexity. This complexity is impacted by past experiences (see in this volume, for example, Burns or Bauer et al.) and rewrites and edits the current stories of negotiating the academy. Kovach and Stelmach (in this volume) ask the very question "What are the forces that shape, reshape, and misshape women scholars' identities? Who do women scholars become and (un)become over time in the academy" (p. x)?

But while the product, stories on paper, was incredibly important, we, as authors and editors, came to notice another narrative that also deserved attention. The act of coming together as women to explore our experiences became, in and of itself, a story worth telling. These instances of noticing came primarily in the form of comments made as chapters were submitted and spoke to both the freedom and the nervousness of engaging in this work. These conversations, often had in hallways or in impromptu phone calls, acted as a constant reminder of the importance of the community being developed and caused me to bring out and re-read a volume I find particularly compelling, *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice and Mind* (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1997).

It Was Fun to Write but Harder Than I Expected

As the various chapters were submitted for the peer review process, it became clear that this type of self-reflective writing was a satisfying undertaking for many. Authors would comment in off-hand ways about the chance to give voice to experiences they had not really considered deeply, because they were simply everyday happenings

S. E. Eaton and A. Burns (eds.), *Women Negotiating Life in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3114-9

and a part of life. But given the opportunity to closely consider these events and experiences, many authors felt as though a chance to be heard was at hand. This sense of voice is not uncommon in feminist literature. In what has arguably become a seminal text in feminist literature, Belenky et al. (1997) describe voice as "more than an academic shorthand for a person's point of view" (p. 18). They continue, in their discussion of the interviews they held with women, to note that "women repeatedly used the metaphor of voice to depict their intellectual and ethical development; and that the development of a sense of voice, mind, and self were intricately intertwined" (p. 18). Indeed, comments made by some of the authors in this volume suggested a similar idea. To take the time to unpack our experiences and give voice to them was a pleasure but it was also difficult in many respects. Indeed, the practice of self-reflection and of reflection on the experiences that have led us where we are can be daunting. One author expressed concern at sounding irreverent while I, personally, was concerned that somehow I had painted the K-12 educational environment, which I deeply respect, as inhospitable to feminist ideals. It was harder than expected to tell these stories which have shaped us for fear, I think, of appearing less than grateful for all we have.

Won't It Be All the Same?

Another common theme throughout the writing of this volume was a concern that, while we had our own stories to tell, a common theme of balancing the traditional female roles that still tend to dominate women's lives with our academic endeavours would emerge. Stories of traditional roles in conflict with or impacted by career aspirations were certainly present but what emerged even more clearly was a varied tapestry of the various influences that have both guided and challenged our individual paths. These individual experiences were then connected to one another through small similarities, like a web of experience that surrounded us as we moved on our own paths. This metaphor of the web is not new. In discussing the work of Carol Gilligan and her colleagues, Belenky et al. (1997) also describe the metaphor of the web as an apt metaphor for the ways in which we are all connected. They describe webs as standing for:

> a complexity of relationships and the delicate interrelatedness of all so that tension movement in one part of the system will grow to be felt in all parts of the whole. In the complexity of a web, no one position dominates over the rest. (p. 178)

This quotation, in many ways, in indicative of the journey we have been on in the curating of these stories into a volume. Our own stories were subject to many of the same subtle tensions and movements yet were individual to each of us. And the act of writing together, of bringing our stories into this volume, has created a web that now connects us all.

Now here we are at the end of this volume and I can hear the voices of many wonderful academics in my ear, from my doctoral supervisor (who also supervised

my co-editor, Sarah) who truly laid the groundwork for this incredible academic life that I have, to the sage instructor who taught me in the first women's studies course I ever took. They are all asking me the same question, so what? Now that these stories have been brought together, now that we have formed this new web of connection, what is to be done with it? Well, we leave that up to those who read it. It is not for us to say what will be done with it once it reaches the hands of those who might take it up because that, too, will be for individual reasons I suspect. What we hope is that, in times when a web of support is unavailable, these stories might act in that capacity. These stories might show other female academics that, while their experiences are unique, they are not without company. In describing the many women they talked with over their five years of study, Belenky et al. (1997) described that "By telling us about their voice and silences, by revealing to us how much they could hear and learn from the ordinary and everyday ('hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heart beat'), women told us about their views of the world and their place in it" (p. 19). Perhaps this volume has spoken of our views and of our place in the world, and hopefully provides others the chance to do the same.

Reference

Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1997). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. New York, NY: Basic Books.