WORKING FOR A GREATER PURPOSE: SUCCESSFUL BLACK WOMEN FACULTY

EMPLOYED AT A HISTORICALLY WHITE RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

by

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(Under the Direction of JUANITA JOHNSON-BAILEY)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1.) What is the career development path for successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

2.) How have race and gender affected the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

3.) How do successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university learn to negotiate research, teaching, and service?

Open-ended interviews were conducted with eleven, tenured Black women faculty representing multiple disciplines, including education, social sciences, science, business and the humanities.

The data revealed four major emergent themes. The first theme was that family, community, and early schooling experiences were significant influences on the women's success both as students and academics. This study also found that a majority of the women's career paths were characterized by diverse career patterns. Seven out of the eleven women took an indirect route to the academy in that they worked various jobs and took breaks between work and school. A third finding was the women experienced challenges such as tokenism, isolation, and

work responsibility overload. Finally, this study found that the women used culturally-bound strategies to survive and thrive in an often hostile academic environment and defined themselves as more than an academic.

There were three major conclusions from this study: 1.) The career development of successful Black women faculty at a historically White research university was found to be multidimensional, non-linear, and shaped by cultural experiences; 2.) The career development of successful Black women faculty at a historically White research university was affected by society's gendered and racialized expectations and beliefs regarding Black women; and 3.) The Black women faculty at a historically White research university learned to negotiate teaching, research and service by transferring culturally specific lessons from their early schooling and work experiences to their new academic environment.

INDEX WORDS: Adult Education; Black Feminism; Career Development; Black Women's
                 Career Development; Black Women Faculty; Faculty Development

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to two of the most important people in my world:

For my sister, Tiffany K. Lawrence and brother, Kirk D. Lawrence

You continue to motivate, inspire, and love me unconditionally.

Thank You for You.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Women professors in the academic workplace have made significant achievements within colleges and universities in the United States and abroad. Their presence in the "ivory tower" has incited a hope and commitment to scholarship and teaching that has had a tremendous impact on the lives of women and minority students (McGowan, 2000; Park 1996), and policies and initiatives developed to foster diversity (Aguirre, 2000), among other achievements. They have greatly contributed to the changing face and voice of a location that has been historically, and contemporarily, White male-dominated. For the past forty years, academia has witnessed a rise in the number of tenured and non-tenured female faculty, in addition to witnessing the demand for increased representation in disciplines that have been exclusionary, such as the hard sciences and business. However, in spite of their rise in numbers over time and the accomplishments that have been made, academic women continue to face obstacles and barriers to professional success on both individual and structural levels (Benjamin, 1997; Gregory, 1995). This being the case, understanding the career development of academic women can provide critical insight into addressing issues of recruitment, retention, challenges to success, and strategies for successful academic careers. As women begin and traverse through their academic careers, it is incumbent upon researchers and practitioners to explore and understand the unique patterns of their successful career development.

Women and the Academic Workplace

There has been a large body of research that has documented the various obstacles and challenges to the professional careers of women employed in White colleges and universities (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988; Bernard, 1964). A summary of the literature conducted by The Study of New Scholars at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (2004) reports alarming trends regarding women's academic employment:

> Despite the fact that more women than ever have doctoral degrees, they: 1) remain in lower ranks (80% of full professors are men); 2) are less likely to be tenured (60% of full-time male faculty; 42% of full-time female faculty); 3) are more likely to be employed part-time (women represent 36% of the full-time faculty and 45% are employed part-time); 4) are more likely to be employed at institutions of lesser prestige (women comprise 23% of the total full-time faculty at public research universities and 45% of the full-time faculty at public 2 year colleges); and 5) are underrepresented in science and engineering (10% of the full professors are women) (¶ 2)

At most doctoral-granting institutions, women are concentrated along the lower rungs of the academic ladder. They are often underrepresented across the disciplines, and concentrated within feminized care-giving disciplines such as education and social work. Research indicates that women are often overburdened with activities that do not contribute to tenure (Aguirre, 2000; Kolodny, 1998; Park, 1996). For example, women faculty mentor more students than their male colleagues, and become "other mothers" and caregivers (Park, 1996). It has also been suggested that women tend to place more value and work into teaching and preparing for courses, as well as spending more time assisting students in their classes (Park, 1996).

Unfortunately, within doctoral granting research institutions, teaching is not valued and does not contribute greatly to promotion and tenure. These are prime examples of how what is typically constructed as "women's work" becomes devalued. In turn, this places the female professor in direct conflict with the expectations set forth by the academic workplace.

Women professors must confront several other challenges that shape their career trajectory, the choices and decisions made along their academic journey, and the repercussions of these decisions. Another important aspect of a female professor's path to professional success involves the "balance" between responsibilities for work, home, and the community outside of the academy (Bassett, 2005; Collay, 2002). Research has also highlighted the tough decisions that women are often forced to make between work and other responsibilities (Bassett, 2005). Academic responsibilities coupled with the demands of children, spouses, extended family members, and community commitments often overwhelm these women and can impede their professional development (Collay, 2002). Unfortunately, this can present even greater challenges as they attempt to climb the professional ladder.

Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) note that the presence of women directly contests "the old norms denying the power of female minds, and they meet most directly the current forms of ancient resistant to their efforts" (p. 5). This "ancient resistance" that these authors refer to includes resistance not only to their knowledge, teaching, and scholarship, but to their very presence in a space that was not designed for their inclusion. This "resistance" is especially heightened when factors of race and gender are examined with regards to the academic careers of women and minorities.

Race and Gender in the Academy: The Academic Careers of Black Women

A vast majority of studies and literature on minorities faculty focuses on men of color, minorities and women as specific groups without accounting for how race, class, and gender impacts each of these groups differently. Therefore, the findings of these studies on "women" and "minorities," are limited in that they do not address issues of race, gender, and class as intersecting and simultaneous forms of oppression which can critically impact the academic lives and experiences of Black women faculty (Benjamin, 1997). Hence, the career experiences of women of color, particularly Black women, become subsumed under the experiences of Black men or either White women. This is a commonly noted critique of the literature on female and male faculty in White, as well as Black colleges and universities (Turner & Myers, 2000).

Despite the diversity and multicultural initiatives of higher education institutions within the U.S., barriers and obstacles to career success continue to exist in the professional lives of minority faculty, particularly Black women faculty. In her seminal essay on Black female academicians, Carroll (1982) writes the following:

> There is no more isolated subgroup in academe than Black women. They have neither race nor sex in common with White males who dominate the decision making stratum of academe; Black males in academe at least share with the White males their predominance over women. (p. 118)

This quote highlights the distinct experiences of Black women intellectuals as greatly impacted by racial and gender oppression. Over ten years later, McKay (1997) contends that Black female academicians continue to face these issues as a result of the White, male dominated space of the academy:

Black women everywhere suffer race, sex and class discrimination because they

are black and women, and the halls of the academy provide no safe sanctuary. In

white universities and colleges, these women experience the workplace as one of

society's exclusive clubs to which, even though they have as much right as

everyone else to be there, they will never gain full membership. (p. 21)

The quote above not only highlights the discrimination that black women can face in White institutions, but they illustrate the reality that these women were never meant to be included as producers of knowledge. Therefore, the White academy, on both the individual and institution levels continues to perpetuate domination, exclusion, and silence to the detriment of Black female professors' personal and professional success.

Over the past four decades, there has been a growing body of work on the issues, problems, and concerns that African American faculty face in predominately White colleges and universities in the United States (Aguirre, 2000; Benjamin, 1997; Gregory, 1995; James & Farmer, 1993; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004; Menges & Exum, 1983; Moore & Wagstaff, 1974; Moses, 1989; Myers, 2002). The research on Black women faculty employed in White colleges and universities suggests that Black faculty are typically found among non-tenure track lecturers, instructors, and assistant professors, and earn less than White faculty at their institutions (Gregory, 1995; Guillory, 2000; Myers, 2002). It is also suggested that there is a "revolving door" syndrome at predominately White institutions in which minority women are hired at the assistant professor level, denied tenure after three to four years, and replaced by other women at the assistant level (Myers, 2002). Black faculty women are often confronted with the "glass ceiling" barrier to career advancement (Bain & Cummings, 2000; Inman, 1998; Phelps &

Constantine, 2001), which also holds true for women in the corporate or managerial professions (Bierema, 1998).

The literature on minorities in the academy also suggests that the academy is not conducive or welcoming to minority academicians. Upon entering academia as faculty members, Black women are immediately placed under the pressure of having to make a place for themselves and their research within the culture of their respective departments, colleges, and the institution at large (Kolodny, 2000). Similar to other academic women, Black women are even more so expected to mentor and nurture women and minority students. Although the literature in this area notes that the success of minority students is largely dependent on support of Black faculty (Gregory, 1995), it largely becomes the responsibility of Black women to occupy the caregiver role.

Another issue Black women face in their academic career involves situating their research and worldviews within the culture of the academy and their respective departments. Oftentimes the research agendas of Black women faculty not only determine whether they "fit" into the culture of the department, but will ultimately affect their professional development in terms of promotion and tenure. Acculturation to the academic department can become a problem that both untenured and tenured Black women faculty encounter. If Black women faculty have research agendas focusing on issues of race, gender, class, and sexuality, they often face isolation and resistance from their colleagues as they attempt to integrate their research agendas (Gregory, 1995; Turner, 2002).

Researchers have continued to document the experiences of discrimination, isolation, and silence among Black women faculty in predominately White colleges and universities (Gregory, 1995; Moses, 1989; Myers, 2002). In addition to this, Black women stated that they feel like

tokens within their departments, have minimal opportunities to collaborate with senior faculty, and don't find sufficient support for their research (Moses, 1989).

Black women also experience significant challenges in both the undergraduate and graduate higher education classroom (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998; McGowan, 2000; Smith, 1999). It is reported that students often feel threatened by and will challenge an authority figure who is not a White male and that White male students are often the most critical of female professors (Tisdell, 1993). Tisdell (1993) further contends that the power relations within the higher education classroom largely reflect the power dynamics in the larger society in that "Those privileged in society by virtue of their race, class, or gender are the ones who usually have the most power and control within institutions of higher education, and often in classrooms" (p. 210). It becomes evident that despite their credential and accomplishments, Black women professors are doubly disadvantaged within multiple sites in the academy by virtue of their race and gender. These challenges to intellectual and classroom authority reflect a fundamental belief system regarding Black women in general: That the academy, whether in the classroom or in the academic departments, was never meant to include the presence and work of Black women.

The challenges that Black women face in the academy should not go unexamined and ignored. It is critical that research continue to examine the multiple survival strategies that the group implements to promote their academic success.

Statement of the Problem

As evidenced in the overview of the status of Black faculty women in the White academy, these women's experiences are varied, complex and shaped by intersecting forces of race and gender to create a portrait that is quite different from White women, White men, and

Black men. For example, issues ranging from racism and sexism in the recruitment and hiring

process, navigating through a hostile work environment, and negotiating the politics of

promotion are all documented as obstacles that can ultimately affect career choice and career

success (Aguirre, 2000; Menges & Exum, 1983; Michelson & Oliver, 1999; Moore & Wagstaff,

1974).   There are studies that have examined Black women and academic identities (Guillory,

2000), professional socialization (Hendricks & Caplow, 1998), sociocultural learning and the

academic environment (Alfred, 2003), the reasons why Black women remain in academia or

leave (Gregory, 1995) and general obstacles to and strategies to promote career success (Moses,

1989). Although it is important to examine these aspects of Black women's careers, addressing

their career development over time can provide a relevant context in which to study this diverse

group of women.

Women's career development scholars set forth that issues in women's careers must be

examined within various social, economic and political contexts (Bierema, 1998). This is

especially significant for Black women in that race and gender are critical factors that shape and

color all aspects of their career development. Career development scholars of color increasingly

highlight and criticize the dearth of scholarship on the career development experiences of people

of color (Alfred, 2001; Bell & Nkomo, 2001). This is even more so the case for Black women

faculty in the White academy in that the current research primarily examines challenges, barriers,

and strategies for success. Alfred's (2001) research on immigrant Black full professors brought

increased attention to diversity and women's career development in the professoriate, but there is

no study that seeks to more fully explore the career development of tenured, successful Black

women faculty employed across the disciplines in a historically White university. Rarely are we

offered a full portrait of their career development, which include factors such as their

motivations, life outside of academia, early experiences with family, community and schooling, among other factors that, I believe, contribute to their successful career development.

<div align="center">Statement of Purpose and Research Questions</div>

The purpose of this study was to explore the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1.) What is the career development path for successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

2.) How have race and gender affected the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

3.) How do successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university learn to negotiate research, teaching, and service?

<div align="center">Significance of the Study</div>

This study seeks to add to the growing body of literature on women's career development and the career experiences of Black female professors in the White academy. In addition to addressing the challenges and triumphs they face as they travel up the academic ladder, this study presents additional layers that highlight the contexts of their careers and other factors that shape their successful career development. This study can also add to the literature on diversity and women's career development (Alfred, 2001; Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Bierema, 1998; Farmer & Associates, 1997; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998). Seeing that career development involves early gender role socialization, constraints on career choices, work and family issues, among others, this study of successful Black female faculty can shed light on how both race and gender affect these issues.

In addition, the contemporary career development theoretical base is largely based on models and frameworks designed by White males for White males (Holland, 1992; Super, 1957) without accounting for how career development differs for women, especially women of color (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Farmer & Associates, 1997; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998). Studying Black women in the professorate highlights their experiences of even greater challenges to career development, including promotion and tenure obstacles, lack of workplace mentors, salary inequity, among many other issues and concerns. This study can also highlight the institutional and structural forces that shape the choices and decisions Black women make regarding their academic careers.

This study further addresses how successful Black women academics learn to negotiate the responsibilities of an academic career. Although contextual factors are more commonly noted in adult learning theory (Merriam, 2001; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999), this body of literature has typically neglected how various social locations impact learning. This study extends this literature base in that it highlights the multiple ways in which Black female professors construct knowledge and make meaning from their professional experiences. Finally, it is my contention that adult education's commitment to democratization should extend to the marginalized and oppressed in the academy and other adult education arenas. With this in mind, adult education can be a viable disciplinary field through which to examine the career experiences of Black female professors.

This study can also have significant practical implications for universities as they seek to increase faculty diversity and become more inclusive. As predominately White colleges and universities seek to recruit and retain more Black women faculty, gaining understanding of the impact of race and gender on their careers can help facilitate their career success. Black women

not only bring various cultural and social experiences to the White university, but these experiences and positions must be integrated into the fabric of the institution in order to facilitate change and promote successful academic careers. This study can aid those adult educators who work with faculty development programs and other higher education programs that are in place to assist all faculty with professional development. Furthermore it highlights the responsibilities of administrators and policy makers who make decisions that can impact the career success of Black female professors.

Definition of Terms

Black/African American: Descending from, pertaining to, or belong to an ethnic group and/or African heritage and residing as a citizen of the United States.

Academic Career Success: The achievement of tenure and promoted to the associate or full professorial ranks (Alfred, 2001).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to explore the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university. The research questions for this study are as follows:

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After reviewing the literature, I find that there exists a substantial body of empirical, theoretical, and anecdotal work on women, minorities, and Black faculty in higher education institutions. Although more research is being conducted with women and faculty of color, scholars continue to highlight the need to attend to the experiences of different groups of women and minorities. However, there exists a relatively limited amount of research on Black female faculty in higher education. Even more so, the career development experiences of Black female faculty in White colleges and universities is virtually non-existent. Despite the fact that more Black women are writing about their careers in the White academy (Benjamin, 1997; Farmer & James, 1993; Mabokela & Green, 2001), the need for on-going, systematic research on their career development remains.

In this chapter, I present the four relevant literature areas that speak to the career development of Black female professors in the White academy: historical perspectives on Black women in higher education, women's career development, research on Black women in the academy, and strategies for successful career development of Black women in the academy.

Prior to discussing the specific experiences of Black women faculty in predominately White colleges and universities, it is necessary to situate these experiences with a historical context. Therefore, I begin with an historical discussion of Black women in higher education. Specifically, I address the development of Black women's work and commitment to higher education during slavery, the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as the 1960's and 1970's. This discussion includes education for "race uplift," the development of institutions for Black girls and women, the work of Black women in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), and the entrance of women into White institutions during the civil rights and feminist movements.

I then present the literature on career development, including research that speaks to the specific career trajectories of women in the professions. This section also includes a critique of traditional career development literature in terms of their ability to address the careers of women of color, particularly Black women. Furthermore, I discuss the literature that highlights the distinct career development issues that Black women encounter in the academy and other professions.

The major component of this literature review illustrates, in detail, the empirical, theoretical and anecdotal literature on Black women's experiences in academia. More directly, I address the most commonly cited barriers to career advancement and strategies for success that Black women faculty employ within these institutions. The barriers include problems with

negotiating the "chilly" academic climate, underrepresentation, recruitment and hiring, navigating the politics of promotion and tenure, and challenges in the classroom. Finally, I present a discussion on the strategies for academic career success, both on individual and institutional levels.

<div align="center">Herstorical Beginnings: Black Women in Education</div>

Black women in the United States have both an obstacle-filled and triumphant history in terms of participating in higher education as students, faculty, and administrators. However, in order to understand the contemporary experiences of Black women faculty in White higher education institutions, it is important to examine the history of Blacks and their struggle for access and opportunity to obtain an education (Collins, 2001). For many years prior to the war between the states (1861-1865) that led to the eventual freedom of enslaved Blacks, there were laws in place that prohibited Black people from obtaining a formal education. However, enslaved Blacks often learned and taught one another to read in secret and through the multiple tasks they performed. For instance, Johnson (1999) notes that enslaved Black children would join the owner's children in school games whereby they would teach Black children how to read. It was often the case that members of religious organizations, such as the Quakers, free Blacks, and other sympathizers would teach enslaved Blacks how to read, as well.

Following slavery, it was these religious organizations that promoted and supported the education of newly emancipated Black people. Prior to Emancipation, Black women had limited access to all women's colleges and seminaries, until Oberlin College accepted Black women from the time it was founded in 1833 (Perkins, 1993). Women like Mary Jane Patterson, who was the first Black woman to become a college graduate in 1862, and Fanny Jackson Coppin, who was the second, both graduated from Oberlin College. Oberlin College, however, was an

exception in that many private, liberal arts colleges, such as Vassar and Smith, were established for White women and did not admit Black women until the 1900's (Perkins, 1993).

This was a critical moment in the history of Black women in education in that new higher education institutions, such as Spelman College founded in 1881, were established not only a means to educate, but to encourage assimilation, and to instill Christian values and morals (Collins, 2001). Within these institutions, Black women were socialized according to the values of "true womanhood" (Guy-Sheftall, 1995), which emphasizes piety and chastity, as well as being socially and culturally refined.

The late 19th and early 20th century is noted as a time during which a greater emphasis was placed on education in Black communities (Johnson, 2000). As a result of limited choices for employment prior to Emancipation, Black women have largely worked as either service-oriented workers or educators. Despite racism and sexism experienced throughout history, some Black women held positions of great influence and have experienced phenomenal success as educators.

With the responsibilities of community organizing, developing academic initiatives for girls and women, which espoused both DuBois's (1903) classical education and Washington's (1986) vocational education philosophies, and promoting "racial uplift" through education and service, "they created a vision of the future, for they realized that the Black community needed cultural and social organizations to improve living conditions, strengthen families, and provide direction for the future" (Wolfman, 1997, p. 160).

The concept of "race uplift" was promoted and espoused by Black women educators, school founders, community workers, and other activists (Giddings, 1984; Perkins, 1993; White, 1999). However, there is a legacy of Black women who were not only committed to the uplift

and survival of the race, but they possessed a keen understanding of the impact of both race and gender on Black women's lives. For example, Maria Miller Stewart, who in 1832 was the first woman to give a public speech, brought forth the issue of Black women becoming educated and financially independent. Almost twenty years later, Sojourner Truth continued this legacy by asking "Ain't I a Woman?" (Truth, 1995), while refuting the notion of true White womanhood and setting forth that Black women were women, as well.

There are examples of influential Black women who had a tremendous impact on the education of Black children and adults. For example in the late 1800's, educator and school-founder Anna Julia Cooper was extremely influential in promoting the higher education of Black girls and women and believed that the future of the Black race depended on Black women working beside, and not behind, it's Black male leaders. Her rationale was because Black woman were doubly oppressed with racism and sexism, "when Black women spoke, they spoke for all the masses" (White, 1999, p. 43.). In terms of educating women, Cooper believed that women should have the same, or even more opportunities to intellectually develop in their goals of racial uplift (White, 1999).

From the late 19th century to the early 20th century, women like Cooper, Nannie Helen Burroughs, and Mary Church Terrell, believed that Black women, in particular, needed and deserved rights and access to higher education. Their work as a clubwomen, activists, feminists (some would argue) and educators provided a foreground for future Black women in their actions around race uplift, education, and civil rights (Johnson, 2000; White, 1999). It is with this solid foundation of Black women leaders in higher education and other areas of service that has paved the way for Black women to emerge as scholars in both Black and White institutions during the mid-twentieth century.

During the late 1960's and 1970's, the majority of Black women faculty and administrators were employed at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Moore & Wagstaff, 1974). HBCU's are regarded by scholars as the "intellectual backbone" of Blacks in the United States in producing faculty and administrators (Moore & Wagstaff, 1974). Within these institutions, Black women were committed to the education, success and well-being of Black students. Although Black women continued their dedication to uplifting the race through education, there were still many obstacles they encountered within HBCU's, and eventually predominately White colleges and universities. For example, Black women report the pervasiveness of sexism in HBCU's, as well as both racism and sexism in White colleges and universities (Benjamin, 1997).

As Black women entered White colleges and universities, they were confronted with the task of acculturating to the academic environment as well as changing the White, male-dominated curriculum to be more inclusive and diverse (Hull, Bell-Scott, & Smith, 1982). As a result, Black women fought to establish and maintain Black Women's Studies programs and challenged the exclusion and racism of traditional Women's Studies programs (Hull, Bell-Scott, & Smith, 1982). Black women both in the social sciences and humanities were calling for a deeper and more complex understanding of Black women's lives beyond the stereotypical images perpetuated by White scholars (Higginbotham, 1982). Overall, Black women in the academy demanded a radical shift in the nature of the academy and set out to do the work that would bring forth these changes.

<center>Black Women and Career Development</center>

The examination of career development in the lives of working Americans has been an on-going endeavor by scholars since the early to mid 20th century. There have been several

theories and models that continue to shape emerging career development research and practice, including the initial work by Parsons (1909), Super's (1957) life-span, life-space theory, Holland's (1959) person-environment fit theory, among several others. As summarized by Brown, Brooks, and Associates (1996), "Parsons believed that if people actively engage in choosing their vocations rather than allowing chance to operate in the job hunt process, they will be more satisfied with their careers," (p. 2). This line of thought predominately focuses on the individual's agency in determining their career work and paths. This belief, as espoused by Parsons forms the foundation for the career development literature to come.

Donald Super's (1957) work is the most cited and most utilized theory of career development, and continues to inform the practices of researchers and career counselors. Super's life-span, life-space approach places emphasis on the life roles of individuals and the various life stages of individuals to determine career patterns and development. Brown, Brooks, and Associates (1996) note that this theory includes "a developmental perspective that focuses on how people change and make transitions as they prepare for, engage in, and reflect upon their life roles, especially the work role" (p. 126). Career development is viewed as a lifelong process and Super's (1957) stages include growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline. In essence, this theory posits that examining the developmental status of individuals, along with the various roles they take on in their lives "can be used as coordinates with which to recognize an individual's current status and from which to project the individual's career trajectory" (Brown & Brooks, 1996, p. 126).

John Holland's person-environment theory is also a seminal career development theory that is also the basis for continued research and practice. As cited by Brown, Brooks, and Associates (1996, p. 39), Holland's (1992) model is described as follows:

1.) In our culture, most persons can be categorized as one of six types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, or Conventional.

2.) There are six model environments: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, or Conventional.

3.) People search for environments that will let them exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitudes and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles. (p. 4)

Farmer and Associates (1997) note Holland's theory is quite different from Super's in that it focuses more on the suitability of occupational environments to the individual's career interests and personality. Farmer and Associates (1997) further suggest that this theory "focuses on making satisfying career choices, ones that match a person's interests with the activities required in a particular occupation" (p. 4). However, what is lacking from the traditional career development models is the contention that women generally are not socialized to fully explore their career interests on their own terms, as well a lack of focus on the contexts which shape career choices and women's varying career trajectories.

Although there are several other foundational career development theories from which contemporary research and practice are conducted, Super and Holland's theories provide underlying frameworks for contemporary career development research. Both theories of career development have received significant critique from contemporary researchers, due to their lack of emphasis on how gender socialization impacts career development and their unsuitability to the career experiences of women (Alfred, 2001; Bell, 1990; Bierema, 1998; Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2002; Farmer & Associates, 1997; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998).

According to Bierema (1998), women's careers are complex and require a multi-faced understanding beyond individual career choices and decision-making within the career. Furthermore, theories on women's career development must reflect the multiple factors that shape their career paths. For example, in her essay on women's career patterns, Schrieber (1998) notes that women are encouraged and socialized from a very young age to think about becoming teachers, nurses, librarians and other service-oriented positions. Schrieber (1998) further notes that "a useful theory of women's career development must place women's career choices in the context of current social norms and beliefs about women's capabilities and acceptable roles" (p. 6). With this in mind, various contextual factors, family influences, gender role socialization, and other forces merge together to have a profound impact on women's career development (Bierema, 1998).

Presently, there exists a minute body of empirical literature on the career development experiences of women of color. Career development theories continue to be critiqued for their lack of attention to the specific experiences of women, particularly women of color (Alfred, 2001; Bell, 1990; Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Farmer & Associates, 1997; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998). Even the research on women's career development has been largely critiqued for only reflecting the experiences of White, middle to upper class women (Farmer & Associates, 1997; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998). Moreover, a majority of this research focuses on "minorities" or "women" in the workplace without accounting for how race, class, and gender function to impact career development (Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998).

In their book, *Diversity & Women's Career Development,* Farmer and Associates (1997) present a longitudinal study of women in professional and non-professional fields. Interestingly, this study takes a more nuanced approach to women's career development in that the researchers

examine the early influences on women's career choice. For instance, they find that by high school, girls are dissuaded from the fields of science and mathematics and that family has a significant part in encouraging their motivation towards traditionally female or male dominated careers. Using both quantitative and qualitative data, the researchers provide a complex examination of women's careers as situated within multiple contexts, as well as highlighting how race, gender and socioeconomic status impacts the career options available to women, the barriers to career success, and implications for career development theory and practice.

Another important study in the area of women's career development is a life history study conducted by Bell and Nkomo (2001) on Black and White women's professional experiences. In *Our Separate Ways: Black and White Women and the Struggle for Professional Identity*, the authors chronicle the career experiences of eight Black women and eight White women who are in upper-level professional positions. The interview data presented in the study is taken from their larger study of 825 women in executive and managerial positions. Their findings not only highlight the race and gender discrimination that both groups of women encountered, but they all shared narratives of "breaking into a management career, adjusting to the corporate environment, encountering barriers to advancement, climbing over the barriers, making change in the work environment, and coming to terms with personal life choices" (Bell & Nkomo, 2001, p. 8).

A major strength of this study as it relates to my research on the career narratives of Black women in the White academy, is the use of a race, gender and class theoretical framework. Specifically, they situate their study within Collins' (2000) Black feminist theory, which considers race, gender and class as interlocking forces impacting the women's' careers. For instance, the authors emphasize class, which Black feminist scholars note as being under

examined in the research on Black women (Collins, 2000). The authors posit the following regarding social class:

> A woman's social class determines her access to economic power, land acquisition, political power, education, technology, and entry to important networks…Social class creates multilayered locations, relations, and experiences that differ according to gender, race, and stage in the life cycle. (Bell & Nkomo, 2001, p. 17)

Thus, their theoretical framework takes into account the quantity and quality of resources available across the life span that can enable or inhibit the professional success of their participants. Coupled with race, which, according to the authors, can have more detrimental effects on the professional development of Black women than White women, and gender, class and the multiple contexts in which the women are situated work together to highlight their career experiences. However, the authors concede that race has a more detrimental affect.

Despite the paucity of research on the career development experiences of women of color in the academy, there are theories and models that can be useful lenses through which to view and understand the career development of the aforementioned group (Alfred, 2001; Bell, 1990; Bluestein & Noumair, 1986; Brown, 1995; Brown-Collins & Sussewell, 1986; Cheatham, 1990; Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2002; Hansen, 1997; Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1996; Miller & Vaughn, 1997). Although most of these theories, frameworks, and models do not specifically address the career development of Black women professionals in the academy, they can be utilized to examine the major issues that impact the career development experiences of Black faculty women.

Guy (1999) asserts that "Members of marginalized groups are, by virtue of the discrimination they face, forced to accommodate themselves to the dominant culture or be even further marginalized" (p. 13). The research on the career pattern and experiences of Black women in academia suggests that a major career concern of this group is the task of having to exist and work in two worlds: the predominately White academic institution and the Black world, which consists of home, family, and the larger community (Alfred, 2001; Bell, 1990). DuBois (1903) first coined the management and negotiation of this "double consciousness" as characteristic of simultaneously living as a Black woman or man and as an American. There have been a few studies conducted that addresses the bicultural experiences of Black women professionals (Alfred, 2001; Bell, 1990).

Based on the history of race relations in the United States, Alfred (2001) reminds us that there "still exists today a Black world and a White world that are separate and unequal, based on educational, economical, political, and philosophical structures of power" (p. 113). In an examination of the career development experiences of African American women in the professoriate, Alfred (2001) found that participants identified the Black world as family, friends, church, and other facets of non-academic life. It is within this location that Black women professors find solace and comfort. In the world of academia, which is constituted as the White world, Black women professors must navigate and negotiate the academic terrain, which is often described as hostile and isolating (Alfred, 2001). I find Alfred's use of the bicultural model to be relevant in the study of Black women in the academy in that it foregrounds issues of culture, identity, and understanding the self in relation to the academic and non-academic environment.

In Bell's (1990) study, which developed from the larger study on the life experiences of Black and White professional women (Bell & Nkomo, 2001), she examined the bicultural

existence of career-oriented Black women. She suggests that "A bicultural life experience requires that a Black woman create a dynamic, fluid life structure that shapes the patterns of her social interactions, relationships and mobility, both within and between the two cultural contexts" (Bell, 1990, p. 462). Thus, Black women not only physically move through both worlds, but there is also an ideological shift, as well.

Benjamin (1997) succinctly describes this shift between the ideology of the academy and the contemporary worldview of Black women:

> This space and playing field exclude Black women's values, voices, and visions while embracing the Western patriarchal perspective. Such a worldview values competition, individualism, and control over nature….This Eurocentric and androcentric perspective perpetuates a hierarchy: unearned privileges, based on White skin and maleness, accrue to those within the presumed normative experience. (p. 2)

Black women's value and belief systems, which traditionally value community, interconnectedness, and collectivity conflict with the belief systems of the academy (Collins, 2000). Kolodny (2000) further notes that Black women are often in the position of having to assimilate into the culture of their respective departments and the institution at large. The bicultural theory can greatly contribute to understanding the complex existence of Black women academicians and Black professional women, in general. Bell's (1990) study illustrates the negative effects that moving through two worlds can have on the personal and professional lives of Black women. Bell (1990) suggests that this can present an identity conflict, and because of the many roles played by Black professional women, they can also be placed in a position of having to choose one world or the other.

Although moving in and out of both worlds is oftentimes necessary for Black women faculty at White institutions, it can also have negative effects on career success. As mentioned previously, career development theories have mainly focused on the psychological aspects of career choice, motivation, and success. However, it is scarcely noted how racism and sexism work to impact the development of self in African American women and its affects on career development (Bluestein & Noumair, 1986). Bluestein and Noumair (1986) developed a model that addresses the various aspects of Black women's self-concepts and how their self-concepts influence their career decisions. Their model addresses the various selves that compose the African American woman's existence, which includes the African American self, the self that exists in a White dominated context, and the individual self connected to their unique and individual history.

Similar to this model, Cheatham (1990) developed a conceptual framework for understanding the career development of African Americans. Cheatham (1990) posits that career success is determined by the individual's Afrocentric and Eurocentric acculturation. According to this model, the successful career development of African Americans is facilitated through balance and reciprocity between both the Afrocentric and Eurocentric reference frames. This model contains elements of the bicultural theory in that the multiple self-concepts are not only negotiated within both the academic and personal worlds, but that the self-concepts and the worlds must be negotiated, as well. Both the self-concept model and Cheatham's (1990) model are useful in examining the career development of Black women faculty in that they reflect how the group negotiates the multiple aspects of self within the academic and non-academic contexts.

In addition to contending with the institutional culture and values, Black women faculty also confront the pressures of professional and organizational issues. There are several models

and theories that examine how the individual and environment interact to affect career development (Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2002; Miller & Vaughn, 1997). Cook, Heppner, and O'Brien's (2002) perspective on career development addresses how the individual and her environment work in conjunction with one another to affect career development and success. The authors recognize the significance of the psychological models, but purport that these models do not reflect the range of career development experiences of women, especially women of color. They also note that these models also reflect the Eurocentric, middle-class, male-centered perspective, which emphasizes individuality, achievement based solely on merit, as well as a linear progression of career development. The ecological model emphasizes how "career development emerges from a lifelong dynamic interaction between the individual and his or her environment" (Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2002, p. 437). This model reflects the notion that women's career development does not occur in a vacuum, but is largely dependent on interacting, environmental variables. This can especially be true for Black women in academia in that their environment largely affects their productivity and success.

Miller and Vaughn (1997) propose a model that also reflects how the environment and the individual interact, specifically in the academic context. Miller and Vaughn (1997) proposed a theoretical model based on developmental contextualism that is used to examine the leadership roles of African American administrators in the academic environment. They note that developmental contextualism "focuses on the reciprocal and dynamic interactive influences of biological and psychological process and environmental conditions" (Miller & Vaughn, 1997). This model is based on four structural levels of the environment:

1.) the microsystem--the interaction between individual and the immediate setting or context;

2.) the mesosystem--the relationship among various contexts in which the individual finds herself or himself;

3.) the exosystem--the primary social structure that influences the individual;

4.) the macrosystem--the overarching institutional patterns of the culture. (Miller & Vaughn, 1997, p. 181)

Situating the career experiences of Black women faculty within this model couples the individual with the systematic to provide a more holistic perspective of career development. It is often cited that issues of racism and sexism in the professions, for example, be examined and understood beyond the individual experience of discrimination (Bell & Nkomo, 2001). With this in mind, this model can take into account the systematic and institutional forces that can be more subtle but still has a tremendous impact on Black women's careers. This model emphasizes the importance of addressing Black women's career development experiences as multi-layered with both the individual and environmental factors working simultaneously to shape their careers.

Another career development model that can be useful to examine the career choice motivation of Black women professors is Brown's (1996) values-based approach. Brown's model emphasizes the importance of personal beliefs and values in career decision making. Personal values have been shown to be extremely important in the career decision making process of Black women educators (Burgess, 1994). For instance, in her oral narrative study of Black women professionals, Etter-Lewis (1993) found that mothers and other influential members of the participants' communities helped shape their career decisions. Also, Black women educators report the significance and influence of the all-Black schools and the Black church on their pursuit of education and in their careers (Allen-Brown, 2002). Brown's (1995)

model foregrounds career development as not only occurring across the life-span, but as a holistic process that encompasses various aspects of self and life experiences.

These models illustrate how career development of women, particularly women of color, is affected by the personal, social, and organizational contexts. Black women faculty's experiences in the academy can be situated within the bicultural framework (Alfred, 2001; Bell, 1990; Cheatham, 1990), the ecological, environmental perspective (Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2002; Miller & Vaughn, 1997), as well as perspectives foregrounding diversity, change, and spirituality (Brown, 1995).

<div align="center">Career Experiences of Black Women in the Academy</div>

Until the late 1970's, there existed virtually no literature on the experiences and problems that Black women face as academicians at White colleges and universities (Howard-Vital, 1989). Howard-Vital (1989) suggests the reasons behind the erasure of African American women in higher education is that overall, "This society does not recognize, and denies, the importance of African-American women's lives and contributions through racial, sexual, and class oppression" (p. 180). Hence, the prevailing contention in the academy is that Black women's experiences as academicians either do not count or these experiences are unworthy of examination independent of other women and minority groups. Despite the issue of in/visibility, Black feminist scholars have insisted that they have the right to bring their experiences to the forefront (Collins, 2000; Hull, Bell-Scott, & Smith, 1982). The following quote from *A Black Feminist Statement* by the Combahee River Collective (1982) parallels the reasons behind why Black women faculty continue this work:

> We realize that the only people who care enough about us to work consistently for
> our liberation is us. Our politics evolve from a healthy love for ourselves, our

sisters, and our community which allows us to continue our struggle and work. (p.

16)

Although there is a growing body of literature on women faculty in White and Black institutions,

most of this work does not reflect the intersecting variables of race, gender, and class. For

example, seminal studies on women in academe (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988; Bernard, 1964)

give fleeting attention to how race can impact the career experiences of female faculty. Singh,

Robinson, and Williams-Green (1995) noted the absence of Black women faculty in this

literature base in their study on the differences in perceptions of African American women and

men faculty and administrators. This study examined the differences in professional

characteristics, perceptions of the tenure and promotion process, and perceptions of the

professional and institutional climate among African American women and men. Faculty were

surveyed from both White and HBCU's in Virginia. Their findings indicate that the women in

the sample reported fewer opportunities to engage in collaborative research, a lack of

administrative support and research funding, and fewer opportunities as new and incoming

faculty for academic orientations and mentoring. This study's results can further highlight the

need to study Black women separately in that their experiences in academia differ vastly from

their Black male colleagues. It also highlights the inequity that these women encounter in both

environments. When examining the literature on women and minorities in academe, I found that

much of this work discusses issues including negotiating the "chilly" academic climate,

affirmative action, recruitment and hiring, barriers to promotion and tenure, and race and gender

in the classroom (Alfred, 2001; Bain & Cummings, 2000; Benjamin, 1997; Gregory, 1995;

Guillory, 2001; Hendricks & Caplow, 1998; Mabokela & Green, 2001; Moses, 1989; Myers,

2002; Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995; Thomas & Hollenshed, 2001; Turner & Myers, 2000)**.**

Negotiating the "Chilly" Academic Climate

In Moses' (1989) summary report of Black women faculty's experiences in the academy, she found that problems such as a lack of professional support system, constant knowledge and authority challenges by students and colleagues, and tokenization are common problems experienced by the group. Black women often report "being the only one" in their respective departments and feeling as if they are required to prove their intellectual capabilities (Moses, 1989). In addition, Moses (1989) reports that they often do not have access to formal socialization to the politics of the academy and are unprepared for the "publish or perish" environment.

Racism and sexism also have a profound impact on how minority scholars experience and negotiate the academic climate (Benjamin, 1997; Mabokela & Green, 2001; Turner & Myers, 2000). More specifically, Black women professors must confront the racism and sexism that can stem from how they are perceived by White faculty. According to Collins (2000), Black women in all aspects of American society are often perceived either as Mammy or Sapphire. The Mammy figure, which is rooted in slavery, represented the ultimate self-sacrificing, asexual caregiver who was entirely devoted to the master, mistress and their children (Collins, 2000). Although this mis-representation of Black women is historical, scholars note that Whites continue to expect Black women to be caregivers and nurturers (Collins, 2000; Giddings, 1984; Hull, Bell-Scott, & Smith, 1982). This phenomenon is also present in academia in that students have similar expectations of their Black female professors, while also expecting them to be lenient, and nurturing (McGowan, 2000; Rakow, 2000; Sandler, 1991).

The opposing image to Mammy is Sapphire, which is another commonly cited stereotype of Black women in American society (Collins, 2000). A character from a Black television show, Sapphire was depicted as sassy and aggressive. For example, it is often noted that when Black women consider themselves intelligent and assertive, Whites consider them to be incompetent, overly-aggressive, and angry (Collins, 2000). Many Black women scholars report the frustration that Black women in the academy experience as a result of being perceived as Mammy and Sapphire (Benjamin, 1997; Farmer & James, 1993). Not only does the academic climate and negative perceptions of Black women impact their career experiences, but there are structural and institutional factors surrounding recruitment and hiring, such as affirmative action policies, which can contribute to Black women faculty representation in the academy.

Recruitment and Hiring of Black Female Faculty

In their examination of the academic labor market, Kennelly, Misra, and Karides (1999) suggest that affirmative action policies largely affected the hiring procedures among higher education institutions during the late 1960's and 1970's. Affirmative action policies and procedures can greatly affect women and minority doctoral recipients' opportunity at gaining employment in predominately White colleges and universities (Menges & Exum, 1983). Although it is noted in the literature that Black women are economically disadvantaged because of race and gender, among other factors, it is a commonly held assumption by both White men and women that Black women and other women of color unfairly benefit from affirmative action employment policies (Bramen, 2000). The popular discourse surrounding affirmative action policies is that they have given minorities and women the unfair opportunities for employment as well as providing opportunities for these groups to take over academia. However, the

disproportionate number of Black female faculty employed within these institutions reflects that these policies, indeed, have not allowed Black women to take over the academy.

If anything, affirmative action has largely benefited the educational and academic employment gains made by White women while Black women and other women of color faculty continue to be underrepresented (Bramen, 2000). A critical element of examining affirmative action policies and how they affect the employment of Black women seeking academic employment, is examining affirmative action on a structural and institutional level. The literature on affirmative action largely examines these policies as it relates to individuals in terms of the employment of minority faculty in academia (Bramen, 2000). Bramen (2000) further argues that by situating these policies within the realm of individual perceptions and experiences ignores the systematic implications of racist and sexist policies (i.e. White male accusation of reverse discrimination). Examining both the structural and individual implications associated with affirmative action can further benefit Black women as they seek employment in academia or are recruited by various institutions.

Research proposes that the recruitment process can potentially be the largest force in determining the number of Black women and that racism and sexism can heavily infiltrate the search process (Atwater, 1995; Myers, 2002; Turner & Myers, 2000; Womble, 1995). Atwater (1995) discusses the issue of power, which enables certain groups within a department or university to create and maintain rules that work in their favor. She states, "Powerful faculty members are able to establish and maintain a desired state of affairs" (Atwater, 1995, p. 279). Myers (2002) further suggests, "A reluctance to define critical issues and admit that racism or sexism exists may hinder a search committee's efforts in maintaining objectivity as they determine the best qualified" (p. 8). Atwater (1995) and Womble (1995) both put forward that

search committees should examine racist and sexist attitudes in the hopes of alleviating negative effects in the recruitment process. Individual racism and sexism among those who have the power to hire Black women faculty is a harsh reality for those women seeking academic employment. The recruitment and search process tends to be difficult to assess by researchers due to the fact that it is a subjective process familiar only to those committee members making the recruiting and hiring decisions.

Although it is noted that there are considerable racial and ethnic biases present during the search and recruitment process (Blackwell, 1988; Mickelson & Oliver, 1991), there are colleges and universities that attempt to prioritize hiring of minority faculty. For example, based on the experiences of faculty of color at the University of Massachusetts, which ranked first among all New England colleges and universities in percentage of minority faculty, Blackwell (1988) suggests essential elements necessary to successfully recruiting and retaining this group. These suggestions include: 1.) monitoring various roles executed by Black faculty and staff organizations within the university; and 2.) have top administrators make their affirmative action policies a priority when recruiting faculty (Blackwell, 1988).

Mickelson and Oliver (1991) further propose that institutions widen their search and recruitment efforts beyond top or elite universities.   Blacks are largely excluded from the recruitment process because they are less likely to have graduated from these particular universities (Mickelson & Oliver, 1991). Their findings indicate that Black students who are at the top of their class may not necessarily gravitate towards the elite institutions. Mickelson and Oliver (1991) conclude:

> Because of family obligations, community ties, inadequate social and psychological support systems at leading schools or limited financial support,

well-qualified minority group members may enroll in a wide variety of schools

rather than following the path that leads to elite universities. (pp. 161-162)

As White colleges and universities seek to become more inclusive and representative in their

numbers of minority faculty, it will remain necessary to examine institutional policies, such as

affirmative action, as well as departmental and committee biases when searching for potential

faculty members. It is the combination of structural and institutional procedures and policies

with individual racism and sexism that can ultimately affect the professional experiences of

Black women once they enter the academy as professors.

Underrepresentation and the Academic Glass Ceiling

Women and minority faculty are severely underrepresented in White colleges and

universities in the United States (Turner & Myers, 2000). In *Faculty of Color: Bittersweet*

Success, Turner and Myers (2001) present a study conducted with women and minority faculty

in predominately White research universities in eight states in the Midwest. The purpose of this

study was to explore underrepresentation of faculty of color within these universities.

Specifically, they sought to understand the reasons behind underrepresentation, the elements that

contributed to underrepresentation, and possible solutions to increase faculty of color

representation in White schools (Turner & Myers, 2000).

Turner and Myers (2000) summarize three primary explanations for minority faculty

underrepresentation, which include: 1.) the "chilly" and hostile academic environment; 2.)

institutional failure to retain minority faculty; and 3.) the "pipeline" view, which states that the

number of qualified minority faculty is low and that this low number is a result of minority

faculty leaving the pipeline between high school and the doctoral degree (Turner & Myers, 2000,

p. 78). The authors also find that retention initiatives must be in place in order to promote

minority academic career success. The survey participants cited "networking, workshops, creating social ethnic groups, mentoring, and better support for research and publication" to be the most important strategies that can be implemented (Turner & Myers, 2000, p. 157).

Not only are Black women underrepresented in White colleges and universities, but once hired, career advancement from assistant to full professor becomes very unlikely, as the majority of these women are in un-tenured positions or at the assistant level (Gregory, 1995). For instance, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2002), African American female faculty represent only 2.5% of all faculty in degree-granting colleges and universities. Further, they only comprise .2% of full professors, .4% of associate professors, and .7% assistant professors. As tenure-track faculty, Krefting (2003) finds that newly hired women are not as successful as men, are much less likely to become full professors, and earn less than men who have similar credentials.

Interestingly, Guillory (2000) examined the salary differences between Black female faculty and their White male, White female and Black male counterparts. The results of the surveys revealed that full-time Black women faculty earn less than Black and White males, but earn slightly more than White women. Guillory (2000) attributes this to the supply and demand of Black female professors in the academic labor market and their possible ability to negotiate more competitive salaries due to the lower number of Black female doctoral recipients.

Despite the finding of this particular study, the empirical and anecdotal literature suggests that Black women faculty struggle to survive on the bottom rungs of the academic ladder, in addition to trying to gain upward mobility (Myers, 2002; Turner & Myers, 2000). Although the "revolving door" phenomenon is commonly cited as a possible explanation for the high concentration of Black women in the lower academic ranks (Myers, 2002), other scholars

(Turner & Myers, 2000) suggest that the dearth of Black female professors can be attributed to the fact that these women are simply not being hired for tenure-track positions.

As Black women enter professional positions, whether academic faculty or executives in large corporations, they often encounter the "glass ceiling" barrier (Bain & Cummings, 2000; Inman, 1998). The 'glass ceiling' is described as both a real, but oftentimes invisible barrier to the career advancement of women in the professions, especially women of color (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Phelps & Constantine, 2001). Many women of color scholars note that because of race and gender discrimination, there exists a concrete ceiling (Catalyst, 1999), which is unbreakable and allows no possibility for advancement. In a study on the career advancement barriers to Black women lawyers, Simpson (1996) also presents the image of the plexiglass ceiling. Unlike the concrete ceiling, the plexiglass ceiling is unbreakable, but one can still see through to the top which is an additional barrier to their career advancement.

Bain and Cummings (2000) examined data from the Carnegie Foundation International Survey of the Academic Profession to illustrate the impact of the glass ceiling phenomenon in academia and the specific barriers to career advancement of women in academia. In their examination of the academic glass ceiling for women in academe, the researchers propose that the reason for the small number of women at senior levels is due to organizational barriers, which can include achieving promotion and tenure, the productivity, the nature of the academic field, and work experience. In light of this, there is perhaps no other more commonly cited organizational barrier to the professional development and success as navigating promotion and tenure within predominately White colleges and universities.

The Politics of Promotion and Tenure

Academic freedom and tenure are considered hallmarks of higher education institutions (Bowen & Schuster, 1986; Tiereny, 2002; American Association of University Professors, 1940). The American Association of University Professors (1940, p. 143, as cited by Tiereny, 2002, p. 59) outline the definition and advantages of tenure in the following statement:

> Tenure is a means to certain ends; specifically: (1) freedom of teaching and research and of extramural activities, and (2) a sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to men and women of ability. Freedom and economic security, hence, tenure, are indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society.

Scholars have continued to praise and critique tenure, citing several advantages and disadvantages (Tiereny, 2002). In a summary of tenure issues, Tiereny (2002) cites several problems, such as the required maintenance of unproductive faculty and the idea that "tenure has created a system that stultifies creativity, while junior faculty rush to publish" (p. 61). In addition to this, he views tenure as only benefiting those who are tenured and that is disadvantageous to the untenured while creating a climate in which research is valued significantly more than teaching (Tiereny, 2002). Proposed solutions include the development of more contractual academic employment options and moving tenure from its place at the organizational level to the college or departmental level (Tiereny, 2002).

Despite the problems and proposed solutions, scholars believe that tenure is necessary and concerted efforts need to be made to support more women and minorities who are on the tenure track (Tiereny, 2002), seeing that there are many obstacles and barriers in place that can inhibit steady movement on the academic career ladder. Further, it needs to be understood that

women of color, particularly Black women encounter substantially greater obstacles on the

tenure track.

In a seminal study within this area, *Black Women in the Academy: Secrets to Success and Achievement,* Gregory (1995) sought to understand the reasons why Black women remain or leave the academy. Of the 182 participants, who were members of the Association of Black Women in Higher Education, she also found that they "continue to be concentrated among the lower ranks, primarily nontenured, promoted at a slower rate, and paid less than their male and White female counterparts…" (p.11). Gregory (1995) found that Black women remain in the academy, largely due to their status as tenured professors. Also associated with this finding is that the women who chose to remain in the academy were satisfied with their jobs, despite the obstacles and barriers. This study also revealed that the women who left the academy were the least likely to have tenure track jobs. In addition to this finding, the respondents reported other barriers to tenure were as follows:

1) limited upward mobility opportunities within the current institution;

2) unrealistic expectations of amount of time it takes to do the work;

3) inability to manage role sets; and

4) person/family factors. (Gregory, 1995, p. 90)

The extent and degree of professional socialization into the academic department and the institution at large is also a contributing factor to the career advancement of Black female professors. Hendricks and Caplow (1989) examined how African American faculty become socialized to the culture of academia, specifically in predominately White colleges and universities in the U.S. Interestingly, the authors framed the study around the concept of organizational culture, which involves the beliefs, values, and practices of members of the

academic organization. Situating this study within the literature on organizational culture provides a useful angle through which to view academic socialization. This study illustrates the notion that the aforementioned groups' experiences are not in and of themselves, but are situated within and are a product of the social and organizational context of academia. The study revealed that the 19 participants perceived that due to lack of formal socialization and mentoring, they had to "negotiate the system" on their own and find ways to combat the "chilly climate" of academia.

In addition to lack of department support in terms of developing their research agendas and professional socialization, there is also pressure for Black women faculty to publish their research in scholarly journals. Due to the fact that many Black women faculty research topics around race and gender, these articles are generally published in journals focusing specifically on these issues. In many cases, these journals are not considered prestigious thereby limiting tenure possibilities. Minority faculty, in general, have reported that White faculty members fail to recognize the quality of their research and criticize the fact that some minority faculty do not publish in predominately White "scholarly" journals (Benjamin, 1997; Makobela & Green, 2001; Turner & Myers, 2000). Although more academic journals are now publishing work around issues of race and gender, Black women faculty continue to experience bias surrounding their research agendas and work when navigating the promotion and tenure process.

In achieving tenure in colleges and universities, Black women faculty are first and foremost measured by their scholarly research and publications, followed by teaching and service. Turner and Myers (2000) assert that because minority faculty usually have a heavier teaching load, spend more time with their students, and have significant issues within the classroom, that teaching should maintain a heavier weight in the promotion and tenure review

process. The issues and obstacles that occur surrounding teaching greatly impact the

professional satisfaction of Black women faculty. In turn, this can have a tremendous impact on

the upward mobility of Black women academicians.

Black Women Professors in the Classroom

McGowan (2000) notes that "virtually no literature exists that examines the classroom

teaching experiences of African-American faculty when teaching White students at

predominantly White institutions and how this impacts the teaching and learning process" (p.

19). The extremely limited amount of literature on Black women professors' classroom

experiences reveal that they are fraught with challenges from White, as well as Black students

and experience the classroom quite differently than White faculty (Brown, Johnson-Bailey &

Cervero, 2000; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998; McGowan, 2000).

Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (1998) posit that learners and teachers, or facilitators, bring

with them their "positions in the hierarchies that order the world, including those based on race,

gender, class, sexual orientation, and disability" (p. 389). The purpose of their study was to

"determine the ways in which power relations that exist in the wider social context are played out

in the teaching and learning dynamics of adult education classrooms" (Johnson-Bailey &

Cervero, 1998, p. 389). Their study is a qualitative case study examination of two graduate

classrooms taught by a Black woman and White male professor. They conducted interviews

with students in each other's classes, interviews with one another, in addition to observing the

other's classroom. It was found that in the Black woman's classroom, the following interactions

were commonplace: "challenge to knowledge dissemination, teacher/student confrontations,

classroom crosstalk, and reinterpretation or disregard of classroom protocol" (Johnson-Bailey &

Cervero, 1998, p. 396). It was succinctly noted that these occurrences did not happen in the

White male professor's classroom. Furthermore, the authors note that the data reveals that positionality of the professors, specifically, affected the classroom dynamics more so than mastery, authority, and voice. This further suggests how race and gender can be prime determinants of the classroom experiences of Black women adult educators.

McGowan's (2000) study explores the classroom teaching challenges faced by Black faculty at a predominately White institution. She situates her discussion within these experiences in the classroom, as well as the literature on multicultural teaching. McGowan (2000) conducted focus group interviews with four African American males and six African American females to address the challenges that they face in the classroom, classroom management, and their perception of race as a variable that can impact student perception. The results indicate "that African American faculty perceived that the majority of White students appreciate having an African American professor" (McGowan, 2000, p. 21). However, her study findings reveal that White students "critique their classroom effectiveness, challenge their authority, have a lower level of respect, and report their concerns and critiques to the professor or to his or her superior" (McGowan, 2000, p. 21). She also sets forth that the onus should not be entirely on the African American faculty member, but that university administrators and faculty colleagues need to be aware of these issues and work together to design and implement policies and strategies to address these problems. Both the Johnson-Bailey and Cervero study and the McGowan study illustrate how White and Black students perceive the intellectual capabilities of women of color professors in terms of being competent teachers.

Brown, Johnson-Bailey, and Cervero (2000) also conducted a qualitative study with seven African American female teachers in technical and community colleges to understand "how the societal position of African American women affects their experiences when teaching

mathematics to adults" (p. 273). This study's methodology consisted of a two to four hour semi-structured interview with each participant, as well as a participant observation of their classrooms. The researchers found that the teacher's positionality as Black and female affected their experiences in the classroom by "producing a teaching philosophy based on a history of marginalization, raising issues of credibility because of their race and gender, and directly affecting classroom interactions and teaching strategies" (Brown, Johnson-Bailey, & Cervero, 2000, p. 277).

The first finding indicates that the teachers utilize their position as previously marginalized learners to identify and connect with marginalized students in their mathematics classroom, with their educational philosophies reflecting this phenomenon. Participants shared stories of feeling disrespected in the classroom because of race, gender, and age, along with experience knowledge and authority challenges from students. Despite these commonly reported issues and obstacles, the researchers also suggest that these types of interactions lead to classroom practice strategies that can make the learning environment more bearable for the teachers. She notes participants felt that "backing off," using humor, and even allowing female students to "police" the classroom when male students are being aggressive and silencing to the teacher and female students were effective strategies to combat resistance and disrespect in the classroom (McGowan, 2000). Similar to the McGowan (2000) and Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (1998) studies, Brown, Johnson-Bailey, and Cervero (2000) also found that the credibility of the teachers was also questioned by students.

Black women faculty are marginalized and challenged through their research and presence within academic departments and disciplines as well as through their teaching and other services to the academic community. With regards to professional development, these two facets

of academic life ultimately determine if, when, and how Black women navigate the academic terrain. Unsurprisingly, most minority faculty find promotion and tenure to be unfairly weighed, inappropriate, and unrealistic considering the extra responsibilities and duties which are required of these faculty members (Kolodny, 2000).

Black women faculty are often called upon to serve multiple roles of teacher, mentor, and committee member, particularly to other students of color. It is noted that the success of women and minority students in predominately White colleges and universities is largely dependent on the advisement, support, and nurturance of Black faculty (Johnson-Bailey, 2004; Moyer, Salovey, & Casey-Cannon, 1999; Schwartz, Bower, Rice, & Washington, 2003). Moreover, Black women faculty feel a keen responsibility towards ensuring the academic success of their students. However, engaging in these activities require significant time and effort and can take away from time needed for research and writing (Phelps, 1995).

As a result of the responsibilities of teaching, advising, mentoring and being the "spokesperson" for Black issues on campus, Black women are constantly in search of time to produce the articles and research that will advance their careers (Moses, 1989). Singh, Robinson, and Williams-Green (1995) find that these women will face more obstacles to obtain tenure because of their involvement and satisfaction with academic life. Although departments encourage activities such as committee services and mentoring students, they are rarely taken into consideration during promotion and tenure reviews, which ultimately determines the professional fate of Black women faculty seeking advancement in their careers. In summarizing how the tenure system presents a barrier to the success of Black women faculty Gregory (1995) states:

The essence of the tenure system today is based on a process developed by and

for an academy which was and presently is composed primarily of nonminority

men who may not share the same interests, needs, views or experiences of Black

women. It seems plausible to consider that Black women, as well as other

minorities and women, may experience some degree of difficulty matriculating

through the tenure process. (p. 43)

Although the tenure system, as it stands, presents many difficulties and disadvantages for Black

women, if the goal is to advance upwards on the academic career ladder, then there must be

strategies in place so enhance career success.

<div align="center">Strategies for Academic Career Success</div>

While it is critical that Black women faculty issues in the academy are given needed

attention, it can also be important to acknowledge how this group navigates the oftentimes rough

and unpredictable terrain of White colleges and universities. A commonly cited collection of

women and academic success is *Career Strategies for Women in Academe: Arming Athena* by

Collins, Chrisler and Quina (1998). In this edited book, the authors present empirical data on

women in the academy, as well as personal narratives. Not only do contributors share

information regarding race, sex, and age discrimination, among others, but they heavily

emphasize taking concerted action to confront these barriers. The authors discuss strategies for

salary negotiation, the importance of creating feminist networks, as well as managing the

academic career and family (Collins, Chrisler, & Quina, 1998).

Seeing that the current study will focus on the career development narratives of Black

female faculty, it is important to examine two influential works that highlight personal

testimonies of how they experience academia (Benjamin, 1997; James & Farmer, 1993). In

these collections, Black female academicians give voice to experiences ranging from discrimination and isolation to tactics for resistance and personal and professional empowerment.

Black Women in the Academy: Promises and Perils is Lois Benjamin's' (1997) collection of research and narratives written by Black women faculty and administrators. The premise behind this collection is that Black women faculty have tremendous visibility, but invisibility in larger society and, in this case, the White academy. As mentioned previously, Benjamin (1997) reminds readers that the controlling images of the Mammy and Sapphire (Collins, 2000) are present in the minds of Whites in the academy as they interact and work with Black women. Furthermore, it is when Black women resist these roles and seek to define their identities on their own terms that they are met with resistance from Whites (Collins, 2000). Black women faculty are highly visible as they are often the only faculty member of color within their departments, but their needs and concerns for academic career mobility are often ignored (Benjamin, 1997). With this being the case, it is vital that these women have a space in which to voice their multiple experiences in the academy.

Another important collection that informs my study of the career experiences of Black women faculty is *Spirit, Space, and Survival: African American Women in (White) Academe,* edited by James and Farmer (1993). Similar to Benjamin's (1997) text, the contributors to this anthology share struggles and stories of survival and recovery in the academy. In the *Spirit* section, authors share stories of how family, spirituality and the Black community supported their educational endeavors and goals. In the final two sections, *Space* and *Survival,* the women provide insight on the obstacles faced and battles fought as well as how to negotiate the academic terrain, respectively. However, an interesting and telling aspect of this collection is that the women share similar experiences across various disciplines. This is noteworthy because

it lends credence to the notion that whether housed in the sciences or the humanities, Black women battle discrimination, challenges to their knowledge base and research, among other obstacles (James & Farmer, 1993).

Research on the coping strategies of Black women faculty centers around the need for strong mentoring relationships, a viable communication and networking system, personal and community support, and strategies for institutional change (Bey, 1995; Bowie, 1995; Collins, Chrisler, & Quina, 1998; Cooper & Stevens, 2002; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004; Luna & Cullen, 1995; Phelps, 1995; Thomas & Hollenshed, 2001; Turner & Myers, 2000). In addition to this, the literature suggests a reconceptualization of the academy and Black women's existences inside and outside of its hallowed halls (Alfred, 2001; Benjamin, 1997; Davis, 1999).

Mentoring

Despite the massive amount of evidence supporting the idea that mentoring is a necessity for career success, Chandler (1996) notes that the majority of research on this topic "has identified male career patterns and subsequently used those as a standard against which to measure women's experience" (p. 79). The body of traditional literature on mentoring neglects to account for how career interruptions, various roles taken by women academicians, as well as how issues for those women in traditionally male-dominated roles can impact career success (Chandler, 1996). Moreover, the research on women and mentoring in the academy suggests that there is an added psychosocial component of mentoring relationships, which emphasizes friendship, care, and serving as a role model, on the faculty member's part (Chandler, 1996). Although mentoring is viewed as contributing to academic success, Black women faculty face added obstacles and barriers involving mentoring.

The literature on mentoring is replete with examples of how junior faculty can benefit from these professional relationships with senior faculty members. Luna and Cullen (1995) view mentoring as having been known to "invigorate senior faculty, to help junior professors learn the ropes, and to assist female and minority faculty in understanding the organizational culture" (p.1). Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004) find that developing mentoring relationships are critical factors to academic success, particularly for women of color as they explore how race, gender, and class operate within a cross-cultural mentoring relationship and mentoring dynamics between themselves as a Black female professor mentee and a White male professor mentor. As a faculty development initiative, mentoring can aid Black women faculty in being aware of the changing nature and culture of the academy, contribute to successful professional development, in terms of promotion and tenure, as well as provide an overall support systems as they confront barriers and obstacles in academia.

Although mentoring is deemed as contributing to academic success, it is often the lack of appropriate mentors for Black women faculty members that is considered to be a factor that negatively impacts career success (Myers, 2002). Establishing mentoring relationships can especially assist new Black women faculty members in acclimating themselves to academia and the institutional culture. Gregory (2001) finds that having a mentor was reported to enhance Black faculty women's opportunities for promotion and tenure as well as providing needed information for professional success and mobility. Hackney and Bock (2000) present an important function of mentoring relationships as "encouraging room for multiple voices and ways of knowing" and where "each individual is enriched and energized as a result" (¶ 6).

Personal Development and Community Support

Traditionally and contemporarily, Black women in the professions have largely drawn from the strength of various socio-cultural communities to aid in successful career development (Thomas & Hollenshed, 2001). Black women faculty often depend on their religious affiliations, community groups, their families and friends for personal and professional support. Furthermore, Black women faculty draw on the strength and support of the communities beyond academia as a way of mitigating obstacles and barriers within their professional existences.

In addition to this as a major "survival" strategy of Black female academicians, Bey (1995) discusses various power and self-development strategies that Black women faculty can use to improve their professional and personal lives. These include recognizing professional "traps" that can hinder the writing and publishing process, utilizing the services of graduate assistants when working on various projects, and becoming aware of the ins and outs of the tenure and promotion process. Phelps (1995) and Gregory (2001) both delineate personal empowerment and resistance strategies, which include the idea of validating one' self as a source of recognition of various professional accomplishments as well as being aware of personal and professional limits. In addition to this, the maintenance of mental, physical, and emotional health, being visible and active in personal and professional communities and staying abreast of departmental and institutional politics can be important strategies for personal and professional development (Phelps, 1995).

One of the most advantageous strategies used to enhance academic career success for Black women faculty is knowledge of the academic landscape (Alfred, 2003). In a study on Caribbean immigrant female professors, Alfred (2003) found that lessons learned from early schooling and family experiences helped them facilitate academic career success in a

predominately White university. Furthermore, their acculturation to academe was largely

dependent on the degree to which they learned and negotiated academic culture (Alfred, 2003).

Although research on academic career success emphasizes the need for women to fully

understand the nature of the academic institution, it is equally important to understand that

certain conditions must exist in order to acclimate oneself to what can be a hostile environment

(Cooper & Stevens, 2002).

Re-envisioning the Personal and the Professional

In *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black,* bell hooks (1989) makes the

following assertion about the academy:

> The academic setting…is not a known site for truthtelling. It is not a place where
>
> the oppressed gather to talk our way out of bondage, to write our way into
>
> freedom, publishing articles and books that do more than testify, bearing witness
>
> to the primacy of struggle, to our effort to transform. (p. 29)

Seeing that Black women, whether faculty, administrators, or students are disadvantaged in the

academy, scholars assert that these women can use their positions on the margins of the academy

as a site of resistance and empowerment (Alfred, 2001; Davis, 1999; hooks, 1989). The

participants in Alfred's (2001) study understand the position of being on the margins of academe

as a benefit in that they have special insight and are able "to watch, observe, and learn the

behaviors of the dominant group White preserving their own cultural identity and self-definition"

(p. 61).

Interestingly, Davis (1999) also suggests an alternative conceptualization of the academy

to understand how Black women transform their marginalized location into a site of resistance

and empowerment. In her essay, Davis (1999) notes that Black women can use the "kitchen

legacy to transform institutions of higher learning in ways similar to those their foremothers in the Southern plantation kitchens of the nineteenth century used to advance African American women's empowerment…" (p. 364). Although separate from the main house and ruled over by the mistress of the plantation, Davis (1999) argues that the kitchen served as a safe space for enslaved Black women in which these women could gain a degree of autonomy, despite existing in captivity. This comparison further illustrates the legacy of Black women as not only survivors during hardships, but as agents of change and transformation in the worst circumstances.

The academy can be described as a microcosm of larger society, in that women of color faculty are often relegated to its peripheries in many facets of academic life. The predominately White academy is a cultural and political space that largely maintains the status quo with policies and procedures that can be detrimental to the academic success of Black women. These written and unwritten rules are developed by and maintained for the benefit of those in power, including White male faculty and administrators. The academy is also an institutional structure that promotes certain ideological systems which can negatively affect Black women faculty's professional lives and success. As the experiences of Black female academicians are further explored, it will be necessary to deepen the analysis of the academic institution as inscribing and promoting certain ideological systems, which, in turn affect the aforementioned group's careers. Therefore, it can be advantageous for Black academic women's careers if institutional changes were implemented and maintained.

Institutional Strategies

According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities, many colleges and universities currently promote and encourage inclusiveness and multiculturalism in their commitment to diversifying the institutions. In turn, this association has outlined five phases to

develop a multicultural campus environment, which are supporting affirmative action programs, encouraging acculturation as opposed to assimilation, improving the hostile campus climate, and providing the means for both individual and institutional transformation. The strategies can be effectively utilized by institutions as they seek to assist in the career advancement of women and minority faculty.

In examining the literature on the various ways that institutions can support and encourage the successful career of its Black women faculty population, it is incumbent upon senior faculty and top administrators to address the institutional policies that can impact Black women faculty careers (Gregory, 2001; Moses, 1989). Moreover, researchers in this area are finding that the retention of Black women faculty must be brought to the forefront. Moses (1989) recommends strategies to increase retention, which include keeping data concerning tenure rates by race and sex so as to identify disparities and encouraging Black women faculty to locate and work with supportive senior faculty mentors who have working knowledge of written and unwritten policies. Increasing retention rates will also be dependent on the rules of promotion and tenure (Myers, 2002). Moreover, it is imperative that institutional policies shift to increase the chances of Black women faculty attaining tenure. Gregory (2001) also suggests that "Colleges and universities can begin by providing reward structures that encourage Black faculty women's success, offer them adequate support systems to help reduce their isolation, and help ensure that they have the necessary tools required to succeed" (p. 132).

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to highlight the significant literature areas that inform the study of Black female faculty's career experiences in the academy. I began with an examination of Black women in education as situated within a historical context, describing their commitment

to education for race uplift and liberation from slavery to the present. In the next section, I

presented relevant theories and models that can inform the career development processes of

Black women faculty. In particular, the bicultural and the individual/systematic explanations

reflect how these women negotiate the multiple contexts that can shape their career trajectories.

A significant portion of this literature review highlighted the barriers to and strategies for

academic career advancement. Specifically, I discussed negotiating the unwelcoming academic

climate, barriers to promotion and tenure, as well as issues and challenges within the classroom.

Finally, I presented the various individual and institutional strategies that can be implemented to

enhance the career success of Black women faculty. Individual strategies include those that

emphasize personal empowerment, developing mentoring relationships, and institutional

responsibilities for creating a suitable environment for these women. Overall, the goal of this

chapter is to provide a substantial literature base in which the study of Black women faculty can

be situated.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university. Black female faculty remain a group that has been under examined, especially with regards to a more in-depth exploration of their successful career development. The study of Black female professors in the academy also requires an understanding that their experiences are shaped by and through their positions as Black and female. The research questions for the study are as follows:

1.) What is the career development path for successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

2.) How have race and gender affected the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

3.) How do successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university learn to negotiate research, teaching, and service?

This chapter provides a detailed description of the research design, sampling, data collection, analysis, validity and reliability, and, researcher subjectivities.

Research Design

For this study, I used a qualitative research design (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1988; Patton, 2002). Creswell (1998) provides the following definition for qualitative research:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The

researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed

views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (p. 15)

This highlights the assumption that reality is socially constructed and that both the researcher and

the researched make meaning through interacting with their social worlds (Merriam & Simpson,

2000). Furthermore, there are a unique set of defining characteristics of qualitative research

which reflect a research process that is conducive to "understand[ing] a phenomenon,

uncover[ing] the meaning a situation has for those involved, or delineat[ing] process" (Merriam

& Simpson, 2000, p. 99).

In a qualitative research study, the focus is primarily on the research process as a whole,

as opposed to seeking specific outcomes (Merriam & Simpson, 2000; Patton, 2002). Patton

(2002) describes twelve themes of qualitative inquiry being situated under design strategies, data

collection and fieldwork strategies, and analysis strategies. The first tenet of qualitative research

design is that they "are naturalistic to the extent that the research takes place in real-world

settings and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" (Patton,

2002, p. 39). This illuminates a central characteristic of qualitative research in that it is not

conducted as an experimental study in a laboratory, but involves real-life interaction and

relationships between the researcher and her participants. In an attempt to understand how the

participant makes sense out of her social world, the researcher situates herself within the

participant's environment. Therefore, this can foster an environment that becomes interactive

and aids in the creation of an atmosphere that is conducive to sharing and exploring meaning. A

second tenet of qualitative research design is that the design is emergent so that "the researcher

avoids getting locked into rigid designs that eliminate responsiveness and pursues new paths of

discovery as they emerge" (Patton, 2002, p. 40). This contrasts with quantitative research in that

it requires the researcher to find a balance between the desire to remain flexible due to the unpredictability of design and the requirement of having a clear, solid research design plan. Janesick (1994) articulates this sentiment using the metaphor of dance choreography to describe the varying, changing nature of qualitative research design:

> The qualitative researcher is remarkably like a choreographer at various stages in the design process, in terms of situating and recontextualizing the research project with the shared experience of the researcher and the participants in the study. (p. 330)

Using a qualitative research design is particularly useful for my study of Black female professors in the predominately White university. In her essay on an African-American woman's research journey, Vaz (1997) suggests that the study of African American women is especially important seeing that their experiences, values, and voices have been historically, and contemporarily devalued or ignored. A well-designed qualitative research study will allow the Black female researcher and participants to work together to highlight these experiences, as well as constructing meaning from them.

Creswell (1998) suggests that when thinking about qualitative research design in relation to one's topic, the researcher usually asks "how" as opposed to "why," their choice of study is due to the need for topic exploration, and the desire to illuminate the topic in detail. My research questions not only highlight academic career experiences of Black female faculty, but I am interested in exploring their career development paths . In addition to this, the research studies on this topic continuously highlight the need for its exploration, especially when addressing forces that shape how they experience the academy. Finally, a qualitative research design allows

for an in-depth exploration of the women in my study, with an emphasis on a thorough and nuanced view of their career experiences.

Narrative Inquiry

Cole and Knowles (2001) suggest that "The focus of narrative research is on the individual and the fact that life might be understood through a recounting and reconstruction of the life story" (p. 19). Narrative research and all it entails emphasizes meaning-making through the telling and sharing of stories regarding the participant(s) lives. It is repeatedly noted in the literature that there is no one all-encompassing definition of narrative research and accompanying analytic procedures (Cortazzi, 1993; Polkinghorne, 1995; Reissman, 2002; Weiland, 1995). For instance, Polkinghorne (1995) defines narrative itself as "the type of discourse composition that draws together diverse events, happenings, and actions of human lives into thematically unified goal-directed process" (p. 5). The definition that I find most appropriate for my study is articulated by Weiland (1995):

> Narrative is the representation of process, of a self in conversation with itself and with its world over time. Narratives are not records of facts, of how things actually were, but of a meaning-system that makes sense out of the chaotic mass of perceptions and experiences of a life. (p. 33)

Approaching narrative research from this perspective allows for a non-linear and fragmented view of women's stories. Furthermore, it can permit for a deeper understanding of the multiple contexts that shape and constrain women's narratives (Reissman, 2002).

Narrative research can be particularly useful for studying the lives of Black women (Bell-Scott & Johnson-Bailey, 1998; Etter-Lewis; 1991; Johnson-Bailey, 2001; Vaz, 1997). Etter-Lewis (1991) suggests that the analysis of Black women's narratives requires special attention to

both narration processes and the multiple contexts that shape their life stories. Narrative inquiry also allows the researcher to examine the multiple aspects of Black women's life stories (Etter-Lewis, 1991). This includes the dominant discourses that shape the re/telling of the stories, the narrative difficulties that can occur when trying to make sense of one's life (Chase, 1995), as well as the intersection of race, gender, and class issues evident within the stories.(Etter-Lewis, 1991; Vaz, 1997).

Sample Selection

For this research study, a purposeful sampling strategy was utilized as a way of collecting rich and in-depth data from the research participants. Patton (2002) notes that purposeful sampling leads to "information-rich" research cases, in which researchers "can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of research" (p. 46). In turn, the usefulness of this sampling strategy to my study is that depth is highlighted over breadth. As opposed to collecting a limited amount of data from a large sample, purposeful sampling allows for the researcher to work with a smaller number of participants, thereby learning as much as she can about the topic at hand.

The basic criteria for participation in this study was that the participants self-identify as Black or African American female, be employed full-time as a faculty member the selected university, an associate or full professor, be tenured, and have at least five years of teaching and research experience at the university level. I chose to interview women who have been employed for a minimum of five years because of the five to seven year time period allotted for achieving tenure and being promoted to the associate level. For this study, my sample consisted of eleven tenured, associate and full Black women professors in the humanities, education, sciences, and social sciences. Seven of the women are ranked at the associate level and the other

four are full professors. They ranged in age from thirty-nine to fifty-nine. This study sample with these characteristics allowed me to create individual pictures of their experiences. Moreover, I was able look across the sample and paint a portrait of the career path of a Black female professor at a predominately White university.

There are several other reasons, many of which were previously stated, that I chose to study the career development of this particular group of Black women. First, it is documented in the literature that Black female intellectuals are a relatively understudied and undertheorized group (hooks, 1989). In addition to this, when academic women or Blacks are studied, the intersection of race and gender as it pertains to Black women is often ignored (Collins, 1986; Hull, Bell-Scott, & Smith, 1982; Vaz, 1997). Also, the relatively small number of studies centering on Black women in the academy mainly highlight their academic career experiences, whereas I sought to explore issues such as early schooling experiences, career decision-making, just to name a few examples. Finally, I chose to study Black women because the literature on the career paths of Black female professionals reveals that they greatly differ from White women, Black men, and White men in that there are different career path turns, obstacles, and various strategies for career success.

Site Selection

The selection process for the research sample includes determining the selection sites, the number of desired participants, methods of gaining access to participants, and the rationale for these selection process components. The site for this study was a large, historically White, doctoral-granting university in the southeastern United States, hereafter called Southern University. Southern University is also a research intensive, land-grant institution whose purpose is to serve the public in terms of higher education. Southern has an extensive and complex

history in terms of racial desegregation, as well as a more recent concern with affirmative action, recruitment and retention of Black undergraduate students. I chose the predominately, White research university because Black women faculty are under-represented at predominately White, doctoral granting institutions for various reasons, ranging from biases in the recruitment process to consciously choosing a different career path. The study of Black women in a White university can provide insight into both individual and structural issues that impact their career development.

Another significant reason for studying Black women faculty in a White university relates to the intent and mission of these universities to "diversify" faculty and administration with the presence of women and minority scholars (Aguirre, 2000). It is important to understand that these institutions were not developed and maintained with the intention of including Black women among its professorial and high-ranking administrative levels. Therefore, the study of Black women in the White academy is important because these women have defeated many odds, made significant progress within their academic careers and continue to thrive in an environment that is "chilly" and unwelcoming (Benjamin, 1997; Gregory, 1995).

In qualitative research, it is understood that determining sample size is another point of ambiguity in the research process (Patton, 2002). Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 202, as cited by Patton, 2002) note that sample selection should occur "to the point of redundancy…In purposeful sampling the size of the sample is determined by the informational considerations. If the purpose is to maximize information, the sampling is terminated when no new information is forthcoming from new sampled units" (p. 246). I interviewed eleven women for the study. My sample size initially consisted of twelve participants with the plan to conduct additional interviews upon

reaching data saturation point. By the eighth interview, I began to reach the saturation point in that the participants were providing little to no new information regarding the academic career.

Access to research participants is a key component in designing a qualitative research study. Patton (2002) suggests that access involves the researcher negotiating her way into the field and entering the field to collect the data. Gaining access to these study participants was, perhaps, the most eventful, frustrating, and exhilarating aspect of the fieldwork process. Contacting and waiting for responses for eleven, extremely busy Black women was no simple and straightforward process, as gaining permission from each woman proved to be a monumental task.

My first step in gaining access was developing a letter of invitation to participate in the study (APPENDIX A). Next, I decided to email the invitation letter to Black women faculty who met the criteria. In conjunction with this, I also relied upon my advisor's connections with other Black women faculty members across campus. Once the emails were sent and phone calls were made, I waited. Shortly after, I began receiving replies of mostly "No. I'm unable to participate" or "I'm too busy, but the study sounds great!" Overall, I received between eight and ten rejections or no response at all. However, in spite of the rejections, I was able to recruit twelve women to participate. Some of the women immediately responded "Yes!", but there were several who wanted to know more about my study before they agreed to participate. This being the case, I sent four women an abstract of my study, sample interview questions, and a consent form. Across a span of two months, twelve women agreed to participate with one withdrawal.

Theoretical Framework

In *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color,* Chicana feminists Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldua (1981) argue women of color have the power and agency

to create the theories that explain their lives. Hurtado (2003) eloquently summarizes their argument:

> Theory, they claimed, should not come from the written text only, but from the collective experiences of the oppressed – especially that of women of Color. Theory…is for the purpose of ultimately accomplishing social justice that will lead to liberation. Theory should emanate from what we lives, breathe, and experience in our everyday lives. (pp. 215-216)

This "theory in the flesh" (Moraga & Anzaldua, 1981, p. 23) is born of and strengthened through women of color's experiences of and resistance to domination and oppression. Furthermore, these theories are "an attempt to bridge the contradictions in our [their] experiences" (Moraga & Anzaldua, 1981, p. 23). This being the case, it is important to understand that the lives of Black women are often complex, and require a theoretical framework that arises from and speaks to their lived experiences. Therefore, it becomes my responsibility to use a framework that can allow me to address the nuances of Black women faculty's careers and honor their voices using narrative research. For this study, I use a Black feminist thought as a framework in which to situate the study of Black female professors in the academy.

According to Patricia Hill Collins (2000), "Black feminist thought aims to develop a theory that is emancipatory and reflective and which can aid African American women's struggles against oppression" (p. 32). Emerging from feminist standpoint theory (Harding, 2003), black feminist theorists recognize the significance of highlighting the lived experiences of Black women in oppressive contexts (Collins, 1986; Collins, 2000; Guy-Sheftall, 1997; hooks, 1989; Howard-Hamilton, 2003; Hull, Bell-Scott, & Smith, 1983; Reynolds, 2001; Taylor, 1998). Black feminism is, first and foremost, a theory produced by Black women, both intellectuals and

non-intellectuals, representative of a standpoint developed and maintained by Black women that has been virtually ignored (Collins, 2000). In turn this particular standpoint places Black women along the margins within multiple contexts, including the academy. Occupying this marginal position in predominately White universities places Black women in the position of being outsiders-within (Collins, 1986).

Black women in the academy can be viewed as outsiders-within because they "have been invited into places where the dominant group is assembled, but…remain outsiders because they are still invisible and have no voice when dialogue commences" (Howard-Hamilton, 2003, p. 21). Furthermore, since the academy is a location in which women of color's voices and knowledge are often discounted, they utilize this marginal position to generate specialized knowledge which reflects their unique positions, ideas and experiences. I deem black feminism as epistemology, theory, and practice as a central aspect of this research process, and will further discuss how it influences data collection, analysis, and representation.

<div align="center">Data Collection</div>

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary tool, as opposed to designing and implementing an instrument to conduct the research (Patton, 2002). This being the case, qualitative research is highly interactive and the researcher is constantly in the process of questioning and refining the research tool that she is. In most qualitative research, multiple forms of interviewing are primary methods utilized to collect data from participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Seidman, 1998; Spradley, 1979). Rubin and Rubin (1995) describe qualitative interviewing as more than just conversation in that they are primarily guided by the researcher and that it is a means to gain understanding of the participant's stories and experiences. Rubin and Rubin (1995) further note the distinctive characteristics of qualitative interviewing:

First, qualitative interviews are modifications or extensions of ordinary conversations, but with important distinctions. Second, qualitative interviewers are more interested in the understanding, knowledge, and insights of the interviewees than in categorizing people or events in terms of academic theories. Third, the content of the interview, as well as the flow and choice of topics, changes to match what the interviewee knows and feels. (p. 6)

Although qualitative research can have positivistic, constructivist, and interpretavist orientations, it is largely framed within the latter two paradigms, which emphasize participants constructing meaning from their social worlds (Crotty, 1998).

Qualitative research and its methods of interviewing can be conducive to understanding and validating the lives and experiences of women, minorities, and other disenfranchised groups in that there is a departure from positivistic research traditions, which emphasizes objectivity, rationality, and separating the researcher and participant from the social context (Reinharz, 1982). Reinharz (1982) reminds us that feminist researchers use a variety of methodological tools, such as in-depth, semi-structured, and life history interviews as a way of obtaining "access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher" (p. 19). Allowing for loosely structured, conversational style interviewing situations can make the researcher more attentive to the ways in which Black women narrate and articulate their lived experiences in a manner that can be empowering (Etter-Lewis, 1991).

The Interview Process

Several qualitative researchers provide detailed outlines and roadmaps for conducting qualitative interviews (Patton, 2002, Seidman, 1998; Spradley, 1979). Patton (2002) suggests "The interview guide provides topics or subject areas within which the interviewer is free to

explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject" (p. 343). For the purpose of this study, I conducted eleven, open-ended, in-depth interviews with my study participants.

My goal for gathering information was to develop an interview protocol that would incorporate the individual's career development experiences, but also account for how the experiences are situated within various contexts as well as what their stories reveal about larger social processes. After reviewing my first interview guide, I found it to be too rigid and focused solely on the academic career. Seeing that the purpose of this study was to examine the career development paths of the women, I realized that a more appropriate interview guide would be open-ended, contain fewer questions, with a greater focus on life categories. My interview approach (APPENDIX B) was developed based on Spradley's (1979) ethnographic interview model and Cole and Knowles' (2001) life history interview guide.

Spradley's (1979) technique involve developing descriptive questions, which include broad, general "grand tour" "mini tour" "example questions" and "experience questions" (p. 87-88). Coupled with Spradley's (1979) technique, Cole and Knowles (2001) suggest that gathering in-depth data from a person's life requires exploring life categories. I felt this especially appropriate seeing that I wanted to understand various aspects of women's career development. For example, I began each interview with the question "When did you first decide to become a professor?" I would then probe and ask questions (Spradley, 1979) based on a combination of their responses with my categories of interest (Cole & Knowles, 2001). Designing the interview in this manner allows for the telling of specific experiences, but keep the interviewing process open enough to invite participant stories regarding these experiences.

Each interview with the women was different and ranged in length from one hour and fifteen minutes to slightly over three hours. All interviews, except for two, which took place in restaurants, occurred in the participants' campus offices. Upon arrival to conduct the interviews, I asked them to review and sign two copies of the study consent form (APPENDIX C). The consent form explained the purpose of the study, the details of the interview, and the rights of the participant. They kept one copy and I retained the other copy for my records. Participants were also asked to choose a pseudonym for anonymity purposes. I then asked each woman if I could audio-tape the interview and hand-record field notes. According to Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995), writing detailed field notes is not only a supplement to the participants' words and supporting documents, but the researcher can record field notes to generate a detailed description of the interview context. In addition to this, recording field notes allowed me to capture facial expressions and other body language in addition to personal observations and reflections throughout the process. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim with field notes and observer comments integrated into the transcripts. So as to be certain that I was gathering appropriate information, transcribing took place in three stages: I would transcribe after every three or four interviews. Following each interview, I recorded reflections, memos and general thoughts about the interview in a research process notebook, which later aided me in analysis and write up of my findings.

Document Analysis

It was also my intention to collect documents for analysis and interpretation from each participant. Collecting documents can further contribute to the in-depth nature of qualitative research (Patton, 2002). For this study, I reviewed each woman's curriculum vita, visited individual websites, and viewed course syllabi. I also asked each participant to complete a

demographic questionnaire (APPENDIX D). The information was a means of adding another layer to the participant interviews.

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

In qualitative research data analysis can occur from the initial collecting of the data and continues throughout the data collection process (Merriam, 1998). Therefore, qualitative data analysis is an interactive process between the meaning-making processes of both the participant and the researcher. My goal, then was for the data analysis process to be one that was dynamic and fluid while keeping the voices of the participants at the center of the analysis process.

A major challenge for qualitative researchers is sorting through and making sense of the piles of interview and document data that will be collected (Patton, 2002). Patton (2002) notes that the latter stages of the research process "bring closure by moving toward confirmatory data collection – deepening insights into and confirmation (or disconfirmation) patterns that seem to have appeared" (p. 436). Data analysis for my project was conducted using constant-comparative methods proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

Constant Comparative Methods

Pidgeon and Henwood (2004) note the constant comparative method involves constantly comparing certain occurrences, cases, categories, and possible thematic elements within the data. More specifically, the task of constantly comparing interview data is a process that occurs from the point of data collection until the final stages of the research project (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The first step of the constant comparative method consists of developing sensitizing concepts, open, and focused coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Strauss and Corbin (1990) define this open coding process as "The analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in the data" (p. 101).

For this first phase of analysis, I began with the first three interview participant transcripts. I first read each transcript and took mental notes and general thoughts in the margins. After I coded each transcript, I opened three blank documents for each research question. Then, I went through each transcript and copied and pasted all information that would address each specific research question. I labeled key concepts, phrases, and words while keeping record of these codes in a researcher codebook. This was my beginning analytic procedure for each interview thereafter.

Generating categories from the codes is next step of the constant comparative method. Dey (1999) suggests using "categories that are analytic and sensitizing rather than representational" and that these categories should be compared and contrasted across the data (p. 8). Writing theoretical memos was a critical component during the coding and categorizing phase of analysis. Pidgeon and Henwood (2004) note "Unlike categories [which have to 'fit' the data], the contents of memos are not constrained in any way and can include: hunches and insights; comments on new samples to be checked out later; deliberations about refinements of file cards; and explanations of modifications to categories" (p. 638). Memos are a vital part of the analysis process in that they lead the researcher towards theme and theory development, which is the final stage of constant comparison (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Therefore, the next step of my process included integrating the codes, categories, memos, and field notes to construct relevant themes from the data. The inductive nature of the constant-comparative analysis method allowed me to be careful and thoughtful during the analysis process.

Validity and Reliability

Assessing the quality and credibility of qualitative research heavily depends on the perspectives and worldviews of both the audience and the researcher (Patton, 2002). Validity and

reliability are criteria that are traditionally associated with scientific research, but can also be used in qualitative research (Patton, 2002). In both quantitative and qualitative research, validity and reliability are needed to establish trustworthiness and rigor (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Furthermore, validity and reliability are commonly associated with reducing researcher bias in a study (Patton, 2002). Due to the fact that the researcher is the primary research instrument from design to the final write-up, Merriam and Simpson (2000) note that validity and reliability are key components in a qualitative research study. In the following section, I provide a discussion of internal and external validity, and reliability.

Internal Validity

Establishing internal validity involves the researcher taking appropriate measures to ensure that their observation and findings are congruent with the participants' realities (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Approaching this from a social constructionist perspective (Crotty, 1998) requires the understanding that there is no one fixed, concrete reality, but that participants and the researcher operate within multiple realities. This being the case, it becomes the responsibility of the researcher to interpret the participants' experiences and meanings in such a way that reflects participant realities as closely as possible. With this in mind, Merriam and Simpson (2000) offer strategies to assess internal validity, which consist of "triangulation…member checks…peer/colleague examination…and submersion/engagement in the research situation" (p. 102).

Qualitative researchers have also emphasized a need to rearticulate validity in such a way that it mirrors the interpretative goals of qualitative research (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Janesick, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Janesick (1994) reminds us that validity is largely associated with quantitative research. She expresses the sentiment with other qualitative researchers (Cole &

Knowles, 2001) that there is no one way to interpret data. Therefore, it can be useful to understand that "Validity in the qualitative research has to do with description and explanation and whether or not the explanation fits the description" (Janesick, 1994, p. 393).

External Validity

External validity refers to the generalizability of the research findings to the larger population (Merriam, 1998). A major goal of conducting qualitative research does not necessarily include the degree to which the results can be applied to multiple populations, but it is to understand the experiences and situations of a specific population (Merriam & Simpson, 2000; Patton, 2002). Moreover, Merriam and Simpson (2000) remind us that it is the research audience that will determine if the results can apply to different contexts. This being the case, qualitative researchers have long argued that the standard of generalizability should be redefined and understood as "reader or user generalizability" (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 103).

Reliability

In a qualitative research study, reliability is understood to be "the extent to which one's findings will be found again" (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 102). In qualitative research, reliability is understood differently than in quantitative research. As a result of the changing nature of people's experiences and interpretations of these experiences, there is no guarantee that a similar research study will yield the same results (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Therefore, reliability of a qualitative research study can depend on the congruency of the findings and the data collection methods (Merriam & Simpson, 2000; Patton, 2002). Methods such as triangulation, or using multiple sources to establish consistency, can also be used to ensure reliability (Merriam & Simpson, 2000).

Researcher Methods of Establishing Validity and Reliability

For the study of Black women faculty, I used a number of tools to establish validity and reliability, as outlined by Merriam (1998). First, it is important to make explicit my subjectivities, theoretical framework, and various assumptions brought into the research process. I also used triangulation methods (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002) as a way of preventing possible threats to validity and reliability. For this study, triangulation included face-to-face audio-taped interviews, generating field notes, analysis of important documents, such as vitae or course syllabi, and using relevant literature to substantiate findings and claims. As a way to encourage external validity, using rich, thick description (Merriam & Simpson, 2000) provided detailed accounts of the participants' stories. I also maintained a researcher journal as a way to record reflections on the research process. Finally, a close and trusted colleague served as a peer observer and provided critical feedback (Merriam & Simpson, 2000) during the analysis and interpretation phase of the study.

Researcher Subjectivities

Addressing researcher subjectivities is a central aspect of the qualitative research process in that it allows the researcher to highlight how her values and assumptions inform the entire research project. Subjectivity, or "bias" as a commonly used term in quantitative research, is typically described as something to be held at bay, as well as posing a threat to the validity and reliability of the research (Patton, 2002). However, many qualitative researchers (Hertz, 1997; Lather, 1991) posit that researcher subjectivities are to be continuously scrutinized so as to highlight how researcher beliefs inform the study. In this section, I highlight feminist research that informs my understanding of and reflection on researcher subjectivities, including

reflexivity, the dynamics of intercultural research, and a personal statement regarding my stance as a researcher.

Reflexivity

Researcher reflexivity is also a common theme in the qualitative research on women interviewing women and is defined by Hertz (1997) as follows:

> To be reflexive is to have an ongoing conversation about experience while simultaneously living in the moment…Since researchers are acknowledged as active participants in the research process, it is essential to understand the researcher's location of self. (p. viii)

Engaging in research with women involves the constant assessment of the researcher's self, in terms of how she is processing the experience and her position within the process. For example, Reinharz (1997) analyzes her field notes from a study of a kibbutz and identifies twenty "selves" in the process. This not only involved intense reflection on the variety of identities brought into the research process, but it reinforces the significance of reflexivity to the research process. This idea of reflexivity is particularly important when examining the researcher's relationship to the participant, in terms of insider/outsider status.

Inter-Cultural and Cross-Cultural Research

It is noted that there are difficulties and various dynamics involved when researching within one's culture, particularly among women of color researchers and participants (Few, Stephens, & Rouse-Arnett, 2003; Johnson-Bailey, 1999; Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane, & Muhammad, 2001). Researching within one's culture can provide the researcher a familiar but unique lens into the lives of their respective cultural groups. Women of color researchers, particularly Black women, face the aforementioned issues in conducting research

with women, including issues of friendship, establishing trust, and balancing power dynamics. However, structures of race, class, and ethnicity are compounded with gender to create a unique experience between the researcher and participant.

The insider/outsider phenomenon has been explored by researchers in feminist and ethnic studies as a way of examining the researcher's position within the research relationship and how this position can affect the research process (Collins, 1986; Merton, 1982). It was traditionally argued by feminist scholars, as well as ethnic studies scholars, that only those researchers with similar cultural backgrounds as the participants could fully understand their experiences. According to Merton (1982), this is the major characteristic of the insider philosophy. For example, he observes this belief system as it relates to the study of Blacks in society in that it was understood that only Blacks could understand and relate to the experiences of Blacks, or "you have to be one to understand one" (Merton, 1982, p. 15). Furthermore, Merton posits that "Unlike the insider, the Outsider is excluded in principle from gaining access to the social and cultural truth" (p. 15). However, it is suggested in the feminist literature that women researchers can be insiders and outsiders within the research process.

Stemming from this insider/outsider discourse is Pat Hill Collin's (1986) outsider-within phenomenon, as it relates to the unique position of Black women. According to Collins (1986), Black women operate as outsiders-within in many locations, including being researchers and participants within social research.   Situated within this framework, is the literature on researching the "Other" (Johnson-Bailey, 2003; Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1996; Riessman, 1987). Kitzinger and Wilkinson (1996) note that researching the "Other" stems from the construction of the Other as woman in relation to man, but is also be used to describe how researcher discourse and methodologies have marginalized non-dominant groups in the research process. With this in

mind, the concept of "Other" can be examined in terms of how women of color, in particular, are viewed as exotic commodities to be consumed, particular among White researchers (hooks, 1999).

Merriam et al. (2001) note that researchers enter into the research relationships with a set of values, assumptions, and belief systems regarding who they are as a researcher and how they view the research process. They further put forth the assumption that "the more one is like the participants in terms of culture, gender, race, socio-economic class and so on, the more it is assumed that access will be granted, meaning shared and validity of findings assured" (Merriam et al., 2001, p. 406). This parallels the feminist research assumption that a solid and connected research relationship will be established by virtue of shared gender. However, it is noted that immediate connection in the research process is not guaranteed because of shared cultural characteristics (Reisman, 1987).

Johnson-Bailey's (1999) examination of race, class, gender, and color in the research process reflects the connections and tensions between a Black woman researcher and her participants and is an excellent example of how a Black woman researcher operates as an outsider-within her cultural group. In interviews with Black re-entry women, Johnson-Bailey (1999) writes "silent understandings, culture-bound phrases that did not need interpretation, and non-verbalized answers conveyed with culture-specific hand gestures and facial expressions," which illustrates how a shared cultural background can positively enhance the interviewing process (p. 669). However, issues of color and class, which stemmed from two of the participants' experiences with skin color discrimination and perceptions of the researcher's social class, caused a rift in the interviewing process. During her research experience, issues of race and gender remained points of agreement and understanding between researcher and

participant, while issues of class and color proved to be barriers in establishing connectedness between them.

Few, Stephens, and Rouse-Arnett (2003) also discuss the dynamics of researching within one's own cultural group and the issues that they commonly faced in studying African American families. A key concern during their research process was gaining trust among the participants. They also encountered the dilemma of discussing their personal experiences in the research process, which is reflected in their constant attempts to redirect the conversation to the participant, while simultaneously answering participant questions. They argue that "Black female researchers who reveal little information about themselves run the risk of being mistrusted by Black women informants" (Few, Stephens, & Rouse, 2003, p. 207).   This is also identified as a major issue in terms of gaining access to participants and achieving insider status (Vaz,1997). Interestingly, the authors suggest using a Black feminist framework to under gird the design of the research questions. As a framework to guide the interview, as well as the analysis, Black feminist thought can provide Black women researchers and participants a means through which to examine the depth and complexity of their subjective experiences. They further suggest that this framework is useful for encouraging self-reflexivity, monitoring the power dynamics, exhibiting mutual care, concern, and respect in the interviewing process.

As mentioned previously, there are several added dimensions when Black women engage in the process of interviewing Black women. Based on the research examples previously cited, an important aspect to note is that shared cultural background does not preclude the possibility of tensions within the interviewing process. This reflects the unique positions and experiences of Black women in relation to one another. Black women share the similarity of being both Black and women, but the difference occurs in how race, gender, class, color, ethnicity, sexuality and

so forth simultaneously act in their individual lives. Another key dimension of the Black woman

researcher and participant relationship is the constant negotiation of one's status as an insider and

outsider in the culture. Similar to the assumption of connection based on race and gender, the

insider-outsider position of the Black woman researcher can greatly impact the interviewing

process, particularly in terms of gaining access and trust.

Researcher Stance

I approach this research study positioned as a Black female completing her doctoral

studies at a predominately White higher education institution. Moreover, I approach the study of

Black female faculty with the intentions of, eventually, teaching. This study of Black female

professors has been of interest to me since I was an undergraduate enrolled in my first Women's

Studies class. This course was taught by a Black female professor and a Taiwanese graduate

assistant and this was my first experience having two women of color professors. As the course

progressed, I could not help but to notice the challenges they faced in the classroom, particularly

from White students. I had never witnessed such resistance not only to the multicultural-based

curricula, but to the presence of the women of color professors. I then became curious as to how

this Black woman in particular experienced other aspects of the academy. I was a student in this

class exactly ten years ago and my interest in the lives of Black female faculty continues to grow.

As a Black woman with the possible intention of teaching at a college or university, I

realize there are several factors that will impact the design, implementation, and final

interpretations of this research project. I bring a great amount of passion and concern for the

personal and professional lives of the women with whom I conducted research. However, I

understand that the emotions I bring to this project cannot hinder my full understanding of the

participants' experiences. As a Black feminist, I approach this research with the understanding

that this particular worldview will have a significant impact on the entire research process. This is critical in that factors of race, class, and gender often go ignored in the study of women in the academic profession. With this in mind, I use this lens to critically examine the career development experiences of the group. Moreover, I deem this way of viewing Black female professors' lives as a major strength of the study because it calls attention to the challenges, obstacles, and successes faced on their academic career journeys.

Chapter Summary

This chapter is my attempt to outline, in detail, the methodological processes in which I engaged to conduct a qualitative study with Black female professors in the White academy. I provided a description of qualitative research methods, including narrative research, along with a detailed description of theoretical framework, data collection and analytic techniques. I also discussed issues of validity and reliability, which are important in qualitative research, but can also be rearticulated in such a way that aligns itself with the subjective, interactive and fluid nature of this type of research. Finally, I closed the chapter with an exploration of various components of my own subjectivity, including reflexivity, insider/outsider research and a personal researcher statement.

CHAPTER FOUR

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

The purpose of this study was to explore the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1.) What is the career development path for successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

2.) How have race and gender affected the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

3.) How do successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university learn to negotiate research, teaching, and service?

In this chapter, I present the demographic profiles and summarized narratives of the eleven, Black women academics who participated in this study. I also developed a profile chart to coincide with the proceeding information (see Figure 4.1). This complete demographic, description, and narrative information was collected using open-ended conversation-style interviews, hand-written field notes, and a demographic questionnaire. The questionnaire was given to the participants to complete at their leisure. All participants except for one completed the questionnaire while I was setting up for the interview and the other participant completed the document on-line and emailed it. The data was transcribed after every three to four interviews and participants were emailed the transcribed interviews. On the completion of the dissertation, the participants were mailed an executive summary. The interviews ranged in length from one

hour and fifteen minutes to three hours, for an average of two hours. For this chapter, I present a

description of the interview setting, participant and a summarized narrative. The summarized

narrative includes a synopsis of each woman's family, academic and career background, along

with interview excerpts that provide insight into the women's career development experiences.

Demographic Profile Chart

Name	Age	Marital Status	Children	Undergraduate College Type	Discipline	# of Years employed at Southern
#1 Isis	45	M	0	HBCU	Sciences	11
#2 Mattie	39	M	1	PWI	Humanities	11
#3 Brianna	58	M	2	PWI	Humanities	10
#4 Sela	40	M	2	PWI	Social Sciences	13
#5 Nancy	47	M	0	PWI	Sciences	14
#6 Hazel	59	M	0	PWI	Humanities	11
#7 Tatyanna	51	W	1	HBCU	Social Sciences	18
#8 Nia	45	M	3	HBCU	Education	10
#9 Peach	52	S	0	PWI	Education	16
#10 Amina	55	M	2	PWI	Social Sciences	13
#11 Quilter	55	S	2	HBCU	Business	18

Figure 4.1

Isis

Isis, which is the name of the most revered goddess in ancient Egyptian mythology, is a

Black woman in her mid-forties and is a scientist. She has worked at Southern for eleven years

and is a full professor. Isis is married with no children and lives in the town in which she works.

It was suggested to me by my major professor to contact Isis for an interview, seeing that she had

just won a distinguished award. I sent Isis the invitation email during the month of April and received no response until three weeks later. Isis agreed to participate and we scheduled the interview for May 10, 2006. The interview lasted approximately two hours and occurred in her campus office.

After finally making my way through her building, I notice Isis walking down the hall wearing a friendly smile. Isis is a medium brown-skinned sister who was approachable, funny and excited about talking with me. She is above average height, slim and wore a burgundy sports coat and black pants. Her slightly-below shoulder-length braids were pulled back tightly in a ponytail and she wears what I eventually discover are handmade earrings, as one of her hobbies is jewelry-making. She seemed very energetic and was anxious to begin the interview. We immediately a rapport and make our way into her maze of an office.

Her office, which is actually two connected offices, is packed to the brim. Interestingly, there are paintings on her wall done by her husband and there are a variety of trinkets, figurines, and other odds and ends that seem to be characteristic of the typical professor's office. The most intriguing feature of her office is a collection of plastic and glass eyes. When I ask her about the significance of the eyes, she laughed and shared with me that that's her specialty in her area of study and that her students are always giving her eyes. Once we were settled in her office, I arranged the tape recorder and began the interview. Initially, Isis was a bit nervous and expressed that she didn't like to hear her voice on tape. She was very forthcoming throughout the interview and I did not have to ask very many probing questions. This interview flowed very naturally and eventually, Isis became less anxious as the interview progressed.

Summarized Narrative

     Isis is a graduate of a Historically Black College located in the southeastern United States. Isis was born on the east coast to a middle-class family. Her father was an engineer and her mother was a teacher until they both retired. Isis was raised with one brother and sister was very much guided by her father in terms of schooling and eventual career choices. She describes her mother as being "very very artistic" and "the genius of the family." As a youth, Isis was encouraged by her father to go into the sciences and she followed suit. He arranged for her to work summers with relatives and other jobs for practical experience. Following high school, she moved down South and attended undergraduate and professional school at an HBCU. Isis described her HBCU experiences as being very rigorous and tough, in terms of excelling in academics. Following college and professional school, Isis worked several "in the meantime jobs" while trying to figure out what she was going to do with her life. After these jobs, she decided to work on a combined residency-doctoral program. Isis described the practical lab experience as valuable, however, shares a disheartening story about coming face to face with overt racism:

     You know it's so funny that my first taste of racism did not happen until I moved here for graduate school. And it was one of these things 'Like, was that just racist? Oh my god! That was racist!' It was, again because I was so incredibly clueless about racism; I think it actually helped me because I wasn't expecting it….So moving South and being told, I mean calling on the phone and saying 'Do you have any apartments for rent?' and then going there and being told 'Oh no no, they are all rented!' and going, 'Was that racist?' (both laugh) Going to the lab where I was working at the diagnostic lab and telling this one guy what happened

and putting me in his car and telling [the apartment renters] 'You will get her an apartment!' and all of a sudden one opened up! So it was like a very interesting experience down there. And the folks at the lab were incredible, but it was the town that was very racist.

So with this combined residency-doctoral program, Isis eventually began to work at Southern as a full-time faculty member after graduating.

Isis describes her first years at Southern being spent "blending." For Isis, "blending" also meant multiple shifts in personal appearance. An unexpected aspect of this interview is the degree to which Isis spoke about and asked me questions concerning black women's hair. She spoke in length about changing various hairstyles at different points in her schooling and academic career. She even asked me questions regarding my choice to wear a natural hairstyle. Although seemingly unrelated, there was a strong connection between her initial desire to "fit in" in several ways, including physically. She shares the following about negotiating her issues with assimilating into the academic fabric:

I spent a lot of time trying to prove to people that I was just as good as any of the other residents here. And then when I got on faculty, [trying to prove that I was] just as good as any of the other faculty here. It probably not until relatively recently that I felt confident enough to revel in my difference. I didn't want to be the Black faculty member. I didn't want to be Black faculty. I just wanted to be a scientist. Then I realized that I am a Black scientist and that's a good thing!

Now, eleven years later, Isis is more comfortable in her skin and is enjoying her position as a full professor and has worked through many of the identity concerns. Currently, she continues to

mentor incoming and seasoned undergraduate and graduate student in her department and is committed to issues of equity and diversity in her field.

<div align="center">Mattie</div>

Mattie is a thirty-nine year old Black woman who is in the humanities at Southern University. Mattie is a dark-brown skinned woman with large, expressive brown eyes and cornrowed hair. She has a medium, athletic build and has a very calm and quiet disposition. Mattie is dressed casually with blue jeans and a plain, a dark blue sweatshirt with running shoes. We conduct the interview on May 11th, 2006 and it lasts for slightly under two hours. I contacted Mattie via email and sent her the accompanying invitation to participate. She responded quickly and agreed to do the interview. When I walk in her office, she motions for me to take a seat while she finishes a phone conversation. Her office is surprisingly small and the walls are a bright blue color. With one window, the office was bright and sunny with a wooden desk facing the wall. Except for the desk, computer, bare floor to ceiling bookshelves, and a few books on her desk, the office is relatively empty. The floor to ceiling shelves are completely empty. She is about to move to a different institution.

Mattie is very relaxed and casual during the interview, but, unlike Isis' interview, I asked more probing and detailed questions. She answered several questions in a round-about manner and that required more specificity with the questions. In addition, she was slightly guarded and was reluctant to share stories about her experiences at Southern. Fortunately, midway through the interview, she gave more detail on her experiences with promotion and tenure and shared quite a bit about her future as an academic.

Summarized Narrative

Like so many other Black families, Mattie's family eventually moved from the city to the suburbs for greater work and educational opportunities. Mattie comes from a working class background, with her mother working as a clerk for the local health department and her father was employed as a warehouse manager. Mattie was reared in a predominately Black community with parents who encouraged her to excel academically. Mattie described herself as a bright child who "wanting to do well for her teachers" and had encouraging and nurturing relationships with her teachers throughout her early years. Mattie shared that she always wanted to be a teacher, even though her parents encouraged her to "do more" than teaching, seeing that teaching was one of the few available employment opportunities for educated Black women. Despite their desires, Mattie held firmly to her desire to teach and assumed she would teach in public schools. It wasn't until college that Mattie realized she could teach on the college level. Two of her professors and her future spouse worked with her and encouraged her to go to graduate school and pursue academic work.

Once Mattie began her work at Southern, she faced a series of challenges in terms of faculty not accepting her research, which centers on race in her field and fighting an uphill promotion and tenure battle. Throughout her ten plus years at Southern, Mattie has found solace and encouragement from her spouse (who is an academic and has been her informal mentor since they met in college) their child, and building close relationships with students. Although Mattie is leaving Southern, she spoke highly of the institution's resources and faculty outside of her department. As she makes this transition, Mattie shared about her forthcoming responsibilities:

> It's like I asked for this stuff, I got this stuff, now there are responsibilities. You
>
> know it's like the Spiderman thing: 'To whom much is given, much is required.'
>
> And at the time I asked for things, I didn't understand the responsibilities of those

things. That's how I see my development. My life, I'm here for a reason and I'm

supposed to do something. I don't know what it is, but I'm going to do it and it

will be cool when it happens! Maybe not even one thing because there are periods

in your life where you accomplish different things for different reasons. That's

how I see this next move. Now it's time for me to be a grown-up. I was the

apprentice here, now it's time for me to give back and be a grown up.

Brianna

Brianna is a middle-aged Black woman in her late fifties, who is soft-spoken but has a

commanding and calm presence. Brianna transitioned from being a graduate student to a faculty

member at Southern and has taught there for ten years. Brianna prides herself on teaching a

variety of courses in her department and is a leader in terms of establishing multicultural-

oriented courses in her department. Upon meeting her, I noticed she wore a long blue dress, very

unassuming and demure with small silver stud earrings. What immediately captured me was her

voice, which was clear, direct but warm and welcoming. I've known Brianna for quite sometime

and originally invited her to participate in my pilot Black women classroom study. However,

after much consideration, I realized that it would be more significant for my work to have her

participate in the dissertation study.

The interview, like the others, took place in her office. Upon entering, she apologizes for

'the mess' that is on her desk: stacks of papers to grade, a favorite mug, and a picture of her god

children. There are maple bookshelves on the left side of her office filled to the brim with books,

trinkets, pictures among a host of other personal items. This interview, which took place on May

22, 2006 is my longest out of the eleven, lasting for three hours. What is striking about this

interview is that Brianna spends a considerable amount of time discussing the evolution of her

current research project, which, almost ten years after her dissertation, is still the focal point of her agenda. While she shared this with me, I initially was unaware of her research topic's relevance for the purpose of my study; I thought the data would be of little use. However, at this final point, I realize that her detailed discussion of her research project spoke volumes about the direction and choices she has made along her career path.

Summarized Narrative

Brianna was raised in an upper middle-class family on the East Coast. A product of religious education, Brianna's life growing up included a strong focus on academic excellence. As a child, Brianna and her twin sister worked hard in school and she described herself as "not having much of a social life" and being satisfied with that. She and her sister were so entrenched in their academics that her parents had to force them to attend social functions. She shares a particularly funny story about this:

> The only time I got upset or worried or anxious when I was growing up was when
> my parents would say to us 'There's this party Saturday, and you are going to it!'
> And I'm like 'Oh no!!! Oh no!!' It was horrible! And going to my school which
> was predominately White! All the people who were in Jack and Jill or people who
> were going to the Black churches meant I didn't have that connection and not
> going to public school meant I didn't have *that* connection. And you would go to
> the Black social functions, you are left out! You know, couldn't dance, didn't
> know the people!! (both laugh). And we were like these identical twins who were,
> like gigantic! And taller than everybody else. And I remember my father saying to
> us 'When you get to that dance or party, don't stay with each other! Just split up!'
> Like we were going to split up! (both laugh) I mean, the whole idea, it wasn't just

that we consider it a punishment, but my parents would have to raise their voice about it! I mean, if you listen to it, most people would say 'If you don't do your homework, you can't go to that party!' But for us, it was 'You have to go to that party!!'

So for Brianna, academic were central and remained so throughout college and graduate school. Brianna married her spouse immediately after graduating from a prestigious liberal arts college in the Northeast. He would move on to a tenure track position and she would complete a master's degree in education and teach as an instructor at the same school for the next ten years.

Brianna's journey to Southern was preceded by breaks between work and school, as she had two children and took time off work during the first two years of both their lives. At the end of their ten year stint at their institution, her spouse was offered a position at Southern and she decided to complete a doctoral degree. When she began her program, Brianna was older than many of her peers, but continued to press forward, despite reservations held by some:

So when I did my doctoral work, I just jumped into the program! And I felt very much like Linus, the Charles Schultz character (both laugh). You know Linus could pat birds on the head and hold bubbles because no one had told him he couldn't do that. So my whole experience was pretty much, 'Well, I'll do this and that because no one told me I couldn't.' I knew, choosing my dissertation topic was challenging, but when I entered the doctoral program, my cohort students, some of them fresh out of undergraduates, had their dissertation topics down pat! And I was there, and I said 'Well, I don't know what I'm going to do. I know I'm interested in researching African Americans and it will probably be something in that area.' And they just looked at me like 'Oh' [unbelieving].

Brianna completed her degree and immediately began a tenure-track position at Southern. She describes her spouse as her "best friend" and has, like Mattie's spouse, been an informal mentor. Brianna's academic career at Southern has been relatively smooth, and greatly enjoys teaching multicultural and diversity oriented classes in her field.

<div align="center">Sela</div>

Sela is focused, determined and goal-oriented with her life and career. Sela is a forty year old Black woman who is in the social sciences at Southern. With a medium-build frame, she is light-brown skinned with slightly below shoulder length hair. Throughout the interview, she spoke carefully and deliberately about her career. She was conservatively dressed and wore brown slacks with a crème-colored turtle neck sweater. I knew Sela previously through another professor and we arranged for her to participate in the study one year in advance. She was thrilled about the dissertation topic and agreed well in advance of the interview.

Surprisingly, this interview was the shortest, lasting for only one hour and fifteen minutes. Due to her busy schedule, she did not have time for an additional interview. We arranged to meet in her campus office and I arrived the usual fifteen minutes early. The interview took place on May 23, 2006. Her office is very institutional-like with concrete walls. On one wall, there were only wood bookshelves and file cabinets. Her bookshelves were filled to capacity and there were also pictures of her children and their artwork. Her computer faced the opposite wall and was next to the only window in the office. Thus far, out of the four interviews Sela's interview was the most difficult to conduct. She gave short, clipped, and almost rehearsed answers, as it was difficult to solicit stories that weren't very general. Sela was extremely guarded throughout the interview, although we had conversations prior to the interview.

Summarized Narrative

      Sela came to Southern with honors and accolades from prestigious undergraduate and graduate institutions. She benefited from a private school education from elementary school through college. Sela grew up in a working class neighborhood and her father often worked two jobs to keep her in private school. Sela, like so many of the other women, went to predominately White schools for her entire education and felt that she "suffered socially" during those early years. Sela intently focused on academics and was encouraged by her graduate professors to pursue the doctorate and begin academic work.

      In her mid-twenties and newly married, Sela began her tenure-track position at Southern immediately following graduate school. She shared feeling "intimidated" and "nervous" as she taught students who were close to her age and struggled with establishing herself in the classroom. During her career at Southern, Sela encountered various challenges, such as isolation and lack of support, but has also enjoyed tremendous success. She describes her biggest problem now as learning how to take on fewer tasks and shares a major issue of overworking herself:

> Sometimes I put myself physically in bad circumstances because I've been working so hard and put in such long days that I know I put myself mentally and physically at risk; just not taking care of myself the way I should because I've been so work-focused. And I think part of that is just me. I'm really kind of project-driven. But I think some of it is attributed to an environment where people rarely give you positive feedback; where you never know if you're doing a good job or not and so part of me is always working, working, working with the myth that at some point people will say 'You're doing a really good job!' (both laugh). I'm on that little gerbil wheel, going, going, going, going!

At this point in her career, Sela is learning how to enjoy herself and her family. As the mother of two school-aged children and the spouse of an educator, Sela is prioritizing other aspects of her life while continuing her career success.

<div style="text-align: center;">Nancy</div>

For this interview, Nancy and I are met in a restaurant on campus. Initially, I was apprehensive about this and was concerned about the lunchtime crowd volume and prayed that the interview would be clear on the tape recorder. Nancy is a tall, medium brown-skinned sister with a large, curly afro. She has a vibrant spirit and immediately makes me laugh upon meeting her. She is dressed in a brown, beaded tank top with fitted, boot cut jeans and brown sandals. Very fashionable and fun! Her hazel-brown eyes are bright, intense and are a contrast to her smoky voice. She immediately sat down next to me and started talking about the weather, traffic and asked a few questions about my study. We immediately bond as we wait about thirty minutes before the restaurant opens. During these thirty minutes, I decided not to turn on the tape recorder and just have casual conversation.

My initial contact with Nancy was sending the invitation email in early May, to which there was no response. About three or four weeks went by and I decided to contact one of her colleagues who then contacted Nancy and spoke with her about my study. I was instructed by this colleague to send Nancy another email. Nancy responded promptly and decided to participate. This interview took place on June 27, 2006 and lasted approximately ninety minutes. The interview itself went well and there was a natural exchange between the two of us. The most difficult part was simultaneously eating, listening to Nancy, being mindful of the time, and taking notes. Nancy had a wonderful sense of humor and our interview was filled with funny

stories and laughter. Nancy is matter-of-fact and spoke of herself as being "a planner" of her career and life in general.

Summarized Narrative

Nancy was raised in the South in the country and spent most of her childhood "riding ponies and having mountain adventures with friends." Describing her family as "poor," Nancy spent much of her time outdoors with animals. Her mother cleaned houses for White people and her father put up guard rail on the roads. Nancy, who was in the class that integrated schools in her home state, described herself as never being really fond of school until about the third grade, where she became "the smart kid":

> I went to school in 1966. I was in the first grade, so I was in the first class [to be integrated] and it was rocky. It was rocky because, you know, not all the teachers of students were happy about it. And so you know I was perceived as being learning disabled, you know my mother told me this years later and I don't remember anything about it, but part of it was that I didn't want to be in school. Because I had ponies at home and I spent all day running around, playing in the creek, riding my ponies and having adventures! All of a sudden I got stuck on a bus and had to sit in a room all day. And I hated it! (both laugh)

Once Nancy discovered books about animals, she became an avid reader and excelled in school. Nancy, like so many other exceptional, young Black women during the 70's, was recruited by a historically White university. After four years of college and completing her degree as the first Black woman student to graduate from her department, she knew, as a science major, she had to attend graduate school. Nancy attended graduate school at Southern and worked part-time in a

campus lab. She was eventually hired as the first Black woman in her department, following the completion of two years as a post-doctoral student.

Upon arriving to Southern to begin her position as an assistant professor, Nancy entered the department as the only Black faculty member. Interestingly, Nancy never considered this as inhibiting her success. Like so many other Black faculty, Nancy did encounter the issue of trying to balance the demands of research, teaching, beginning a lab, recruiting minority students, and being of service to Black students on campus. For instance, during her third year review, she shares that although she brought in grant money, had an up and running lab, had excellent teaching evaluations, she came up short on the publication end:

> The year after that was my third year review, which I didn't think went well. Because basically they told me that I wasn't doing what I was getting paid to do. But I was doing what I thought they wanted me to do. You know that whole pleasing thing. And that's when I realized no you have to do what you're paid to do. And sometimes you have to tell people 'No I can't do that [whatever favor, task etc. asked by another person] because I have to do Y.

This being the case, it was time for Nancy to prioritize and she did. She decided to go up for promotion and tenure "as soon as possible" and was successful. Nancy continues to be active in her department and now has more administrative responsibilities, as well as taking on a more instrumental role in recruiting Black graduate students. Nancy describes herself as a "survivor" and has taken the challenges and the triumphs in her career along the way in stride.

<div align="center">Hazel</div>

My interview with Hazel took place on June 28, 2006 for two hours in her campus office. Hazel is a light-brown skinned Black woman who is in the humanities. Upon meeting her, I

noticed her large, mischievous eyes behind her oval shaped eye glasses. She wore an Africentric-style shirt with matching gold and purple skirt and gold hoop earrings. Hazel is average height and a medium to large build. When I walked into Hazel's office for the interview, I was greeted by a huge poster of black lesbian feminist Audre Lorde hanging on the left wall. The excerpt below the picture of Lorde is from *The Black Unicorn* (Lorde, 1978) and it read:

> And when we speak we are afraid
> our words will not be heard
> nor welcomed
> but when we are silent
> we are still afraid
>
> So it is better to speak
> remembering
> we were never meant to survive
>
> *-from* "A Litany for Survival"

Accompanying this poster are pictures of Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and several other African American artists and activists. In fact, her walls are nearly covered from ceiling to floor with photographs, prints, playbills, award certificates and other items. Her desk was covered with papers and books, but her office was spacious and comfortable; it definitely reflected her interests and personality.

When I emailed her about the study, she immediately replied and arranged the interview during the latter part of June. The interview lasted slightly over two hours and she was open and honest with the information she provided. Out of the first six women, Hazel, by far exhibited more willingness to "share the real deal" about academic life.

Summarized Narrative

Hazel's journey to academia is similar to other women in this study and Black women professionals in general, in that she went to college, worked several jobs while pursuing her passion in the arts. Hazel was raised on the east coast by working class parents. Her parents were

born in the South and, like many African Americans in the 1930's and 40's, moved to the North for better job opportunities. Hazel fondly recalled her parents' meeting and spoke in detail about her father:

> My father was born in Tennessee and mother in Virginia. They met in World War II. He was stationed in Virginia and she was a hostess USO. So they ended up falling in love and getting married. And he had a lot of family in upstate New York. So he knew there were a lot of jobs up there. So they got married and the war ended. He got his release from the army and they moved up there. I was born and grew up in upstate New York and there was a lot of factory work employment up there after the war. So my mother did graduate from high school, but my father only went to tenth grade. He had to quit to work, he had brothers, sisters, mom and dad, so he had to work. So he had always missed having an education, I mean it was something he felt was missing in him. And he loved to read, he taught himself music. He could read music, arrange music, he trained himself to become a professional musician. He played in bands. So he was a very very intelligent man, it's just that he never had the opportunity to get an education.

So, like the other women's parents, Hazel's parents were adamant that she go as far as possible in terms of her education. Hazel grew up in a predominately Black community and it was one of those communities in which everyone looked out for one another, reprimanded and encouraged one another's children. She attended mostly Black schools and shared that parents were active in her schools, seeing that the Black schools in the area had limited resources. As a student, Hazel starred in school plays and her teachers supported her passion for the arts. Following high school, Hazel attended a historically White college in upstate New York and spoke of feeling

isolated, as there were few Black students at the university. Hazel, a long time fan and participant in the arts, used this opportunity to build community with other fine arts majors.

After graduating college, Hazel moved back to her hometown to teach for two years, which she described as an awful experience where she encountered hostility and overt racism in the school. Following this two year stint, Hazel knew she wanted to pursue the arts with more fervor, so she moved to the big city. Hazel told her parents she would be going to graduate school; and she did. However, she used this chance to audition for plays, worked on set designs, and other aspects of the theatre community while attending graduate school. For ten years, Hazel was active in the Black arts scene, but after having no major success, decided it was time to settle down and pursue more stable interests.

After getting her Masters' degree, Hazel decided to work on her doctorate and was an adjunct, as well. It was teaching part time when Hazel "began to learn the politics of academia" and that "it was not such a pleasant place." Following her doctoral work, Hazel worked for a few years at her alma mater, but was displeased with the lack of diversity at the institution. Hazel and her spouse moved down South to work at Southern after being told about a faculty position opening in her field.

Hazel described her overall experience at Southern as being "relatively smooth." She has no promotion and tenure horror stories and has received strong support from a majority of her colleagues, but clearly understands the challenges Black faculty face at White schools:

> It's just that I don't take any unfair mess. And that tends to happen, unfair with
> African American professors. Especially with tenure, and speaking of tenure, the
> problem that a lot of African American people get into is that is that, because I've
> had to from time to time people call me to evaluate tenure packets. And especially

predominately White institutions they will have this person overextend themselves in teaching and service, and when it comes to tenure evaluate them on the academics and publications. So the person is short on that end and long on the other ends and won't get tenure. So you have to try and help that person as much as you can with that evaluation. But I've seen this happen and so it becomes a revolving door. You get this young African American academic, they come in, stay an X number of years, don't get tenure and have to move.

When asked how Hazel has handled the different stresses of academic life, she replied "I play everything straight," meaning that she "stays out of political games." Although Hazel has no children, she and her spouse enjoy an active life outside academia and are very involved in their church and local community. Hazel speaks with great joy and pride about her life and work at Southern, while recognizing the challenges that many Black faculty have encountered at the institution:

Remember, this institution was not built for us. It wasn't even built for most of the white people. It was built for male, southern aristocrat white men. And one thing I get is a great deal of pleasure from is thinking about them revolving in their grave because I'm here! (both laugh) And that gives me great pleasure!

Tatyanna

Tatyanna's interview lasted for two and one half hours and took place on July 17, 2006. Tatyanna is a dark brown-skinned sister with a bright, glowing smile. She wore a pink short-jumper set with a lighter pink top and pink lipstick. She is about 5'3 tall and stockily built, as she used to lift weights and do martial arts. Tatyanna is very personable, alive and spunky and greeted me at the door with a big hug. We laughed throughout the interview and at several

points, she would lean over and howl with laughter. She's an amazing woman who has lived a life with many highs and lows, but she is filled with a spirit that guides and sustains her.

I was pleasantly surprised when I entered Tatyanna's office. It is open and spacious with very high ceilings. The walls were light blue and a darker on the bottom. It was very neat, with bookshelves on the right and an L-shaped desk in the rear. But what struck me is that she had a type of alter on the left side of the room. On the altar, there was a framed poem entitled "Mother" (I believe her son wrote that poem, but I didn't ask. She mentioned that he wrote beautiful poetry.). She also described herself as "saved" and there was a bible on the desk along with a few other church pamphlets and cards on the altar. Tatyanna is a woman with integrity and stands firm by her beliefs. More than just 'strong' or 'funny' or 'convicted' but, similar to the other women, her life is a testimony.

Summarized Narrative

Tatyanna was raised with nine siblings to tenant farmers in the South. She describes her early years as being filled with hard work on her parents' tobacco farm, a growing love for reading, and trying to "find my [her] place in the family." Tatyanna's mother was determined that all of her children would go to school and excel. Unlike many other Black families in their area, Tatyanna's mother decided that her children would attend school year round and did not allow her spouse to keep them out of school when other kids would be working on the farms. In spite of a sometimes difficult life, Tatyanna and her siblings all graduated from high school and several went on to college.

Towards the end of high school, Tatyanna gave birth to a son and worked several jobs before attending a historically Black college. As a new mother, Tatyanna knew that she needed a college degree, so she left and her son stayed with her parents. Seeing that her college wasn't

very far away, she would come home on the weekends to be with her son. This was a huge

sacrifice, but she graduated from college with honors. While attending college, she was recruited

by a large mid-western university for graduate school. Tatyanna shared that she didn't know

much about graduate school; she thought she would just graduate from college and teach like her

sister. Nevertheless, she took a chance and moved with her son for graduate school, which took

adjusting after leaving a small town:

> But when I left for graduate school, and I got up there, it was like the whole
>
> campus was a city! (laugh) and it was definitely a total cultural shock to me!
>
> Because when I went there my attitude and how I felt about people was totally
>
> different. When I left I still had an issue with whites, black and white. I had this
>
> serious issue because I had grown up in an environment where we were
>
> segregated. I can remember black and white bathrooms. I could remember when
>
> we wanted to eat at restaurants and wanted food, we had to go to the back door. I
>
> can remember. I grew up in that era when that happened. And actually, schools
>
> were not integrated until I was in high school. But when I went to Ohio, it was
>
> like total cultural shock to me! Here I was at this university and I don't even feel
>
> that comfortable being around Whites at all. What am I going to do? And I can
>
> remember I was on a fellowship that first year, I couldn't work. I wasn't supposed
>
> to work. I went to class and I'd go right back to my room and I only interacted
>
> with a few blacks I had met at my dorm. So after the first year, I was no longer on
>
> the fellowship, they said I had to be on assistantship, which forced me to interact
>
> with people in the department. Then my second year I had the assistantship and
>
> began to realize the people here don't act like where I came from. The whites here

don't act like the whites where I came from. You know they were actually different. Nicer. And I used to think they were up to something! (both laugh) Something has to be going on with these people! But it ended up that the faculty members were so helpful and actually wanted me to succeed.

Tatyanna eventually became accustomed to graduate school life and was mentored by a senior White woman faculty member in the department. Despite financial struggles as a graduate student and a mother, Tatyanna completed her Masters' and doctoral degrees. Following her doctoral degree, Tatyanna came to Southern and worked as an academic professional for two years. Seeing that she always worked hard and, oftentimes had two jobs, she found this job to be less intense and worked a part-time job off campus for awhile. After two years, her department had a faculty search for a position, and subsequently decided to offer Tatyanna the assistant professor position. Tatyanna never considered a full-time academic position before and shared that she wasn't interested in doing research. So, she was able to negotiate her contract and has a larger service and teaching component.

Tatyanna describes her first years as on faculty as "spending a great deal of time juggling several balls." Initially, she felt intimidated by the research requirements, but she was able to start and complete several successful projects. Describing herself as "a natural classroom teacher," many of Tatyanna's academic adventures occurred in the classroom. Tatyanna spoke in great detail about student complaints that she is "too tough" and "has too many requirements." She, like Hazel, has an active life outside faculty work, especially in the local community, where she often facilitates workshops on health and nutrition, as well as financial management for low-income women and men. Tatyanna shared that she didn't enjoy her work as much as in her earlier career, but the work she does in the community is a sustaining factor in her life.

Nia

Nia is a Black woman in her mid-forties who is quick witted and spirited. While sharing

her stories with me, Nia spoke rapidly with a lowered voice throughout the interview. Nia is

average height, medium brown-skinned woman with short straightened hair. She wore cream-

colored slacks and a chocolate brown button-down shirt; very professional. During the interview,

she appeared very relaxed and spoke passionately about her life as an academic and fondly

remembered growing up in an all-Black environment in the northeast U.S.

Our interview, which took place on July, 18 2006 lasted almost two full hours and took

place in her office on campus. My professor suggested that I contact Nia and that she would be a

perfect candidate for the study. I emailed Nia and she responded immediately that she would be

able to participate. I arrived at Nia's office about ten minutes early for the interview and she just

finished meeting with a student. I would later find out that a stream of Black students waiting

outside her door was not an uncommon occurrence, as she is the only Black woman faculty

member in her department. Nia's office, next to Mattie's, was the smallest office of all the

participants and I sat in a chair wedged between a bookshelf and a file cabinet. She sat at her

desk, which faced the windows and bordered on both sides by huge bookcases. There were

minimal decorations in her office, except for framed degrees and drawings by her children.

Summarized Narrative

Nia, the youngest of four children, was born and raised in a large, urban city on the East

Coast with both parents. She was also raised in the Muslim faith and her family members were

active members in the Nation of Islam. Nina's mother started out as a receptionist at a local,

Africentric-oriented community school and eventually became director of the school. Nia and

her sister both attended that school and did homework with their mother while she worked on her

bachelor's degree. Nia's father, a devout Catholic in his earlier years growing up, wanted to be a priest, but was told that Black people couldn't be priests. Although he didn't go to college, Nia described her father as being very smart and determined that his children would grow up educated and have a strong sense of racial pride.

As mentioned previously, Nia grew up in a community-oriented neighborhood in which her parents, family who lived nearby, and community members instilled in their children a sense of racial and ethnic pride. Nia shared that being in the Nation was instrumental in her feeling self-confident, as well as realizing the possibilities for who and what she could be. Growing up, Nia attended all-Black and predominately Black schools and went to a historically Black college. Nia describes her undergraduate school experience at a Black college as being quite different from her experience teaching undergraduates a White school:

> I had diverse faculty, I had Black, White, all types of professors. We don't have
> that here [at Southern]. That's one big thing. The commitment was there. And
> again, I have to put that in the context of the time. So when I was a student, there
> was a sense of people caring that you understood the material. We weren't
> allowed to have excuses. Like, I remember getting a 'D' in calculus and I went to
> the teacher and I said 'You gave me a 'D' and I'm acing all the tests.' And he was
> like 'Yes, I did and you're going take this again.' And I'm like 'Why?' And he
> said 'Because when you get a job, you can't always decide that you're going to
> show up. And you only showed up for the tests. So you'll take this class again and
> that's something you'll have to negotiate with whomever's in charge.' I was so
> mad at that time. I never had that problem again! So there's this sense of, that this
> was not just a lesson for the class, but this was a life lesson. We don't have the

luxury of doing that here. Here at this school, it's more of getting a credential as
opposed to the learning.

After attending undergraduate college, Nia worked at an advertising firm for a brief time and then decided to go to graduate school. During graduate school, she worked part-time and full-time jobs and then decided, after being encouraged by a professor, to go for the doctoral degree. Nia then moved out of state, but stayed in the North and worked on her doctoral degree. She describes her Master's degree as being "alright" but she encountered several racist professors in her department. Her doctoral program was a blur because towards the end, she got married and had two children by the time she began collecting data.

Towards the completion of her doctoral degree, Nia was offered a tenure-track faculty position at Southern. She and her family moved to Southern and she described it as a "homecoming" seeing that her mother was from the South. Although it was an adjustment in terms of cultural differences, Nia accepted the position and finished her dissertation during her first year. Nia's first few years at Southern were difficult for several reasons. Not only did she deal with the "culture shock" of adjusting to the South, but she felt unwelcome by her colleagues in that she knew they thought she was an affirmative action case. Similar to the other women, Nia felt the pangs of overt and covert racism in those first years. For instance, Nia shared that new White professors are immediately allowed to teach graduate classes and have reduced teaching loads. However, when she started, she taught several courses and was not permitted to teach her first masters' level courses until seven years later. Nia found those first years learning the landscape, and starting a research agenda with a race and gender focus to be difficult. Not to mention she had a young family with children active in school and social events. After moving through a promotion and tenure process which she describes as "hell," Nia became more

comfortable with her research agenda and decided that her family and students would come before anything else. Now, Nia has her first cohort of doctoral students and is teaching graduate level courses and views her current research agenda as a major priority in terms of creating change in her field. She shared that overall, "Standing out there and doing the work you feel is necessary to make things happen when you have so many people against you takes courage."

<div align="center">Peach</div>

The interview with Peach took place on July, 26, 2006 in her office on campus. I contacted Peach to inquire whether she would like to participate, and she quickly responded that she would love to speak with me about her academic career. Peach is a beautiful, soft-spoken and reserved Black woman who greeted me warmly when I arrived. She seemed very relaxed and comfortable and wore a pink carp outfit with a light brown jacket. In the middle of transitioning to a new office, Peach apologized for the "mess" and we promptly began the interview. In her office, there were stack of papers, books, and boxes that covered the floor. I sat in a chair next to the door and Peach sat directly across from me during the interview.

For this interview, Peach answered every question very carefully and thoughtfully, as she took a few moments before giving me a full and complete answer. The interview with Peach lasted just over one hour, as it was my desire to be mindful of the time. I knew Peach was happy to do the interview, but I also got the sense that she was overextended. Seeing that Peach was in the middle of a transition and seemed extremely busy, I truly wanted to honor and not occupy a tremendous amount of her time.

Summarized Narrative

Peach described herself as someone who loves learning and especially enjoyed school as a child. As the only child of parents who worked at a historically Black college, Peach was

reared in an all Black, nurturing community in the South. Peach attended an all-Black school in her early years growing up and then attended an integrated school from middle school on. This experience was challenging for her, as she shared that her personality changed in that she became more introverted and didn't feel as much encouragement and support in a White environment.

After graduating high school at the age of sixteen, Peach went far from home to a large Midwestern university. Although the environment was a huge change from living in the South, Peach "enjoyed the bigness of the campus" and being one among thousands of students. Peach fondly remembers friendships she shared with three other young, Black women on campus. Peach remained at this school for her undergraduate and Masters degree and worked as a residence hall director. Peach then did a year long internship out of state and moved back down South for her doctoral degree. During her graduate studies, Peach found excellent faculty mentors who supported her throughout her studies on into her first position at a historically White university in the Northeast. Peach shared highlights of this first year position:

> I went back to the cold. I was there for four years and, it was the best first job I could have ever asked for. Very, very supportive department, but the university was unreal. At the time I was one of four black Ph.D.'s on campus. And the only black female in the entire university. So it was a culture shock in a lot of ways. But I was very protected by the people in my department. Interestingly enough, my major professor accepted a job there the year before I finished. And she mentored me, so again, being in the department was wonderful. But once I stepped outside of that building on campus, it became much more cold and uninviting. I also had strong community support. I found a network of church members, or community folks that helped a lot. Had another family that fed me

after church! (laugh). So I didn't feel too isolated because of the community and department.

While at her first institution, Peach was employed in a professional position in her department and taught one course a year. Peach shared that she enjoyed her position, but was eventually mentored by two women faculty members who encouraged her to do research. So, she ended up meeting with them and creating a research team in which she had the chance to focus solely on her own research. At their suggestion, and after much thought, Peach applied for and was offered a tenure-track position, but her advisors told her to wait and see what else came along. Two days later, Peach was contacted by the department head at Southern and was invited to interview. Seeing that Southern was close to home and her aging parents, Peach decided that after twenty years away, she would come back down South.

Upon arriving at Southern, Peach did not find her department as welcoming as she anticipated. Her colleagues weren't very supportive, but Peach still managed to be successful and "get the job done." Peach shared several challenges she encountered once she came to Southern:

It's the overt and subtle racism I have experienced here. Things like that make me wonder sometimes. Also the faculty here in this department. You know, as I said, when I came here, they didn't know what to think! The expectation was for me to kiss up to them, ask them for help, support, and to work with them. Well, they put an automatic wall up. And this sort of thing, I think just happens to junior faculty regardless of race or gender. The wall is up and you have to break through it. But when you add race and gender, the wall takes on a different dimension. It thickens when those things are added. It's so funny, there is a guy who came in with me and has published with almost every faculty member here. I've only published

with one or two faculty. I just decided that it was important for me to do the work and I did it. And they wondered and were confused at how I was able to accomplish so much with little to no assistance. But I still had the support of colleagues across campus and previous mentors from graduate school.

After an uphill promotion and tenure battle at both the associate and full levels, Peach continues to maintain a positive attitude about academic work. She shared that her students were a central part of her academic career and does all she can to support and encourage Black students, in particular. Finally, Peach stays grounded in remembering and acknowledging "from whence I [she]came" and always striving to do her work "with integrity."

<div align="center">Amina</div>

Amina is an average height, light-brown skinned Black woman who wears a short, natural hairstyle. Amina speaks quickly, with an East Coast accent and did not hesitate to share aspects of her life with me. I contacted Amina via email, sent her my invitation letter and sample of interview questions, and she responded immediately. Interestingly, when I arrived at her office for the first interview, it was near the end of the day and she had forgotten about the interview. Her office was very spacious with huge desk facing picture windows, a couch to the side of her desk, two chairs in front, and a conference-like round table on the other side of her office. Her office had an Africentric theme, as there were various small masks, cloth, and prints covering her walls, desk and windowsills.

Due to Amina's hectic schedule, we rescheduled the interview a total of two times and finally met on the third try. Oddly enough, she invited me in on the first day to reschedule and we ended up chatting for about a half hour! As she spoke about her day and a little about who she was, I considered starting my tape recorder, but, something told me that that would have

been inappropriate. So I took mental notes in the beginning and notes on my legal pad for the last

fifteen minutes. We eventually scheduled the next interview, which had to be rescheduled and

finally met on the 11th of September and it lasted for two hours.

What immediately struck me about Amina was the way she walked. When I met her for

our lunch/interview date, I noticed she walked with her head held high and her steps had

purpose; like she was on a mission of some sort. She spoke and walked quickly and I found that,

although I was much taller, I had difficult keeping up with her! When the interview started,

Amina spoke in a matter-of-fact way and shared her satisfaction with the fact that I was

interviewing Black women faculty.

Summarized Narrative

Amina shared in depth stories that revealed her strong race and political consciousness.

Amina described herself as a "radical" and an "activist" and the work she has done throughout

her life has been work that reflects that spirit. Amina recalled growing up with parents in the

North who were active in their local communities and with their children's education. Amina's

mother played an instrumental role as Amina experienced racism in her early schooling years:

> I remember in fourth grade being asked what I was going to do when I grew up
>
> and I said I was going to be a teacher. And the teacher said 'No, you're not going
>
> to do that. You'd have to go to college and you're not going to college' So I
>
> remember that clearly, Ms. Brown. I'll never forget that. I went home, told my
>
> mother and my mother was up there the next day. She said 'My father, sent all
>
> eight of his children to college.' She gave that woman a piece of her mind. I don't
>
> totally remember if I was there, or if I heard her sharing it with her sister, or what,

but whatever it was, it resonated with me. I always knew I was going to college;

there was no question about it.

Amina's activist career path began while she was in high school, as she volunteered in her high school's guidance counselor office. After graduation, Amina went to a small college and was active in the local NAACP and other Black campus organizations. Amina was in college during the height of the "Black is beautiful" movement and enjoyed participating in cultural activities and speaking out on issues of racism, in addition to sexism in the Black Nationalist movement. Following college, Amina moved down South to attend a historically Black university for graduate school. She described this experience as "phenomenal" and "life changing" in the sense that she greatly benefited from being in an all-Black campus environment. Once she graduated, Amina moved back up north, married and had two children. During the eleven years between finishing her Masters degree and starting her doctoral work, Amina worked in the social services field and directed her own social services center. While working in her agency, Amina led study groups and continued to be involved in multiple Black organizations both locally and nationally.

Amina's decision to go to graduate school and, several years later, apply for a tenure track faculty position stems from, as she says, the fact that she "wanted more" and was encouraged by her faculty members. While working on her Ph.D. in the Northeast, Amina struggled with the lack of faculty diversity and worked with other students on issues of building diversity into the curriculum, creating retention programs for Black students, among other pressing issues. Amina recalled challenging her White professors on issues of race and gender, while demanding that different voices be represented in her classes. In spite of these challenges, Amina completed her doctoral work in three years while working full time and raising a family.

Once she finished her work, Amina was told about a position at Southern and suggested that she apply. After talking with her spouse about a major life change with moving down South, Amina moved her family and she began work at Southern. Amina's academic development at Southern was quite different from the other women. First, she had a large, extended family with two birth children, an adopted child and raising several cousins, nieces and nephews on and off. She also commuted to Southern because she was determined that her children would have a "Black experience" with Black schools, while growing in a culturally rich environment. Amina had a smooth promotion and tenure experience, while having most of her faculty as supporters in her advancement. In her ten plus years as a faculty member at Southern, Amina has persisted through her commitment to service; service not only to her community, but to Black students. She enjoys a strong network of Black faculty on campus and an active life in her home community and views these as sustaining factors in her career development.

<div align="center">Quilter</div>

My final interview with Quilter was a two part interview that took place on September 19, 2006 in two, one hour long segments. It was suggested by my professor that I contact Quilter for an interview, and she immediately agreed to participate in the study. Our interview was originally scheduled one month prior, but when I arrived at her house, she had forgotten about it and went off for a morning walk. I waited the obligatory thirty minutes and left a note on her door. Despite this, we rescheduled the interview for the morning of the 19th prior to her first class of the day.

It was still dark when I left my home for Quilter's campus office. Her building is similar to a maze, so it was difficult finding her office. When I found her office, there were two students waiting and looking nervous with what appeared to be graded tests in their hands. Shortly after I

arrived, she walked down the hall wearing a long, flowing African-style kafkan dress. She

politely asked if I would give her just a few minutes with the students before we began. After

meeting with the students, she invited me into her office and I immediately noticed that it

reminded me of Hazel's office. Her office was average-sized with a large bookshelf completely

occupying one wall. Her L-shaped desk dominated the office and was bored by several file

cabinets facing one window. There was an old rocking-chair, which I sat in, next to her desk, soft

music playing in the background, and all sorts of posters and prints with Africentric themes. She,

like Hazel, had a picture of Audre Lorde on her wall.

This interview was inspiring and uplifting for me, as Quilter spoke with conviction about

her goals and beliefs regarding her work and its purpose. She, like Amina and Nia, spoke quickly

and I began the interview with constant probing until after about twenty minutes. At this point,

Quilter shared more stories and I listened without asking many questions. The second half of the

interview took place later on in the afternoon, following both of our morning classes. I

practically ran across campus to make the interview on time and ended up arriving early. The

latter part of the interview, Quilter shared more about her life as an academic and, due to time

constraints, addressed my final question via email.

Summarized Narrative

Quilter, who's favorite hobby is making quilts, was raised on the east coast with her

mother and father, who was a homemaker and a government worker and minister, respectively.

Quilter, who grew up during the Civil Rights Movement years, remembered growing up in a

household in which there was a strong activist presence:

> You had a real sense of what was going on, but it just participating was just
>
> something you did without understanding the total historical significance of it. So,

my dad, especially because he was a minister, was a great admirer of Dr. King. My dad had his own church for twenty-seven years and I was at the March on Washington. I was twelve and my family went without thinking that forty years later it would be this absolutely historical thing! But we always had, my parents always had a real sense of participating in the community and a sense that they should be able to be thought of as human beings. So there were times when we weren't actually participating, for instance, we would take in people who would come to for some event or march. People were always marching through our house for some reason. It was ok to stay with us and people knew that. So yeah, a real sense of 'You can't just sit by. That you are a part of this.' And of course from 68 to 70 when I was away at school, there were the sit-ins and stuff like that, the Black Power Movement, you know so I was a part of all of that.

Quilter, like the other women, was raised to value education and excelled in school. Her community, which went from all-White to all-Black in a short period of time was also supportive and she enjoyed the close-knit aspect. As a youth, Quilter enjoyed reading and spent much of her free time in the library after school. Once she finished high school, she attended college not very far away from her hometown and spent the last year at home before her mother passed away. Having no idea what she would do, Quilter decided to attend graduate school at a historically Black university. Although she didn't speak very much about this experience, Quilter shared that it encouraged her to work with issues of equity, civil rights, and labor. Her first job following law school was working with a Black woman judge, which provided to be an invaluable experience.

Quilter shared that her career path was very circuitous and "unplanned" in that she purposefully chose several temporary jobs in her field because she still wasn't quite sure that this was what she wanted to spend the rest of her life doing. Following these jobs, a teaching job down South was brought to Quilter's attention by another colleague, so she and her two children moved for her first full-time tenure track position. When asked what made her decide to teach, Quilter responded that she is "divinely guided" and that she knew that was the best decision for her at that point. She described her experience at her first institution as "positive" and felt she had an impact on her students and faculty, in terms of addressing issues of race and gender in her work and in the classroom. Despite the fact she enjoyed her first job, after being contacted about the position at Southern, Quilter felt it she was "divinely led" to come to Southern:

> I always understood that I wasn't put here by man and I wasn't going to leave because of man. I understood this was God's work. And I really believe in that. So I don't necessarily know, in fact I did just built the house I thought I would spend the rest of my life in forever. The year before. It hadn't even been a year. I had tenure where I was and it was very comfortable when the idea of coming came, I couldn't say no because I knew this is what God wanted for me. And sometimes you just have to walk out of faith and I understood it would be ok. I can remember telling my department chair, 'You all didn't bring me here. I know you think you did, but you didn't. (laugh) You won't be the reason why I leave and you just need to know that.'

Quilter began her work at Southern in an environment in which White faculty were suspicious of her and, like several of the other women in this study, considered her to be at Southern solely because of affirmative action. Quilter shared her knowledge of the departmental need to fill

faculty lines with minority scholars, but she was also comfortable in knowing that she was more than qualified to do the work and teach. Even still, Quilter experienced a negative promotion and tenure experience, but, as she says, "it all worked out in the end." In her years at Southern,

Quilter has broken new ground in her field, is world renown for her work, has the most widely used textbook in her field, and is one of the most popular professors in her college. She prides herself on providing her students with "real world knowledge that incorporates matters of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and disability." Quilter, like the other women, is committed to issues of race and gender on campus, and has mentored many women and minority students. Overall, Quilter describes her career path as being "divinely guided" and relies on her spirituality and faith in every aspect of her academic life.

<center>Chapter Summary</center>

The purpose of this chapter was to provide relevant background information on the eleven Black women who participated in this study. The first half of each woman's profile centered on the interview dynamics, contained brief reflections on interviews with each of the women, and setting descriptions. The interviews with these women took place over the course of four months so as to assure maximum flexibility to suit their schedules. Using field notes, demographic questionnaires, and data from the transcripts enabled me to construct the significant participant background information.

The second half of the profile consisted of a summarized narrative. This section is the most significant in that it contextualizes the women's career path, as opposed to presenting their academic careers in isolation. We see how, for example, community support, having children, and working different jobs influence their decision to have an academic career. This was my attempt to provide a condensed account of significant aspects of their lives including their early

years growing up, their schooling experiences, transitioning into Southern, and a brief synopsis

of their experiences at Southern.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1.) What is the career development path for successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

2.) How have race and gender affected the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

3.) How do successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university learn to negotiate research, teaching, and service?

In this chapter, I present the findings from the research study through an exploration of common themes constructed across the data set. I first provide a data display as an overview of each thematic section and its accompanying sub-sections. Next, I present and discuss four emergent themes, which include "Sociocultural Influences: The Early Path Toward Success," "Becoming an Academic: A Circuitous Path," "Challenges in the Academy," and finally, "From Surviving to Thriving in the Academy." I then close the chapter with a summary of the thematic presentation.

Data Display

I. Sociocultural Influences: The Early Path Towards Success

    A. Family and Community Influences

    B. Early Schooling Experiences During the Movement Years

II. Becoming an Academic: A Circuitous Path

III. Challenges in the Academy

     A. Tokenism

     B. Isolation

     C. Work Responsibility Overload

IV. From Surviving to Thriving in the Academy

     A. Faculty Mentoring and Networking as Vital Support Systems

     B. Learning From Previous Work Experiences

     C. More Than an Academic

<div align="center">Sociocultural Influences: The Early Path Toward Success</div>

An analysis of the women's interviews suggests that their success as professional women can be traced back to their early years growing up in their respective communities. Mattie, Nancy, Hazel, Tatyanna, Nia, and Peach. were raised in predominately Black communities, Amina was the only woman who was reared in a predominately White (Jewish) community, and Isis, Sela, Brianna, and Quilter were reared in mixed (Black and White) communities. Although the women are varied in terms of their background, it was found that socio-cultural influences of family and community, as well as school experiences during the Movement years of the 1960's and 70's are highlighted in their stories they shared. In all of their tellings, these factors played a significant role in their ambitions, their beliefs about who and what they could be, as well as their eventual success.

Family and Community Influences

They all shared stories that reveal their family and community commitment to education for Black children. Family, community, and early schooling experiences operate together and

intertwine in their stories and we can get a sense of how the events of their early years are an integral aspect of their career development. For Mattie, Nancy, Hazel, Tatyanna, Nia, and Peach, growing up in a Black family and predominately Black communities and early schooling experiences are significant aspects of their individual and collective career development.

Mattie was raised in a predominately Black, close-knit community in the southwest United States. She is from a family and community background in which teaching is valued, but she was also encouraged as a child to think beyond just becoming a teacher. Seeing that teaching or domestic service were generally the only options available to African Americans during the 60's and earlier, her parents encouraged her to "do something bigger than teaching":

> Well, I always wanted to be a teacher for as long as I could remember. My parents greatly discouraged me from doing that because they said, 'African Americans historically in terms of high-end professions aspired to be teachers.' They said themselves they had come from a time where African Americans should aspire to be more than teachers. They could do anything. And so they really encouraged me to go into business. So I decided at that point, 'Ok I won't go into teaching' even though at that point a teacher lived across the street from us and I said [to her] 'You can do so much more.'

With both Isis and Mattie, the professions commonly associated with women and African Americans, such as teaching or other artistic professions are discouraged while the sciences and business are encouraged. This is especially significant seeing that the job options for African Americans were limited during this time and these options were often mediated by oppressive forces in many communities. The desire to "become more than" expressed by Mattie's parents, for instance, can be read in such a way that reflects the structural constraints and limited mobility

for African Americans in their particular community, which consisted of working and lower-class folks.

Nancy, on the other hand, was encouraged by her family to become a teacher. Nancy grew up in a predominately African American, rural community in which most people lived below the poverty line. She spoke in great detail about her resistance to becoming a teacher:

You have to understand about being Black and living in the South where kids get these ideas of what they'd like to be. But they realize quickly that it isn't going to be allowed and that was the way it was. And I remember distinctly at the time, you know when I was a kid [family and elders would tell her] 'Oh you're so smart' and 'You're going to be a teacher when you grow up'. That was the only route for intelligent Black people was to be a teacher. And I remember being really young telling my father 'I don't want to be a teacher! Why is everyone saying I want to be a teacher?!!? I don't want to be a teacher.'

Hazel, who was raised on the east coast also shared that "You know my parents were very very strongly trying to push me into teaching." Similar to both Mattie and Nancy, Hazel's parents also strongly enforced the importance of education for her, seeing that their options had been limited:

So my mother did graduate from high school, but my father only went to tenth grade. He had to quit to work, he had brothers, sisters, mom and dad, so he had to work. So he had always missed having an education, I mean it was something he felt was missing in him. He could read music, arrange music, he trained himself to become a professional musician. He played in bands. So he was a very very intelligent man, it's just that he never had the opportunity to get an education. So

they both, like most African Americans, they felt that education was like second religion. So I was going to get an education no matter what.

Tatyanna, like Nancy, grew up in an impoverished community in the South. As one of ten children, Tatyanna went to school and worked in the fields with her siblings and parents, who were tenant farmers. With both of her parents having no high school diploma, her mother, especially was adamant that all of her children would graduate from high school:

> During that time, the other farmers throughout the county, they would keep their children out of school to work on the farm. But my mom never allowed my dad to do that. She had, she always told him we could work before school, after school, in the summers and on the weekends, but we would never stay out of school to work because her children were going to get an education. And she literally meant we were going to get that education! And so we never missed days out of school, we had perfect attendance certificates every year. If we were sick, she gave us a home remedy, put us on the school bus, and sent us to school! And my mom, she forced us to make good grades. You had to come home with nothing less than a 'B'.

Nia and Quilter were also reared in predominately Black, northern communities. Quilter, whose family moved into what was an all-White neighborhood when she was four years old, shared that her parents were instrumental in ensuring that she and her siblings received a quality education. Nia, who was also raised in on the east coast like Hazel, was reared in an all Black community in which cultural pride was an integral part of her development. She describes her experience as "multicultural" and "growing up in a free culture" where she regularly interacted

with people of Color. Her parents and community instilled a strong sense of pride in being Black and educated:

> I was raised in the Nation of Islam. So growing up was interesting because I lived in two worlds: I lived in the Muslim world and the other world. It was interesting. So being in the Nation, and education was very important. That was it. So education was never a question. There was never a question of whether we could do this. They were Black Nationalists, they marched. At the school I went to, there was sort of this Nationalist movement. So, for history, for example, I had this teacher named Kuti. Kuti would start every day with 'I am, I am Somebody!' We would chant along with him. It was definitely a feeling of affirmation and pride.

Peach also grew up in the Deep South and was an only child in her family. Her parents were both professionals and worked at the local university and were well known in their small town. Although she describes her early experience as "living in a fishbowl", she was encouraged by her parents and community members to excel and aided in fostering her love of learning:

> I knew folks had high expectations of me. When I was growing up, they had a nursery school on campus. When I got older, the librarian was my mom's best friend. So I would get out of school and spend the time after school in the library just walking around reading books. So that's the place where I got my love for books and reading. So I had a lot of time just reading and she kind of nurtured me in that tradition of seeking information and wanting to know more.

Isis was raised in a Black and White, middle class environment in the northeastern United States. Many of her family members were professionals, including her father who was an

engineer. Isis lived in an environment in which the arts were discouraged. She was heavily influenced and encouraged by her father to foster an interest in the sciences, as opposed to the arts:

> And so I went to school and I actually became more interested in the artistic side of life. I thought 'Oh, maybe' (trails off). When I got into high school I thought about ad agencies and at the high school I went to, you decide pretty early whether you want to specialize in the arts or sciences. I come from a family background in which the arts are not really considered a viable career strategy. So I was encouraged to think of something in the sciences.

Throughout Isis's early schooling years from elementary throughout high school, it was her father who "encouraged" [my quotations] her career path. From securing summer jobs that focused on the sciences to discouraging her from more creative pursuits, Isis' father played an instrumental part in her early career socialization.

Brianna is from the northeast and has an upper-middle class family background. Brianna's father was a professional and mother was a homemaker. She, along with Sela, attended private schools from elementary through high school and described excelling in school as "understood" and she loved being in school.

> I always loved school. For me school was a safe haven. Socially, I was awkward, but I looked forward to Monday through Friday. Always on top of things. I did my homework on Friday nights so I would have weekends free. Was always prepared for tests, looked forward to tests! I mean, really weird! (both laugh) So all of the situation comedies about people not doing their homework were so

foreign to my experience. Why would anybody not study or do their homework?

It was just so natural.

Sela's parents were working class professionals and often worked two jobs to afford for her to attend private school. Amina, who is also from the east coast, moved at a very early age to a Black and White community, but was educated at White schools. Her mother, who worked in social services, was also an activist and, like Nia, was concerned about the quality of education for Black children. In fact, Amina's mother decided to move during her early elementary school years so that her children could attend better schools.

Family and community support were found to be important aspects of the women's early years growing up. Between parents, other relatives and community members, these women were well on their way towards excellence in academics. Coupled with this, their schooling experiences, from elementary through college, also provide a window into their early career development.

Early Schooling Experiences During the Movement Years

A majority of the Black women in this study either came of age or were in college during the movement years of the 1960's and early 1970's. This was a factor that influenced the beginnings of their career path in that they experienced many incidents that would aid in conditioning them to the challenges they would encounter as Black women along this path. It was also in this particular context that several of the women experienced the transition from all Black to White schools, for instance. Stories of being the "token minority," which also appears later in this chapter on challenges in the academy, experiences with discrimination in the classroom, as well as transitioning from all Black to all White schools, resonated throughout the data. All of these women excelled in school, were both internally and externally motivated to

achieve their goals. In addition to this, they were also "the smart kid" during their schooling years. Several women also experienced isolation from both their Black and White peers while simultaneously being encouraged by both Black and White teachers to excel. In the following excerpts, we see another common thread linking a majority of these women's lives: their experience "smart, token minority" from elementary through college.

Sela, Peach and Hazel reported feeling a sense of isolation from being the only Black girl in their classes. Sela attended private school from kindergarten throughout high school and spoke about the "division" between she and other kids in the neighborhood, as attended the surrounding public schools. Sela was also an only child and she described that as creating an additional barrier between her and the Black neighborhood children. So with Sela, the experience of attending all White schools was somewhat of a conflict in that it impacted her socially and created distance between her and the Black children who attended the mostly Black public schools.

A majority of the women were coming of age or attending school during a critical socio-historical moment during which the struggle for civil and women's rights were at the forefront. Further, several of these women, in various stages of their schooling experienced the desegregation of schools and were transitioned to White schools. The transition from being in all-Black to an all-White environment was often difficult for Black children, as they often encounter isolation, discrimination, lack of support from their teachers, among other challenges and barriers. While Mattie does not specifically describe instances of racial discrimination in schools, she does remember being bused to an all-White magnet school along with several other Black children from their neighborhood and how it was difficult to make the transition, initially.

Peach described feeling isolated once she transitioned from an all-Black to an all-White environment during her middle school years:

> I loved school. It was at a time, and I have a distinct memory of different time periods. Up until I was in the seventh grade, I was in an all black school environment. Loved the teachers. They were very nurturing and had high expectations. They were also the people I would see in the community. Eighth grade year came along and that was the time when the desegregation plan went into effect into the state. So the state asked that the black schools identified up to five black students who were deemed exceptional or outstanding to go to the White school. Everything changed for me then. I still enjoyed school, but certainly not as much. The atmosphere was not as supportive. The teachers were not as encouraging. But I had a real different feeling about going. So at that point, I became more introverted. If you looked at some report cards, you would not see a difference in my grades; I maintained the same high level. But I think in some ways my personality changed. Yeah, the transition was different.

I quote this story in length because it is characteristic of many schooling stories Black women tell who came of age during the school desegregation years. Her story is not only powerful in and of itself, but we get a sense of the socio-historical and political context in which this story is situated and how it shapes their career development.

Hazel and Amina also experienced being "the smart kid" in being in an all White high school and were placed into advanced level course with other White students:

> But one thing I did get, was I got put in accelerated classes. So that meant that a lot of the classes I had, especially in junior high and high school were

predominately White. So I would be the only black person there. But I look at it

now, it wasn't easy, but I look at it now as good training. Because I had to handle

myself in situations where I had nobody there who looked like me. And so I had

to gain an awareness of black and white situations.

In the above excerpt, Hazel is the only Black student in her accelerated classes, but this position also requires that she engage in learning the ways of White culture. The position commonly noted as being the "outsider-within" (Collins, 1986; hooks, 1989) can give Black women a special vantage point in that they are able to learn how White people operate. In turn, this awareness leads them to successfully navigate said context.

As mentioned previously, Amina's mother was extremely involved in ensuring that her daughter received a quality education. Amina shares a story in which she felt isolated as a result of being one of two Black girls in her accelerated class:

I was probably one of two black students who were taking foreign language. They

tracked you then. You were either college bound or you were vocational bound,

then there was general. So even in junior high you got tracked. Before this, they

had given me home economics, typing and something else. My mother paraded up

to the school (both laughs) and told them she would teach me all I needed to know

about cooking, sewing and ironing and I would not take those and I would get into

French. And I remember crying because all my friends were in the other classes.

So me and this one other Black girl, we became the only Black girls in the

languages and algebra and all those accelerated classes.

Tatyanna, Sela, and Nancy all shared instances of discrimination in all-White school environments as a result of them often being the only Black girl in their schools and classes

during their early years. Tatyanna went to school in a small rural town several miles from her home and shared that several of teachers, throughout elementary school were unsupportive and discriminatory against she and all of her siblings. She shared that "No matter how good my grades were, it was never enough; we were still 'dumb' to her" [one of her elementary school teachers]. It was in her early schooling experiences during which Sela learned about the kinds of constraints placed on Black people as far as their job options were concerned. Sela shares a particularly disturbing story about this:

> Elementary school was really difficult. I remember the very first day of going to fourth grade and the secretary took me down to the room and we could hear the teacher explain to the kids that there was a new girl coming into class. The teacher told them 'You know she was a little, she's different.' And that's when the secretary knocked on the door and the teacher said 'Well, you'll see!' So in elementary school it was mainly teachers who weren't prepared for dealing with students unlike the students they always taught and I think they had low expectations of me. I remember maybe fifth or sixth grade we had to go around the room and say what we wanted to be and I said 'pediatrician' and the teacher kinda laughed.

In the above excerpt, we see an effect of "integration" in that Sela, along with so many more Black children were not welcomed within these spaces, but were still required to negotiate the hostile environment and obtain an education. Similar to Sela's story, Nancy shared a disturbing story of encountering overt racism as a child in elementary school:

> I think it was around third grade when I realized that I was the 'smart kid.' We had this TV show called Kiddie College. So the schools gave all the third graders

a test and the ones that scored the highest on the test got to go to Kiddie College. Apparently, I scored either the highest or among the highest. So I was going to be on the team. And it was so disturbing to the school and county because they hadn't sent an integrated team ever to Kiddie College. And apparently they called my parents and tried to figure out what was going on. They thought maybe I cheated on the test. My mom said they wanted me to take the test over and retest because they couldn't believe the score. My mom must've dug in pretty deep on that one with 'No!' But it ended up I was on the team with Kiddie College.

In both Sela and Nancy's stories, being "the smart kid" and the only Black child in the classroom or in the Kiddie College program resulted in discrimination. For instance, the disbelief that Nancy was smart enough to be a part of Kiddie College reflects the racist attitudes and beliefs about the intellectual abilities of Black children as well as the resistance of White educators towards school integration.

Summary

In the excerpts above, family, community and schooling perform a significant role in the early development of Isis, Mattie, Sela, Nancy, and Hazel. The reality of the women being reared in communities in which education is valued greatly sets the context for their life long journey towards becoming an academic. Despite the fact that these women's backgrounds are vastly different, the emphasis on a quality and equitable education is a common thread linking their experiences. Moreover, obtaining a good education was expected by their parents and community members. The significance of their parents' involvement with ensuring their children a quality education is relevant, especially seeing that these women were schooled during the school integration years. In addition, this relates to the larger Black community's emphasis on

equity in and access to education for their children. This was a time during which issues such as employment, housing and education were at the forefront for Black women and men, and as such, impacted the women during the early years.

Several of the women also reported feeling a sense of isolation as they transitioned from all Black to all White schools and also as students in mostly White classrooms. In addition to this, discrimination from teachers and resistance to Black student presence in their classrooms was also a part of their schooling experiences. The first theme of sociocultural influences on the future success of the Black women provides important contextual background as I explore their career paths. The career development of the women cannot be isolated from their experiences in schools and their early encouragement and socialization. With this theme, I coupled demographic information about the women with their sociocultural and historical influences to highlight the significance of those early years to their career development.

<div align="center">Becoming an Academic: A Circuitous Path</div>

A majority of women in this study said that becoming an academic was not their original career decision and, for many, it wasn't until they started college that they realized the possibility of being a college professor or researcher. The study of the career development process of Black women in the academy reveals that there is definitely a process of becoming an academic. After analyzing the stories and information given by these eleven, successful Black women academics, I argue that the process of becoming an academic has no definite beginning and ending. Indeed the process is not linear, but often circuitous and there are a variety of plans and paths carved out by the women. With this in mind, I found that these women's lives are characterized by divergent career paths.

Seven of the eleven women in this study were employed in all types of work ranging from a three month stint at a zoo to working in social services. For this group of women, their paths to the academic job greatly differ. For this theme, it was found that the majority of the black women did not necessarily have lifelong plans of becoming a professor and engaged in a variety of employment options that eventually led them into the academy. There were a variety of circumstances and situations that propelled them into various arenas while traveling down different paths towards the academic job.

The first theme, which focused on socio-cultural influences in the women's lives, provides a context in which to examine the early influences and beginnings of their individual career journeys. I explore the influences and experiences during the college years, the varying work and career paths that led these women into the academic profession.

The participants' career paths greatly differed in that they were constituted by different job and career turns and many of them came to the professoriate in a roundabout way. Isis shared that she, like many of the others, did not want to be a professor, but wanted to be a practitioner. Like so many women, Isis graduated from professional school and worked a series of "survival jobs" before working on her Ph.D. She shares the following about her plan and desires to finish graduate school:

> So being the practical person I am, because I had no interest in doing research at all, I wanted to make myself as marketable as possible, so a person to work with who I knew had money and would get me through a project, even though I had no interest in this project whatsoever, it was a means to an end. I'm very goal oriented and I wanted to get this.

For Isis, becoming a researcher was not a part of the plan, but she viewed it as "a means to an end." And, interestingly, her major professor suggested that she apply for a tenure track position at her graduate institution.

Brianna, who was a non-traditional graduate student, began graduate school more than ten years after completing her undergraduate degree. Upon completing college, Brianna married, had a child, and worked in secondary schools for several years before working on her Masters degree while her husband taught at the same university. Brianna describes much of her pre-doctoral work experiences as being circumstantial. After finishing the Masters degree, she taught as an instructor for ten years at the same institution, but it was never her original plan to do research and teaching:

> But it was a gradual process. I didn't wake up one morning with an epiphany that said "I must do this!" (laugh). I was really sort of, it was circumstantial. I guess the real watershed for me was I wanted to continue teaching at the college/university level. I was going to have to get a doctorate. The alternative was going back into secondary school teaching and having taught for ten years at the college level, I was spoiled. So I decided to take that extra step.

In Brianna's case, she was required to enroll in a doctoral program so that she could continue teaching on the college level. Her "circumstances" also included her spouse moving to another university and taking breaks from work and schooling between having two children. So in Brianna's case, there are a variety of what seem like interruptions that have influenced her academic career decision.

Hazel and Tatyanna, both in their late fifties, also had a break between undergraduate and graduate schools. For Hazel, her goal was to be a performer and, concurrently, was active in the

Black arts scene during the 70's and 80's. Following college, Hazel taught for two years in her hometown and encountered overt racism and discrimination in her newly integrated high school, which led her back to the big city to pursue the arts. Like Isis, she had "survival jobs" working in a factory, as a waitress and several other jobs that would give her flexibility to do attend auditions for performances. Hazel's parents intended for her to go directly to graduate school, but Hazel was determined to pursue her passion in the arts:

> I knew in my mind that I had to try to work in the theatre as a profession before I could do anything else. I knew that if I didn't give myself an opportunity to sink or swim for good or ill or whatever, then I would never be satisfied with my life. So I moved to the city and told my parents that I wanted to go to grad school. Which I did. Sort of (laugh). Later on I finished, but I started grad school but that was a way for me to learn about the arts scene in the city and get involved.

Hazel was committed to her artistic work, but several years later, decided that she was "at a certain age," "getting older," and was "mentally ready to go back to school." Prior to beginning her job at Southern, Hazel was a faculty member at her alma mater for five years. Like many other institutions that needed black faculty, this institution developed a program in which they recruited black faculty and Hazel was offered and accepted the position.

Tatyanna's story of becoming an academic veers even farther from the conventional journey directly towards the professoriate. She, like most of the women, shared that becoming an academic wasn't her plan when she went to college and she "Just sort of ended up here." After graduating from high school, Tatyanna worked for five years in a factory and other odd jobs in her rural hometown before beginning college. Tatyanna poignantly describes one of the reasons behind the desire to go to graduate school:

> Most people decide 'Ok I'm going to do my masters, then a Ph.D. then I'm going to get a job, and get a large house nice car.' Those things never crossed my mind when I was in school. My motive was to make me feel good about myself. It was to make my mother proud of me and to help her see that even though I did have my son, I could accomplish something. To show all the people in my hometown who said I was just going to have more babies… [trails off]

Although she had a child directly after high school, she still managed to graduate from college and was recruited by a major institution for a Masters program. It was in her Masters program that Tatyanna began to realize her potential and received tremendous support from her faculty members:

> When I first got there to the master's program, the department head helped me get my classes and at that time you had to walk back and forth to schedule classes. It wasn't on a computer. So I was registering late and was trying to get classes. So a lot of those classes weren't available so I had to walk back and forth so he could find me different classes. And so I found a class and he said, 'You don't need to take that class now, you can take that when you work on your PhD.' And that was when I had just gotten there to work on my Master's and I thought to myself, 'This man is a fool! I'm going to be working on a PhD??' (laugh). I came here to do this Master's degree and I'm getting it and leaving! Then things changed, and I thought I would stay for a PhD.

The "things" that changed included further discussions with and support from her professors, who mentored her throughout her doctoral program once she began. From the excerpt above, the idea of enrolling in a doctoral program is beyond the realm of possibility for her. It isn't until her

department head shows that the path can exist for her that she begins to realize that is it possible. Once Tatyanna received her doctoral degree, she moved to Southern and worked in a professional position for two years before being hired as a tenure-track faculty member. Similar to Isis, Tatyanna was encouraged by one of her faculty mentors to apply for the open position and that she would be a "good fit."

Nia went directly to college following high school and worked for an advertising agency while searching for funding for graduate school. In fact, Nia worked professional jobs throughout the Masters' degree and her professor encouraged her to get the Ph.D.:

> And I had this long term plan, but someone I met said 'Well, why don't you go full time for the Ph.D.?' And I was like 'I can't afford that; that's for rich people.' And she said 'How would you know if you've never tried?' So I tried and got a fellowship to support my doctoral studies.

Following graduate school, Nia applied for a tenure track position at Southern and finished her dissertation during her first year. Nia shared that she decided to go the academic route because it provided flexibility for her to have children and spend more time with her family. So, for Nia's journey towards becoming an academic, there was a definite plan once she enrolled in graduate school to do academic work.

Amina's journey is akin to Hazel's in that she was a college student during and strongly influenced by her participation in the Black arts scene and civil rights work of the 1970's. Amina went to a historically White college in the northeast and worked in social services and other activist-oriented jobs until beginning graduate school in the South. Following graduate school, she married, had children, worked full-time running a social services agency, and began her

doctoral studies. However, it was not easy for Amina to make this decision and she, too, was supported by her faculty to go for the Ph.D.:

> Faculty really encouraged me and I saw a number of my colleagues going for their doctorates and saying 'You need to do this.' By then I had two babies and was thinking 'How am I going to do this?' I decided that after about a decade of working in social services and private practice, I knew I wanted more. I knew I wanted to go back to school and do my doctorate.

Amina shared that she loved and was energized by her work as an activist and practitioner, but she continued to feel that there was "something missing" in terms of her career. For Amina, her work as an activist was a priority in her life, but was influenced by other Black women researchers and scholars to start the academic career journey:

> When I was debating whether I could leave my work as a practitioner and administrator, I attended the Black Women in the Academy conference in Boston. I went and most of my friends around the country in academe knew I were struggling with leaving our respective practices to do that [research, teaching]. They said I needed to be there. And I got to go and got to hear and sit at the feet of Angela Davis (both laugh) and Dr. Johnetta Cole and you know discuss the works of Lani Guinier and other psychologists, sociologists, and activists. It was just phenomenal. I was just in awe. And they talked to us about guiding research and that this was about us and that we were needed to do this work.

Amina was inspired by the Black women in the academy conference and received support from her doctoral faculty members to pursue academic work. These events led her to apply for her first tenure-track job, which was at Southern. Again, there were people, including other Black

women scholars and her own faculty advisors who suggested that she apply for the job and that her social services work would couple nicely with research and teaching.

Quilter, like the others discussed in this section, had no plans of becoming a professor. In fact, she describes her "[life] course as being so unplanned" but she feels that she is "divinely led" along her career journey and that this journey was by no means a linear or straightforward:

I took a very circuitous route. But exactly that was what I wanted because I didn't want to be confined to one thing. I had gone into the legal field because I didn't know what I wanted to do. And the only way you can really know is to do. So I took a succession of jobs that, luckily for me, were naturally ending kind of things, so I didn't feel like I just happened jump around because I couldn't decide what I wanted to do.

After working several grant funded jobs, Quilter took on more steady work in the northeast. One of her three Black co-workers suggested that she apply for a position teaching in the South. Initially, she was against it and could not make the connection between her work and teaching in an entirely different area. But she viewed the warmer climate and less of a workload as a benefit and decided to accept the position. In conjunction with this benefit, she discovered that teaching was her calling and that her work could inform her academic work:

So moving to teaching where I could get the same money and I only had a few classes a day and nobody was watching what I was doing was just very strange for me. But I was so glad I did what I did because it gave me so much for the classroom. And I found out that was I was supposed to be teaching. That's what I was supposed to do. That's what I was born to do.

Five years later, Quilter was recruited by Southern and accepted a position even thought she had tenure at her first institution. So for many of these women, it was at the suggestion or encouragement of another that aided them in the decision to become an academic.

Summary

The women who took the road less traveled to the academy brought a wealth of life and other work experiences that were preceded by and influenced their decision to become academics. Becoming an academic, as evident in these women's journeys involved working "survival jobs," negotiating their individual beliefs about what options are available to them, and the input and influence of significant family, friends, and mentors. For these women, they stressed the significance of the support and encouragement of their graduate faculty members, co-workers and other mentors in their academic career decision, as well. This is a major connecting thread between all of their career development stories. There was someone or several ones who either helped them open the door to an academic career or pointed the way towards that door. The decision to do academic work did not occur in a vacuum for these women, but was encouraged and influenced by college professors, co-workers or other mentors. Although their paths are different, becoming an academic for these women involved encouragement and support from others.

Perhaps even more significant with these women is the degree of agency evident in how they talk about their careers. As mentioned previously, none of the women gave a direct answer to the question of "When did you *decide* to become a professor?" The answer was along the lines of "It wasn't my decision" or "It just sort of happened" or "I'm still trying to figure that one out." This is not to say that these Black women lacked agency, but I argue that they are, indeed agentic

in that they have each carved out their academic career paths and these paths are varied, diverse and, I believe, are an integral component of their successful career development.

<div align="center">Challenges in the Academy</div>

The theme of challenges in the academy resounded throughout the data. In their stories, it became evident how their race and gender impacts and shapes their daily experiences in the academy. Whether walking across campus past a group of hostile fraternity guys or encountering colleagues who consider them "the token hire" and doubt their capabilities, these women encounter all sorts of challenges they must negotiate. They spoke of dealing with resistant students, hostile colleagues, learning how to "play the game" among other issues encountered as faculty. For this theme, the most commonly reported challenges included tokenism, isolation, and work responsibility overload.

Tokenism

Tokenism was the most commonly reported challenge among the Black women in this study and the problems that accompany being "the only One." Interestingly, only Quilter, Nia, and Hazel are, literally, the only Black faculty members in their department. The other women are either on faculty, or have been in the past, with one or more Black faculty members. Interestingly, they still described themselves as "being the Only One" and reported feeling like the token hire.

A majority of the women shared being recruited and hired at Southern and other institutions not only because they were qualified, but because of institutional charges to increase minority faculty representation. All of the women, except for Tatyanna, who came during the 1980's, were hired during the 1990's, when there was the demand for Black faculty. For example, both Isis and Nancy, who are in the sciences, were told upon beginning their work, how

beneficial it would be for the department to have Black women in such an underrepresented area of study. Isis, in particular, shared feeling insecure and spent much of her time "blending" during those first years:

> At first, all of my time was spent blending. I didn't want to stand out. I didn't want to be looked at as different. There were already a lot of people already assuming that I was here because of some kind of affirmative action or else I would have never gotten in.

Eventually, Isis became comfortable with being "different" than the majority of her faculty. In conjunction with negotiating their position, these women were well aware of the fact that more departments needed to increase Black faculty presence and the potential negative and harmful consequences in terms of how these women would experience faculty life.

Several of the women spoke about being the only Black faculty and being hired to increase representation. Hazel describes being the token Black woman faculty as being both an advantage and disadvantage as she shares her experience as an adjunct faculty member, which is what she did while working on her doctorate:

> And I went through the adjunct thing. There was never more than one or two who were Black or of color, so one of the plum assignments were to get teaching jobs over the summer. So there was a lot of resentment because I would always get picked. You know I was the *Black* one. (both laugh) I mean I did a good job, but this is the thing: I always knew I was part of, whatever institution you're in that's a predominately White institution, you're part of somebody's politics. It has nothing to do with you as a person, but you're always part of someone's racial politics. They need a Black person here. They need your face there. They need

your body. You know, to look the way they want things to look. So it has this

disadvantage, but it also had an advantage: I always had a job! (both laugh). So,

but a lot of the white instructors [would say] 'I never get to work over the

summer!' Well, sorry! (laughs)

In this case, the politics of race within the higher education institution demanded that there be a

"black body" represented at said institution. Interestingly, and keeping with the reality of

learning White people through the position on the margins of academia, Hazel is well aware of

the fact that she is figuratively being consumed by the White people that comprise the institution.

However, the fact that she "always has a job!" is to her advantage and her knowledge of the

racial politics leads her to accept this and see it as beneficial to her.

Interestingly, for Nia, there was not only the issue of coming to a White university, but

coming to the *South* and negotiating southern culture with her northern, Black nationalist

identity. As the first Black woman ever hired in her department, Nia shared that she "was just

trying to fit in" and find her way around the department and university. Although faculty were

initially supportive when she arrived, she still reported feeling "out of sorts" and wondered if she

made the right decision by coming to a White school to research and teach. Nia came to work for

the university during a time when her department was also in need of a more diverse faculty. She

also spoke passionately about being the first Black woman in her department:

At the time I was hired, at the time I was hired, the dean here at that time was

giving a push for diversity in the department. It was pretty much the message that

'Everyone needs one!' [a black scholar]. 'Yeah I got one! I got one!' [referring to

each department's goal to hire faculty of color, or particularly black faculty].

(laughs) So, and it was just interesting. There were a lot of things that went on

like that.

What is intriguing with both Nia and Peach is that their colleagues were highly concerned about

increasing diversity throughout hiring Black faculty. Nia shared that "People think your

blackness is your guarantee" meaning that being a Black body in the department isn't enough,

but these women must often go the extra mile to prove that they are good enough. Peach's

department was also engaged in the same rush for hiring Black faculty and she encountered

hostility from her colleagues upon entering the job at Southern:

It was made known and the head was quite up front about the fact that he wanted

an African American professor in the department. Anyway, he had an agenda for

me. And that included increasing minority enrollment in the department,

developing diversity oriented courses, and things of that nature. So I wasn't

surprised at all. As far as the other faculty were concerned, they were skeptical.

My recruiter hyped me up, talked me up and so a few of them were a little

reluctant to get to know me or my work. Very skeptical and wondered what I

would do here.

Another Black woman was also hired along with Peach, so they relied on one another for support

and encouragement. However, Peach still shared that "they were the only Black faculty in the

department" and experienced the consequences of being "the Only One." Quilter also spoke in

great detail about being the first Black woman hired in her department and the first person hired

under the institution's affirmative action program. Upon arriving to Southern Quilter found that

her colleagues were also resistant to her presence and wondered whether or not she was

"qualified:"

> They needed somebody Black to fill these new faculty lines that were developed
> specifically to bring more of us here. And all of a sudden, all these lines started
> getting filled! (both laugh). And I was the first one they hired. I can remember
> receiving, they started after I agreed to come, sending me newsletters and
> transcripts from meetings. I can remember one transcript where they were this
> discussion about affirmative action and whether or not I would be qualified, all of
> this crap.

Unfortunately, Quilter found a majority of her colleagues unwelcoming and skeptical in that they believed she was an affirmative action case. In addition, being the lone Black woman impacted Quilter such that she made and continues to maintain a healthy sense of self in spite of the lack of diversity:

> It's a challenge to keep a sense of who you are when you don't see yourself
> reflected in your environment. I literally don't look like anybody here. And it was
> a few years before they got anybody Black here. So you know, walking into a
> meeting and I'm always, for years have worn African clothing, hair short. I wore
> dreds for awhile, you know and knowing what people think about that and still
> managing to keep a sense of who you are without at all feeling above anybody,
> but just understanding that who you are is really is ok, was probably more
> difficult in the beginning.

> For these women, tokenism in and of itself is only one small piece of the puzzle. Being

what is commonly known as "The Only One" is coupled with a series of challenges for the

women in this study, including feelings of academic culture shock, isolation, lack of support for

race-related research agendas, greater standards for tenure and promotion, and work responsibility overload.

Isolation

Feeling isolated in their departments is commonly reported in the experiences of Black women in White colleges and universities. In this study, isolation emerged as an additional challenge. With being the token Black women in their departments, several of the women shared that they often felt a sense of isolation. Seeing that both Isis and Nancy are in a field lacking racial and gender diversity, they both reported feeling isolated from other Black faculty. In speaking about her decision to work in academia, Sela noted that "there was the issue of there just not being any black faculty in my area." In Sela's department there are very few African American faculty members and she is the only one who teaches in the Ph.D. program and has Ph.D. responsibilities. This being the case, Sela also felt the isolation and lack of support that many women scholars of color report. Sela also shared that the "people were really standoffish" and found out that "other people of color had difficulties in this department." Also contributing to her sense of feeling isolated, Sela found that, unlike her experience, other incoming White faculty received support and guidance:

> [There are] A lot of hidden things that you know are going on and you just have to cope with from day to day. For example, after being promoted to associate, I served on a number of review committees where people were going up for third year reviews and promotions. I would hear the senior white male faculty say 'Oh, I really took him [faculty under review] under my wings, we invited him over to our house often, spent Thanksgiving with us, when he got here I put him on a project, helped with a grant. Knowing that other people have those kinds of

sources of support that have never been open to me sometimes is a challenge and is so unfair, but it's hidden, so it's difficult to…(trails off) I think making those issues more visible without sounding like you're whining or complaining. Because I think that's the first interpretation that people always bring when people of color make a complaint about being treated unfairly.

Not only does Sela express the fact that she felt isolated and out of the know, but she also shares the consequences for many Black faculty who wish to address this challenge. Sela experiences a type of covert discrimination that creates a no-win situation; if she discusses this with someone, she's "complaining" and if she remains silent, then there are also negative consequences. Black women faculty often speak of both overt and covert discrimination in their careers and the challenges that come along with attempts to address the matter. In Sela's case, the lack of support is obvious, intentional, and completely contradicts any sort of departmental or institutional commitment to supporting women and minority faculty, which was promised to her when she started her academic job.

Nia also shared that she felt isolated, initially because she was "asking questions no one else was willing to ask." She queried her faculty about their diversity policies, initiatives for recruiting and retaining minority students, and research agendas relating to issues of equity in the field. She stated, "They've never seen anyone like me. Here I am asking questions about unfair treatment of faculty of color and students and I'm asking them 'What's our policy on that?' And they're like 'What do you mean?' In this situation, Nia is disrupting and demanding that her faculty be accountable, but this, in turn, leads to her feeling isolated and "lost" during her first few years. Feelings of isolation or "not being in the loop," as spoken by Sela, permeate the women's stories in various contexts. In conjunction with being "out of the loop" or feeling

isolated are the problems these women encounter when trying to develop and build a race-related research agenda and the backlash that can occur when these women do "non-traditional" research.

Out of all the women, Mattie encountered the most difficulty with regards to her race-related research. Mattie came to Southern at a time when there were two other Black women in her department. Even with their presence and support, Mattie felt the department was so large and so many of her colleagues took issue with her research, that she felt like her research was pushed to the margins:

> And I just did not work well. But I think that happens with a lot of people in my department who don't do mainstream stuff. If you do anything with minority groups and women, you get marginalized in some ways. But because I was in two areas and could be marginalized, that made it doubly problematic.

Interestingly, in Mattie's case, she had relatively no support of her faculty and they were displeased throughout her career that she engaged in race and gender oriented research. This is a commonly cited theme in the literature regarding the challenges of Black faculty in that when doing research on race or any other "non-mainstream" area, they are often overlooked by more prominent journals, and discouraged by their department. Hazel also shares the difficulties Black faculty have in terms of getting their non-mainstream research validated and published:

> And the issue in a predominately White institution is first of all, if your research is research in a subject like, African American studies, if it has African American in it, then you have to fight harder to get it to be taken seriously. Unless you're Henry Louis Gates! (both laugh). But if you're Hazel, maybe not. So you know, that's another thing and you can publish but if your pubs, you have the *African*

American Review is just as good as the more White, mainstream journals. You

have to have a refereed journal. Maybe they're not the journals *you* [White

faculty] wish for us to publish in.

Although Hazel is well-known in her field for doing quality and cutting edge research, she still

lamented over her experience trying to get published in journals that were more accepted in her

field. Hazel publishes quite frequently in journals with a race and gender theme and has worked

hard to get her department to accept those journals as being credible and worthy.

Tatyanna and Amina also spoke about the obstacles they encountered as they tried to

establish and continue research agendas. Tatyanna's situation is quite different than the others in

that her position at Southern is geared more towards service, as opposed to research. But she is

still required to do research. She shared her dismay with several of her colleagues who felt her

research was "too service-oriented" and "too practical." Tatyanna's research has involved action

research projects and other social-justice oriented programs. Not only does she facilitate

workshops and other services in the local communities, but several of her research projects have

this focus. Amina, who has an extensive history of activist work, also bridged the gap between

this work and her research. Throughout her career, Amina has received great support from her

senior faculty members, but, like Tatyanna, has encountered hostility from other colleagues who

do not support her applied research projects. Lack of support for non-traditional research, such as

those that are race-related, is reported by several of these women to be a major concern in their

academic careers.

A majority of the women in this study reported experiences of isolation as faculty

members. Being the token Black, or one of two in a department, and the accompanying

experience of isolation are two relevant issues to the study of these successful Black women

professors. Although these women are successful, have met or surpassed requirements for

advancement in their respective fields, it has by no means been an easily traveled road.

Furthermore, these problems manifest themselves in myriad ways throughout their lives, from

early schooling to the professoriate. Being the only one and making their ways along the margins

of the institution requires great skill, but they are met with formidable tasks in their attempts to

navigate the career ladder.

Work Responsibility Overload

A third category that emerged under challenges in the professoriate included the

dilemmas of managing and negotiating the multiple demands of being a faculty member. Not

only are the women responsible for research, teaching and service, but, as Black women, they

often have to accomplish more to be considered just as good. Several of the women also spoke

about the difficulties of balancing work responsibilities with family and other non-academic life

responsibilities. The women in this study spoke in great detail about issues surrounding

promotion and tenure, particularly work responsibility overload. Brianna shared that being a

faculty member requires balancing and negotiating multiple roles and responsibilities:

> Another thing that's challenging is having, being able to juggle a lot of balls at the
>
> same time. Because at a professor at this university, even when you choose not to,
>
> or not being promoted to full, even without that, you're still constantly juggling a
>
> lot of things. Between preparing for classes, teaching, dealing with students,
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> presenting, serving on committees, writing journals articles. Sometimes doing
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> grant writing, just constantly juggling and being able to feel good about what
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> you're doing. Not just doing things, but juggling and being able to do a good job
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> at all the things you're doing. That's the real challenge.

It can be posited that all faculty, regardless of race, are extraordinarily stretched in terms of devoting time to research, teaching and service. However, race and gender are additional layers in terms of having to be available and a resource for Black and other minority students, extra service on "diversity" or "multicultural" committees across campus, among other responsibilities not necessarily encountered by White faculty. These activities, in turn, can prohibit Black women faculty from doing the necessary work to be promoted and tenured because research is primary. As a result of teaching and service overload, Black faculty are often unfairly evaluated and are, according to Nancy, "required to do more work than White faculty just to be on the same level as White faculty." So a quagmire exists for these women: They are oftentimes hired to support minority students, to diversify the faculty and research, participate in diversity and multicultural initiatives. However, they are still expected to conduct research, obtain funding, publish and be excellent teachers. Although there are very few promotion and tenure "horror stories" among the women in this study, they all express the challenges they and other Black faculty face with regards to working "twice as hard" and trying to meet often unrealistic expectations.

Out of the eleven Black women in this study, Mattie, by far had the most taxing experience with getting tenure. In her ten plus years at Southern, Mattie has faced and jumped over many hurdles set up by the faculty in her department. Not only was her research on race and gender related issues marginalized, but it was never truly accepted by her senior faculty. Therefore, she described her promotion to associate professor and tenure journey was a tumultuous one:

I felt my tenure case was pretty open and shut. But I fought like hell. I had done what I felt I was asked to do and it clearly, for me it became an issue of the people

in my area who were problematic. I think a correlation of that has to do with race

and what I do. Because what I do [in terms of research] was never really valued in

this department. But it worked out fine. I got through the college and university

level, but part of the problem had to do with that cohort of people who felt I

shouldn't have been here. And there is no value for what I do in terms of what

some of the people think here.

Nancy, by far, has had a tremendous amount of support from her faculty members. However,

although Nancy's situation was one in which her faculty supported her research, she too

experienced the commonly noted bias towards Black women faculty when they try to get

promoted and tenured:

I found out the other people getting promoted hadn't done as much as I had. You

know I thought all those people were so accomplished and at some point,

someone will tell you what others have done in order to get promoted. And I

realized I had done that. Like one of the things, when I went up both times, I had

a couple of people who felt like I hadn't done enough. However, they voted

unanimously yes. But the last person who got promoted was a white man who had

a higher research FTE than I. So when I went up for associate, he had been the

person who had gone up the year before me. He had 60 FTE and I had 50 FTE.

And I had as much money and as many pubs as him and he was unanimous, but I

still had a couple of people who thought I didn't do enough. And I asked the

question "Well it was enough for him!" When I went up for full, there was kind of

this same perception, that, and we used to say this back in the 60's and 70's: That

you had to do twice as much if you're a woman and Black in order to be considered almost as good.

Despite having done as much work and securing just as many grants, both Nancy and Nia still experienced the age old expectation for Black people to do "twice as much work" to be considered on par with Whites. Nia, who had to appeal the tenure decision, expressed dismay at having a wealth of teaching responsibilities, but still under the expectation that her research will be the top priority. She shared a feeling of her research "always being in addition to my [her] classes", as she taught only undergraduates for five years of the ten years at Southern and is just recently working with her first cohort of doctoral students. Interestingly, Nia also reported that there are White faculty in her department who have fewer publications and years teaching experience, but were afforded the opportunity to work with graduate students upon being hired. Peach also had to appeal her tenure and both promotion decisions. Although she wasn't very specific about the details, she described the process as "rough and rocky" but she eventually made it through and was successful.

Although Hazel and Amina did not have negative tenure and promotion stories, they both shared the difficulties that other Black faculty encounter, including balancing other duties and responsibilities with the requirements to research and publish. Amina's described her process as being "smooth," but expressed extreme disappointment and worry about the other Black woman's experience in her department. Surprisingly, the other Black woman had more publications, grants, and conducted more research than Amina, but she was denied tenure and had to leave Southern. Amina describes this as being similar to "the Only One" meaning that there can only be one Black faculty member to get tenure; it had to be her or the other Sister.

Hazel describes the process as a "game" but places high value on doing work that is important, as well:

> There are people with lots of worse tenure stories than mine. It's a challenge because the game is set up in a particular way and you have to play it that way in order to get the tenure. So, in the meantime, you have to do what you think is important and to do the work that you think should be done whether they think, whatever they think of it. So it's kind of a juggling act. That's the way I see it.

This "juggling act" manifests itself in the women's stories not only as they sought to be promoted and gain tenure, but several of the women also spoke about the demands of juggling the work with family and other responsibilities. Quilter describes herself as being extremely committed to women and minority students. As discussed earlier, Black faculty are often called upon to be mentors, other-mothers and support systems for minority students. Quilter expressed the difficulties with balancing service, tenure, and other life responsibilities:

> At some point it became clear to me that in this push to get tenure, your kids get lost somewhere in this process. And you realize you are making a choice that you don't like making. And especially for a Black female, who's at a predominately White institution, the choice is awful. Part of what you have in that choice is some non-negotiables. I have to speak with students groups. I have to do that because I understand that's part of what keeps Black folks here and keeps them connected. Well, there aren't but so many hours in a day. Between work, which is your meetings and classes and things, and doing what I feel like I have to do, which is being a resource for the students, and then being there for my kids in that day

(trails off). It was like, 'Ok, something's got to give.' And it was my kids and I didn't want that to happen.

For Quilter, the demands of research, teaching, being there for her kids at Southern and her own children was difficult to balance and she described it as a "day to day balancing act." Similar to Quilter, Nia had to shift her priorities, especially seeing that she has three young children. When Nia began her career at Southern, she was ABD and completed the degree in her first year. She also had a child and one on the way. Nia felt that there were "sacrifices to be made" because she chose to spend more time with her kids and family. She also shared that other faculty members had trouble understanding how she could leave work early to participate in her kids' activities and still manage to do her work. Nia believes that, although she may not have as many publications as expected, she willingly made that sacrifice to fully participate in family life.

Out of all the women, Sela, Brianna, Mattie, Tatyanna, Nia, Amina and Quilter have children. Brianna began her career at Southern as a doctoral student with teenaged kids. Even though she described her spouse as being supportive, she still experienced difficulties balancing her doctoral studies with family:

> It was challenging and perhaps more challenging than I even realized at the time. One of the things I would do, it wasn't bad during the evening because we've always emphasized academic excellence. So we expected our children to have their noses to the grindstone doing their homework. So it was no big deal because I did my homework too. But the other thing I would do, because I'm a morning person, I would get up at 4:00 a.m. every morning and between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. have three hours of uninterrupted time to read and work. So by the time the children got up, I had already gotten in three hours. So that was ok. But

clearly I was not a stress free person. But it is a challenge and I'm not going to sit here with the wisdom of Solomon (both laugh) and say 'I conquered that!!' I don't think I did. I did what I thought replicated what my own experience growing up was. Always focusing on academics!

All of the women have adult children, except for Sela, who currently has two elementary aged children. Although Sela is just as busy with balancing her life as the other women, she described having her children as being an "empowering experience" and felt as if she could "accomplish anything":

With both kids I felt an immediate sense of empowerment that was unexpected. I was someone who just dreaded childbirth and was really fearful. But with each kid, I felt like such a sense of 'I can do anything!' But I had spurts in my productivity in the first two years after each kid. I always attributed it to a sense of strength and empowerment after I had them. Having that empowerment freed me to make choices that only I was concerned about. So after they were born, I just didn't care about what other people thought about what I should be doing. I made decisions professionally based on what I wanted and what I wanted to achieve. And it always paid off. So it was a really great thing for me professionally.

Like Quilter, Amina had two pre-teenaged children when she started at Southern and found it difficult to meet the demands of research, her many community activist-oriented activities, commuting to the university, and being there for her children. A typical day for Amina began at five o'clock in the morning to finishing preparing for class or meetings, ensuring her children arrived safely to school, commuting to the Southern and arriving home after dark most

evenings. She described this routine as being "challenging," but felt that she did the best she could for her own success as an academic and for her family. For the women with work and family responsibilities, there existed an on-going balancing act between maintaining one's own sanity, their research and teaching responsibilities, and ensuring that they devote time and energy to their families.

Summary

For this theme, the women in this study shared numerous challenges and obstacles they encountered throughout their academic careers at Southern. First, the women spoke of being "the token Black woman" in their departments, even when there was another Black faculty in their respective departments. With this, the women reported feeling a sense of culture shock in their attempts to learn and negotiate the academic culture. They also shared feeling isolated, marginalization and other issues involving their research, which is often race-related. Several of these Black women also shared that they felt as if they had to "work twice as hard" and that this was a common phenomenon with Black faculty. The women also encountered the problem of work overload and experienced difficulties with balancing service expectations with their requirements for promotion and tenure. Finally, coupled with work overload, several of the women reported that managing academic and family life are "juggling acts" and shared their thoughts on balancing academic work with other life responsibilities.

From Surviving to Thriving in the Academy

Many faculty of color describe their journey as "surviving" the system (Nancy), or "playing the game" (Hazel). So despite the challenges, the "unfair" rules and other obstacles, these women continue their work and are tremendously successful, both by personal and

institutional standards. The following excerpt spoken by Nancy illustrates the challenge of negotiating the need to "survive" and continue her work:

> I'd like to consider myself as surviving the system. Not many of us do it. Black, white, male or female. I managed to survive the system. Because the system is the natural selection system. Not everybody is supposed to make it; only the best are supposed to make it. Unlike other systems, the only time we lose a student is if they drop out or cheat or something like that; we'll kick 'em out. Short of that we graduate everybody we let in. It's like 'Many shall come; only a few shall survive.' It's like that's how it's supposed to work. It's competitive on ideas. But, yeah, surviving the system.

The position of being a Black woman in an environment that is overtly and covertly hostile and unwelcoming leads these women to develop ways of surviving and thriving, thus enabling them to be success by both their standards and institutional standards. So what are the ways in which these women survive? How do these Black women learn to negotiate their responsibilities of being an academic? More importantly, how do these women do more than just survive on the rungs, but thrive and be professionally and personally fulfilled?

Although the Black women in this study reported numerous challenges encountered as an academic, their collective story reveals a resilience and determination which aid them in overcoming the obstacles. The women in the study reported a variety of strategies, tools and other mechanisms that illustrate their desire to be successful, even in the midst of the previously discussed challenges in their academic careers. This study found that multiple support systems were critical as they facilitated the women's academic career success. There are three relevant categories that reflect the theme of surviving to thriving. These include having faculty mentoring

and community-building as vital support systems, learning from previous work and school experiences, and defining themselves as being "more than an academic." These career and life strategies aided them in learning the academic landscape thereby facilitating, in part, their success.

Faculty Mentoring and Networking as Vital Support Systems

A close examination of these women's career stories revealed that support systems are a critical component of not only how they become successful, but how they survive in what can be an unpleasant environment. Faculty mentoring is a significant contributor for Black faculty in terms of learning what it takes to be successful. From learning the academic landscape to awareness of the different journals to submit specific work to, mentors serve in a number of capacities for Black faculty. All of the women in this study spoke to faculty support and mentoring as absolutely critical to academic career success. This does not mean that the women *needed* to have a mentor to be successful, but they all spoke of the importance of mentoring along their academic career journeys. As mentioned previously, the White academy was not intended for the presence of successful Black women faculty and there is continued resistance on many levels. Therefore, engaging in mentoring relationships became one of the means through which their success was facilitated.

Isis, who came to Southern in her mid-thirties, reported feeling "intimidated" and "nervous" about interacting with and asking questions of senior faculty members during those first years. Isis recalled that her first few years, like the other women, were a time period in which she "was feeling her way around." Isis shares that her mentor was instrumental in helping her gain confidence to ask for supplies, funding for projects and the like:

I've gotten more because I realize when you say stuff it gets done! (laughs) I'm not too sure what it is, but a lot of the shyness was all in my mind. Anyway, I would say things like, 'I'm going to ask for this and see what happens.' And I would say 'I've had a really old microscope for three years and I need a new one.' And they'd be like 'Ok' and I'd be like 'Whoa!' And I began to realize that, in this system, if you begin assuming stuff, if you keep your mouth shut, and I got this from Dr. Mentor then nobody knows what you want. And sure, there are some things that you may not get, but you wouldn't have gotten it anyway if you hadn't asked for it.

Also significant for Isis's promotion and tenure journey is the support of black senior women faculty who wanted her to be successful with her work:

I remember Dr. Mentor came into my office and I said, 'I need someone to tell me what I need to get promoted' and she said, 'Two articles per year and $125,000 in funding.' I said 'I'm never going go get that!' She said 'Well, you're never going to get promoted' and walked out (both laugh). And she's just like that; very cut and dry. However, interestingly she emailed me saying 'I'm putting through this grant and you're on it' and you're on it. And it got funded. So basically from talking to people in the teaching program and talking to people like Dr. Mentor, and all the mentors here in the department.

Not only was departmental support extremely beneficial for Isis, but having support outside of one's department can further validate and affirm Black women's work. As discussed in the previous theme, Mattie faced great resistance to her race and gender-oriented research in her humanities department. As a result, Mattie found very little support from White faculty, in

particular, even at the senior levels. In turn, she stressed the need for mentorship outside of her department and the university. Mattie thinks "it's important to have not just institutional mentors, but national and international mentors. And I have. I have a lot of people outside of Southern U that have contributed as much as anyone inside Southern."

Brianna's situation differs from any of the women in that she and her spouse are in the same field and department at Southern. Brianna describes her research as non-mainstream when compared to other faculty members' agendas. Brianna stresses the mentoring of her spouse and faculty mentor as the most important source of encouragement as she sought to break new ground with her research agenda. Her faculty members supported her research, but because she is only one of three scholars working on her particular topic in the country, she often found it difficult to find someone who really understands and can relate to her research. But, similar to Mattie, she was able to find her mentors that could relate to her work:

> It helps if you have a mentor and I was fortunate that I have that. My informal mentor is my husband and I have a formal mentor that I got to choose who was one of the members of my dissertation committee. They're very helpful. For example, you need to get yourself out there. Now one of the things that interesting is that they're either doing it at an earlier stage, or as a graduate student, I sort of slipped under the radar. But I was fortunate because in doing my own research, I found my own mentors.

Nancy, the "planner" was the first Black woman faculty in her department and, like the other women, has found mentoring relationships to be important for her career development. When asked about what has had the greatest impact on her career success in terms of support, Nancy also shared that building and sustaining these relationships was instrumental:

Having good mentors. No doubt. Because you have to have somebody to give you

reality checks. You have to have somebody to bounce ideas off of. You have to

have somebody to help you network. A good mentor will do it. I have found that

good mentors are not defined by gender or race at all. And, it tends to be people

who have a really good understanding of what people need at that particular time

and how to say it.

As evidenced in the quote above, Nancy feels that race and gender haven't necessarily been a

factor in terms of choosing mentors. For instance, Nancy and Isis spent the first five or six years

of their careers co-teaching with senior White male faculty members and both describe the

experience as being tough, but they were able to learn how to manage and teach in the

classroom.

Hazel's experience in a collaborative department slightly differed from the other women,

due to the nature of her work in the arts:

We [faculty] are forced in these situations of collaboration. Whereas in other

departments, they are not. So that, I think that has an impact on how we behave.

Also they have been very cooperative. We have an honors and awards committee

and I've had an opportunity to get some of the honors and awards. I just received

a major award, and that could not have happened without the cooperation of the

committee and the department. I feel very fortunate to be in this department.

As a faculty in the arts, Hazel also finds that "collaboration and creativity work together." This,

in turn, became a factor insofar as helping her adjust to faculty life at Southern and learn what it

took to become successful in her field.

Tatyanna found her department head to be a wonderful mentor when she started her faculty work at Southern. She shared that even thought they "didn't see eye to eye on a lot of things," that she was still very supportive. Further, she reported that her head would "support us in front of anybody, regardless if we were disagreeing." So when it was time for Tatyanna to go up for promotion and tenure, she provided examples of dossiers and gave constant feedback while Tatyanna was preparing.

Several of the women found the presence and support of other Black faculty and "sister networks" to be a critical part of their thriving in academia. Sela, Nia, Peach, Amina and Quilter spoke passionately about the need for a greater Black faculty presence at Southern and Black faculty being a critical presence in their careers. These women shared that building community and networks among Black women faculty is also a vital component of their career success. Sela found the encouragement and available learning opportunities from White faculty to be lacking. Therefore, she found it necessary to build strong ties and relationships with Black faculty in and outside of Southern. The opportunity to network with other black scholars and building community with Black women faculty was a significant part of Sela's success. She shared, "You know fortunately there was email and I would meet other young Black women starting their careers at conferences and we really worked together to support each other and find out what was going on."

This is especially significant for Sela, seeing that she experienced isolation in her home department. Having a collective of Black women across the country is a means through which to feel affirmed in her work. Interestingly, and connected to this, it was also the lack of departmental support that, in part, fueled her desire and drives to be successful:

You know I wasn't receiving the same kinds of work benefit that other people got who had close relationship with their peers or people who collaborate. But in hindsight I see it as pretty liberating because that meant I wasn't always kind of having to explain myself, define my work or interests. I could just do my work, work with my students, send stuff out, be successful and not always have to negotiate my values or interests. And I think had there been an emphasis on working with senior faculty, there would have been a lot of time that having to negotiate research interests, strategies, methodologies, all those things.

As opposed to giving up, Sela viewed the lack of support as somewhat of an advantage in that she could take charge of her research agenda and do the work she felt was important.

Like Sela, Peach also found support to be lacking once she started at Southern. She described the transition to Southern as being difficult because her two mentors at the previous institution really aided in facilitating her beginning success as a researcher. In addition to these two women, she also received support from her major professor and became acquainted with other Black faculty across campus. She described the Black faculty presence at Southern as "refreshing" and a "welcomed change."

Nia and Amina were also greatly encouraged by Black faculty and learned a great deal about negotiating the responsibilities of her academic career. Nia describes her first year as "not knowing very much about a Research I institution." However, meeting Black faculty across campus allowed her to "ask questions that I [she] couldn't necessarily ask White faculty members," including questions about their promotion and tenure process, classroom experiences, and the like. Nia also shared the influence of her race-conscious upbringing on her desire to create Black networks and support systems:

And if you don't have support around you, you end up doing bad. I spend a lot of time with new faculty. We have a sister writing group, we get together for lunch. Because we can't keep using the excuse 'They won't play with me.' We have what is capable to make this happen. Why are we still trying to knock on the door? How do we play a role in this situation? Part of this is growing up as a separatist, you know (laugh). We were like 'let's go out here and do this together'.

As opposed to demanding that White faculty support Black faculty, Nia posits that Black faculty have the tools and the agency to create their own successful communities.

Amina also shared her experiences with being mentored by colleagues at Southern, as well as other mentors who assisted her along her varied career path. Amina is one of the women that had a variety of work experiences and whose work is heavily informed by her activism in the community. Although she had previous teaching experience, Amina found that creating community with other Black women faculty on campus to be a "saving grace" for her:

You know I thought back to the Black Women in the Academy Conference, and actually met sisters working here [Southern] when I came. We would, and still do, you know the ones that are still here, go to lunch, have our book club and just be there for one another. It's so hard, but I needed and still need these women in my life. Not just for work, but just daily encouragement in general.

Quilter also spoke of being involved on campus with Black faculty. She came to Southern at a time during which the school was intensively recruiting Black faculty and, as mentioned earlier, was the only Black woman in her department. She shared that making connections with Black faculty "provided important building blocks for me, the professor, and

me the Black person trying to maintain a measure of sanity in this department." So, like the others, creating and sustaining relationships or networks among Black faculty on campus was a critical link to not just surviving on the bottom rungs of academia, but thriving and flourishing in that environment.

Learning from Previous Work Experiences

In their attempts to learn the academic landscape and all that is involved with being a researcher, teacher, colleague and the like, the women in this study used a variety of strategies. Moving from surviving to thriving at Southern, for several of the women, meant engaging in learning experiences, whether planned or unplanned. Learning from their previous experiences as post-doctoral students or adjunct faculty, for example, proved to have an impact on various aspects of their academic life at Southern. These women were able to take those prior experiences and apply that knowledge gained to various situations.

When Sela first started her work at Southern, she was overwhelmed by the professional demands and becoming acclimated to her department and the field of study in general. She shares the following insightful story about her attempts to reach out to senior scholars and "learn it all:"

> You know we moved here in fall and I had to go a conference to give a presentation in Canada. And I asked the professor next to me some questions [about academe] and he said 'Look, you're just going to have to figure this out on your own! I can't give you all the answers.'

Following this, Sela shared her "hurt feelings" about the encounter, but, eventually realized that this man, indeed, could not and would not provide the answers. Sela would in fact have to step in the classroom, set out to write that first research article, learn how to negotiate various aspects of

her career, among a host of other experiences that constitute an academic career. Although Sela and the other women in the study spoke to the value of mentoring, they were also aware that they would have to make decisions and choices on their own. The previous excerpt provides critical insight into what it will take for these women to "learn the ropes" and be successful.

Isis and Nancy, the scientists, both had the chance to do an internship and post-doctoral work, respectively. Prior to beginning her doctoral work, Isis worked in a research lab as a resident and continued this work once she began working on her doctoral degree. She spoke to the benefits of having that experience and how other students would benefit from the hand-on practical experience:

> So I did a combined residency and doctoral program at the same time working to pay my way. Actually working and getting my hands dirty, which was awesome! I still try to convince my colleagues here that one of the best ways to train a scientist is to throw them out there and see what happens. That's how my dad taught me how to swim and my mother almost cried. He threw me in the pool he watched me and as he fished me out he said, 'Keep swimming!' He threw me in and I came right up to the top.

Isis continued to speak about the value of that experience and uses this approach as she mentors and guides her students through their research projects. Like Isis, Nancy also worked as in a postdoctoral position for two years. Ever the planner, Nancy shared that she knew this job would make her more marketable once she completed the doctorate:

> I turned down I don't know how many faculty jobs to do a post doc or research internship. I knew I needed more experience to be a successful faculty member. And I turned down the money to get training to have a shot at being a decent

researcher. I mean, I turned down $60,000 jobs to get a post doc! (both laugh)

That's a lot for a graduate student. I looked at it and said 'What are my chances of

getting tenure?' I really didn't feel like I was ripe yet. I looked at what I thought I

needed to do and whether I knew how to do it. I knew I didn't know how to do it

and a lot of people thought I was a fool.

Nancy follows this with describing her foresight in what it took to be a successful scientist. She knew that the postdoctoral position would allow her to work with a seasoned faculty member. With this experience, she began to learn how to write grants, set up a research lab, write and prepare for lectures, among other necessary tools she would take with her into her faculty position at Southern.

Many of the other women in the study spoke about their earlier teaching experiences and how they learned how to manage the college classroom, become a solid lecturer and the like. Isis, Sela, Mattie, Brianna, Hazel, Amina and Quilter all shared the ways in which they learned from those experiences prior to coming to Southern and even in their first year on faculty at Southern. Out of all the women, Sela and Mattie had no previous internship or teaching experience before starting their first year at Southern. Sela recounted feeling "vulnerable" and "nervous" about being in the classroom, seeing that she wasn't much older than the students. Mattie had an opportunity to teach during her final year of graduate school, but decided that wouldn't have been feasible with her schedule. Instead, Mattie shared how she over-prepared and focused all of her energies on learning how to teach that first year:

I really enjoyed my first class and I put a lot into it. I still feel like I'm learning

and getting new ideas, but I think the difference between now and then is that I'm

much more confident. You know I don't feel like I have to have these particular

notes (laugh) because when I first started, I would plan the entire class period everyday. And I would have a sheet that would have a 'Before class' 'During class' and 'After class' section (both laugh). I would have a list and every single thing lined up. I eventually learned how to relax in the classroom and not be so agenda driven!

Mattie reported that after this first year, she "became more comfortable" and was even more prepared for her second year of teaching.

Upon teaching at Southern, Isis found it comforting to be a co-instructor in her assigned science courses. She shared that in the sciences, there are hardly any sole instructors for the large lecture classes. She also stated that she really did not get a sense of what it mean to be a professor until she was able to develop her own lectures, as opposed to using standard lectures used by other professors. She found this to be a pivotal experience in her development as a teacher:

Once I started having to put together the web lessons myself and bringing in my own lectures, I started to become more fascinated with what makes a good lecturer. I learned that standing up in front of a classroom talking to them means nothing, so what makes for the learning experience, what makes it go over and become understood and held on to? And then that's when the little light bulb came on and it's like 'Oh my gosh, this is so fun!' I think it was at that moment, or that period of time, was when I truly became a professor. Because up until then I was a lecturer. I wasn't instructing anybody, I was just standing up and talking to them, showing them pictures someone else had made. And once I had gotten

completely caught up in a more effective way to transfer knowledge, I think that's

when I became a professor.

Isis' words are powerful in that they convey a moment in the beginning of her teaching at

Southern during which she learned the most appropriate way for her to create a classroom in

which optimal learning could take place. However, she had to have the experience of using other

professors' lectures, notes and slides to come to the realization that this method would not

provide the most ideal experience for the students.

Brianna and Amina both taught undergraduates and graduate students prior to beginning

their doctoral work. Brianna taught for ten years as an instructor at her spouse's institution where

he was a full-time faculty member. She shared that these years of teaching gave her a solid

foundation in the college classroom. For example, when she started her instructor position, she

developed her own lecture notes, tests, and course reading packets. She found this was extremely

challenging for the students, but continues this practice even today teaching undergraduates and

graduate students at Southern. Amina taught undergraduates and graduate students prior to

working on her doctoral degree. She was offered to teach classes in her home department and,

eventually developed training modules and programs for her job in social services. She described

the combination of teaching on the college level, in the workplace, and in different community

programs as "making me [her] more comfortable" when she began teaching at Southern. Further,

she describes her approach and social justice-oriented nature of her Southern classes as being

strongly influenced by these previous experiences.

Differing from the other women, Hazel and Quilter came to Southern from tenure-track

positions at their respective schools. Hazel, who taught on the east coast in an all-White

environment shared that she grew tired of the all-White college environment and often wished for something different:

> It [the school] was not my favorite place in the world, but I needed a place to get started. Everybody needs a place to get started. So, nothing particularly bad happened. It's just that there weren't a lot of Black students or professors. So I didn't get to teach a lot about my interest in the Black arts. I taught in our general studies area. I got to work in the Masters program, but that wasn't bad because I learned how to teach a range of things. I guess the more different things you can do, the better off you are. I guess it prepared me for coming down here, as well.

So for Hazel, although it was her desire to be around more Black students and faculty, she used these years at her school to her advantage in that she was able to teach a variety of courses to both graduates and undergraduates. Like Hazel, Quilter also taught for a few years in a tenure track position, and felt it was her "divine calling" to come and work at Southern. She spoke about her teaching experiences at her first institution and her "practical and real-life" approach in that environment as stemming from her work in the legal field and her desire for students to be successful and "action-oriented" in their future workplaces. In her years teaching at Southern, Quilter has successfully integrated her individual social justice centered beliefs and goals with her course subject matter to, in her words, "help create some sort of change that we can see and not just sit around and talk about." Both Quilter and Hazel brought a different experience to academe, in that they understood various aspects of the academic career upon arriving at Southern. Although they did not go up for tenure and promotion at their previous schools, for example, they were well aware of the rules, politics and other tasks at hand in order to achieve said goal and had that first-hand experience of being on the tenure-track.

The women in this study were, overall, able to take their individual experiences as postdoctoral researchers, adjunct faculty, and professionals and use those to facilitate various aspects of their careers at Southern. For a majority of the women, their previous experiences as teachers in a variety of settings aided in acclimating them to a new college classroom environment. Learning from these previous experiences in the classroom, the workplace and other appropriate arenas constitutes a significant aspect in the movement from survival to thriving in the academic environment for these women.

More than an Academic

The third category that reflects the shift from survival to thriving involves the women in this study defining themselves as being more than just an academic. Ultimately thriving and feeling successful as academics, for these Black women, involved being "differently academic" in terms of how they, in the end, define success for themselves based on their position as Black women in a White university. A majority of the Black women in this study understood their lives to encompass much more than their work as academics. Further, they understood their purpose in academia as social justice-oriented in that they highlight their commitment to Black, women and other minority students and faculty. In other words, as Nancy purports, "It's so much bigger than tenure, girl."

As Black women academics encounter various obstacles and barriers, including but not limited to lack of research support, tokenization, challenges to authority and credibility, overt and covert discrimination among others, it becomes clear that they must develop an understanding of success as it applies to their individual lives that can positively contribute to their survival within the academic system. Achieving success is commonly understood as accomplishing something that one plans or wishes to accomplish. Embedded within this is the

presence of a definite start and finishing point, and that the path to the finish line is linear. In the academic world, career success if often defined as achieving tenure and promotion to the associate then full professorial levels.

The academic career path is typically constructed as being linear with a clear and definite steps or goals to achieve the aforementioned measure(s) of success. Other markers of academic success include establishing a national/international reputation in the respective research field, excelling in classroom teaching, and the like. However, in light of these expectations, success for women in the academy, particularly women of Color is measured differently. For many of the women in this study, I found that they all defined success as encapsulating more than the above institutional markers. Both Isis and Hazel's understanding of their career success incorporates more than moving up the job ladder. According to Isis, family and the pursuit of outside interests is what contributes to her feeling of success:

> I am extremely committed to my family and I know that once you get into those
>
> [work] positions and you don't have as much latitude. And my whole goal is that I
>
> want to be able to pursue outside interests as well as my academic interests.

In this case, Isis takes a radical turn from the traditional understanding of success in that she incorporates the desire to have "outside interests" and deems that a critical component of her life. She troubles the notion that academics should only have academic interests. Foregrounding family life is also an important part of Isis' understanding of her own success. She shares the following:

> Put your family life first. I mean no one ever died and said 'I wish I'd spent more'
>
> and this sounds like a contradiction, but no one on their deathbed ever said 'I wish
>
> I'd spent more time in the office.' But really put your family first and try to find

that balance between putting family first and doing the best that you can at your

job to show them you can do what you do well.

Hazel, Amina, and Tatyanna's perspective of their success as Black women in the academy is

vastly different from the norm. These women feel that being an academic is not who they are in

their totality, but it is what they do for a living. Hazel shares the following sentiment:

I've always had the attitude that I can go manage a Burger King (laughs)! You

know! (laughs) And that may seem weird. But I didn't put any of my self-esteem

on the line. I never let myself feel that was a part of it. It's hard to explain, but

because people will try to, if they see a vulnerability or weakness, they will try to

exploit that. Black or White. So what you have to do, like I say, whenever I have

failure or if something doesn't work, I'm like 'I tried that, and it didn't work.'

Hazel takes a very practical and pragmatic approach to being successful in the academy in that

she sees it as a job to be done that has no larger connection to her own beliefs about her self-

worth. Unlike many other academics, this is her job; it's what she does for a living, but it is not

who she is. Amina also adopts a similar perspective on academic work and life outside academic:

This is a job, it's not my life. My life is beyond this. Relationships and things. I

have a family and that's important; those relationships with my family come first.

And when these people piss me off, I can go home and talk to my husband,

girlfriends, sister or somebody and share. I don't have to run across the hall and

tell somebody next door; I have a life outside of here. So once you know this isn't

your total life, you don't take it so to heart. It's a job.

Tatyanna also views this work as a "job" and shares that "I don't jump when they say jump,"

meaning that she is here at Southern to do her job and is not threatened or intimidated by

administrators or White faculty. Indeed, Tatyanna has accomplished a great deal in her almost twenty years at Southern and her current priorities reflect a shift from *being* to *doing* academic work:

> Do I want to spend more of my time doing articles or what's necessary to get promoted, or do I want to spend my time doing other things? And I choose to do other things. Work is a job. It's a job for me now. And I have to do it to earn a living. But because of my nature, I'm going to do the best that I can.

Part and parcel of defining their success as academics differently, a majority of the women shared that their work, whether it be research or teaching, is often in the name of service. Although Black women faculty are often overwhelmed with service commitments to students, faculty, and others, they deem service as a critical responsibility of being a Black faculty. Service, for these women becomes a source of empowerment and another strategy used to thrive in the White environment. There already exists the expectation that Black women serve the masses, be "other mothers" (Collins, 2000). These women engage in a counterstance to the dominant notion of service in that they use it as a tool to facilitate their success and simultaneously keep themselves sane. For all the women thus far, having a 'larger goal' or a 'larger commitment' is a significant aspect of career success. There is a social justice commitment evident in their tellings. Mattie and Nia spoke passionately about the greater meanings of their research and why they do the work they've set out to accomplish. For instance, Mattie, who was surrounded by a loving and committed African American community growing up, highlights her commitment to more than just academic work:

> I was interested in how to help people today. I did have a high sense of 'There are things going on in the African American community and I can do something

about those things in this way.' I couldn't just make a practical connection with my original research focus. And as I indicated before, a part of my growth and development was asking 'What can you do as an African American that's bigger than teaching? Bigger than becoming a teacher? And part of that was 'What can you do in your community?'

Mattie views her research as not being a means to an end, but, through her work, she sought to address the issues and problems in the Black community. The fact that she drastically changed her research agenda speaks to her unwavering desire to, in her words, "make things better." Like Mattie, Nia's work also serves a greater purpose:

Some people do their research for the sake of research. It's the next publication. Yes, I need publications, but if I don't make a make a difference in the lives of children, if my research doesn't really transform the field, then I haven't done it. I can't just pick up and say 'I don't want to do this anymore' or 'Oh, I'll pick up on something else.' It's a passion to the work that some of my colleagues don't have. That's a challenge because of that passion and I will approach it very cautiously and with care.

Nia's words are powerful in that they highlight her dedication to the people who will be affected by her research. Further, Nia provides a comparison between colleagues whose work does not seek to transform or improve and those who do, as evidence with her own work.

The women in this study also speak of their success as including being available for their students, as well as other Black students at Southern. Although she is in the sciences, Nancy, like the others, also asks the question, "What is my contribution? Other than just being a successful

academic and scientist?" As a result, Nancy is working more with college and university minority recruiting efforts and is becoming active in areas of diversity and retention on campus.

Brianna and Tatyanna spoke about their commitment to students, specifically with regards to being in the classroom. Brianna describes her classroom environment as "rigorous and intellectually engaging." Coupled with this Brianna teaches more than just the course material, but she views the courses from a much broader and inclusive perspective:

> One of the things I tell all my students is that I love the particular courses I teach because I consider them life courses. I demand a lot of reading and a lot of sophisticated analysis. I only have essay exams and you have to do these papers and show your academic excellence in that way. But after all of that, the subject matter we're dealing with is essential to being a functioning individual, a citizen in this country.

So for Brianna, her commitment to students is evident in how she constructs her classes as "life courses."

Tatyanna realized that other faculty in her department view her as a "hard professor" and she has endured several conflicts with students and faculty concerning the rigor of her courses. However, she has several students who graduate and tell her how helpful her classes were:

> One of the things that goes in my letters is 'She was hard, but she was the only professor who was able to help me function out here in the real world.' Because I teach them real life experiences. This is what I care about: I care that I do my job and that I do the very best job I possibly can. I care that I teach my students what they need to know to be successful. Especially Black students. I will do what I feel is in their best interests.

Peach also views herself as a role model for students and uses her work to "give back." She spoke of the recognition that the job is, in and of itself, a means to an end, but it is not the end. She believes a part of her role as a Black women professor is "to help bring along the next generation" and "To let people know 'You can do it. It can be done.'"

Being successful means also working with students to get them where they need to be professionally. Sela also views her success as incorporating the success of her students:

> I think students are first. My graduate students, their needs are primary and then my research and teaching. I haven't taught a new class in so long a lot of what I teach is well-developed is planned developmentally throughout the semester. So that doesn't require as much of me as it did initially. I'm always trying to find ways for my students to be successful, making sure they get feedback and that they have opportunities. When I feel like I'm not keeping up with their needs, is when I worry the most professionally. But I need to make sure my students are on track.

For Nia, this school year began with working with her first set of doctoral students in the department. Nia also describes herself as being "very committed to our Black students here." Like Nancy, Nia and other colleagues in the college are working hard to recruit more Black students. Her commitment is further highlights as she shares, "We may not be their major professor or on committees, but we support them anyway. We have social gatherings, we fellowship, we talk about where they are in the program and what we can do to help." In this case, as in the others, there is a collective effort. The "we" in Nia's statement includes other Black faculty in her college who are dedicated to recruitment, retention and nurturing of Black students.

Similar to the other women, Quilter and Amina prioritize the academic success and other aspects of Black college students' lives at Southern. Quilter shares the following regarding her dedication to marginalized students:

> My commitments to the Black students, to minority and women students are really high. I know I have to put them in my day. And knowing I have books, and presentations, something will have to give. And if it means that I don't have an article, so you think I'm not doing as much as you, you can think that. That's ok. And the good thing is I have tenure, so I don't have to worry about that! (laughs) But I know where my commitment is and my classes are, as it turns out, some of the most popular in the whole university.

Interestingly, Quilter is known across campus as being "accessible" to women and minority students. As mentioned in the "challenges in the academy" theme of this chapter, Quilter is highly aware of her need and responsibility for students on the margins of Southern. She also recognizes and negotiates the commonly reported conflict between being available for these students in addition to responsibilities of research and other faculty work. Like the other women who were reared in politically active environments, Amina also sets forth her belief in Black faculty, as a community, being responsible for the success of Black students. Amina describes teaching and training as a gift that comes from the maternal side of her family. She shares:

> You know that always helps because if I learned something, I wanted to share it. There was a Black women, Alma John who coined that phrase 'Each one, reach one, teach one.' So it was important for me to have a responsibility not just to know it, but to share it. And that's what I've always done.

So from these excerpts, it is evident that these Black women have an expanded and more nuanced view/understanding of what it means to be a successful academic. For example, being successful in the academy means being available and helping students in their own academic growth and development and asking themselves 'What is my larger purpose?' (Nancy), thereby taking a more holistic and community-oriented approach to career success. Their desire to make a 'greater contribution' and their dedication to their students is reminiscent of the historical commitment of African American educators. Quilter eloquently summarizes coming to terms with the collective responsibility and accountability for continuing the legacy of commitment to a larger, social justice-oriented academic purpose:

> Quilter: When I decided to come here, I literally thought about Martin Luther King and my dad. The first Christmas I went back home from being in the South, I said to my dad that the South was weird because it's 1982 and Black folks are walking with their heads down. And he asked me what was I going to do about it. So I'm like, 'Why are you asking me that?' But that question has stayed with me the whole time. And it's been fuel for so much of what I do as a teacher, an educator and researcher. So when I got ready to come here and as I go through my days here, I remember King asking us, 'If not you, Who? If not now, When?'

Summary

Survival in the academy can be an elusive goal for many Black women academics. However, Kesho Scott (1991) poignantly reminds us that survival cannot be the ultimate goal for Black women overall:

> The challenge to black womanhood in the twenty-first century is to go beyond cultural prescriptions. We need to discover how we can function in an oppressive culture, change

it and live beyond mere survival. To make these discoveries, we need answers to

questions: How do we liberate ourselves *from* the external and internal tentacles of

oppression as well as liberate ourselves *to* a new and flexible idea—the role of ourselves

as choosers? (p. 12)

In this quote, Scott calls attention to Black women's individual and collective agency to create

new possibilities for their lives, even in the midst of oppressive forces. This is akin to how the

eleven Sisters in this study use a wealth of resources to effectively resist challenges in the

academy. The transition from survival to thriving occurred through faculty mentoring,

establishing support networks with other Black faculty, learning from previous work

experiences, and developing an expanded definition of what it means to be successful.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented the four major themes that were constructed from interviews

with eleven, Black women faculty employed at a historically White university. The first theme

centers on the women's early path towards becoming successful. It was found that family

encouragement, growing up in their respective communities, and early schooling experiences

were integral aspects of their development. From being the lone Black girl in the elementary

classroom to being encouraged by community members to "become more," these women were

given a stable foundation in the early years growing up.

The next two themes were "Becoming an Academic" and "Challenges in the Academy."

In the road towards becoming an academic, it was found that a majority of the women did not

take the linear path straight from college to the professoriate. Indeed, most of the women worked

"survival jobs", taught at other institutions, among other forms of work that were a part of their

career development. In conjunction with taking alternative roads to the academy, the women also

were encouraged by college professors and other mentors to consider academic work. This, in fact, was the link between all of their stories surrounding academic career decision-making. Once the women entered the academy, they encountered numerous challenges and obstacles to their success. Overall, they talked about being "the token hire" and "The Only One" even in many instances where they were, numerically, not the only Black faculty. These women spoke of feeling isolated, a lack of respect and support for race-related research agendas, and work overload as they sought to negotiate their familial and other life responsibilities.

The final theme of moving from survival to thriving is, for me, the most compelling in that it highlights the women's power and agency in negotiating and overcoming various challenges they experience. Thriving in academia, for these women, involves support from faculty, building networks and community with Black faculty and, providing us with an alternative understanding of academic career success. Although they all are thriving at Southern University, the women in this study do so with an understanding that their position as Black women impacts and shapes their career development. For these women, their career development is not a linear, step-by-step process, as there is a constant weaving back and forth between negotiating one's identity as a Black woman in a White space, dealing with a variety of challenges, being recognized and rewarded for work well done, among other experiences as an academic.

CHAPTER SIX

TALKING BACK: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1.) What is the career development path for successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

2.) How have race and gender affected the career development of successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university?

3.) How do successful Black women faculty employed at a historically White research university learn to negotiate research, teaching, and service?

Overall, three major conclusions were drawn from this study: 1.) The career development of successful Black women faculty at a historically White research university was found to be multidimensional, non-linear, and shaped by cultural experiences; 2.) The career development of successful Black women faculty at a historically White research university was affected by society's gendered and racialized expectations and beliefs regarding Black women; and finally, 3.) The Black women faculty at a historically White research university learned to negotiate teaching, research and service by transferring culturally specific lessons from their early schooling and work experiences to their new academic environment. In this final chapter, I address these conclusions in relation to the study research questions, while making connections to the relevant literature. Following this, I discuss how my study impacts the four major bodies

of literature, which include: 1.) historical perspectives on Black women in higher education; 2.) women's career development; 3.) research on the status of Black women in the academy; and 4.) strategies for successful career development of Black women in the academy. Finally, I present implications, further recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

<div align="center">The Process of Career Development for Black Women in the Academy</div>

The overarching goal for this study was to explore the career development of successful Black women faculty in the White academy. Specifically, it was my desire for these women to articulate the relevant aspects of career development through open-ended interviews. The first conclusion addresses the first research question: What is the career development path for successful Black women faculty employed in a historically White research university? The first conclusion is that the career development paths of the eleven, successful Black women who participated in this study was found to be multidimensional, non-linear, and shaped by cultural experiences.

Their voices concerning their career trajectories are at the center and heart of this study in that, collectively, they spoke to the significance of family, early schooling experiences and other socio-cultural aspects of their lives as constituting a foundation that would impact and shape their life course. An early and on-going emphasis on educational excellence proved to be instrumental in the early stages of the women's career path to the professoriate. Overall, the Black women in this study were reared in households and communities that valued and promoted the education of Black children. Their families, especially mothers and fathers, were contributory in seeing that these women received what they needed in order to be successful and receive a quality education. This finding coincides with the literature on African Americans and education; since slavery, African Americans have consistently promoted education for racial uplift, race

pride, and preservation of the community (Collins, 2001; Giddings, 1984; Johnson, 1999; Noble 1956; Perkins, 1993). For example, many of the women in my study were raised in all-Black communities and were products of a collective desire by community members to "get an education." This education, in turn, was to be used for the purposes of giving back to communities and moving forward towards success in their lives.

The theme of educational excellence as the building block for success in life was also facilitated in the women's lives by their teachers, from elementary school throughout college and, eventually, to graduate school. The impact of teachers, especially African American teachers, is consistent with the research on African American teachers. These studies reveal the commitment of African American teachers to quality education for Black students (hooks, 1994; hooks, 2003; Walker, 1996).

Many of the women in the study experienced challenges within transitions from all or predominately Black schooling environments to all or predominately White environments. hooks (1994) poignantly shares her experience moving from a Black school environment to an all White school:

> When we entered racist, desegregated, white schools we left a world where teachers believed that to educate black children rightly would require a political commitment. Now, we were mainly taught by white teachers whose lessons reinforced racist stereotypes. (p. 3)

hooks (1994) reminds us that many Black children suffered and were disadvantaged when schools were desegregated. They were often forced to leave Black community schools to attend White schools where they experienced racism, isolation, lack of positive attention and an extremely hostile environment from White students and teachers.

The career development process for the successful Black women in this study continues with academic career-decision making and the transition towards becoming an academic. However, their paths toward successful academic careers were characterized by support and encouragement throughout the college years. All the women in this study, at some point in their undergraduate careers, were encouraged by their professors or other mentors to pursue graduate education. This aspect of the career development process is supported with research on the importance of college mentors for African American college students (Davis, Dias-Bowie, Greenberg, Klukken, Pollio, Thomas, & Thompson, 2004; Rogers & Molina, 2006). For these women, their initial leanings towards an academic career began with a faculty mentor, co-worker, or other significant individuals in their lives who suggested that they try academic work. Whether they took the direct or indirect route from college student to academic, someone important greatly influenced the academic career choice.

Interestingly, this study found that a majority of the women had no intention of becoming a faculty member at a university. This finding is consistent with research on Black women in the professions. Bell and Nkomo (2001) found many of the women in their study of Black and White women in the professions never aspired to be professionals. The authors cite social and political contexts as impacting the career decisions and choices available for the women in their study. These women entered the professions during the 1970's at the tail end of the women's and civil rights movement years. In contract, a majority of the women in my study began their academic careers during the 1990's, when there growing numbers of African Americans entering the White academy coupled with expanded career options.

Varying and diverse career patterns are considered to be a major issue within the career development literature on women and minority career development (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987;

Fitzgerald & Betz; 1994; Leong, 1995; Schrieber, 1998). Consistent with the research, a majority of the women's academic career paths were characterized by diverse career patterns. Many of the Black women in this study worked a variety of "survival jobs" from high school teaching to zoo keeper. A substantial body of career development research reflects the linear, straightforward career process of middle-class, educated, White heterosexual males. However, the current study refutes both this notion, as well as the contention that diverse patterns which include other jobs can inhibit career success. For many women, taking the "meandering path" is a facilitator of eventual success because cumulative of life and work experiences are beneficial in that lessons can be learned and applied in the chosen profession (Bell & Nkomo, 2001, p. 106).

The process of career development for most of the Black women academic in this study begins with the early influences and educational support of family, community and significant schooling experiences. The women in this study excelled in school and were considered to be "smart kids" throughout their early schooling years. In conjunction with these factors, all of the women were influenced by college mentors, professors, co-workers, or other significant individuals to pursue academic work. This process is also characterized by diverse patterns in the career in that many of the women worked different jobs before deciding to become an academic. Although their individual journeys are qualitatively different, the career development process is multi-dimensional and complex, and includes significant connecting threads that illustrate the various actions taken to facilitate their careers in academia.

<div align="center">The Impact of Race and Gender</div>

The next conclusion addresses the second research question: How have race and gender affected the career development of successful Black women faculty in a historically White research university? The second conclusion is that he career development of successful Black

women faculty at a historically White research university was affected by society's gendered and racialized expectations and beliefs regarding Black women.

Race and gender shaped their career development in several ways, many of which are revealed in the literature base. Tokenism, isolation, and work responsibility overload, can stem from negative and damaging perceptions and beliefs about Black women (Benjamin, 1997). Another way that race and gender impact their career development is through re-defining what it means to be a successful academic in terms of their academic work and their social justice-oriented commitment to supporting Black, women, and other minority students.

In order to better understand how race and gender specifically impact their career development experiences, the challenges and the means through which they address these challenges must be examined in relation to the societal perceptions and beliefs about what constitutes Black womanhood (Collins, 2000; Giddings, 1984; Guy-Sheftall, 2005). Black women are often stereotyped as "natural" caregivers, strong-Black-women, sassy loud-talking women, promiscuous, among other inaccurate and harmful images (Collins, 2000). Despite the fallacy of these derogatory images, White women and men in the professional workplace believe these stereotypes and treat Black women accordingly (Bradley, 2005).

In my study, the women reported feeling overcommitted and experienced difficulty negotiating their responsibilities for research with the high demand for them to do service. When they are hired, Black women faculty are expected to mentor Black students, serve on diversity and multicultural oriented committees, and the like. These expectations are often informed by beliefs about Black women occupying a Mammy status in that Whites believe it is natural for Black women to personify the care giving or other-mother role (Collins, 2000).

Another example from the current study is the challenge they face upon being hired, which involves other colleagues treating them as if they are affirmative action cases and are not worthy of the position. This typecast reflects the belief that Black women and other women faculty of color cannot be legitimate knowledge producers (Bernal & Villalpando, 2002). This bias explains expectations for Black women faculty to do disproportionate amounts of service. Several women in my study perceived their colleagues believed that they were only offered the position because they are Black women. This is a critical finding in relation to the current moment in higher education affirmative action arguments are at the center of the discourse surrounding recruitment of Black faculty (Bramen, 2000). Therefore, false perceptions and stereotypes applied to Black women are part of the challenges encountered in academia.

In the women's lives, race and gender impacted their career development in such a way that they experienced a range of challenges as academics. The issue of tokenization is also present in the women's narratives following their schooling, especially as they began their academic careers. The women in this study were often the sole Black girl in the elementary classroom, the college classroom, and, finally their academic departments. The women in my study report feeling like the token Black coupled with feeling isolated. Consistent the research, personal experience accounts highlight these common problems that are associated with being a Black woman faculty member in a White university (Berry & Mizelle, 2006; James & Farmer, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1997).

Another significant challenge that many of the women faced included those surrounding the credibility and significance of their research agendas. Many of the women in this study shared the difficulties they encountered as they sought to do non-mainstream research that incorporated issues of race, gender, orientation and the like. Faculty of color experience

significant challenges to their credibility as they seek to establish research agendas that may not align themselves with the established agendas in their department and field. It is commonly noted that research intended to disrupt and resist the norm, or offer new insights into issues of race or gender, for example, is oftentimes not well-received (Bernal & Villalpando, 2002; Fenelson, 2003; Pollard & Welch, 2006).

Just as race and gender impact Black women's career development in negative ways, this marginal status can also offer these women a special vantage point (Collins, 1986; hooks, 1989). From this stance, Black women academics redefine and reinscribe what it means for them to be successful, as well as creating strategies to ensure that they thrive in the academy. One major finding included a different understanding of the academic job, which is that it is not the end, but a means to an end. Most of the women in this study did not consider academia to be their life, but deemed it to be work. This also refutes the belief that one's identity is primarily that of an academic, as the women in this study report that academic work is something that they *do*, as opposed to it being who they *are*. The women in my study did just that: they considered themselves to be "more than an academic" through their commitment to service and collective responsibility to make academia a better place for themselves and Black students. Similar to Thomas's (2001) study of faculty of color, the women in my study defined themselves as "more than an academic" by virtue of expanded notions of success.

In conjunction with expanded definitions of success, the women in my study who described themselves as having negotiated service with their other responsibilities, viewed service to students as being integral to their success. Initially, this can be viewed as an inhibitor to academic success because Black women are often overburdened with these activities. It is documented in the literature that these extra activities get in the way of conducting research and

writing, which is essential for promotion and tenure (Gregory, 1995; Myers, 2002; Turner & Myers, 2000). There is also the battle with the stereotype that often forces Black women into nurturing or care-giving responsibilities, as mentioned previously. However, these women offer a counter narrative (hooks, 2003) of service. Service becomes an act of resistance in that they are aiding and preparing Black students and junior Black faculty to be successful. This rewriting of service is consistent with hooks' (2003) view of teaching as service. hooks (2003) contends that Black educators engage in service as a type of political resistance that foregrounds culture, community-building, and a caring and nurturing attitude towards students.

Consistent with the historical and contemporary beliefs and actions of Black women educators, these women continue the legacy of ensuring Black student achievement and success. The women in my study exhibit this mentoring, excelling in the classroom environment, working with issues of campus recruitment and retention and other relevant activities. Informed by their race and gender, the Black women in this study surpassed the required institutional markers of success while simultaneously redefining and reworking their personal understandings of the meaning of success.

Learning to Negotiate Academic Responsibilities

In answering the third research question, "How do successful Black women faculty at a historically White research university learn to negotiate research, teaching, and service?", it was found that the Black women faculty at a historically White research university learned to negotiate teaching, research and service s by transferring culturally specific lessons from their early schooling and work experiences to their new academic environment. Upon beginning their work at the university, various forms of support were critical in terms of the women learning and thriving in the academic landscape. These support systems included faculty mentoring and

creating community and networking with Black faculty. In addition to this, the study also found that previous work experiences, whether academic or non-academic, aided the women in learning to negotiate their academic career responsibilities.

For many Black women in the White academy, it is the lack of mentors or the inaccessibility of senior, established faculty mentors that continues to be a major challenge in their careers (Atwater, 1995; Cornelius, Moore, & Gray, 1997; Crawford & Smith, 2005; Thomas & Hollenshed, 2001). For example, in Crawford and Smith's (2005) study about the importance of African American women higher education administrators, the authors found that traditional definitions of mentoring did not apply to their study participants. None of the women in the authors' study engaged in a mentoring relationship with someone who provided guidance, who was a prestigious, senior administrator or faculty member, and, most importantly, who closely assisted them in their successful career development.

The women in my study also reported the effects of race on finding and establishing mentoring relationships. This mirrors Bova's (2000) study of Black professional women and mentoring, which found that finding mentors can be a challenge because of racism and stereotypes of Black women. For instance, in my study, a majority of the women addressed their colleagues' belief that they were affirmative action hires, which oftentimes led to isolation, thereby discouraging the development of mentoring relationships.

Five women in this study highlighted the significance of Black faculty networks and community building as tools to become acclimated to the academic culture and provide a general support system. This finding reflects a significant theme in the literature that recommends the creation of strong Black networks in the White academy as another strategy for success and survival (Bey, 1995; Bova, 2000; Turner & Myers, 2002). Since a majority of Black women

faculty in White schools are in the lower academic ranks, there are limited senior-level Black

women faculty at these institutions to even serve as seasoned mentors (Gregory, 2001; Menges

& Exum, 1983; Myers, 2002). Therefore, cross-cultural and cross-gender mentoring (Johnson-

Bailey & Cervero, 2004) along with building community with Black faculty are means through

which to address the lack of appropriate mentors for Black women.

Interestingly, this finding departs from the traditional mentoring model in that mentoring

relationships are typically characterized as being an individualized relationship between a senior

and junior colleague. Due to the reality that many Black women faculty have little to no access to

this quality of mentoring, they are forced into the position of creating alternative methods to

enable their success. This form of collective mentoring also aligns itself with the historical,

community-oriented experiences of African Americans; the success of the individual is

inextricably linked to the success of the group and that Black faculty support groups are formed

for the benefit of all.

Creating relationships and networks with other Black faculty also function as "safe

spaces" for these women. The notion of "safe spaces" aligns itself with Alfred's (2001) study of

success in the ivory tower for tenured, Black women faculty in that these women found Black

faculty networks to be "safe spaces." This finding also resonates with Gregory's (2001)

contention that creating these supportive networks is salient to reduce isolation and other

challenges that Black women faculty encounter along their paths.

This study also found that the women's previous work experiences were additional

facilitators in terms of learning to successfully negotiate their academic responsibilities. In turn,

the women in this study were able to use those previous experiences as contributors to learning

the ropes and thrive in the academy. A majority of the women had some type of teaching or pre-

professional experiences that were significant aspects of their successful career development. Previous teaching experience, for example proved to be beneficial for several women in the study. These women know what is to be expected in terms of negotiating issues of power, identity, and other challenges in the White classroom, which is a well-documented concern for women and minority faculty (hooks, 2003; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998; Lather, 1991; McGowan, 2000; Tusmith & Reddy, 2002).

For the women in this study, learning to negotiate primary academic responsibilities involves mentoring, creating and building Black faculty networks, and using knowledge gained from previous work and non-work related experiences. According to Inman (1998), women often gain knowledge outside of the workplace, which is informal. Inman (1998) reminds us that the knowledge gained outside of their formal workplace setting is often a key factor in their success. With regards to my study, it is important to note, for example, lessons learned in the home and community about who or what they could be professionally, transferred into adulthood. They keep these lessons or words of wisdom as they build and continue along their academic career paths. Whether it is learning within the sociocultural context (Alfred, 2003) or learning via previous work experience these women were able to learn how to negotiate their academic career responsibilities.

<div align="center">Talking Back to the Literature</div>

My study explored the career development of successful Black women employed in a historically White research university. This study is situated within four relevant literature bases and contributes to each of these research areas.

Herstorical Beginnings: Black Women in Higher Education

This study of eleven, successful Black women faculty and their career development can be viewed as a continuation of the historical struggle and legacy of Black women educators and activists who dedicated their lives to the betterment of Black women, men, and children (Giddings, 1984; McCluskey, 1997; Perkins, 1993; White, 1999). Black women educators such as Anna Julia Cooper, Mary McLeod Bethune and Nannie Helen Burroughs continued their work based on the premise that Black women and girls deserve the right to a quality education. In addition, the women's actions and beliefs reflected great insight into how both race and gender impacted Black women and girls in terms of access to education, beliefs about their intellectual capabilities, and the like (McCluskey, 1997). Like their foremothers, the sisters in my study, despite the challenges and barriers they encountered, continue to believe in the possibilities for Black student success. They also consider this responsibility and work to be a vital aspect of their own successful career development.

When Nannie Helen Burroughs founded the National Training School for Women and Girls in 1909, her school motto "We Specialized in the Wholly Impossible" "challenged the orthodoxy of black inferiority, ineducatibililily and immorality" (McCluskey, 1997, p. 223). Burroughs, her foremothers and contemporaries established educational institutions secure in the knowledge that Black women and girls deserved optimal educational experiences that would uplift and serve Black women, men and children. In this vein, the women in my study continue their foremothers' legacy as they remain committed to the education and empowerment of Black, women and other minority students at Southern. Furthermore, the women in this study move through their careers with the knowledge of how their societal position as Black women impact and shape their career development experiences. Like the Black women school founders and

educators, the women in my study also acknowledge the oppressions of racism and sexism and negotiate these forces with their desire and commitment to success on their own terms.

Black Women and Career Development

A central aspect of women's career development is that women's careers are characterized by interruptions in the career, a variety of work experiences as integral to the career, work and family issues, among a host of other characteristics (Bierema, 1998). Like many women in the professions, a majority of the women in this study have a circuitous, non-linear career development trajectory. The Black women in my study, for the most part, took an indirect path to the professoriate and worked a variety of jobs along their paths.

This study also substantiates the sparse amount of literature on Black women's careers in the professions (Dumas, 1980; Bell, 1990; Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003), in that it highlights the significance of race and gender along their career trajectories. Unlike the study findings that highlight the significance of shifting between the Black world and White academic world (Alfred, 2001; Bell, 1990; Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003), this study did not find that negotiation of the Black world outside academia with the White academy to be a significant aspect of the women's career development. The women in this study spoke of learning the academic culture and its expectations, but did not specifically address or make a distinction between both worlds.

This study refutes, supports and adds to the expansive literature base on career development, particularly in the area of women's career development. Unlike the traditional career development literature that focuses on individual choices and abilities in terms of career choice, several Black women academics' career choices and options available to them were influenced by early role socialization, as well as the various social and political contexts in which

their career development was situated over time. For instance, many of the women in this study were encouraged to become teachers, as a result of a context in which teaching was considered a viable career option for educated Black women. Indeed, a combination of social and psychological factors impacted their career development. The choices that women make about their careers, especially for Black women, are bound by beliefs about women, their roles, and the actions they take to facilitate career development. For several of the women in this study, the plan to become a professor did not exist until college, or even after working different jobs. This study contextualizes academic career decisions and career development experiences prior to academic work and beyond.

Status of Black Women in the Academy

This study confirms much of the literature findings on the status of Black women in the academy. These findings include various challenges encountered by the group as they seek to establish themselves and travel along their academic career course (Benjamin, 1997; Gregory, 1995; Menges & Exum, 1983; Moses, 1989; Myers, 2002; Turner & Myers, 2000). Black women in the academy face myriad challenges, ranging from lack of support and professional socialization to dealing with racism and sexism in the classroom. Another major challenge that Black women faculty face as they seek to move up the academic ladder is negotiating the politics of promotion and tenure (Cornelius, Moore, & Gray, 1997; Gregory, 1995). The women in my study, interestingly, shared relatively few promotion and tenure horror stories, as most of them had relatively smooth process.

This study also takes a turn from the small body of empirical research that specifically addresses Black women in the academy in that it attempts to do more than simply address challenges to and strategies for success. Although these are significant aspects of my study, I

also seek to provide a window into the women's identities not only as faculty, but as activists, parents, community-members, and the like. This study seeks to paint a more nuanced portrait of their lived experiences as they traverse along their career development paths.

Strategies for Academic Career Success

The final body of literature that speaks to the experiences of Black women faculty in the academy centralizes the strategies they use to encourage and enhance their success. Mentoring and Black faculty networks were primary tools that were instrumental in the women's lives. Similar to the women in Alfred's (2001) study, these networks provided a safe space to learn the politics of academia, in addition to providing general support. Alfred (2001) shared several strategies for professional success, or gaining promotion and tenure, including creating positive images of self-definition and rejecting stereotypical images of themselves as Black women, finding a safe space where they could reaffirm themselves as Black women, and knowing the academic culture and its role expectations.

My study with the eleven, successful Black women participants confirms and adds to the literature focusing on strategies for success (Bey, 1995; Davis, 1999; Moses, 1989; Phelps, 1995; Thomas & Hollenshed, 2001) in that the women found mentoring, networking, previous teaching experience as helping acclimate them to the academy, defining their success on their own terms, and family and community support to be significant in terms of aiding them in their success.

These literature areas speak volumes to the career development experiences of Black women faculty in the historically White academy. First and foremost, we see the historical legacy of Black women educators and the similarities between these women and the Black faculty women in this study, especially regarding their commitment to social justice and providing educational opportunities for Black youth. The women's career development literature

is also enhanced by this study in that race and gender occupy critical roles in multiple areas of the Black woman's career trajectory. Race and gender are central aspects of the women's career development in that they shaped and impacted early beliefs about who they could be and the options available to them, the encouragement and support they received in terms of education and career aspirations, the perceptions of their colleagues once they became academics, the challenges they encountered along the way, and the ways that they resist oppressive forces in the academy.

<div align="center">Implications and Recommendations for Future Research</div>

The implications for this study are drawn from a combination of the study findings, interpretations, and existing literature base on Black women faculty in the historically White university. There are both theoretical and practical implications, in addition to recommendations for future research that can inform both individual and institutional responses to the issues set forth in this study.

Implications for Theory

The findings in this study have implications for black feminist theory, as well as contributing to the gaps in career development theory. As black feminism focuses on the simultaneity of oppression, and the significance of Black women's culture, it also posits that race, gender and other markers affect all aspects of Black women's lives (Collins, 2000). As a black feminist project, this study sought to highlight and explore explore career development with a focus on the impact of race and gender. The relevance of Black women's culture is also significant to this study in that the women spoke to the power of their home communities, as well as academic community-building with other Black women in the academy. Moreover, it

illustrated how these women resisted and survived in the White academic institutional environment.

The study of Black women faculty's career development also has implications for current career development theory. Although career development scholars emphasize the need to address issues of race, women scholars in career development continue to highlight the necessity to do empirical and theoretical work that incorporates a race and gender analysis. This study's findings clearly foreground the significance of incorporating race and gender as units of analysis when studying Black women in the White university.

Implications for Practice

In conjunction with theoretical implications, there are also practical implications brought forth through this study of Black women faculty. A major practical implication involves strengthening mentoring programs for incoming and junior Black women faculty members. Since black feminist and women's career development literature sets forth that this group often lacks formal mentorship, it would be more than beneficial for this group to have access to culturally relevant and responsive mentoring relationships with senior faculty members. Dichotomously, it would be advantageous for the individual women, departments, and institutions at large to create and monitor existing professional development and support programs designed to facilitate academic career success.

Institutional support systems, such as fellowship opportunities for incoming and junior Black women faculty can aid this group in acclimating to the institutional environment. However, it is important that these programs take into account issues of race, gender, sexual orientation and other identity markers that affect the women's academic career experiences.

Other practical implications include increasing funding and research opportunities specifically for minority faculty so as to facilitate the accomplishment of institutional markers of success.

Recommendations for Future Research

Scholars researching in the area of women and minority faculty adamantly suggest that there is a need for ongoing, systematic research to highlight the careers and experiences of women and faculty of color. This is especially critical for the study of Black women in that most of the literature is not based on empirical qualitative and quantitative research focusing specifically on said group. My study brings forth the continual need to address issues of race and gender in the academy. Based on the "more than an academic" finding of this study, there should be research that highlights how Black women make meaning of their individual career success, both as junior and senior faculty.

There are several other recommendations for the study of Black women in the academy. Phelps (1995) also suggests that this area of research should focus on the experiences of Black women faculty with more than one Black faculty member in the respective department(s). Another area of research could focus on Black women faculty at historically Black colleges, especially since the majority of Black faculty are employed at these institutions. Qualitative research on Black women faculty in specific programs could also examine how they negotiate their success, navigate promotion and tenure, and other discipline specific challenges.

Concluding Remarks

During July of 2006, I attended the National Women's Studies Association conference in San Francisco, California where I presented a paper on Black women faculty in the higher education classroom. Following my presentation, a Chicana faculty member spoke about her experiences in a large, Midwestern White university. There were several Black, Latina, and

Asian women present in the audience who nodded their heads in agreement and affirmation as

we shared our papers. Finally, when it was time for questions and answers, a Black woman

sitting on the last row stood up with tears in her eyes and thanked me for this work and stated

that she would "participate in my study any day!" Afterwards, three or four other women of

color approached me and shared how important this work is and that because of my work, they

felt affirmed and realized they weren't "crazy."

I left the conference feeling that I was definitely on the right track in terms of my larger

study on the careers of Black women faculty. In fact, I felt a responsibility to speak up and speak

out on behalf of myself and the hundreds of Black women in academia whose voices are silenced

or unacknowledged. This study is by no means an attempt to represent all Black women in

academia. However, it was my intention to center the voices of eleven Black women who shared

their time, energy, and the stories of their careers. To maintain the centrality of their voices, I

close this study not with my concluding remarks, but with theirs. At the end of each interview, I

asked the women, "If you could write yourself a letter or an email to your former self as a junior

faculty member, what would you say?" Their responses are as follows:

Isis: You're a lot better than what you think you are. And write more!

Mattie: If I if it's worth doing, then it's worth doing well. You'll be ok wherever
you are, just get your work done.

Brianna: Don't let the bastards get you down! There are times here, when people,
for whatever reasons, their own insecurities, their power because of the hierarchy
of academe, will not be helpful, or will try to frighten or unnerve you. And don't
let them do that! You have to be secure in your own belief in the value of what
you are doing.

Sela: Be kind to yourself.

Nancy: Don't quit. It would be a short letter. Don't quit.

Hazel: Get your book published now!

Nia: We give our patience to everybody else. We explain, take time, but we need to be patient with ourselves.

Peach: The first thing I would say is 'Girl, who would have thought it!' I would say be open to all experiences. Be kind. Understand that for me, that your steps are being ordered by a higher being. I would say take advantage of as many opportunities that are offered to you, because you'll never know when you will build upon or use those experiences or opportunities. I would say don't ever forget where you came from. I would say be true to yourself. And whatever you do as you continue along your path, to always do it with integrity.

Amina: Recognize a Research I university, and what that really means.

Quilter: Follow your passion and choose the path of not sticking with the traditional. Go for it, girl. Make it happen. Fly so high with it that if you go down, you go down in flames. Push the envelope. Go outside the box. Follow the example of so many of your ancestors before you. Do what is uncomfortable. Shake people up. Trod the unbeaten path. If you don't, you will never be able to face yourself. You will never feel that you did all you could to, as Gandhi said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

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APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INVITATION

I am interested in your experiences in your experiences as a Black woman faculty member and am currently conducted a qualitative study in which I would like for you to participate. As a Black woman doctoral student with plans to be a faculty member, and as a student who works with a Black woman faculty member, I believe this research area is important as well as fascinating.

My name is Nichole Ray and I am hoping that you will be willing to talk with me about your career and your experiences in a historically White university. Your name and contact information was given to me by _____.

Since I know your time is valuable, my protocol only calls for one meeting and I would, of course, arrange this for your convenience as it relates to time and location. Please respond by email and let me know your interest or willingness to participate.

Sincerely,

Nichole M. Ray, M.Ed.
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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The following protocol was used in the study of successful Black women faculty in a historically White university. Individual questions are based on the categories below and participant responses.

Leading Question: When did you first decide to become a professor?

Early Life Experiences and Influences
    Family
    Community
    Schooling Experiences

Undergraduate Years (memorable experiences; life in college, beginning career decisions, influential professor, work experiences)

Graduate School (decision to attend graduate school; work experiences; graduate student life, influential professors; memorable experiences; experiences with discrimination)

Work Experiences (non-academic work experience; work choice/decision-making; significant work experiences; transition to academia)

Experiences at Southern (first years at southern; first year in the classroom; challenges; mentors and other professional support; faculty life; collegial relationships; negotiating academic work; promotion and tenure process; strategies for success; future as an academic)

Family (Spouse, Children) (negotiating work and family, if applicable; family support)

Other Information

Final Question: "*If you could write yourself a letter or an email to your former self as a junior faculty member, what would you say?*"

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study titled "THE
CAREER NARRATIVES OF BLACK FEMALE FACULTY EMPLOYED IN THE
HISTORICALLY WHITE UNIVERSITY" conducted by Nichole M. Ray from the Department
of Lifelong Learning, Administration, and Policy (Adult Education Program) at the University of
Georgia (542-2214) under the direction of Dr. Juanita Johnson-Bailey, Professor and Graduate
Coordinator, Department of Lifelong Learning, Administration, and Policy, Adult Education
Program, the University of Georgia (542-6600). I understand that my participation is voluntary.
I can refuse to participate and can withdraw my consent at any time without giving any reason,
and without penalty. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed
from the research records, or destroyed.

The purpose of this study is to examine the career narratives of Black female professors
employed at a predominately White university. Specifically, this study addresses how race,
class, and gender impact and shape the academic career.
If I elect to participate in this study, I will be asked to do the following:

1.) Participate in a two to three hour interview with the researcher;
2.) Answer questions and share stories about experiences as an academic

I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed, with the tapes stored in
the researcher's secure office location. For purposes of confidentiality, I understand that my real
name will not be recorded in the data, on tape, or in the transcripts. I understand that all data
transcription will occur by the researcher and that I will be allowed to review the tapes or
transcripts upon my request. The audio-tapes will be retained by the researcher and data will be
de-identified with all links between recorded identifiers and the data destroyed. This will occur
upon the completion of the dissertation study (May 8, 2007).

I understand that I will receive no monetary gift, but will receive a journal as a gift of
appreciation from the researcher. I also understand that I may be asked to participate in a follow-
up interview. The benefits for me are that I will have the opportunity to share stories of my life,
with specific focus on my academic career. Furthermore, I understand that this study adds to a
limited body of literature on an important population in academia.
No risk is expected upon participation in this study.

No information about me, or provided by me during the researcher, will be shared with others
without my written permission. I understand that the information I provide will remain
confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form, unless otherwise
required by law. I also understand that anonymity cannot be guaranteed. The researcher will
answer any questions about the research now, or during the course of the research project (706-
340-6870).

I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project
and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

_____   _____
_____

Name of Researcher   Signature
Date
Telephone: _____
Email: _____

_____   _____
_____

Name of Participant   Signature
Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; Email Address: IRB@uga.edu.

APPENDIX D

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

(The following demographic questionnaire will be provided to each participant prior to the face-to-face interview.)

The Career Narratives of Black Female Professors in the Predominately White University

Please take the opportunity to complete the participant demographic questionnaire for this study. Thank you for your cooperation.

Personal Background

1. Please select a pseudonym: _____

2. What is your place of Birth? _____

3. In what year were you born? _____

4. Please describe your parents' or guardians' highest educational level.

Mother or other guardian	**Father or other guardian**
(check one)	(check one)
☐ No diploma	☐ No diploma
☐ High school diploma/GED	☐ High school diploma/GED
☐ Some college	☐ Some college
☐ Associates' degree	☐ Associates' degree
☐ Bachelors degree	☐ Bachelors degree
☐ Graduate degree	☐ Graduate degree
☐ I don't know	☐ I don't know

5. What was your household income as a child? (Please check the appropriate box.)

☐ Less than $20,000	☐ $40,000-$49,999	☐ $70,000-$79,999
☐ $20,000-29,999	☐ $50,000-$59,999	☐ $80,000-$89,999
☐ $30,000-39,999	☐ $60,000-$69,999	☐ $90,000 or more

6. What is your marital status? (Please check the appropriate box.)

    ☐   Single
    ☐   Married
    ☐   Divorced
    ☐   Widowed

7. Please list the number of children you have, if applicable. _____

Educational Background

8. What type of high school did you attend? (Please check appropriate box.)

    ☐   Public
    ☐   Private

9. Undergraduate Institution Graduation Year: _____

10. Undergraduate Major: _____

11. Type of Undergraduate Institution

    ☐   4 year private
    ☐   4 year public
    ☐   Historically Black College
    ☐   Predominately White Institution

13. Please provide the years in which you received the following degrees:

    ☐   Master's   Year:_____

    ☐   Doctorate   Year:_____

    ☐   Other (specify and write year):_____

14. Please provide your area of specialization for the following degrees:

    ☐   Master's   Area: _____

    ☐   Doctorate   Area:_____

    ☐   Other   Area:_____

Professional Background

15. Number of Years at Current Institution: _____

Professorial Rank:

 # of Years at Current Rank: _____

 # of Years at Assistant Level:_____

 # of Years at Associate Level: _____

 # of Years at Full Level:_____

16. Salary Range

 ☐ 40,000-49,000 ☐ $70,000 – 79,000 ☐ $100,000 +
 ☐ 50,000 – 59,000 ☐ 80,000 – 89,000
 ☐ 60,000 – 69,000 ☐ 90,000 – 99,000