

BOOK REVIEW

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Bounding Greed: Worklife Integration and Positive Coping Strategies Among Faculty of Color in Early, Middle, and Late Career Stages at Comprehensive Universities

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In *Bounding Greed: Worklife Integration and Positive Coping Strategies Among Faculty of Color in Early, Middle, and Late Career Stages at Comprehensive Universities* (henceforth known as *Bounding Greed*), authors Guillaume and Martinez artfully craft an instructive template for faculty of Color in coping with the distressing culture of many comprehensive universities and the achievement of work-life balance. In this edited book, each author thoughtfully provides autoethnographies or *testimonios* to convey their personal and professional experiences at varying stages of their careers in higher education. The authors assert that it is with considerable difficulty and an often unmitigated microaggressive strain, faculty of Color experience a wave of personal and professional challenges that leave many disillusioned and emotionally traumatized. With

seemingly tangible barriers to tenure, retention, and promotion, faculty of Color at comprehensive universities experience intense bouts of racism, marginalization, isolation, and double standards. While navigating these incredible professional difficulties, faculty of Color also face an array of personal circumstances that, in tandem with the professional woes, lead to a high degree of emotional and psychological taxation. Using coping strategies to attenuate the stress endured by faculty of Color, this text offers a number of techniques that institutions would be wise to promote.

Part II Early Career

In chapter 2, *Becoming Mamascholar: Unlearning Oppositional Thinking and Pursuing Opportunities both/and*, the author, Aerial A. Ashlee, documents how the patriarchal conditioning of society positions her to feel guilty and makes women choose between professional and maternal responsibilities. Supplying life while breastfeeding a newborn daughter, the drain of domineering structures seemingly sapped the author of their vigor, as refrains such as “There is no good time to have kids as a womxn in higher academia” (p. 12) played vociferously in the background. Ashlee discusses the use of bell hooks’ (1994) work and Anzaldua (1987), among others as salves in the traumatic circumstances of higher educational confines. The author gave birth to a daughter named Azaelea and how womxn of Color with career ambition must “work twice as hard to get half as far” (p. 12). While the challenges of breastfeeding Azaelea while navigating the professional space were also pronounced, the author used hooks’ *Teaching to Transgress* as a source of comfort and support during difficult times. Striking a work-life balance is difficulty, but as Ashlee eloquently stated: “Sometimes work is the priority, and other times life and family take precedent” (p. 16).

Chapter 3 features the work of author Bernadeia Johnson entitled *From Trauma to Unicorns: Surviving the Afflictions of Teaching While Black and Female* and deftly shares the trauma associated with the intersection of Blackness and femaleness. Johnson discusses navigating the transition from school district superintendent to assistant professor at a university in Minnesota. Significantly, Johnson notes there is little ethnic diversity in this university setting. Unfortunately for many Faculty of Color, this is the unsettling reality, as Edwards and Ross (2017) found that Black faculty in particular often lacked *anticipatory professional socialization*, which, plainly stated, is a lack of understanding of professional mores and culture in a new, mostly White setting. Edwards and Ross suggest that mentorship is an effective technique to support new Black faculty. Intuitively, Johnson provides an essential statistic that undergirds the psychology of many conscientious Black educators, as they astutely point out that Black males have a 1 in 1,000 chance of being murdered by police. With this awareness and the ongoing attacks on critical race theory (CRT), Johnson maintains that microaggressions are a commonplace occurrence in their higher education setting. Johnson lists the following among coping strategies amid the personal and university-level challenges she encounters: spending time with family, connecting with professional networks, and seeking the help of a therapist.

In Chapter 4, *Balance vs. Integration: Finding an Alternative to the Work-Life Integration*, author Isela Peña notes early on that “I am not convinced the work-life balance is possible (p. 33), but also asserts that work-life balance implies the two existences are separate rather than blended.

Peña goes on to adroitly detail the challenges of serving as a program coordinator while completing a doctorate degree and as an assistant professor and offers key suggestions as to how faculty navigating similar struggles might cope. A salient step in achieving a measure of self-support is boundary setting. According to Peña, not giving out a personal cell number is an example of establishing parameters to nurture one's personal self. Additionally, taking time to disconnect from work and engage in fulfilling activities is another coping mechanism. Core to the strategies offered by Peña is the mentoring faculty of Color need, both inside and outside the institution. These resources were seminal in promoting healthy personal and professional existences, according to Peña.

In chapter 5, *Finding Joy and Balance Through Campus Engagement in Male Success Initiatives*, author Eligio Martinez, Jr. provides a strong understanding of the need for mentorship throughout one's journey. "Find something that brings you joy and stick to that" (p. 47). Inspired by the preceding sage words of a colleague, Martinez realized a passion for working with Latino boys in a local school context while developing his dissertation. While this partnership served dual purposes, it also seemingly provided a salve during difficult times, serving as a reminder that mentorship is central to development. Accordingly, Martinez suggests, incorporating your work into service. "We must not allow the things we are passionate about to be put on hold or discontinued because of the service responsibilities we have, but rather, make the work that we do part of our service" (p. 55). Martinez also lists learning how say no to diversity work and making time to connect with the community as vital inclusions to cope with workplace stressors.

Part III Mid-Career

Nancy Acevedo, author of Chapter 6, *You're Getting Bold: A ChicanaMotherScholar's Testimonio of Inward Healing and Outward Actions*, supplies an approach to achieving work-life integration and seeks to offer healing to the harms caused by academia and the heteropatriarchal society in which many were reared. Particularly striking is Acevedo's statement that "women are less likely to receive tenure if they have a child within five years of earning a doctorate degree" (p. 61). After skillfully providing context for their ascension into a tenure track faculty position, Acevedo, a first-generation college student, neatly chronicles the harrowing experiences of micro and arguably macroaggressive treatment they received as a faculty member. For example, after bringing her three-year-old daughter to the doctoral commencement, the ChicanaMotherScholar shared that she was unofficially chided for bringing her to the ceremony. Because of this and other stressors, Acevedo gives a few life-giving suggestions for successfully navigating the tumult. Among her suggestions are developing a scholarly (writing) community developing a writing familia, and doing service that matters.

In Chapter 7 *Pushing and Setting* Natalie Rasmussen relates their experience as a Black female science educator. Serving as a chemistry teacher in a predominantly Black school, Rasmussen witnessed "the full spectrum of Black life: Black love, Black conflict, Black joy, Black grief, Black shame, and Black pride" (p. 76). After earning a PhD and moving into higher education, Rasmussen, the scholar, wife, and mother, noted the palpable impact of racial battle

fatigue and the need to sufficiently gird against its causes and effects. Rasmussen catalogs White people in academia into four main groups: *the Cynics, the congregation, the Choir, and the Concordance*, with each detailing how White people position themselves around equity work. Using seminal texts such as Audre Lorde's *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House* (1984) and Woods-Giscombé's *Superwoman Schema*, Rasmussen began to understand the core role of Black women in the academy. To combat the trauma regularly experienced by faculty of Color in academia, Rasmussen touts truly knowing who she is and asking for help, including help of the divine variety.

In Chapter 8 *Una Golondrina No Hace Verano*, author Maria de Lourdes Viloría relates how trauma-informed experiences as a first-generation college student and the lack of historical access to learning opportunities have shaped her identity. Viloría actively leans into the *consejo* tradition of valuing and seeking advice from those more knowledgeable or experienced. Similarly, Viloría intends to share consejos with future generations and intentionally chooses to call them scholars of Color. Viloría cites the troubling statistic that of all full-time faculty at degree-granting institutions, “3% each were Black males, Black females, Hispanic males, and Hispanic females” (p. 93). Accordingly, Viloría assumes a mentorship role with faculty of Color to help them develop social capital and effectively navigate the higher education landscape. Further, Among other offerings, Viloría provides the following coping strategies to faculty of Color: Providing outreach opportunities to prospective scholars of Color, granting scholars of Color opportunities to establish affinity-based relationships based on cultural responsiveness, and having experienced faculty of Color share their experiences with less-veteran faculty.

Part IV Late Career

With Chapter 9, *Being Asian American, Working Class, and Male*, Eugene Oropeza Fujimoto powerfully conveys the career challenges that taxed his marital relationship and his sanity. With a devotion to “life-affirming” (p. 108) diversity, equity, and inclusion work, Fujimoto shares how committing to those efforts required deep investment that came with expensive costs. As an Asian American male who has capably served as faculty and department chair, the challenge to resist the pervasiveness of Whiteness in education has been an active one and states that the dismantling of racial oppression comes from an earnest analysis of how “unearned privileges” (p. 109) are actualized and when they occur, as leaders are evaluated against a White backdrop of “believing, thinking and doing” (p. 109). Fujimoto pens three letters, one each to his niece, daughter, and a student. In every case, Fujimoto relates the value of self-care, building connectivity with others, and challenging normativity. The letters serve as a form of mentorship to the recipients and offer real chances at reflexivity among them.

In Chapter 10 *Overcoming Burdens of Identity When Being Perceived as the Underdog*, author Mahmoud Suleiman begins by dexterously pointing out that higher education institutions were not designed for faculty and students of Color. With this realization in place, Suleiman relates his experiences as a survivor of a war-ridden environment and how he strove to overcome the “...fear, marginalization, oppression, and racism” (p. 121) to ultimately serve as a University

professor, department chair, Fulbright Scholar, mentor, etc. Suleiman imparts the advice he was given upon applying for a professorship at one university, relating he was asked: “*Why apply to this campus, especially if you are originally from the Middle East where most people here would despise you and hate the ground you walk on, despite what you have to offer?*” (p. 127). Suleiman poignantly shares his experience with the tenure review process, detailing how unjust, opaque, and uncomfortable the process was for him. With the attendant challenges to his existence as a faculty of Color, Suleiman provides, among others, the following suggestions for coping mechanisms: Being true to oneself at all times, being strategic in choosing battles, and attacking problems, not persons.

Frank Lucido, the author of Chapter 11: *Hay Que Trabajar Para Vivir, No Vivir Para Trabajar*, supplies a compelling testimony of personal trauma and professional challenges. With the early death of his father and grandfather, Lucido and his mother worked to ensure a safe, prosperous existence. Entering higher education many years later as an adjunct faculty member was fraught with challenges, however. Lucido found that life as an adjunct was difficult and tenure track were few. When an opportunity did arise, Lucido states, “I did not get the royal treatment that other candidates received since they already knew my abilities...” (p. 139). Ultimately, although Lucido earned the tenure track post and spent a long career serving students and the university, a health scare forced him to emphasize personal reflection, setting goals, and family time. Lucido reminds readers to “don’t ever forget the importance of life-work integration to be a better academic for all our personal families and our university students!!” (p. 144).

Bounding Greed grants readers access to the lives of its authors and delivers pragmatic suggestions based on the need to generate work-life balance. With simple reminders such as spending time with family and being true to yourself among the many meaningful offerings, readers can conduct additional research on those topics to find the best approach for their particular circumstances. While these techniques all have great import and potential for supporting faculty of Color, Peña maintains that suggestions alone will not solve the problems. “In the absence of a collective effort and structural changes by universities, we will continue to grapple with this issue” (p. 32). That said, all the provided coping mechanisms are sound and carry varying forms of applicability, but the onus for supporting faculty of Color, with some measure of balance, should in large part, be borne by institutions of higher education, as the achievement of balance would likely improve interpersonal relationships and productivity in the workplace. Unequivocally, all faculty, particularly faculty of Color, would benefit from reading *Bounding Greed*.

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