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I, Portia L Watkins, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Urban Educational Leadership.

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Black Women Faculty: Portraits of Othermothering

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By

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Abstract

This dissertation is a qualitative portraiture study that explores othermothering with Black women faculty who are employed at predominantly white institutions. This study also examines the central tensions and impact of othermothering on obtaining promotion and tenure. The researcher used the portraiture method, which embraces traditional qualitative data sources, such as interviews, observations and researcher's field notes to co-construct portrait narratives.

The analytic framework and process were guided by Black Feminist Thought and a dimension of The Listening Guide, allowing the study to add to the limited research base concerning Black women faculty and othermothering at predominantly white institutions. The findings of this study reveal the following themes of othermothering: othermothering as support, the cost of othermothering, othermothering as survival and othermothering as legacy building. This study sheds light on the multiple dimensions of othermothering in the lives of Black female professors. Additionally, it illuminates the ways in which this essential work is under-recognized and under-acknowledged in the service requirement of the reappointment, promotion, and tenure process for Black women faculty.

For my family: Warren, Zaire, Isaac, Bentley, Braxton, and Langston.

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For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29: 11-13

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Black women faculty who teach at predominantly white institutions (PWIs) have been victims of race and gender-based discrimination for decades (Wallace, Moore, Wilson, & Hart, 2012). Although there are many experiences that have been positive, there are many that are filled with overt and institutional discrimination; enduring these experiences has become part of the journey of Black women faculty (Fries-Britt & Kelly, 2005). They have experienced feelings of isolation, endured chilly climates, and survived racial battle fatigue (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999).

Audre Lorde (1984) argued, "It is axiomatic that if we do not define ourselves for ourselves, we will be defined by others–for their use and to our detriment" (p. 45). Black women faculty must fight against stereotypes and definitions that do not fit who they are in order to counter the narrative that says they are affirmative action hires, angry, and incompetent (Frazier, 2011; Louis, Rawls; Jackson-Smith, Chambers, Phillips & Louis, 2016). Black women have faced difficulty with gaining access to education, unequal wages, sexism, and racism. However, Black women have persevered in education and continue to do so in various aspects of their life, including family and community (Davis, Reynolds, & Bertrand-Jones, 2011; Hinton, 2010).Even though the discriminatory treatment of women and people of color in higher education has existed since the Reconstruction Era, contemporary Black women professors are still facing issues of access into the ivory tower, support to stay in academia and earn tenure, as well as racism, sexism, unwelcoming environments, lack of mentoring, and more (Bryant-Shanklin & Brumage, 2011; Nichols & Tanksley, 2004; Frazier, 2011).

Black women faculty employed at PWIs of higher education face marginalization in a variety of ways and areas (Bradley, 2005; Butner, Burley, & Marbley, 2000). PWIs are a hostile,

exclusionary, and oppressive environment for Black women faculty (Constantine, et al., 2008; Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002; Harley, 2008; Moses, 1997; Patitu & Hinton, 2003). Black women professors must find ways to become acclimated to the institution and in relationships with colleagues and students, often in a chilly campus climate. Additionally, Black women professors tend to "mother" Black students which could impact the trajectory of the professor in the academy. Collins (2009) states, "Unlike the traditional mentoring so widely reported in educational literature, this relationship goes far beyond that of providing students with either technical skills or a network of academic and professionals contacts" (p. 207).

Black women faculty are exploited through service at the hands of academic departments in order to fulfill diverse representation, all while being overworked often with not enough time for their own research that is required for attaining promotion and tenure (Constantine, Smith, Redington, & Owens, 2008; Bryant et al., 2005; Turner, 2003). Although service is necessary for promotion and tenure, Black women faculty have offered service through aiding students and it is not as valued in the tenure process. The cultural taxation that these women endure can lead to feelings of tokenism and slow progress toward promotion and tenure (Niemann, 2012).

Othermothering is a type of service that Black women faculty give to help students through the academic journey. Patricia Hill Collins (2009) coined the term to describe the assistance offered to blood mothers from community members in order to assist in childrearing. The term has been adopted into other areas of education from elementary to post-secondary and is deeper and more robust than mentoring and academic guidance. Othermothering includes socialization to the department and university, exposing and explaining the unwritten rules of the department, and negotiating skills and the confidence needed to be successful (Bernard, et al., 2000; Nichols, & Tanksley, 2004; Collins, 2009; Gildersleeve, Croom, & Vasquez, 2011). Other

types of mentoring can include formal and informal programs, and traditional and non-traditional programs (Grant & Ghee, 2015). Some of these mentoring models are a part of the departments' effort to pair a more experienced faculty member with a new junior faculty.

There is a shortage of literature about how Black women faculty at PWIs experience othermothering and its influence on promotion and tenure. Although there is ample literature detailing the challenges and experiences of Black women professors at PWIs (e.g., Alfred, 2001; Bradley, 2005; Constantine, Smith, Redington, & Owens, 2008; Davis, Reynolds, & Bertrand Jones, 2011; Frazier, 2011; Fries-Britt & Turner Kelly, 2005) more focused attention deserves to be paid to the relational challenges that can shape Black women faculty's success in PWIs because of service expectations that may jeopardize the attainment of promotion and tenure. This is important to study because the number of Black women faculty in the academy is small and even smaller for those who earn promotion and tenure.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

In order to gain a better understanding of Black women faculty's experiences with othermothering, it is necessary to explore different aspects of their experiences with research, advising, teaching, collegiality, and requirements of promotion and tenure.

The following questions guide this study:

1. How do Black women professors experience their role of othermothering at predominantly white institutions? What are the central tensions they experience in this role during research, teaching and advising?
2. How do Black women professors perceive their othermothering to impact promotion and tenure?

I address these questions through life histories, observations, field notes, and analysis using the portraiture method.

Definition of Terms

Due to the specialized nature of the current topic, some definitions are presented in order to assist in understanding the literature review. Definitions for the following words are included: Black, predominantly white institutions, research university, othermothering, marginalization, and microaggression.

Black. The term African American is generally used in the literature and in the United States Census Bureau to describe people of African descent. However, in the current study, the term *Black* was used for the purposes of the representation of people of African descent throughout the *African Diaspora*, or a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as "Black, African Am., or Negro" or report entries such as African American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian (www.census.gov).

The term African American is only used in direct quotes in the current study. According to Robinson (2005), the 34.6 million people of African descent in the United States are of diverse cultures. These cultures include but are not limited to African, Caribbean, Central European, and South American. Of all the people considered to be African American by the United States Census Bureau (2010), 6% are foreign born, coming from the Caribbean, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and others. Due to the conglomeration of differences within what is usually considered to be African American, the term Black is used to honor and recognize the diversity amongst people of African descent.

Predominantly white institutions (PWIs). The term *predominantly white institutions* for this study refers to a learning institution that was not originally intended on primarily

educating minority students like Historically Black Colleges and Universities or Tribal Colleges. These institutions are predominantly serviced by and for majority White students, faculty, and staff. Although some historically Black colleges and universities exist throughout the United States, due to many factors including higher costs of private schooling, limited choices of schools and programming, and the lack of financial support provided by federal funding, the majority of Black students attend PWIs (Lett & Wright, 2003).

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, defines an HBCU as:

"Any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission is the education of black Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accredited agency or association determined by the Secretary [of Education] to be reliable authority as to the quality of training offered or is according to such an agency or association, making reasonable progress toward accreditation" (Powell, 2012).

Research university.[1] A *research university* is defined as a doctoral granting university "that awarded at least 20 research doctoral degrees during the update year (2015) that has very high research activity" (www.carnegiefoundation.org, para. 8)**.**

[1] The reappointment, promotion, and tenure process will vary with each type of institution. The requirements may vary according to institution type as well as college and department. Some institutions come with more or less emphasis on scholarship, service and teaching.

Marginalization. *Marginalization* is defined as: "actions, policies, and processes that relegate people to the fringes of the academy, away from the center of productivity, acceptance, equity, and opportunity" (West, (2015), p. 109).

Microaggressions. *Microaggressions* are defined as "commonplace verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults" (Sue, (2007), as cited by Minikel-Lacocque, 2013. p. 436).

Othermothering. *Othermothering* is a concept that refers to a woman who has no biological connection to child who then becomes like a mother or shares in the responsibility of raising a child (Collins, 2000). In this study, othermothering is expanded to include different examples including fostering children and providing care as a nanny or babysitter. It also refers to faculty providing psychosocial, professional, academic, and personal support to students (Collins, 2009).

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in that it takes an in-depth look into the life histories of Black women professors to seek out their experiences and understandings of othermothering throughout their lives. By studying these women's experiences, a wealth of information may be obtained in learning about the challenges, needs, costs, and benefits of othermothering. Through the portraiture method, the participants and I were able to co-construct a narrative that considers the many intersections that Black women professors confront. I recommend that PWIs and other universities rethink the service component for promotion and tenure to include mentoring as well as considering a program that aids in the socialization of Black women faculty to the department's culture.

The additional importance of this research lies in fact that Black women professors at predominantly white institutions are still facing the same challenges that plagued their predecessors (Barnard, 2015; Croom, 2017; Turner Kelly & Winkler-Wagner, 2017; Gibbs Grey & Williams-Farrier, 2018). As long issues of inequity and inequality exist, there will be a need for conversations about the experiences of Black women professors at these institutions. In order to make sure that amplification is given to the voices of these women and that their experiences are passed on to future generations, it is necessary to glean what we have learned from the past.

The fact that Black women faculty continue to deal with these issues is warrant enough to keep addressing these concerns even when the dominant culture chooses to ignore them. Although it used to be easy to recognize discrimination against Black women professors (Gutiérrez y Muhs, Flores Niemann, Gonzales & Harris, 2012), it is now more of a covert operation because the root of institutional racism and sexism is so deep (Croom, 2017; Gutiérrez y Muhs et.al 2012). These abstract attacks of marginalization (i.e., microaggressions) can be felt but not always easy to see. My study contributes to the literature by exploring the origins of othermothering for the participants while establishing the costs and benefits that may exist for Black women professors.

Researcher Positionality

As a Black woman aspiring to have a career in higher education, I wanted to investigate the literature around othermothering and learn from the experiences of Black women professors who participate in othermothering. With the vast amount of research that discusses the experiences of Black women professors in the academy, I wanted to know if there are challenges in how they experience othermothering, or if they experience it at all.

I reflect on my own experiences of being othermothered in graduate school and how immensely fortunate I was to have been chosen by those who took me under their wing. I can recall having conversations with a Black woman faculty member about balancing life, school, and work. She offered me a space to be vulnerable about my experiences in my department. She offered her personal experiences and a map to navigate this space. I was fortunate that she poured in the time that was needed to help me through some pretty dark times in my life during graduate school. She gave advice about adoption when others offered statements of judgement and prompted me to "not take any more kids." When family situations bled into my school work, she offered sage advice for school work and resources for home.

I often wondered while completing this study, what sacrifices did she have to make and was a benefit to her for aiding me? I wondered if the Black faculty who othermothered me had challenges that were directly related to the time, energy, and resources spent on aiding me. I would like to know if Black women faculty had to balance feelings of ostracism and marginalization related or unrelated to othermothering, and how they were able to remain successful on all fronts. These experiences helped shape my graduate experience and helped me to get through difficult times that I faced.

The othermothering I received also solidified the choice that I made to othermother students in their navigation of PWIs. I know first-hand that these spaces are not always welcoming, and that racism and sexism is institutionalized and covert. My aim is to help others to get through in order to model behavior that can be paid forward. I want my presence in higher education to be impactful for other women of color whether they are student, staff, or faculty.

My personal charge is to present a platform for discussion about the experiences of Black women professors at PWIs—a conversation about the inequities and challenges that are faced by

this underrepresented group of women in the academy and within scholarly literature. I wanted to know that if their experiences of othermothering were negative in relation to attaining promotion and tenure, will Black women professors opt not to othermother? What would be the possible implications for Black students at PWIs if Black women did not othermother? I was also interested in exploring the successes of their resilience, and how they have used their marginality as a platform to bring awareness and to resist definitions placed on them by society (Alfred, 2001; Collins, 2000). This study serves as a medium for me to answer some of these questions and others that may be interested in the impact of othermothering on Black women faculty.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

In order to find out how Black women faculty experience othermothering, it is necessary to explore the other facets that they engage in and challenges that exist for Black women at PWIs such as service commitments and research. This chapter examines aspects of the literature that contribute to my understanding of othermothering, and the reappointment, promotion, and tenure process. These aspects include: discrimination, service, and the relational context. In addition, I examine resilience, including networking and coping strategies. This chapter closes with a discussion of Black Feminist Thought, the theoretical framework that guides this study.

Reappointment, promotion and tenure

For faculty in the academy, attaining tenure is a goal that comes with several benefits such as job security, and a renewed sense of power, self-worth and privilege (Jones, Hwang, & Bustamante, 2015). Academia is a competitive environment that can cause challenges for all tenure-track faculty members. However, literature has shown the frequency and degree of challenges confronted by tenure-track professors in academe often fluctuate between non-white faculty and their white counterparts (Burgess, 1997; Perlmutter, 2010). According to the most recent data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2017), 6% of full-time instructional faculty members were Black (3% at the assistant level, 2% at the associate level and 1% at the full level) compared to 77% of full-time faculty who were white.

The reappointment, promotion and tenure (RPT) were meant to create academic freedom for faculty and allow them to study and report their findings in an atmosphere of consent (citation needed). While the requirements for promotion vary from institution and department, there are general guidelines that have been outlined by the 1940 *Statement of principles on*

Academic Freedom and tenure (www.aaup.org, 2018). These guidelines include when the reappointment process should begin as well as the notification timeframe that a person should be notified if reappointment and tenure have been earned or denied. Tenure is defined as a permanent status; the position of having a formal secure appointment until retirement, especially at an institution of higher learning after working there on a temporary or provisional basis (Encarta World English Dictionary, 2007). If tenure is not attained, a faculty member will be terminated from the university.

Based on the Faculty Review Project, Diamantes (2003) defined tenure as, "an effort to provide security if and when a professor wished to practice academic freedom that may or may not be controversial" (p. 322). As stated in the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure,

> "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" (www.aaup.org, 2018 p. 13).

Whatever definition one chooses, it is apparent that the concept of tenure is fundamental to the employer-employee relationship currently experienced by institutions and faculty members.

Black women faculty and RPT. Tenure can be problematic for most faculty members, whether Black or white; however, it appears to be a particularly demanding road to travel for Black women (Aguirre, 2000; Alfred, 2001; Bradley, 2005; Burgess, 1997; Gregory, 2001). In the study conducted by Gregory (1999), promotion and tenure procedures were found to be

ambiguous, inappropriate, unrealistic, or unfairly weighed applied to Black women. It was determined that when minority and women faculty members do not attain tenure, it was often because they were caught in the revolving door syndrome (Frazier, 2011; Gregory, 2001). This syndrome was apparent when faculty members are on a tenure-track, kept for up to six or seven years, evaluated negatively for tenure, and are then required to leave. Black women are assigned more service-oriented tasks that make it difficult, or near impossible, to devote sufficient time to scholarly activities that would allow for greater success in the RPT processes.

During the RPT process, Black women faculty can experience marginalization of research efforts as an obstacle for earning tenure and promotion (Frazier, 2011). Tenured senior faculty and peers of Black women faculty often devalue the research areas and populations Black faculty selects to build their research. Topics that are often valued by tenured senior faculty do not resonate with the experiences and interests of Black faculty, which causes marginalization of the Black faculty due to the devalued topics of their research (Thompson, 2008). The irony of this is that academic freedom is supposed to be what is protected in higher education and by the promotion and tenure process.

Black women faculty are promoted and tenured at a much lower rate than white women and white females, 3% for Black women compared to 35% for white women (NCES, 2017). Croom (2017) asserts that even though Black women "have outpaced Black men in attaining doctorate degrees, less Black women were entering academic careers based on external factors such as inequitable and unequal access to academic positions and lack mentoring towards an academic career" (p. 559). While Black women and Black men are attaining tenure at similar rates (3%), Black women are less likely to enter into the professoriate. Factors that contributed to the lower rate include fewer opportunities for collaborative research (Bradley, 2005), race and

gender issues; and rules and regulations written to impede minorities and women from attaining tenure (Burgess, 1997; Frazier, 2011). Black women faculty face many challenges in fulfilling service obligations at PWIs. Due to the scarcity and visibility of Black women faculty, they are often overused at university functions. They are expected to be role models and mentor Black undergraduate and graduate students. Mentoring and othermothering are acts of service that often go unnoticed and unappreciated by RPT committees. While the expectation may be to mentor or othermother students, there is no formal quantification of these services when being reviewed for promotion and tenure. The refusal to recognize othermothering as an act of service worthy of tenure consideration allows for this particular service to be considered invisible labor. While the act of othermothering may be beneficial to students, the egregious amount of time that it takes can distract Black women faculty from completing research and publishing that can negatively impact their attainment of promotion and tenure.

Discrimination

Black women faculty have faced discrimination at PWIs of higher education for many years, and this phenomenon has been documented heavily (Bradley, 2005; Butner, et al., 2000; Constantine et al., 2008; Edwards, Green Beverly, & Alexander-Snow, 2011; Moses, 1997; Frazier, 2011; Gregory, 2001; Harley, 2008; Patitu & Hinton, 2003; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001). In this section, I discuss several examples and arenas of discrimination: academic bullying, microaggressions, racism, and campus climate. In addition, marginalization as an outcome is discussed.

Academic bullying. *Academic bullying* is defined by Frazier (2011) as:

> A concept […] that looks at systematic long-term interpersonal aggressive behavior as it occurs in the academic workplace setting [including] both covert and overt forms against

> faculty who are unable to defend themselves against the aggressive behavior committed by faculty in power (p. 2).

In order for instances to be considered bullying the following three conditions must be met:

> (1) an imbalance of power between the person being bullied and the person inflicting the bullying, (2) the behaviors must be systematic and occur in a long-term time frame, and (3) those being bullied must find it difficult to defend or retaliate against those inflicting the bullying behavior (Frazier, 2011, p. 2).

Frazier's (2011) article about academic bullying discusses a case example of Nicolette, 30-year-old Black female tenure track faculty who decided to leave the department after four years. The faculty member shared that she experienced academic bullying, feelings of isolation, marginalization, and institutional racism. Although this research demonstrates challenges that a faculty member experiences as a result of academic bullying, there is no mention of her interactions with students and or if there was opportunity for her to have positive interactions with students.

Microaggressions. Some of the acts of discrimination committed against minorities and people of color are described as *microaggressions*. Microaggressions came from legal literature of critical race theory (Smith, 2004; Smith, Yosso, & Solórzano, 2006; Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Microaggressions are "commonplace verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults" (Minikel-Lacocque, 2013, p. 436). Microaggressions were first introduced by Charles Pierce in 1969 as offensive mechanisms (Solórzano, et al., 2000) that can seem harmless at first but can have serious effects on the individual that can cause mental and physical stress.

Microaggressions have many forms such as racial slurs, inappropriate racial jokes, as well as disrespectful outbursts (e.g., classroom behavior).

The stress that is caused by microaggressions is referred to as *battle fatigue* (Smith, 2004; Smith et al., 2006; Solórzano et al., 2000; Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009), and is similar to military personnel combat fatigue whether or not they are under direct attack (Smith, 2004). Smith (2004) asserts:

> Racial battle fatigue is a response to distressing mental/emotional conditions that result from facing racism daily (e.g., racial slights, recurrent indignities and irritations, unfair treatments, including contentious classrooms, and potential threats or dangers under tough to violent and even life-threatening conditions).

Smith (2004) and Louis et al. (2016) maintain that there is a growing body of literature suggesting that stress-related diseases result from the fact that Blacks have to keep a "physiological response, originally evolved for responding to acute physical emergencies, but now 'switched on' constantly to cope with chronic racial microaggressions" (Smith, 2004, p. 180).

Microaggressions also have different classifications such as micro-assaults, which are explicit verbal and non-verbal attacks; micro-insults, which are rude or insensitive characterization of one's heritage; and micro-invalidation, the exclusion and/or nullification of one's perspectives on the basis of race (Chambers, 2012; (Louis et al., 2016). Micro-invalidation

> connects to education and legal scholarly literature as it implicates colorblindness, the purposeful failure to see or value racial heritage. Colorblind perspectives further marginalize the experiences of isolated minorities while aggrandizing the knowledge and skills bases of those in the dominant group (Chambers, 2012, p. 234).

Cumulative microaggressive behavior over time can lead to detrimental psychological and physical health effects (Chambers, 2012; Smith, 2004).

Campus climate. Blacks and other people of color have experienced chilly climates that can add to the stress of being on a predominantly white campus. As part of the covert context of discrimination, *campus climate* is defined as "a term used to describe the culture, habits, decision, practices, and policies that make up campus life; the degree to which the climate is hospitable determines the 'comfort factor' for people of color on campus" (Harvey, 1991, p. 115). Climate studies include the perspectives and experiences of undergraduates, graduates, and faculty (Turner, 2002). Turner (2002) uses another definition for campus climate derived from a report by Jeri Spann:

> Panelists defined climate as the quality of respect and support accorded to women and minorities on individual campuses and in individual departments. They believed that climates were created by institutions and could be measured in specific ways, … by the number of women and minority faculty members at junior and senior levels, … by the social distance between majority and minority group faculty and administrators (sociometry), … by the equitability of work assignments" (p. 1, as cited in Turner, 2002, p. 78).

There are many manifestations of this chilly climate for Black women faculty. One of the most prevalent forms occurs in the classroom (Bradley, 2005; Pittman, 2012; Pope & Joseph, 1997). Black women professors have reported incidents of receiving unequal treatment from students (Bradley, 2005). Black women have shared experiences of not being appreciated in classrooms by White American students who perceive them as incompetent, and feel at liberty to challenge their authority (Bradley, 2005; Pittman, 2012; Pope & Joseph, 1997).

Campus climate not only refers to classroom experiences but also to the department to which the faculty belongs as well as the overall university. Patitu and Hinton (2003) argue that institutional climate can affect a faculty members' job satisfaction. In their study, Black women faculty described the climate for faculty of color as lacking the commitment of affirmative action, the presence of very few Blacks, and conservative attitudes and beliefs. Patitu and Hinton (2003) also discussed how problematic it was for Black women faculty's teaching evaluations to be used to assess their retention and promotion. The literature shows that students rate Black faculty teaching unfavorably compared to their White colleagues (Gregory, 1999 Turner, 2003; Turner & Meyers, 2000).

Assessing campus climate informed my study by describing the environment in which Black women professors may be working. The research demonstrates the challenges of being in a chilly climate at PWIs, and how it can promote isolation.

Marginalization. *Marginalization* has been defined as policies, actions, and processes that relegate people to the fringes or peripheral of the academy (West, 2015; Wolfman, 1997). Marginalization keeps people away from the center of productivity, acceptance, equity and opportunity (Alfred, 2001; hooks, 1984; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2011). Marginalization is the result of discrimination and can cause issues with retention as well as promotion and tenure. Additionally, it can cause feelings of isolation for faculty of color. As such, they can be perceived as not being collegial, which can, in turn, limit offers to partner in research or publications (Thomas & Hollingshead, 2011).

Applying the literature on discrimination to this study. This study focused on student interactions with Black women professors and the connection between such relationships and Black women professors' resilience (Frazier, 2011). The literature informs this study by

providing background on challenges that may exist for Black women faculty. The literature also informed how the prompts were worded in the interview and how the data was analyzed. The study explored microaggressions experienced by Black women professors during their educational careers. This study explored how the campus climate may shape Black women faculty's experiences of othermothering.

Service

Another key dimension in the experience of Black women professors at PWIs is that of service to the university—a key criterion necessary to earn promotion and tenure. This service can be done by serving on committees at the departmental, college, university, and professional level. For Black women faculty, there can be tensions between doing service for promotion and tenure and being over-assigned or volunteered as a token that serves as a diverse representative (Turner, 2003).

Black women professors and other professors of color are often expected to pay "cultural taxation" once hired into a department. Turner (2003) defined *cultural taxation* as:

> the obligation to show good citizenship toward the institution by serving its needs for ethnic representation on committees, or to demonstrate knowledge and commitment to a cultural group, which may bring accolades to the institution but which is not usually rewarded by the institution on whose behalf the service was performed (p. 26).

Service is certainly an important part of the promotion and tenure process, but excessive committee work (via the burden of cultural taxation) can have negative implications for Black women faculty in gaining tenure and promotion. Being over-assigned to several service committees often means that they are unable to commit as much time to research and/or teaching

responsibilities. These other responsibilities are the most important criteria for earning promotion and tenure (Bryant et al., 2005; Turner, 2003).

Black women faculty often feel stretched by the commitments of service. They can experience burnout at an early rate that can lead to issues in retention and promotion and tenure (Bryant et al., 2005; Constantine, et al., 2008; Turner, 2003). In their study, Constantine et al. (2008) described how participants (eight Black professors, seven of whom were women) described having alternating feelings of invisibility/marginalization and hyper-visibility. The faculty reported feeling that many people on campus did not notice their presence, especially White faculty members and administrators, until their "expertise (particularly with regard to racial or ethnic minority issues) was needed or valued" (Constantine, et al., 2008, p. 351).

Relational Context

In order to understand the context in which othermothering may exist, it is important to consider the relational context in which Black women professors work. This discussion includes the literature on collegiality, support for research, relationships with students, and othermothering.

Collegiality. The acceptance of Black women faculty members as equal colleagues within a department can be a slow process (Bryant et al., 2005; Edwards, Green Beverly, & Alexander-Snow, 2011; Turner, 2003). Black women in the academy often face adversity in the place that is supposed to be a place of opportunity. Turner (2003) uses the African proverb of "it takes a village to raise a child" (p. 119) to describe how it takes the whole department to nurture a junior faculty member. The degree to which an academic unit is responsible for nurturing new hires is a complex matter. If this essential observation is ignored, it is very easy for Black women to slip through the cracks and diminish their chances of gaining promotion and tenure very early

in their career. Turner also asserts that instead of promoting a culture that looks out for all, faculty of color are often isolated. This means that marginalized faculty are not often included in social and informal gatherings of members of the department where networking takes place.

Collegiality can also be an important factor in the promotion and tenure process, and can be difficult to engage in when the department environment is not conducive to acknowledging value in Black women faculty (Jones, Hwang, & Bustamante, 2015). It is also important to note that building a relationship with everyone in the department is critical when faculty materials come up for evaluation (pre-tenure, for tenure, etc.). If people do not know the faculty seeking promotion, or if they do not have a positive relationship with Black women faculty (perhaps because they have been excluded) then Black women faculty fare worse at the department supporting promotion/tenure (Frazier, 2011). The department not supporting Black women faculty means that the evaluative levels after that (department chair, dean of college, provost, and president) will likely not support promotion/tenure. Thus, even though collegiality might seem like a small thing, it actually has major implications for retention, promotion, and tenure.

Support for research. In addition to not fitting in with peers, the legitimacy of Black women scholars' intellectual interests is challenged by other faculty colleagues. This is especially true for faculty members who choose to conduct research on "Black issues" or other social justice causes (Constantine et al., 2008; Turner, 2003). White colleagues often see research by faculty of color on people of color as unimportant and not valid. "Black women faculty often experience criticism by peers over the journals in which they have published, with scholarship merit challenged when it is published on diversity issues in ethnic specific journals" (Turner, 2003, p. 118). "Consequently, Black female faculty members have felt pressure to produce scholarship deemed acceptable by their White colleagues, who inadvertently stifled

progress for many in their areas of expertise" (Edwards et al., 2011, p. 17). Not only is the work of these faculty members seen as invalid, they are often forced to produce research that they may not be passionate about in order to be respected (and promoted/tenured) in their departments.

Constantine et al. (2008) argue that White participants in their study on racial microagressions against Black counseling faculty did not value the scholarship of Black women faculty if it focused on racial, ethnic, or gender concerns. The research of Black women faculty seems to only have value when it came time for academic accreditation. One of the participants reported:

> Most of the White faculty in my department don't like or respect my work. They see it as too personal, as about me and my life. I am a scholar who publishes in top-tier empirical journals using large community samples, but they don't see the value in my work because it's about [the mental health issues of] Black folks. So they end up not acknowledging it or saying it's not rigorous work. It's pitiful that they don't feel we can do good quality work that focuses on racial [issues]. At the same time, those same [faculty members] think they can "use" me and my work when it suits them, like when it's time for [an accreditation body] to visit us to see if we're training students the way we say we do […] It's hard to feel ignored most of the time, but then occasionally feel like the spotlight is on you because you have expertise in an area that is valued for the moment, [yet] not often enough (Constantine, et al, 2008, p. 351**).**

The literature demonstrates that Black women professors are producing work, yet they are still ignored. Black women can do all that is necessary to be a team player, and still be marginalized and only brought to the center when they are needed for specific reasons.

Additionally, faculty members of color are often excluded from collaborative research projects with their peers and lack sponsorship for research (Gregory, 2001). Rarely having access to resources for research that can lead to greater prestige, higher future economic gains, enhanced job mobility, institutional fit and job satisfaction add to the list of consequences of not being able to have amicable relationships with peers (Jones et al., 2015; Edwards et al., 2011). The implications for promotion and tenure concerning the aforementioned problems can lead to tenure denial.

Relationships with students. Relationships between students and Black women faculty is an extra service that majority faculty are less likely to engage in. Some students challenge the ability and the authority of the Black women faculty (Bradley, 2005; Lazos, 2012). Examples of simple racial prejudice can result in marginalization. This especially true of white male students who sometimes have a sexist and racist response to taking a class taught by a Black woman (Bradley, 2005). Bradley (2005) explains that research has shown that all women faculty often receive unequal treatment from students. However, research has also documented that some White American college students perceive Black women professors to be incompetent (Bradley, 2005; Lazos, 2012).

Black women professors have reported that white students feel at liberty to defy their authority in the classroom. Pope and Joseph (1997) in their study of student harassment of female faculty cited the following observation by a Black female professor that illustrated this predisposition:

> After reading his grade, the student lunged out of his seat, threw the chair on its side, and shouted very loudly, “I don't want that grade. You can't teach. I'm going to see that you don't get tenure.” He then stormed out of the room. The matter was reported to the dean,

who simply shook his head, implying that boys will be boys. This was a horrible experience for me. (p. 252)

The predominance of negative experiences pushes Black women professors toward the margins of the academic enterprises of teaching. Complaints from white students about Black faculty are much more likely to come to the attention of colleagues and administrators than compliments from white students about black faculty (McGowan, 2000).

The results from Pope and Joseph's investigation also revealed that Black women faculty often received disdainful student evaluations and verbal assaults from their students. Some of the verbal comments have included, “Bitch, go back to Africa,” “Black bitch,” and “You are here only because of Affirmative Action.” Hooks (2000) and Robinson (1997) described this phenomenon as a construct of white supremacy in that some white American students only see race and inferiority when they receive instruction from Black female professors.

Although there is an abundance of literature that support these accounts of Black women professors being challenged by white students (Bradley, 2005; Butner, et al., 2000; Edwards et al., 2011; Lazos, 2012; Louis et al., 2016; Patitu & Hinton, 2003), there was not sufficient literature that documents positive accounts for Black women professors and white students. McGowan (2000) noted that in a study about Black faculty classroom teaching experiences in PWIs, most Black faculty perceived that the majority of white students appreciate having a Black professor and appear to “gain a greater appreciation for cultural difference” (p. 21).

Students of color are often drawn to faculty of color and this is the case for Black women professors. Black women professors have devoted large amounts of time advising students of color (Laden & Hagedorn, 2000) even though in Research I universities, advising (a form of service) contributes much less to tenure/promotion than scholarly publications and teaching

(Cross & Slater, 2002; Gregory, 2001). Faculty have noted that they feel a certain obligation to take on minority students because of the feeling of needing to mentor, give back, and as an ethic of care (Bryant et al., 2005; Turner, 2003; Gregory, 2001; Stanley, 2006). It is also important to note that researchers have found that students of color who work and identify with faculty of color are more likely to return and graduate (Hughes & Howard-Hamilton, 2003; Patitu & Hinton, 2003; Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002). This research demonstrates that Black students are often drawn to Black women professors in increasing numbers, but does not mention positive relationships with white students. When Black women faculty are great mentors or othermothers, they can end up mentoring students from other races. Black women faculty often end up mentoring a disproportionate number of students than their white counterparts.

Othermothering. Othermothering can be traced back to times of slavery when Black families were sold, separating mothers from their children (Collins, 2000). Other Black women would take on the role of mother to orphaned children. This concept remains part of the Black community due to varying reasons of parents not being able to care for their children. Other members become "fictive kin" and provide parenting roles to children in the community. Othermothering can be viewed as a way to uplift or elevate the community along with attending to students' social and psychological development.

Othermothering continued after slavery ended and as Black children were educated in segregated schools (Foster, 1993). Foster (1993) found that the relationships between the teachers and students were kin-like and teachers had adopted this practice based on their own experiences going to segregated schools during elementary and secondary education. She noted that the teachers had a belief that every Black child would be successful academically. Additionally, several studies have shown that othermothering is a concept that has been present

when evaluating Black teachers and principals (Case, 1997; Loder, 2005). Teachers and principals not only make decisions based on the child's educational progress but also on outside factors that they may be dealing with at home that show up in school.

Othermothering in schools and universities. The teachers in Foster's (1993) study had all received their teacher training from HBCUs and learned from their professors that it was their moral and spiritual obligation to uplift or elevate the Black community by attending to student's academic, social, and psychological development. This literature demonstrates that some educators that attended HBCUs were trained to provide more than just an educational foundation for students.

Othermothering in higher education as it pertains to Black women faculty is also well documented in both HBCUs and PWIs (Griffin, 2013; Guiffrida, 2005; Kendricks, Nedunuri, & Arment, 2013; Mawhinney, 2012; Trotman, 2002; Tuitt, 2012). Black women professors have been described as having caring or nurturing natures that have been essential to the success of students (Mawhinney, 2012). Guiffrida (2005) indicated that some Black students at PWIs have expectations that faculty will go above and beyond formal roles to become active in the students' academic, psychosocial, and emotional development

Some Black women professors have noted that they felt an obligation to be more involved in the lives of their Black students or students of color (Mawhinney, 2012). In her reflections of working at an HBCU, Mawhinney (2012) describes the imbalance that occurs when othermothering goes too far due to belief that it provides an educational racial uplift or elevation and that student success depends on it. She explained that othermothering can lead to a lack of self-care. Care-sickness is a concept originated by Roseboro and Ross (2009) that explains what happens to Black women when they get tired from caring too much. Mawhinney

(2012) believes that the lack of self-care can be attributed to a "generation of guilt that occurs among teachers feeling as if they are not providing enough within the teacher-student relational expectations" (p. 217). The generation of guilt refers to Black women faculty feeling guilty that they are not doing enough to help students of color (Mawhinney, 2012).

Costs and benefits of othermothering. In a study of Black men and women faculties, Griffin (2013) found that most professors believe that othermothering comes with costs and benefits to the professors. In order to help Black students through support of their academic and personal development, Black professors can become drained due to the time and energy exerted (Griffin, 2013). Griffin (2013) explains that service to students, as well as excessive commitments to service, can draw Black faculty away from research responsibilities. This then can hinder productivity and tenure evaluation.

Benefits to Black faculty who participate in othermothering, according to Griffin (2013), include having a cultural outlet due to shared experiences and sense of satisfaction as a result of mentoring. Griffin (2013) noted that some participants felt a deep connection and commitment to service to Black students while others did not feel obligated to engage in service activities in ways that differed from their White colleagues.

Resistance of Black women faculty is related to othermothering because it counters the systemic and institutionalized narrative that would contend the Black students do not belong in the academy. Black women being hired as faculty members and thriving is an act of resistance in itself. If they are othermothering, they are resisting the narrative that Black students do not belong in the ivory tower. Othermothering can provide socializations processes that can be helpful in the retention of Black students. Othermothering can be a form of resistance that helps

faculty and students learn the culture of the department and university. It can also be used as a tool to aid in the admitting of students and faculty of color (Bernard et.al, (2000).

Applying the literature on relational contexts to this study. The research on service is important to the proposed study as it explores the ways in which Black women professors view othermothering as "service" in the promotion and tenure process. This study explored the challenges of balancing service, teaching, research, and advising. The research on othermothering informs this study by identifying the origins of othermothering and how it became part of the educational experience for educators. It also included life histories of Black women professors to understand their origins of othermothering. Exploring the origins of how the participants experienced or did not experience othermothering gives insight to their choice to othermother and to the boundaries of their interactions.

Resilience

Even though Black women professors have experienced discrimination, microaggressions, documented accounts of sexism and racism, and unwelcoming chilly climates at predominantly white institutions of higher education, they have still persevered and persisted. Black women continue to find ways to transgress against unwelcoming environments by finding networks and mentoring groups and using their marginality as a platform for resistance (Alfred, 2001; Collins, 2000).

Although it is important to note the challenges and struggles of this group of women, it is also important to note the tenacity of Black women faculty. Gilligan (2011) discusses different forms of resistance that women can employ: political resistance, psychological resistance and healthy resistance. Gilligan argues that historically resistance was considered negative

(especially resistance from people of color) (Gilligan, Rogers, & Tolman, 1991), but resistance reframed can be a political strategy.

Political resistance is defined as: "the willingness to act on one's knowledge when such action creates trouble" (Gilligan et al., 1991, p. 2) or "an insistence on knowing what one knows and a willingness to be outspoken" (Gilligan, 2011, p. 115). For Black women professors, this can be expressed by exploring the experiences of their marginalization and by speaking up against societal stereotypes through research and scholarship. This section highlights ways that Black women professors have fought back to make space for themselves and others for like them in higher education.

Networking. With the onset of racial battle fatigue, Black women faculty and other people of color have had to be creative in their coping mechanisms and strategies (Võ, 2012; Harley, 2008; Smith, 2004; Sule, 2011; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001) in order to navigate through the academy and pursue their career goals. One of the strategies they use includes networking with other Black women faculty and administrators as a way to vent frustrations and gain ideas. Networking is a common practice for marginalized individuals, though the networks may span across colleges and universities and with nonwhite faculty. Black women faculty have made purposeful connections with senior faculty, administrators, and new faculty (Butner, et al., 2000; Fries-Britt & Kelly, 2005). The networking is not only for mentoring opportunities but also to a way to create safe spaces within the university, as well as in relation to research and writing opportunities.

Black women professors have also looked for support through networking across departments and even outside of the university. Depending on the field that they are in, there may be opportunities to join professional field associations. Black women faculty may be able to

find like-minded individuals who are not at their university but are in the same field. In some cases it may be necessary for Black women faculty to join professional associations that are not related to their field of study (Davis, Reynolds, & Bertrand Jones, 2011). One such organization is the Sisters of the Academy (SOTA), which is open to women of color with doctoral degrees or other terminal degrees. SOTA offers a research boot camp that pairs junior and senior faculty in a weeklong intensive that helps start the socialization of new faculty to the academy (Davis et al., 2011). This is also a way for faculty to network with other professors from other universities.

Coping strategies. Tenure and promotion is often the barometer used to measure the success of professors in the academy (Bradley, 2005; Gregory, 2001; Patitu & Hinton, 2003) and Black women faculty do reach this mark. Some Black women professors have found ways to take their negative experiences and use them as a battle cry to sound the war on resistance to being treated unfairly.

In a study conducted by Constantine et al. (2008), several coping strategies were identified:

> (a) seeking support from colleagues, friends, partners, and family members, (b) "choosing one's battles carefully" (i.e., making deliberate decisions about when and how to confront racial microaggression), (c) prayer or other spiritual forms of coping with difficult situations (e.g., meditating), (d) interpersonal or emotional withdrawal from faculty members perceived to exhibit racial microaggressions, and (e) resignation that subtle racist treatment will always exist to some degree in academia (p. 353).

The strategies offered by Constantine et al. (2008), although well intentioned, may only be effective if given to Black women faculty early in their careers. According to the study, Black women faculty gave these suggestions only after they had endured negative situations

(Constantine et al, 2008). If this information is not shared early enough, some Black women may not make it through the reappointment period.

Salazar (2009) also offered several coping strategies for faculty which include: "(a) gain distance from negative experiences, (b) learn the rules of the academic game, (c) succeed in earning tenure and promotion, and (d) find a sense of professional kinship and community" (p. 182). Salazar found that these suggestions are easier to say than they are to put into action. Her study of how to employ these strategies revealed that a lot of energy is needed in order to accomplish these strategies. She noted that most participants found that these were easier to attain when they were introduced to the right tools or people to help through different negative situations (Salazar, 2009).

One of the emerging themes that came from the Salazar study was the idea of defining self (2009). This was different for each participant but imperative when dealing with negative situations. The importance of self-definition for Black women professors in imperative to their survival in the academy because the existing definitions do not accurately define their abilities and contributions. Collins (2000) states: "Black women intellectuals from all walks of life must aggressively push the theme of self-definition because speaking for oneself and crafting one's agenda is essential to empowerment" (p. 40).

The coping strategies offered by Salazar (2009) compared to those offered by Constantine et al. (2008) are not as detailed. Salazar offers the strategies, but notes in her study that it is easier to say these things than it is to actually perform them. Salazar's strategies read more like a guideline or something that you may hear in a passing conversation, but do not give distinct instructions to enact these suggested strategies. Constantine et al. (2008) offer more of a

"reality check" of the academy, and urge readers to understand that no matter what coping strategies they adhere to, racist treatment will likely exist in some way in academia.

Applying the literature on resilience to this study. The research on resilience and coping strategies demonstrates the ways in which Black women have been able to succeed and take proactive measures to ensure earning promotion and tenure. My study explores what coping strategies and efforts of resiliency that Black women professors experience in their roles of othermothering as well as other tensions with research, advising, teaching, and collegiality.

Theoretical Framework

In this study, I examined othermothering and the dimensions of race and gender. A review of the theoretical framework is presented in order to assist in understanding how othermothering as a Black faculty member is situated in the academic context. Black Feminist Thought is the introduced as the theoretical framework for this study.

Black Feminist Thought. Black Feminist Thought informs me as a researcher because it allows me to make observations of the lived experiences of Black women professors, and to interpret those experiences that may add to the body of literature of the topic of the experiences of Black women professors at PWIs as well as to the scholarship of BFT. *Black Feminist Thought* (BFT) is a theory that merges and validates the intersecting dimensions of race and gender that are uniquely experienced in the lives of Black women. It is grounded in the assumption that the majority of Black women share certain commonalities, perceptions, and experiences (Collins, 1986; 2000). BFT is comprised of "ideas produced by Black women that clarify a standpoint of and for Black women" (Collins, 1986, p. 16); Patricia Hill Collins asserts that there are several assumptions that underlie this definition. First, BFT can be recorded by

others, but it is produced by Black women. Second, Black women have a unique standpoint on and about their experiences, and commonalities of perceptions may be shared by Black women as a group. Third, living life as a Black woman will produce different themes for each woman based on the intersections of class, region, age, and sexual orientation. Finally, Black women may not always recognize their standpoint and it is up to Black female intellectuals to produce the facts and theories about Black women that will illuminate a Black woman's standpoint for Black women (Collins, 1986).

My research is informed by BFT because I will be recording the standpoints of Black women who have in common that they are professors and work at a PWI, but they will have a unique standpoint based on the intersections of their identities. As a Black female researcher, I will be contributing to the body of literature by examining known standpoints of Black women professors' experiences with othermothering as well as clarifying standpoints that may not be apparent to the participants. In the following section, I explore key aspects of Black Feminist Thought, including standpoint, controlling images, outsider within, self-definition and valuation, intersectionality, and Black women's culture.

Standpoint. According to Collins (2009), at the center of Black Feminist Thought is the concept of *standpoint*, which suggests that the inherited struggle of sexism and racism is a common bond among Black women. Collins (2009) defines standpoint as:

> A social theory arguing that the group location in hierarchical power relations produces common challenges for individuals in those groups. Moreover, shared experiences can foster similar angles of vision leading to group knowledge or standpoint deemed essential for informed political action (p. 321).

Although there are varying dimensions of their experiences depending on the class, region, age, ethnicity, and sexual orientation of the individual women, there is a commonality to their experiences (Collins, 2009). It is not necessary for every Black woman to experience every oppression in order to recognize that treatment toward them is different from their counterparts. It is expected that Black women will experience different oppression that other Black women may not experience due to their group location. This was pertinent to my study because it allows for Black women faculty to express their experiences individually even though it may not resonate collectively with all Black women faculty. Standpoint speaks to the position that Black women are in and how their location impacts their lens and their life experiences.

There are four themes inherent to BFT according to Collins (2000): "the lived experience as a criterion of meaning, use of dialogue, ethic of caring and the ethic of personal accountability" (p. 266). These themes refer to the knowledge gained from their life experiences, the importance of building alliances and relationship (since oppression is not solved individually), incorporating uses of expressiveness and emotions as a means to have better understanding for Black women experiences, and to knowledge claims that lack objectivity (Henry & Glenn, 2009).

Controlling images. Black Feminist Thought explores stereotypes that have been assigned to Black women which are deeply rooted in the American slave history. These controlling images contribute to the experiences of Black women faculty as they are part of the stereotypes that have been part of the American history as well as interwoven in the institutional racism that exists in higher education and other organizations. These controlling images are intended to "make racism, sexism, poverty, and other forms of social injustice appear natural,

normal, and inevitable parts of everyday" (Collins, 2000, p. 77). Two of the controlling images are the Mammy and the sapphire (Angry Black woman).

The Mammy is an image that originates from the time of slavery (Collins, 2000; Bryant et al., 2005). This image depicts an asexual Black woman who is warm, nurturing, and loves to take care of the White children of her slave owners. She is completely devoted to her white family, often not having time for her own family. The expectations of the historical Mammy and her devotion to her white family is giving way to new expectations of contemporary mammies who should be completely devoted to their jobs (Collins, 2000). In thinking about Black women professors, this stereotype is prevalent in the literature (Bryant et.al (2005); Kupenda, 2012; West, (1995); Woods-Giscombé, 2000) in the strenuous course loads, commitment to endless service committees throughout the department and the university (without compensation or recognition), and constantly othermothering and mentoring minority students. Just as the historical Mammy is expected to do the job without any complaint or question, so is the Black female professor.

The other controlling image is that of the matriarch also known as the sapphire or the Angry Black woman. This image is also a historical controlling image that is based on what happens if a black woman fails as a Mammy (Collins, 2000). This image depicts the Black woman as an abrasive, brash, ill-tempered woman. She is unfeminine and spends too much time away from home and the responsibilities of raising her children (Bryant et al., 2005; Collins, 2000). One of the primary roles of the sapphire or Angry Black woman is to "emasculate Black men with frequent verbal assaults, which she conducted in a loud, animated, verbose fashion" (West, 1995, p. 461).

Black women professors are thought to be combative if they do not agree with the status quo even if they have not displayed the characteristics of the stereotypical image (West, 1995). A Black woman professor can also be considered an Angry Black woman if she is not conforming to the Mammy image. If she does not act or appear to be grateful at all times of being given the opportunity to be hired by the department by accepting all assignments and extra duties assigned without complaint, she is considered to be a sapphire. These controlling images can sometimes make it difficult for Black women professors to be themselves. Not adhering to either of the controlling images can still leave Black women professors open for criticism because they are following the preconceived notions of how people think they are supposed to act.

These images inform my thinking about the experiences of Black women professors in PWIs as they speak to the stereotyping that Black women sometimes experience in their different roles at the university. In a pilot study where I explored these issues, a participant spoke about the preconceived notions that her department had about Black women. Even though the department was a counseling education department and it was assumed that counselors would know the implications of treating someone according to stereotypes, she was often referred to as the Angry Black woman for merely disagreeing with a colleague (Watkins, 2012).

Outsider-within, the stranger. Collins (2000) also explains that the Black woman's outsider-within position allows her to gain access in places where she really doesn't belong. Historically, Black women have been privy to the unknown and highly secretive worlds of society (Collins, 2000). As domestic workers for white families, they were able to establish relationships with the white children that they took care of as well as gain closeness to the white women who were in charge of their service (Bryant et al., 2005; Collins, 2000; Harley, 2008; West, 1995). It was from this special location the Black women were able to demystify the

rumors about power dynamics in white homes. The Black women domestics were able to glean information from observations as well as give advice when asked. From this peculiar position, Black women were able to share the information that they learned with others in their own communities. Although these women were able to gain important knowledge of the white families that they worked for, they knew that they would never be a part of their white families, therefore, no matter the level of their involvement they remained outsiders (Collins, 1986). Collins (2000) uses the *stranger* as defined by George Simmel (1969) as a "starting point for understanding the largely unexplored area of Black female outsider within status and the usefulness of the standpoint it might produce" (p. 15). The stranger is an individual who is a member of a system but who is not strongly attached to the system (Simmel, 1969).

The standpoint of the stranger or outsider is a unique place for Black women professors as they can see the interactions of the academy and speak from multiple intersections of their identities (i.e., race, gender, marital status). The person who is the outsider-within has been invited to be in the environment but is not really a part of the environment and is considered marginalized (hooks, 1984; Simmel, 1969). The marginalized other is expected to come into the environment and then return to the margin after they have done their work. This was the duty of Black female domestics who were employed by white families.

This is also applicable to the Black female professor who is employed at a predominantly white institution (Frazier, 2011). It is from the outsider-within position that Black women professors have been able to navigate the institution of higher education. They are allowed in the department but not necessarily considered part of the department. It is from this position that Black women professors have shown great resistance by sharing and writing about their

experiences (Alfred, 2001; Collins, 1986, 2000; Fries-Britt & Kelly, 2005; Gregory, 2001; Harley, 2008; hooks, 1984).

Although the margin is considered to not really be part of the environment, there have been Black female intellectuals that have used their margin as a place of creative excitement (Alfred, 2001; Collins, 1986, 2000; hooks, 1984). As outsiders, Black female faculty can offer standpoints that can deepen contemporary scholarship of Black Feminist theory. This is important to this study because it highlighted how Black women faculty have used othermothering to resist and as a foundation to advance students of color through the academic pipeline.

Self-definition and self-valuation. Black Feminist Thought also recognizes the individuality of Black women as well as their commonalities. Even though they may share similar experiences, they are still respected as a unique individual based on sexual orientation, class, religion, and age (among other variables, including, for example ability, academic preparation, etc.). This allows for women to be able to self-define and self-value (Collins, 2000) their own identities regardless of stereotypes that may plague them in the academy.

According to Collins (1986) *self-definition* requires:

> challenging the political knowledge that has resulted in externally defined stereotypical images of Afro-American womanhood although self-valuation stresses the content of Black women's definition-----namely, replacing externally derived images with the authentic Black female images (p. 16-17).

Self-definition and self-valuation are ways to resist mainstream stereotypes of Black women.

Some of the controlling images that were mentioned in previous sections of this paper (Sapphire and Mammy) are being challenged in higher education. The purpose of these images is

to punish Black women's assertiveness in resisting the multifaceted oppression that they have experienced (Collins, 2000). It is important for Black women to acknowledge and expose the controlling images and their attempts to silence Black women. It can be problematic to try only to replace the negative images and not offer an explanation as to why they need to be replaced (Collins, 1986; 1991).

Self-definition challenges what is being said about Black women and the credibility, motive, and power of who is saying what about Black women (Alfred, 2001; Collins, 1986; 1991; 2000;). As Black women define themselves, they are rejecting the "taken-for granted assumption that those in positions granting them the authority to describe and analyze reality are entitled to do so" (Collins, 1986, p. 17). The act of insisting on Black female self-definition validates Black women's power as subjects regardless of the actual content of that self-definition.

Although self-definition speaks to the power dynamic of definitions, *self-valuation* addresses the actual content of the definitions (Collins, 1986; 2000). Collins (1986) asserts that many of the attributes that still exist in Black female stereotypes are actually "distorted renderings of those aspects of Black female behavior seen as most threatening to white patriarchy" (p. 17). Aggressive Black women are threatening because they challenge white patriarchal definitions of femininity (Collins, 1986; Alfred, 2001; Bryant et al, 2005; Harley, 2008).

Self-valuation is also a point of resistance that questions some of the basic ideas of the dominant groups that are meant to control Black women. Resistance can be displayed by embracing the stereotype that has been deemed negative. If Black women and Black women professors embrace assertiveness, sassiness, and other "unfeminine" qualities as necessary and

functional attributes for Black womanhood, then they challenge the content of externally-defined controlling images (Collins, 1986; 2000).

Self-definition and self–valuation are relevant to this research because it establishes ways in which Black women professors can resist stereotypes that they may encounter during their experiences of othermothering and tensions in other areas. The research sought out specific examples of how the participants self-define and or self-valuate through their research interests, presentation of research and engagement of students.

Intersectionality and Black women's culture. Collins (2000) asserts that one of the functions of Black Feminist Thought is to "resist oppression as well as its practices and the ideas that justify it and to empower Black women within the context of social injustice sustained by intersecting oppressions" (p. 26). Crenshaw (1991) defines intersectionality as "the various ways in which race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's employment experiences" (p. 1244). The many intersections that are experienced by Black women give them a special standpoint in which they can express themselves from multiple identities. The importance of intersectionality is that it reveals many facets of Black women that contribute to the shaping of their standpoint. The multiple points of intersection provide an abundant opportunity to contribute to the field of literature for Black Feminist Thought as well as the Black woman professor and should provide impetus for new scholarship.

Concerning Black women's culture, it is important that scholars continue to glean from historical black feminist scholarship about the experiences of Black women as an avenue from which we can learn and teach (Collins, 1986). Culture is not static and is ever-evolving, and for this reason it is important for Black women to continue to self-define and add to the culture. Doing so will allow for Black women to explore multiple intersections in which more

commonalities can be identified and "creates space for more women to use ideological references to make sense of the circumstances in which they find themselves" (Collins, 1986, p. 28).

Black women professors at PWIs of higher education are often bullied by the stratifications of the university and/or department because of the dominant culture's power of naming (Moffitt, Harris, & Forbes Berthoud, 2012; Frazier, 2011; Walker, 2004). The power to name what is better than or less than often translates into defining what is or is not important. This is often manifested by dismissing the research interests of Black women faculty and other faculty of color. If the scholarship has to do with gender or race, it can be considered to not be relevant and therefore causing barriers for RPT (Bradley, 2005; (Butner, et al., 2000; Harley, 2008)

The dominant culture has the power to define one group being better than the other, which allows the dominant culture to distort images of self, images of others, and images of relational possibilities (Collins, 2009; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Walker, 2004). This could include seeing oneself as successful which may translate in earning promotion and tenure, and a sense of belonging.

As mentioned in previous sections of this chapter, it is imperative the Black women place emphasis on self-definition (Collins, 2009) and continually add to the culture of Black women. The dissertation contributes to the literature by exploring the ways in which Black women professors self-define and self-valuate while incorporating the intersections they identify with while experiencing othermothering and any tensions that they may encounter.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study was conducted using interpretive qualitative inquiry, phenomenology components of the Listening Guide (Gilligan, 2015), and portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). This chapter includes details on these methodological approaches, as well as the setting and context, data collection and analysis procedures, authenticity and validity, and the limitations of the study.

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative inquiry was used in this research study as it provided an opportunity to deeply examine concepts in individuals' lives. Qualitative inquiry allowed me to describe ideas with great detail rather than represent it with a number as in quantitative inquiry (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research methods offer an opportunity to humanize problems that people experience and an avenue to share those perspectives (Jenkins, 2009). In other words, "qualitative research seeks to understand the world from the perspectives of those living in it" (Hatch, 2002, p. 7).

Interpretive qualitative inquiry. In particular, my study used an interpretive approach. Interpretive qualitative research gave me the opportunity to comprehend the meanings people construct about their experiences and how they make sense of their world (Merriam, 2002). Qualitative approaches are based in *social constructivism*, which focuses on understanding the processes of interaction among people in the specific contexts within which they live and work, also known as *worldview* (Creswell, 2013). A qualitative researcher makes every effort to interpret the complex and varied meaning of their participants' experiences (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative approaches are beneficial for descriptions of situations, processes, and relationships (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2002).

The vital factor of qualitative research is the meaning of the experiences reported by the participants. This is what makes qualitative inquiry focus on the situational (Hatch, 2002). For my particular study, I was interested in the lived experiences and perceptions of these women. Qualitative methodology was an appropriate approach for exploring how Black women professors experience othermothering at PWIs because it allowed the participants to share their perspectives and lived experiences. Each woman was able to speak to specific experiences and how she was influenced on her journey in the academy. In-depth interviewing, phenomenology, memo-ing, and observations of the participants were used to construct meaning. Meaning for each participant varied based on the diversity and the unique qualities of each woman.

Philosophical assumptions of qualitative inquiry. Creswell (2013) identified four philosophical assumptions of qualitative methodology: ontological, epistemological, axiology, and methodology.

Ontological assumptions deal with the nature of reality and its characteristics (Creswell, 2013). Researchers acknowledge the idea that multiple realities exist within themselves and the participants of the study. Qualitative researchers conduct their studies with the intent of reporting these multiple realities (Creswell, 2013). Phenomenological studies will report how individuals in the study view their experiences differently (Moustakas, 1994). My study meets this assumption because my discussion of intersectional BFT similarly supports the assumption of multiple realities, and also how I present the findings of each person separately to demonstrate their unique experiences of othermothering.

The *epistemological assumption* in qualitative research means that the researcher attempts to get as close as possible to the participant in the study to obtain what counts as knowledge and how knowledge claims are justified. It is important for the researcher to spend

time in the "field" where the participants live and work, and minimize the distance between themselves and the participant. The researcher relies on the participants' context to gather understanding quotes from the participant, which is considered subjective evidence (Creswell, 2013). Observations were completed of the participants in order to meet this assumption.

The *axiological assumption* deals with the values that a researcher brings to the study and makes known in the study (Creswell, 2013). The researcher admits that the nature of the study is value-laden and actively discusses their values and biases along with the value-laden nature of information gathered in the field (Creswell, 2013). As a researcher, I positioned myself in the research by sharing my perspectives with the participants, drawing from my own experience during data analysis. I mentioned that I was a foster parent when it came up in the interviews and how the participant's experiences resonated with situations currently happening in my life. I also mentioned my experience about not being invited to do research from faculty members due to my research interests. My presence is evident in the text as well as the interpretations of the participants (Creswell, 2013).

Methodological assumptions refer to the approach of the inquiry (Creswell, 2013). The procedures of qualitative research are "characterized as inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researchers experience in collecting and analyzing the data" (Creswell, 2013, p. 22). It can sometimes be necessary for research questions to change during the study in order to use questions that better understand the research problem, which in turn can cause the data collection strategy to change as well (Creswell, 2013). This assumption informed my work because I needed to make a change to the research questions in order to gain more information about the tensions that Black women faculty experienced in relation to their research, teaching and advising.

Assumptions guiding this research. The overall assumptions that guided my research are the following:

1. Reality is multiple as seen through many views (Creswell, 2013, p. 21). In this study, there may be multiple truths as experienced by each of the participants.
2. All knowledge and experiences are connected to phenomena. Things in consciousness that appear in the surrounding world, inevitably a unity must exist between ourselves as knowers and the things or objects that we come to know and depend upon (Moustakas, 1994, p. 44). Creswell (2013) also refers this as *intentionality of consciousness*, which asserts that objects exist only within one's consciousness of it. Since the subject and the object coexist, the experiences of Black women professors cannot be examined analyzed or understood without studying the participants who are living the experience.
3. There is general agreement that meaning is at the heart of perceiving, remembering, judging, feeling, and thinking (Moustakas, 1994, p. 68). In this study, Black women professors were asked to recall memories of different periods of their lives. Memories from different periods of their lives helped to construct meaning about how they experienced othermothering and their choice to othermother. The information was presented from their perspectives as they remember it.
4. The process of searching into the meaning of something involves the suspension of judgment (Moustakas, 1994). In this study I memoed any preconceived notions I had before interviewing all participants. Bracketing, memos, and the reflexivity of the researcher is pertinent to how meaning is conveyed to readers (Maxwell, 2005). I did

this to ensure that the meaning that the participant gave was clearly conveyed in my interpretation.

Phenomenological Approach

Phenomenology was the methodological approach used in this study. It is defined as the study of lived experience and how people understand this experience (Crotty, 1998). Phenomenology describes the "common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon" (Creswell, 2013, p. 76). In this study, I described the experiences of three Black women professors and their experiences at different predominantly white institutions of higher education.

According to Creswell (2013), the basic purpose of phenomenology is to explore how an individual experiences a phenomenon. In order to get the individual's perspective, it was necessary for me to acknowledge my own prejudices, preconceived notions, and relational images. This was done by bracketing my personal experiences through memos written throughout the research process (Creswell, 2013). This bracketing was necessary in order to gain a broad picture of the experience.

Phenomenology is an appropriate approach for the study because I examined the experiences of several Black women professors from varying levels in their careers at PWIs (i.e. assistant or associate level faculty). I sought to describe common experiences among these women. An integral part of this study was the idea of bracketing. My positionality, as discussed in a previous chapter, makes the readers aware that I had personal interests in the research. I created a separate section to share this to make sure that I had created a unique space for participants to tell their stories rather than highlight my own.

Portraiture

Portraiture is a method that was introduced by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot in 1983 while conducting a study on six high schools (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). This method is used when the researcher and the participant co-construct the story of the participant while taking into account the position of the researcher. A *portrait* is the final result of the inquiry: "documents or texts that come as close as possible to painting with words" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 4). *Portraitist* is another name for a researcher who utilizes the portraiture method to document the discoveries from their inquiries in a portrait (Good, 2010; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Portraiture offers readers the opportunity to sense familiarity or connection with the story. In order to achieve this the portraitist (or researcher) needs to intricately describe the behaviors of the participant as well as describe *how* the behaviors and interactions are experienced, perceived, and negotiated by people in the setting (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Comparing portraiture and phenomenology. Portraiture holds some of the same traditions and values of phenomenology (Jenkins, 2009). It enquires about the lived experience and how this experience is understood by people (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Portraiture, however, expands the confines of phenomenology by pushing against the:

> constraints of those traditions and practices in its explicit effort to combine empirical and aesthetic description, in its focus on the convergence of narrative and analysis, in its goal of speaking to broader audiences beyond the academy, in its standard of authenticity rather than reliability and validity, and in its explicit recognition of the use of self as the primary research instrument for documenting and interpreting the perspectives and

> experiences of the people and the cultures being studied (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 13).

Expanding the traditions and practices of phenomenology, portraiture combines the findings, narrative, and emotion that allow contributions of rich-lived experiences to the academy and beyond. Portraiture embraces the idea of crossing boundaries and blurring lines in order to co-construct a narrative that exhibits "aesthetic expression" and captures the essence of the participant (Jenkins, 2009; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 3).

Although the portrait is not an exact replica of the participant, it is a piece in which the participant should recognize his or herself, and that tells them things that they did not know about his or herself (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005). Lawrence- Lightfoot (2005) explains her personal encounter when someone painted a physical portrait of her:

> I also recognized that in searching for essence, in moving beyond the surface image, the artist was generous and tough, skeptical and receptive. I was never treated or seen as object but was always a person of strength and vulnerability, beauty and imperfection, mystery and openness. The artist needed to be vigilant in capturing the image but always watchful of my feelings, perspectives and experience. I learned, as well, that the portraits expressed a haunting paradox of a moment in time and of timelessness (p. 5).

The role of the portraitist. Portraiture not only captures insight of the participant, but also allows the researcher, or portraitist, to interject their own thoughts and voice into the portrait (Jenkins, 2009; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1994; Wright, 2007). In this methodology I used the self (portraitist-researcher) as the research instrument (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), therefore allowing an opportunity for not only one portrait, but also a

self-portrait. The self-portrait may not be as prominent as the participant but is it certainly present. Lawrence- Lightfoot & Davis (1997) assert:

> In portraiture, the voice of the researcher is everywhere: in assumptions, preoccupations, and framework she brings to the inquiry; in questions she asks; in the data she gathers; in the choice of stories she tells, in the language, cadence, and rhythm of the narrative. Voice is the research instrument, echoing the self of the portraitist-her eyes, her ears, her insights, her style, her aesthetic (p. 85).

The portraitist is an integral part of the portraiture methodology. For instance, the researcher's experiences, attitudes, and opinions are considered important perspectives to consider in the portrait. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) explain:

> Portraitists seek to record and interpret the perspectives and experiences of the people they are studying, documenting their voices and visions—their authority, knowledge, and wisdom. The drawing is placed in the social and cultural context and shaped through dialogue between the portraitist and the subject, each one negotiating the discourse and shaping the evolving image. The relationship between the two is reach with meaning and resonance and becomes the arena for navigating the empirical, aesthetic, and ethical dimensions of authentic and compelling narrative (p. xv).

Although I collected the data from the participants, my lens was still present because I am the one who produced the narrative. My positionality was important to the process as it provided motivation for the exploration of the study. I will be working with each participant to co-create a narrative that uses their voice and experiences and my lens. The setting, social and cultural context are all part of the narrative or portrait.

The goal of the portraitist is to produce a "narrative that is at once complex, provocative, and inviting, that attempts to be holistic, revealing the dynamic interaction of values, personality, structure, and history […] in context" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 11). This methodology can use a number of data sources for triangulation including: in-depth interviews, observations and field notes, and poetry. The different data sources were used to render a complex story in order to add symmetry, contrast, and color to the portrait. This was important because without different data sources the narrative would appear to be a regurgitation of an interview transcript.

Although the voice of the portraitist should not minimize the voice of the participant, it should be evident that the portraitist is there to be a supporting voice to the participant (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). The portraitist chooses what aspect(s) of the story is being told from his or her own perspective, including background knowledge, subjectivities, and reservations (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Related to this point, I memoed my own preconceived notions and experiences and used reflexivity to make sure that I was not using the participants' story to tell my own story.

Goodness seeking. The portraiture method takes the stance that there is goodness to be found in the inquiry of the participant (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) explain that portraiture resists the deficit model of looking at phenomena that highlights and documents failure. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) explain that portraiture resists using a deficit stance in describing and "documenting pathology and suggesting remedies" (p. 141), and rather it encourages a

> pursuit of strength and an examination of productivity and assumes that strength, health, and productivity—will *always* be imbued with flaws, weaknesses, and inconsistencies,

> and that the portraitist's inquiry must leave room for the full range of qualities to be revealed (p. 142).

This not to say that the portraitist will omit things that may be viewed as negative or unfavorable, but by approaching the inquiry with the questions "what is good here?", the researcher is likely to tell a different story than one that is only seeking the sources of failure (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 9). In searching for goodness, there is an opportunity to explore vulnerability and weaknesses.

It is also important that the portraitist not impose a singular definition of what goodness may mean. The portraitist must be open to many ways that goodness can be conveyed. They must be able to identify and document it from the subjects' perspective. The search for goodness is a search for truth, or in some cases competing truths, that are co-constructed with the portraitist and the participant to complete a genuine narrative (Lawrence- Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Importance of portraiture for my study. Portraiture was an appropriate method for this study because I sought to co-construct a descriptive narrative with the participants. The study was designed to give space for the participant's voice through listening and observation. This study explored the historical and social contexts in the participants' experiences and reported on the multiple realities of each participant in narrative form. Close attention was paid to body language, interaction between the participant and others, as well as interpreting the silences. Doing this allowed me to co-construct a narrative that explored the origins of the participants' experiences and how those experiences impacted their choices to othermother.

In this study, I sought to describe goodness through the Black women faculty experiencing othermothering. The questions that I chose allowed the participants to decide what

is good or not. I was attentive to the ways that the participants described goodness. I was also open to the varying definitions of experiences that made up goodness for each participant by recording the self-defined explanations of the participants.

Recruitment and Consent Procedures

I used website searches, email inquiries, and recommendations from women of color to petition potential participants. I reached out to a total of twenty-seven people to petition them to participate in the study. I looked up faculty and staff directories on websites of several Midwestern Research universities; asked Black women faculty that I knew for recommendations and also utilized word of mouth from peers who may have known eligible Black women faculty at PWIs. A total of six women agree to be interviewed and observed. Several of those women decided not to participate after they were cautioned by mentors that they may be identifiable in the portraits. Even after explaining all the measures that were being taken to protect their identity, they declined to participate. They were cautioned about the ramifications it could have on promotion and tenure if they spoke negatively about their department and their experiences.

Initial consent was obtained either verbally by phone or in email. Upon meeting the participant, a consent form was signed which explained the study and the rights of the participant (see Appendix A and B).

Sampling and Participants

The number of participants in qualitative research varies. In phenomenological studies, however, the goal is to collect extensive detail from the individuals studied, not to generalize the information (Creswell, 2013). Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) speak of the "particular residing in the universal" (p. 80). This means that in portraiture, rather than starting with broader ideas, the portraitists starts with specific or the particular experiences. In dealing with the

particular, the portraitists will discover general themes. Portraiture insists on "documenting and illuminating the complexity and detail of a unique experience or place hoping that the audience will see themselves reflected in it, trusting that the readers will feel identified" (p. 14). This means that the even though each participant in this study was unique and had her own specific story based on her intersections, readers will be able to discover resonant universal themes.

A purposeful sampling strategy was used in this investigation because particular individuals can inform an understanding of the research questions (Creswell, 2013). More specifically, *criterion purposeful sampling* was used because each of the participants met specific criteria (Creswell, 2013). Participants identified as Black women university faculty whose primary function is teaching, research, and scholarship rather than administration.

There were three participants in this study. In a qualitative study, the most important consideration is to select the individuals who can provide the researcher with information that will answer the research questions (Maxwell, 2005). The participants in this study were Black women professors who were 1) pre-tenure, 2) recently received tenure, and 3) full professor status:

- Dr. Wise: a full professor with over 40 years of teaching and research experience. I chose this pseudonym for this participant because of the reflective nature of our interactions. Dr. Wise was preparing to retire from the university and was full of wisdom on things she learned and how she wanted to pass that on to others.
- Dr. Faith: an assistant professor with two years of teaching experience and over four years of research experience (as a graduate student and assistant professor). I chose this pseudonym for her because of the strong ties to her spirituality that kept coming

up in our interview. Her "faith" was very important to her and appropriately described her.

- Dr. Love: an associate professor with over 20 years of teaching and research experience. I chose this pseudonym for her because of how she viewed education and othermothering. She loved education and impacting others to change the world. She exuded love when she talked about her life and was an accurate description to capture her demeanor and passion.

Data Collection

The data collection involved in-depth interviews and observations. I added memos as part of the data collection to make sure that I remained attentive to the story that the participants told. In this section, I describe the interviewing process, observations, and memos.

Interviews. According to Seidman (2006), interviewing can lead to "understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (p. 9). Seidman (2006) also claims that "interviewing provides access to the context of people's behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior" (p. 10).

Seidman (2006) recommends a series of three interviews that explore a focused life history for the participant, details of the experience, and reflection on the meaning that participants attribute to their experience. For this study, a modified approach was used. Although each participant participated in a 90-120 minute interview, the single interview contained all of the components of the three-part interview process suggested by Seidman (2006). In particular, I focused the interviews on childhood and family information, college and graduate history, and career history of the participant in order to establish the context of the participants' experience.

A protocol was used to guide each semi-structured interview (Appendix C). Participants told their stories by answering open-ended and clarifying questions. By asking open-ended questions, participants were encouraged to give detailed accounts of actual experiences rather than general descriptions. I also asked for clarification and followed the participant down varying paths in order to provide more details to ensure rich data collection. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed.

Observations. I also observed each participant in their work setting with students for one to two hours. I took field notes of the observation as a form of data. The participant chose the context in which they wanted to be observed based on where she felt she participated in othermothering. During the observation, I took notes of the interactions that the professor engaged in with the student(s), paying close attention to how they acted out their roles in the othermothering interactions.

Memos. Before each interview, I completed a memo about concerns and any reservations I had as a way to bracket my experiences and preconceived notions to be attentive to the participant's story. I also completed a reflection after each interview to document relevant contexts, general impressions and reactions of myself, and points of clarification. In addition to these reflections, I also completed a memo after the transcription of each interview to describe and capture initial thoughts on the first reading and the observations. These reflections were considered data (Maxwell, 2005).

Data Analysis

My data analysis included several different analytical approaches. After reading each transcript; I used themes derived from transcripts. I then used reflections and field noted to complete a narrative. Once this was completed for all participants, I identified emerging themes

and examined those themes for commonalities among the participants using descriptive, and interpretive coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994). *Descriptive coding* describes the data with little interpretation, "but attributes a class of phenomena to a segment of text" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56). Descriptive coding involves "attaching a class designation to various occurrences which will help with data management" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56). I first used descriptive coding by labeling comments which will help establish initial properties for responses (Jenkins, 2009).

Interpretive coding denotes some particular difference or special category that has been attached to the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This was done by grouping similar words and phrases to create themes. Once themes were determined, I linked those themes with examples from the interviews.

Coding through the *First Listening*, a component from the Listening Guide (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 2015), was used throughout the data collection process, and helped me to refine analysis as well as clarifying unclear information. The objective was to write the landscape of the interview as well as notice salient themes, repeated words, and gaps in the interview. The landscape served as the preliminary outline for the portrait. This method encourages the listener to use the plotted or intriguing aspects of the interview to realize their location in connection with the material. Location refers to the position or lens that the listener is experiencing the interview. In a first listening, the listener is in a peripheral position that allows them to survey the material. Using this component of the Listening Guide helped me to determine themes and silences to include in the narratives.

Authenticity and Validity

"Authenticity refers to the researcher ability to fully and truly capture the depth and breadth of the experience and narrate in a way that retains the spirit of the stories being told" (Jenkins, 2009, p. 124). Portraiture conveys authenticity by acknowledging that conducting the same study may not yield the same results because research interactions change based on life events and influences (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Maxwell (2005) defines *validity* as "the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account" (p. 106). I focused on writing the truest account possible of the participants. My intent was to provide an accurate, credible description and interpretation of the experiences of othermothering for Black women professors at predominantly white institutions of higher education.

I employed three of Maxwell's (2005) tests for validity: gathering rich data, respondent validation, and triangulation. The first test of gathering *rich data* involves using in-depth interviews and observations as well as providing detailed descriptions in the findings section of the study. I demonstrated this in my dissertation through the data collection processes which included conducting interviews and observations of the participants.

The second validity test is what Maxwell (2005) calls *respondent validation*, or member checking. Respondent validation involved getting feedback from the participants throughout the data collection process. I intended to receive respondent validation by sending a copy of the portrait to each participant for their feedback. The evidence gathered from this method could have helped me identify any biases that I may have had by allowing the participants to look over the written analysis. I received feedback from Dr. Faith who was satisfied with the portrait of her

and did not ask for any changes. Dr. Wise also accepted the portrait as written and was pleased with the way I told her story.

The third test for validity is *triangulation*, which required the use of multiple methods to gather data in a study. I used interviews, memos, reflections, and field notes from the observations as data sources in this study. Using these methods provided an accurate description of the participants' experiences. I also double-checked notes, re-listened to interviews for new codes and expressions, as well as re-read all field notes to ensure that everything that needed to be noted is part of the narrative.

Limitations

My shared race and gender identities with the participants as well as similar life experiences may have shaped what I heard even though I put measures in place to avoid the type of interference. As mentioned before, recruiting for participants was difficult due to a number of women being a concerned about being identified.

Chapter 4: A Portrait of Dr. Wise

During my recruitment period for this dissertation, I had a somewhat difficult time finding people who would agree to participate in the study. I was grateful for those who agreed and scheduled to start the interview process. There were several reasons that Black women were reluctant to participate. Some Black women professors felt as though they could be easily identified and that being "outed" could be adversely affect their employment (Stevens, 2010). This is a real fear for junior faculty members who have not yet earned tenure and are working diligently to conduct research and produce publications.

I did not think that I would run into this issue for full professors. My assumptions were that these women would be more confident in speaking with me because they had arrived at the pinnacle of their career. I assumed that they had proved to their institutions that their contributions to the field were beneficial, that their service to the university was appreciated and sufficient, that their scholarship on teaching was superb, and therefore had achieved a level of academic freedom that afforded them to right to speak about their experiences without some form of retaliation. My assumptions were incorrect. When I had reached out to Dr. Wise, she initially said no because she was too busy and that she could not commit the time that was necessary. She mentioned that she was working on a number of research projects as well as teaching and advising. It was a very busy time for her, and it she didn't feel like she could commit the amount of time to be a part of my study. I was devastated by this news. She is a celebrity in her own right, and I might have been dealing with a small research "crush."

I asked her again to reconsider and let her know that I was willing to accommodate her schedule as to fit the interviews in as she needed. She did not seem interested in my accommodation strategy. I consulted with my advisor and other members of my committee to

rethink my strategy to help her reconsider being part of my study. One of my committee members told me to ask again and this time, explain my reasons: “I would love to hear your story and then to tell your story.” I felt inspired by this strategy, but it meant that I was going to have to send her another email or leave another voicemail. I decided to give it a little time and focus on some travelling that I needed to do for work.

While travelling, I attended a program that was meant to provide an environment for students of color with faculty of color. During this session, I was in contact with several women professors who had suggestions of folks that I should talk to. Each time, I was asked by other Black professors about asking Dr. Wise to participate as the full professor for my study. I tried very hard not to mope as I informed them that I had already asked her and she declined. Their sighs were comforting, and at the same time a reminder of the story that I would never get to hear. I resolved to try to reach out to her again once my travelling was over.

The last professor that I spoke with about my research told me that her mentor would be perfect for the full professor participant, and that she was going to be visiting with her at the same conference that I was attending. She assured me that this is the kind of thing that the professor would be interested in, and that she was very mindful of helping young scholars. She asked how long I was staying and stated that she would love to introduce us. After mingling for a few minutes, her mentor arrived and motioned for me to come to the table. “Portia, I would like for you to meet my mentor and good friend, Dr. Wise.” I was so shocked that I almost forgot to say hello. I joined them at the table and engaged them in conversation about my experience as a graduate student at a predominantly white institution of higher education. Soon we were talking about my research interests and I could feel the eyes of the mentee prompting me to ask her to be a part of my research. Dr. Wise began to tell me how, for some reason, my research seemed to be

familiar to her. At that moment, she tilted her head and said, “Are you the young lady that has been sending me requests to participate?” I replied, “Yes, I am the one! I would love to talk to you about why I think you should reconsider.” She asked me if I had any idea about how busy she was, and how she did not know if she had the type of time that was required for my study. I assured her that I would be patient while she found the time. I also told her that I would share it widely so that other scholars like me looking to join the academy could learn from her experiences. She agreed, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to talk with her.

After several weeks of scheduling and rescheduling, an opportunity to both observe and interview her became available. I had spent several minutes prior to our meeting memo-ing. I wanted to make sure that I acknowledged my nervousness and excitement. I wanted to admit that I was fearful of messing up but absolutely honored that this woman had taken the time to talk with me so that I could move forward with my research. I wanted to get all of my preconceived notions and assumptions about what I thought she might say out of my mind. I had to admit that I had some prior knowledge of recent events in her life and that I did not want to open up wounds for her or the floodgate of emotions for the both of us. I wrote in my journal to clear my mind so that I could give her my undivided attention.

Setting the Scene

I met with Dr. Wise in a local restaurant that offers free Wi-Fi and specialty coffee drinks. We could hear the traffic that was outside whenever the door opened. After we purchased food and settled into what we deemed a more private, quiet part of the restaurant, the interview began. Dr. Wise worked at a mid-sized research institution in the Midwest. The university is situated in in an area that covers five or more neighborhoods.

Dr. Wise is an older Black woman with a very young face. She does not look her age, which is somewhere in the mid-60s. She is about six feet tall with a slender build. Her hair is brown with tints of red and subtle hints of gray. Her skin tone reminds me of Tina Turner, with the facial features of Angela Bassett. She is a testament to the Black adage of "Black don't crack." She appeared calm, regal, and kind.

Early Life and the Value of Education

I wanted to get an idea of the way in which Dr. Wise experienced othermothering in different periods of her life. To do this, I inquired about different aspects of her life where othermothering may have occurred or were necessary. Dr. Wise began by telling me about her childhood. She grew up in a two-parent home with her older brother. Her parents were not educated at the time when she was a child. Her mother eventually graduated with her bachelor's degree from the same university where Dr. Wise was a faculty member. Her father never went to college, and she believes that it was one of his biggest regrets. Indeed, education was very valued in her home. She said that her parents worked hard to make sure that their children had the same opportunities to which children from other socio-economic classes had access (e.g. taking 2-3-day vacations, going to the symphony). Dr. Wise's parents made a modest living that would have been considered low income. Her father made sure to point out successful educated Black women in their community, in order to encourage her to pursue an education. Dr. Wise describes her upbringing as "very fortunate growing up, not to say fortunate financially, but fortunate in terms of the family support."

Dr. Wise was a strong student in elementary and middle school. She went to a predominantly Black elementary school received a great deal of attention from teachers, which boosted her self-esteem. She received reinforcements of her intellectual ability and self-esteem

from her parents who assured her that she could and would be successful. When she got to junior high, however, she found the work to be more challenging and she struggled a bit. She started experiencing teachers who did not see students of color as intelligent. This was very different than what she had become accustomed to in elementary school. She realized she was being used by the teachers as a measure or standard above which her white classmates should surpass. She recalls:

> But one memory that stands out is that white teachers and white counselors, I have experiences of how they didn't necessarily see talent in me or whatever… I was taking chemistry, and they lined us up as - they gave some kind of quiz at the - at the beginning of them, and then they lined us up. The students who did poorly sat - had to sit in the first row and the - the better you did, the further back you were sitting. And I must have done okay because I was sitting in - near the back as well. And so there was one test where I had a higher score than these white boys who ordinarily had the high score and the teacher, the science teacher was a white male and I distinctly remember him using the fact that I had gotten a higher score than them as a sign that they hadn't studied, rather than that I [had] done well - [LAUGHTER] - and that - it was like see, you must not have studied.

This was the first of many micro assaults of racism that Dr. Wise experiences in her middle and high school years. These types of micro assaults continued as she went to high school. As she was preparing to go to college, she did not know much about Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). Many of her classmates attended HBCU and several attended Big 10 schools. She remembered being told that she would not make it at a Big 10 school. She asserted to her counselor that she knew Black students that were there, and her grades were comparable to

them. The counselor checked her grades and resentfully agreed that maybe she could go there. She used the doubt of others to advocate for herself and to motivate herself to excel in her studies.

Dr. Wise attended a predominantly white university but felt that she and her fellow Black students created their own world of support, advocacy, and activism. “I wanted to go to a school that was rated well but had enough Black people so that I would not be alone there.”

She recounted how information that they needed while in college was difficult to find and that they had to help each other by sharing what they had found out. She and the other students created a safe space for themselves to support each other academically and socially. They studied together and attended different events together. They used each other as an audience to practice presentations to make sure they were prepared. “We took care of each other. We helped to get through our studies and through life.” Even though her peers worked together to take care of each other, their care could be seen as another form or start of othermothering. It may look different because they are peers and of different genders, but the behaviors mirror othermothering.

Although she eventually sent her own daughters to a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), she never felt like she missed out on the Black experience because of the network she helped to cultivate:

> It was a really good experience, and in fact, it was - most of my life even - most of my life was in - outside the classroom, it's like we had created a Black world for ourselves even though we were not at an HBCU. So social life was in a Black - a Black world.

She did regret that perhaps they were too isolated from others.

There are several of her white counterparts who are well known in the field now with whom she attended university but does not know personally. This is something that she is intentional about teaching to her students; to make sure that they are networking with others and creating opportunities to foster research relationships while also being a support to other students of color.

Othermothering.

When defining othermothering in her own words, Dr. Wise explained that it is:

> Someone who takes enough interest in you that it has a possibility of either changing the trajectory of your life or helping you emotionally. [PAUSE]. And they are doing it not for any personal gain but doing it altruistically to help you.

This helps me to understand that othermothering is something that is not expected by the person who is experiencing the guidance. They are getting more than what they expected from the person in regards to the functional role of the relationship (e.g., advisor, professor). This also helps me to understand that the experience of othermothering is not for professional gain of the mentor/mother. They are doing it for a greater reason than checking off criteria on a task list. They do it to ensure that Black students persist and thrive in the academy.

Dr. Wise and her aunt. Her first recollections of being othermothered was by her aunt (her mother's sister) who took to Dr. Wise and her brother as she did not have any children of her own. They were treated as her own children:

> My mother and her sister were so close till - it was like me and that family and my family were almost like raised together. So I would say first my aunt. And then I had another aunt who didn't have any kids of her own and so she really favored me and my - me and my brother a lot.

Although she did not give many details about how she was treated, it was clear from the tone and sincerity in her voice that the aunt was like a second mother to her. Dr. Wise was othermothered by her aunt based on the affection that she was shown and the attention that was given to her and her brother.

Dr. Wise and Dr. Ellen. The next person that she considered an othermother was her graduate school advisor, Dr. Ellen. Dr. Ellen was a white woman who served as her advisor during her undergraduate studies. Interestingly, she did not have a close relationship with her as an undergraduate student. All advisors were assigned a caseload of students (according to alphabetical order) to advise during their undergraduate career. Dr. Wise was assigned with other students who had the same first initial of her last name.

> My advisor, who was a - a white woman, played a big difference in my graduate school life. And it wasn't that we were so close that I would sit down and have - talk to her about problems or something like that. But it was like she clearly believed in me and she opened the door - she opened doors for me and she made just such a big difference in my life.

Dr. Wise said that no one was really guiding her path closely during her undergraduate years. She needed to meet with her advisor, Dr. Ellen a couple of times a year to make sure that she was on track with reaching graduation. She really did not expect that she would be more than that until it came close to graduation and Dr. Wise needed a recommendation letter for graduate school. She initially was reluctant to share her doctoral aspirations. Earlier in our conversation, Dr. Wise talked about how she did not have the support of those who were meant to counsel and guide her (e.g. teachers and school guidance counselors). Even though she got into the school of her choice, her reluctance to share her doctoral goals may be connected to the lingering

disappointment with her high school counselor who doubted that she could make at a large institution. She went to her advisor to let her know that she had not worked closely with anyone in order to have them write letters on her behalf. Dr. Ellen wrote her recommendation letter without a second thought about the matter.

Although there was no significant relationship between the two of them initially, she notes that Dr. Ellen was integral in her success during the graduate years. This was the beginning of the formal relationship between Dr. Ellen and Dr. Wise. Dr. Ellen served on the admissions team and made sure that students of color were admitted into the graduate school when she eventually became the chair of the department. Dr. Ellen offered courses and practical advice as any advisor would. Dr. Wise felt that even though this advisor was not a person that she would talk to about deeply personal things right away, the relationship was cultivated by work she did in order to make sure that students of color were present and had voice in their department. She was instrumental in making sure that students of color felt supported. She became a person that Dr. Wise could count on, and in return, Dr. Wise made sure that other students of color knew that she was a resource for support academically and within the department. Dr. Wise stated that at this time, the department graduate admission committee had admitted at least ten Black students.

It was because of the number of students in the program that students began to stick together. Dr. Wise states that her graduate school experience was pleasant because she did not feel like anyone was trying to get rid of her. She said, “they thought they had who they wanted.” She began to become more personally connected with her advisor because, while working on her dissertation, she left the university to get married, and Dr. Ellen served as her dissertation chair and made sure that she stayed connected so that she would finish. The support of Dr. Ellen was something that Dr. Wise began to trust and could count on. Dr. Wise was able to find someone at

this predominantly white institution that helped her to not feel alone and to offer educational, career, and life guidance from a place of sincerity. Dr. Ellen did not expect anything in return except effort from Dr. Wise to achieve those goals. Dr. Ellen was instrumental in helping Dr. Wise secure her first and only tenure-track position at her current institution.

The belief that Dr. Ellen had in her helped to solidify the othermothering relationship. Dr. Wise went through most of her junior high and high school career without having the support of a school official who believed that she could achieve academically. Dr. Wise found great support in an unexpected ally.

She did mention that her othermothering relationship with Dr. Ellen continued throughout her junior faculty years. She is proud to still be in touch with Dr. Ellen. Dr. Ellen has even advised one of Dr. Wise's daughter's dissertations. It gave her comfort knowing that her daughter was being advised by Dr. Ellen, who had looked out for her years earlier.

Junior Faculty Years

Dr. Wise left her graduate school to get married in her current city and worked as an instructor at a two-year college program until she completed her dissertation. Her dissertation advisor knew the chair at the current university and asked if they had any openings. It was a tumultuous time at that university because there was a lot of racial tension throughout the university.

> When I told my advisor that I was moving back, I had moved back to [name removed] to get married, but when I was defending my dissertation and I said I was going to stay here, then she said well, the head of the program there is also a grad of our institution; I'm going to call him and see if he has any positions. I had already been working in a two-

year college here. And so she called him, and it was at a time that there was strife here, racial strife - [LAUGHTER] - and they knew they needed some more Black folks.

Dr. Wise and another Black man were hired as tenure-track faculty by the department chair as a tactical move to be an example to the university and other departments. It was clear that the chair of the department wanted things to be different and wanted to make sure there was a presence of Black people in the department.

> But it was forcing the whole University to take - take another look at diversity. The department wasn't perfect. It had its problems, too. But I think he wanted things to be different and he brought me and this other person in at least so that there'd be some presence of Black folks. He was a good man.

This bold move by the department chair made her feel valued. It created a Black presence in the department and the university. She realized very early on that she would not earn tenure if she did not focus on the requirements of publishing and service. She relied on Dr. Ellen for advice and examples of how to manage simultaneously trying to get tenure, mentor students, and raise a family. She did not paint a picture of everything being perfect with her colleagues nor the department but felt that her experience was adequate.

> Overall it's been a reasonably good experience. Well, the difficulties that I would say is that I - junior faculty who - get a chance to hook up with more experienced and senior faculty to do their work, I think have a real advantage. I don't know that the other faculty went out of their way - going out of their way to exclude me, but we just didn't have the common interest for me to hook up on research. So I was never on any research teams in the department. Except there was a Black faculty member who had a joint appointment in our department and he had [half] administration, and he needed to do some writing and

> he didn't have time really to do it and he had some opportunities for a couple of book contracts that he put me and the other Black male who came in with me on those books and it made all the difference for getting tenure.
>
> So that came from a Black man. And I say that helped me a lot to get tenure. But it - was more like benign neglect for the white faculty - that they didn't know what I was doing. I didn't care what they were doing. I wasn't interested in what they were doing. And so I was on my own and I kind of fumbled around on projects and stuff. And I would say even though I'm a full professor now, it was into my full professor years when I finally got on research team was a good experience overall.

The intentionality of the Black male faculty member helped her to build her publication record and was a large part of to attain tenure. She did not mention whether the Black male faculty members' interest aligned with her own, just that he gave her opportunity.

The idea of "benign neglect" was an interesting concept. Where did the responsibility lie to make sure that there was opportunity for junior faculty to have research experience? She did not believe that she was not asked to participate because of her color, but that she suffered from "benign neglect" due to the difference in research interests. Even though Dr. Wise did not believe that she was not left out intentionally due to race, benign neglect can be another form of a micro assault. A micro assault is "intentionally and explicitly derogatory verbal or nonverbal attacks" (Yosso et.al, 2009, p. 662). To retain faculty of color, there needs to be intentional engagement of these faculty to co-produce to attain promotion and tenure. This part of the discussion resonated with me as a graduate student who has found it difficult to be invited to participate on research projects with faculty members due to my specific research interests. If not

for some very intentional faculty members, I would not have had many opportunities to do research and present at conferences as a graduate student.

There was quite a bit of imbalance between her duties to service, teaching, and tenure. She and her Black male counterpart were often used as the diversity token on search committees and university committees. She believed that although her presence on the search committees was important, her opinion was not. Her presence was often used as an excuse to appease the human resource department about looking for faculty candidates of color. She resented being on these committees, because her vote never mattered. She stated, "I was put on the search committee to defend the decision… to justify the decision they made when in fact I really didn't have any real influence over the decision." She also asserted that her presence was often used to justify when there were not any candidates of color to be considered.

> Through the years, I have been on committees where they wanted to show that there was some diversity and the only way they could show diversity was to overtax the - the Black faculty members. And somehow that doesn't happen so much for me anymore, but we had some of that in the early years and it really showed up more for search committees and I really resented that because I felt like I was put on the search committee to defend the decision that they - to justify the decision they made when in fact I didn't really have any real influence over that decision. I was just one vote out of six or seven or whatever. But Dr. Wise is on there. I can remember putting something on my wall once, a promise to myself that I was never going to be on another search committee where I was the only Black on it. Sometimes the searches didn't even have candidates of color! But it's like; we put Black folks on the committee [LAUGHTER].

If she was on the committee it was assumed that they certainly tried, but did not find any viable candidates of color. There were barely any candidates of color, and none were hired in her early years. She admits that being overtaxed on service committees cost her a lot of her own research time.

In addition, she noted that the Black faculty always wanted to be the ones who were mentoring or advising the Black students. She wanted to be a familiar face that students of color could identify with and be a resource for. Serving as an advisor or mentor also caused her to be concerned about the possibility of becoming stuck in "reappointment purgatory", or not attaining tenure or becoming an associate faculty member. This is a place that I describe as career paralysis which eventually turns faculty of color into casualties in academia. It seems that casualties are made when there is not a healthy balance between supporting students, teaching, and converting research to publications. In order for the two desires and/or responsibilities of advising and seeking promotion to coexist, she had to be intentional about her research and the time that she was able to devote to students. This meant that students needed to understand and respect the time that she had carved out for them. They needed to be punctual and ready to work. They had to be willing to do their part of the mentoring relationship. It sometimes meant that relationships took longer to cultivate and could not be very deep initially (similar to her relationship with Dr. Ellen). She cannot say for certain that in her early years as faculty that she was giving students everything they needed in her role as othermother.

> Your junior faculty years, it's just hard to be as available to students as later you can be. Now, I can be much more available. So that was an issue of kind of balancing that. I think that the students, the way I hope they would describe me now is very different probably from the way that my - the students who came during my pre-tenure. I try to

explain to them the value of my time and their effort. Both were valuable and could not be ignored or wasted.

She hopes that her students would describe her differently now as she has more time to devote to them as a tenured faculty.

Parenting and Research

Dr. Wise and her husband have two daughters. She was very active in their lives and served a soccer coach for 10 years. She was known to her children as the "homework czar" and the present parent who always had a laptop at the games by other parents. It was during this decade that she felt like she was not as productive as she wanted to be. She did as much research as possible but wanted to make sure she was there to support her children as best as she could.

> Being a professor, I always felt like the control that I had over my time made it so that I could do some things that other people couldn't do with their kids, that I could take off and go be the one who was the chaperone for a trip if I didn't have class. It wasn't like I could take a vacation day or I'd just make it up that night or whatever.
>
> During those early years, when I'm around people with young kids and they're going through it and I can remember back, and you're thinking is this going to work all right. Am I going to have one of these kids that goes off the deep end because I'm working so hard?

Dr. Wise felt tension between her responsibilities of service, publications, and to her family. During the time that she was serving on committees, she did not have a lot of time to do research, so she made sure that she was being as present as possible for her daughters. Although it may have not yielded the research publications that she wanted, she said that she does not regret being available for her daughters at that time. I mentioned that her journey seemed to

make a good impression on her daughters. She explained "Absolutely, they knew that education was important, and that higher education was the expectation."

Othermothering as a Faculty Member

Dr. Wise had been a part of what she called "our own Black world" while she was in graduate school. She found that there was a lot of support and accountability among the students who were a part of the group. She wanted to create that same type of environment for the Black students at her Midwest University. She and other Black Colleagues then started a "lab" that allowed them to meet with their individual caseload of students on a regular basis. Once a week, the Black faculty and students of color met as a collective to talk about research interests, projects, and experiences in their program. All the students of color were advised by faculty of color.

Students were assigned to advisors according to common research interests. It was intentional that the lab students were Black or students of color (these were students of Dr. Wise and other Black Faculty). The bond that was created between the professor and the students was unique; the bonds between the collective students were immeasurable. She explains, "They have been in each other's weddings, supported one another through losing loved ones. Faculty members have met their families and in some ways have become part of them."

Observing Dr. Wise's othermothering. One of the ways the Dr. Wise served students was to help them to prepare for important presentations. Students in the lab helped each other by doing research together, critiquing each other's work and participating in practice dissertation defenses in order to be ready for the "big day." I was fortunate to observe one of the labs that included a practice dissertation defense. It helped me see Dr. Wise othermothering several students at once and in different ways. She encouraged, challenged, and protected them.

I walked into the room and was welcomed by an array of colorful artwork that adorned the space. There were several African artifacts including masks, fabric, and portraits. The room was warmed with African culture and buzzing with great energy from the people present. Several students had gathered already and were waiting on a few others who were on the way. I found a seat, and looked for Dr. Wise to let her know that I had arrived. Dr. Wise was attending to students, greeting them as they entered the space, and giving them tasks to help with the session. She was warm with her words and laughed during interactions with the students. Every once in a while, she would laugh with another faculty member. They leaned in toward one another with their heads to support one another in the laugh. I do not know what they were speaking about but their laughter and kindness toward each other made me smile.

She welcomed me, "It's great to see you. We will be getting started shortly. We are having some technical difficulties that we are trying to fix. Do you need anything?" There were seven people present in all: Dr. Wise, a Black female professor, four Black female students, and one Black male student. The male student had a lot of nervous energy. He was going over presentation slides, and periodically checked in with Dr. Wise, who seemed to assure him that all is well and that he would be fine. Four of the students present were graduate students in a doctoral program and one undergraduate student. The undergraduate student was quiet and seemed to be distracted or avoiding contacting with Dr. Wise. I later found out that this student was a mentee in a mentorship program with and a student of Dr. Wise. She was there in order to make up some time that was missed from a meeting. Dr. Wise later explained to me that the undergraduate student was avoiding eye contact because she had missed an assignment, had been granted an extension, but still had not completed it. She seemed nervous about being there because she didn't want to talk about the missed deadline. The other female students were

talking and laughing amongst each other. The other Black professor was the mentee that had introduced me to Dr. Wise. She gave me a smile and a wave and continued to talk with Dr. Wise.

The young Black male student was a doctoral candidate who would be defending his dissertation the next day. His nervous energy was warranted and expected. He glanced over to Dr. Wise to let her know that he would be ready to get started in a couple of minutes. She then alerted all the participants that they would start shortly by saying "please take your seats so that we can begin, I am sure that George is ready to get started." As the student began to get his technology together, Dr. Wise thanked everyone for coming and instructed them "We are all here to support George, by listening to his presentation and giving constructive feedback. George, can you tell us what you are looking for from us today and what you hope to gain?" George replied "Absolutely! I would like for someone to time me and let me know if there are any points that I am making that are unclear. I have a tendency to speed up when I am nervous which can result in me twisting my words." Everyone agreed that they could help with his request.

He started to advance his first slide and the technology would not cooperate. It was decided that they would use the classroom space down the hall. Everyone packed up and walked to the classroom which was cold in temperature and in presentation. They would still need to learn to survive the unfamiliar territory to be successful. As the presentation started, all eyes were on George. He talked fast and then reminded himself to slow down. The audience listened intently as they nodded and jotted down notes for future reference for the discussion that would happen later. Dr. Wise looked on and listened, but she did not have a pen or paper to take notes. She watched and listened. She watched George and the rest of the audience. Whenever someone made a verbal agreement she would look in that direction. She did not change her facial

expressions during the presentation. She shared with me later that she wanted to remain observant of the presenter and the audience.

Once George was finished, he let out a sigh of relief. Dr. Wise then opened the floor for discussion. She first asked that everyone talk about what George did well. Several folks spoke up and offered their opinions. When asked what George could have done differently, there were several suggestions which he wrote down. When he was asked questions, he answered right away or asked for clarification. Dr. Wise mainly listened and nodded when most of the questions were asked. She stepped in a couple time to ask clarifying questions of the audience member. Her clarifying questions served as protection for George as well as modeling for the students. George seemed to appreciate her jumping in periodically to clarify some of his points, on his behalf.

The other Black female professor asked questions of George that addressed his nervous energy:

> George, you seem to be nervous which is understandable. When you are nervous you make jokes and can be dismissive. Slow down and take your time explaining what you mean. Do not self-sabotage your efforts by being dismissive. Use affirmative statements when explaining your work. You are the expert. We will be expecting you to confidently discuss your findings.

He agreed and then expressed, “I am very nervous and didn’t realize how it was showing up. Thank you for telling me that. I needed to hear it and I will definitely work on calming my nerves so that I can get through this.” In this moment, the professor, who has known George for several years and has gotten to know his personality and work, was negotiating the dimension of

academic discourse and feedback with him. She spoke to the nervousness and how his expression of it while also affirming his ability and advice on how to work through it. When the discussion was over, Dr. Wise told George that he was ready, and that he would do well tomorrow. She wanted him to relax a little and take some time to clear his mind so that he could be fresh for the real defense. She spoke to him quietly and said "You will not be alone in the room tomorrow. I am on your side and especially after all these hours!" They both laughed. Everyone applauded him and wished him luck on his defense.

As everyone was leaving, Dr. Wise and I were gathering our things to finish the interview portion of our time together. She offered to drive us to a quieter location. On our way to the location, she asked how me what I thought about the presentation. I began to tell her that the presentation went well, but that I was most impressed with the fact that it had occurred. I did not know that advisors did a run-through of dissertation presentations with an audience. She explained that it is a practice that she and other advisors have done in order to help ease the nervousness of the candidate as well as offer them an opportunity to practice and get feedback. It was intentional that she was the only dissertation committee representative present. The committee agreed that only one of them should hear the presentation and that the rest would hear it for the first time at the defense. Since Dr. Wise was the dissertation chair, she had spent numerous hours with George and his dissertation and knew it very well. She wanted others to hear it and give him feedback.

Dr. Wise said that it is difficult for her to remain quiet for the discussions, but that it is necessary in order to help build confidence in the other students who are posing the questions. I told her that my observations of her protective and yet nurturing qualities were very evident. She cultivated an atmosphere that fostered intentional learning for George who was practicing for his

defense, but also for the other students who were giving him feedback. The students were able to agree and disagree with the information presented without the fear of being embarrassed if they were not correct. Dr. Wise observed intently and allowed the interactions to occur while always making sure that George was shielded from incorrect information or comments that may harm his confidence. I saw her speak to George and calm his nerves and encourage him by letting him know that he was ready and that his defense would be filled with folks that stood behind him and believed in his potential. She explained, "I sometimes struggle with that. I don't want to tell them that ain't right, but I also want to make sure that he is ready for his defense tomorrow." I asked if she knew of other departments that did similar things. She was not sure if it occurred in other departments but believed that it helped her students and new faculty members.

Benefits of othermothering for Dr. Wise. As we continued to eat and talk, I asked her how she benefitted from othermothering. She explained that the setting that I had just observed meant that she was making sure that her students have space and opportunity to be researchers, presenters, authors, and scholars. They were supported and were part of a process that modeled behavior that she can only hope they will emulate as they graduate to become faculty members and clinicians. She took the experience that she had in her own graduate program and made it a sustainable model for faculty and students of color at her current institution. She explained:

> We carved out our own space of support. We agreed, disagreed, laughed, cried, supported and equipped each other with what we needed in order to succeed. This space should have been available for students of color. It was difficult to carve out the space and do all the work and supporting and figuring out the dynamics of how things would work. I hope that I have created that space for the students that I have advised.

She created the lab out of a need that was not provided to her or her classmates. She wanted to make sure that her students were supported in meaningful ways. She had spent over twenty hours in the past two weeks working on George's presentation. She did not mind spending the time to help him prepare. She felt that it was partially her responsibility if he did not do well in the defense. Although her department has a particular mentoring model, she explained:

> Some programs have the mentor model and some programs don't have the mentor model, but the way we see the mentor model, it's really a different kind of relationship than an advisor relationship. If a student is doing poorly - and our students don't usually do poorly in the classroom - but if a student is missing deadlines, … the thing that would be more likely to happen, the program head is probably going to come to me about it if it's my student.

In this narrative, Dr. Wise conveys that she felt respected by her department chair regarding the mentoring program that she offers. The chair of the department would come to her personally to make sure that she was aware of a problem with one of her students, because they believed in the model as well.

Her colleagues, though not a part of her lab experiences, also recognized and respected the relationship that she was trying to cultivate. They would help her and her students by reporting any issues to her. This also meant that if her Black students failed, she was being scrutinized as well and her lab practices would be questioned. Any mistakes or failures were going to be looked at more than it would have non-faculty members of color. This reminds me of a saying that my mother used to tell me when I was younger: "You have to try twice as hard as those that do not look like you."

Othermothering the students. I asked her about any students that she othermothered who seemed significant and that stood out during her career. She shared these instances:

> I have one student who's now a doctor who, despite being the valedictorian of her high school class and maybe number two in her college graduating class, came to our department with very low self-esteem about what she could do, and I told her at graduation that watching her gain confidence in herself and being a part of making that happen was one of the highlights of my - of my career.

I appreciated how Dr. Wise talked about seeing the journey of this student and the transformation that took place. This student was not confident in her abilities but made it to the finish line. Dr. Wise's pride about this student shows that her care for students is genuine.

> I can tell you one story of what it - of what it's meant in her life. She's finished. She's finished now. But I recognized that she was a star, even beyond our department early on. And so she started doing her research on projects that were data sets that were collected in this network, and I had a chance to introduce her to some of the people who had collected some of these data sets. At one point, I think it was her second year or so, maybe her third year, I just said well, let me just write these people and tell them a little bit about you and that you'll be looking to go on internship in another year and a half or so, and do they - I'll - I'll phrase it kind of as do you have any advice for how to mentor a student with this kind of talent, but really I'm just trying to introduce you to them. And so we did that and two wonderful things have happened as a result of it. One wonderful thing is that - and she really is exceptional - but when she got to this internship site for her interview, which is probably one of the more competitive ones, they already knew of

her and when she got there, they asked what is it that we have to do to make you want to choose this place. Another good thing that happened for her is that this other site got - we call them [R25] grants to do - training grants, and they quickly needed some post-docs to do training and they knew of her, knew her name even though they were way out in California and stuff -and picked her easily - approached her to do it the first year and they had met her through - they had met her through that - that network. So those are good - those are good - that's a good feeling because she's so worthy.

Dr. Wise was beaming with pride as she talked about these students and how it makes her feel about the time and effort that she has put in to help them navigate spaces in academia. She talked about the fact that if her students do well, it was a reflection on her. I asked if she had any negative reflections in her career.

She said that it does not happen often, but when it does, she and the student are usually able to get on the same page and move forward.

I also wanted to know if there were any regrets that she had with any of her students. She shared that while she never had any regrets with students that she othermothered, she did have a couple that she said "Boy, I can't wait till this is over!" We both laughed about that comment for a while before we moved on.

Othermothering and the tenure process. Since one of my research questions focused on the effects of othermothering on the tenure process, I asked directly about her tenure experience. I was curious whether it was good, bad or indifferent. She said it definitely was not a negative effect on her process, but it could be for others. She explained that a colleague recently did not earn tenure and it had a great deal to do with not being well-liked by the students. Dr. Wise said that it could have had a negative impact if she felt like students were working against

her. She added that the campus climate can sometimes be concerning at times. She explained that there were a number of administrative changes happening in the past year that could have interfered with the students (e.g., the resignation of the college dean), but the students were able to manage. The dean of the college had resigned from his position due to racial tension and lack of support from faculty and other administrators. Most of her students are working away from the campus during their third year and missed the chaos which she thinks was good for everybody.

She described that the bittersweet part of othermothering is the time she spent cultivating relationships, helping to prepare them for the field, and then

> they're moving on, and after they move on sometimes I don't hear from them that often. But I'm - I believe that when I look back on my life and my career, the number of Black students that I work with will be a more important contribution than my writing, my research, whatever. I really believe that - that that has been my real contribution.

Her words deeply resonated with me. She recognized that although it was important for her to be able to publish and earn tenure, she was most proud of the scholars that she encountered and helped them to navigate through their graduate programs. She was more concerned that mentoring and navigating would be reproduced in those who she had served. Her contribution to the field was other Black students who became researchers and professors.

Importance of Othermothering

As my interview with Dr. Wise came to an end, we exchanged remarks about this experience. I was thrilled to listen to her, and she thanked me for my interpretation of her interactions with the students. She said that it was good to hear someone else's perspective and

that she was thankful that her intent and impact were positive. I asked her why it was important to othermother Black students and she responded:

> Well, I have kind of a complicated answer. When I look back on my life, that as I said before, I think that the number of [grants] that I didn't get or did get, publications I did get or didn't get, really won't help me determine whether I've lived a valuable life as much as what my grad students have allowed me to do for them. And so, that's half of the answer. And the other half - and you probably are familiar with the Piaget stages, and I'm getting close to that - that stage where it's whatever, but it's kind of like has your life been worth it. And it's my relationships with the students that - that I'm - will be using to measure whether my life has been worth it or not. At least in whether my work life has been worth it.

Dr. Wise's words were genuine and warm. Her intention was to create spaces that allowed new scholars to have academic freedom to explore their interests while also learning how to navigate the academy as a graduate student, researcher and faculty member. Her intent was also to live the saying that "representation matters" in the academy and in her field. Her words help me to understand that she holds that the impact of her intentions, her students, as the grand contribution of her work career. Her words help me to understand that her intent and impact were functioning through several platforms: research, publications, committees, teaching, and people.

Conclusion

During the time spent with Dr. Wise, I found that her "motherwork" in higher education is very reflective of her journey to the full professor level. Her earliest accounts of othermothering came from her maternal aunt who treated Dr. Wise and her brother as if they

were her own children. Dr. Wise then does not identify another other mother until she is getting ready to go to graduate school. She identified her undergraduate advisor Dr. Ellen. Even though Dr. Ellen and Dr. Wise's relationship began as a low involvement interaction, it later turned into a lifelong relationship. The relationship between Dr. Ellen and Dr. Wise was significant enough that one of Dr. Wise's daughters had Dr. Ellen as a dissertation advisor.

Dr. Wise did not have a lot of support from faculty members as a graduate student. She and several of her friends create a support group for one another in which they offered academic and personal support. As a result of this, Dr. Wise adopted a similar a similar support network for Black students at her university.

Dr. Wise experienced tokenism by being overused on committees for her department. She was used as a representative of diversity, but her opinion was not taken into consideration for decision-making. She also experienced benign negligence as a junior faculty member. She was not asked to be a part of research teams due to her research interests not aligning with other colleagues in her department. Dr. Wise believes that the cost of othermothering is time as it related to doing research and publishing. She didn't believe that othermothering impacted her RPT process, but warns others often about the potential danger of othermothering impacting RPT.

This portrait help me to understand the othermothering is something that can be taught and that it can be passed on in order to create legacies.it helps me to understand the benefits of othermothering to a full professor may be different from and assistant and associate professor. Toward the end of her career, Dr. Wise was more concerned with the impact she made on students than she was with the number of publications.

Chapter 5: A Portrait of Dr. Faith

As I prepared to meet with Dr. Faith, I was excited about her willingness to participate in this research. I had been having a difficult time trying to secure pre-tenure professors to be a part of my project. Several of the women that I contacted certainly had experiences that they wanted to share, but feared being identified due to descriptions about them and their research. So when I received a positive response from Dr. Faith, I was eager to hear about her experiences. Dr. Faith is an assistant professor whose research interests surround: drug prevention, use, intervention, and rehabilitation within the Black community. I contacted Dr. Faith through email after I looked on the website of one the Midwestern research universities.

Setting the Scene

Dr. Faith agreed to meet with me after further explanation about what the research was about and the time commitment that was necessary to participate. We met at a mutual time. Dr. Faith chose the location for our meeting. We met in her office which is situated on the campus of a mid-sized Midwestern predominantly white institution.

When I arrived, Dr. Faith greeted me and introduced herself, and I did the same. She was very cordial and warm. She had a big smile on her face that made me feel at ease. She had a gospel song playing in the background, which she turned down as I took my seat. Dr. Faith was wearing a fuchsia-colored long sleeved ribbed sweater with black dress slacks. She wore black flats. Her neck was adorned with a long multicolored beaded necklace with a matching bracelet and simple complimentary black earrings. She also had a thin gold chain with a cross on it that was layered with the beaded necklace. She was about five feet seven inches and very slender. She had a smooth caramel complexion with jet black hair. Her hair was cut in an asymmetrical

bob with bangs that perfectly swooped across her face but careful not to cover her dark brown eyes.

I was surprised at how young Dr. Faith looked. She was in her late twenties and had earned her doctorate. I felt very proud in that moment about her accomplishments of earning her doctorate at such a young age. I am generally a little nervous about the interviewing for the first several minutes of the interview. I had spent a few minutes prepping myself for the encounter with various strategies including self-talk about being capable to build rapport, letting go of preconceived notions, and being interested and attentive but not too hype.

She asked for a couple of minutes to finish up something. I took the time to pan the room. The office was painted white and had a desk that was faced toward a window that had a view of another academic building. She had adorned the walls with a copy of her doctoral degree and several biblical scriptures that were small like postcards but strategically placed for easy access. There were several to do lists scattered on her desk and a few small trinkets around the office to make the space feel comfortable. Dr. Faith was drafting an email and was talking out the content of it aloud in order to see if something she wrote made sense. She would pause, backspace several times on the keyboard, and then begin typing again, mumbling parts of the email. “I apologize. I just need to answer this email right now or I may forget later. You know how sometimes the words just come to you and you just have to get it down.” I nodded and assured her that I was okay with her finishing her task.

Early Life and Family

As we began our talk, I reminded Dr. Faith of the purpose of the interview and of my study. She nodded in agreement and I asked her to tell me about herself starting with where she was born. She was born in a large Midwestern city. She explained:

> I was born in 1985, right? yeah that is right. I come from a big family. My mother and father, they both do foster care and they have done foster care since I was about one year old, so I probably had probably like 30 to 35 kids coming in and out of house because they would also do respites. And so through that process, I've learned a lot about [mental] health, substance abuse, working with different agencies. We had social workers coming in and out of the house, case managers.

Already in the first few minutes we were diving right into what seemed to be these stunning associations to othermothering that she witnessed by both her parents.

There was a distinct tone change in her voice as she pointed out the conflict of admiration and not understanding why her parents wanted to foster. Her tone was both respectful and concerning at the same time.

> And so, I always admired my parents for doing that but when I was younger, it was hard for me to understand the process because I'm like okay, you already have me and then I have a biological brother and two biological sisters. And so I'm like wait, are we not good enough? I didn't understand—why were these other kids coming in?

Her words held genuine emotion and concern. She questioned the worth of herself and her own siblings trying to see the value of fostering to her parents. She seemed to turn into that questioning little girl right in front of me.

As I learned later in the interview, the logic of her young mind trying to reconcile her parents' choices is something that helped to shape her passion for helping others as a researcher and professor. I resonated with this part of our conversation on several levels. At the time, my husband I had been foster parents for four years. We had one biological child. Even though we talked through our choices with our daughter and gave space for her to voice her opinion, I often

wondered if she had the same feelings that Dr. Faith was expressing and whether she felt comfortable expressing how she felt with her father and I.

As quickly as she seemed to voice her young child self, she returned to her adult voice, explaining how she came to terms with the experience.

> But of course, as I got older, I understood. It's like oh, wow, they're amazing. I don't know how they did it. So just kind of - I think that's the process that kind of influenced me to be where I'm at today, just seeing all those different interactions. So yeah, it was a lot of us, but I think my parents did an excellent job, especially considering that we all have our own needs and demands and personalities.

She explained that at times, things were difficult in the home due to some of the behaviors of her foster siblings.

> At one point, we had some kids who were getting into legal trouble [and so] I would always try to be the one like okay, let me be the good one, because it's so much stuff going on. I think I was more of the person that kind of was the peacemaker or tried to be anyway because there was much going on.

The behaviors of the others made her find ways to make things easier for her parents. She made sure that she would be a child that did not draw any negative attention. It helped her to be driven and independent, which has helped her on her journey to be a researcher and professor.

She looked at her parents as a source of stability and inspiration. She spoke about how she thought her parents were amazing but had no idea how they were able to do all that they did. She recognizes that her parents' choice to be foster parents greatly influenced where she is today. It was through the interactions that they had with different agencies, social workers, case managers, and children that she saw her parents' compassion and purpose. For a short period of

time, they wanted to provide children with an opportunity for safety, structure, and love. She would later use these observations and interactions to propel her interests in helping others who struggle with drug use.

Dr. Faith spoke very fondly of her parents and the care that they showed to her biological siblings and her foster siblings and their expectations and value of education. Her perceptions of her parents are important to note because it helps Dr. Faith shape her understanding of parenting and othermothering. Her parents were not perfect, but they were purposeful and made impacts in the lives of others. They may not ever realize the impact of all that they have encountered, but they were resolved to provide the best experience possible for their biological and foster children. This included celebrating their victories and coordinating consequences for their choices. As a professor, Dr. Faith wants to help provide a great experience for all her students and the ones who she othermothers. It will come with celebrating victories as well as difficult conversations about choices, institutional climate, and academic life.

Othermothering as fostering children. When she spoke about each of her parents, she spoke of her mother as being an amazing woman who sometimes takes on too much. She explains:

> So my mom is amazing. She's an amazing woman. She takes on too much sometimes and so I have to get on her about - it's like that Superwoman. I'm like "Mom, you can't do it all." But then of course I look at myself, and I'm like tell myself that. [LAUGHTER].
>
> And so she - and she just - I mean, she's always cooking for people. She goes out of her way to do things for people, which I think is great. But at the same time, it kind of leaves her at the end of the day feeling like "who there's going to be there for me or

what" - and I try to tell her, I'm like "Well, you need to leave time for yourself." It's okay for you to do things for yourself and to take care of yourself. But yeah, so she's a - a really good woman… But I wish that she would spend some more time taking care of her.

She admits that taking on too much is something that she got from her mother and that it is difficult to take her own advice sometimes about being able to commit to self-care.

Her mother worked outside of the home for a few years after fostering. Because of the long relationship she had with different agencies as a foster parent, she ended up working for one of the agencies. She worked there for a few years until her youngest daughter was getting ready to have a baby. She retired from her job, and gladly embraces the role of grandmother and helping to care for her new grandbaby. Her mother's passion for othermothering in the form of fostering lead her to a career that allowed her to continue othermothering, by helping others to learn the passion. I believe that fostering children is a form of othermothering. Dr. Faith had been around it all her life. This helps me to understand that othermothering can have many forms and transcend jobs.

Dr. Faith also talked about her father being a good man, but a man of a few words:

He's great. He's really quiet like me, and so when he does talk, everybody's like [shh], let's listen, hear what he has to say because he - he doesn't really say much but he's very engaging and it's something I always remembered I could - if I call him right now and say "Dad, I need this" or I call him dad - my dad, "I need this, I need that." It's like no matter how old I am, I think he's - he'll be right here. And so I think he's dependable, reliable. Similar to my mom, always giving. I don't - but he's just so quiet. So he's like - my mom is like a social butterfly so she knows everybody, is all over the place. But my

dad, he's much more kind of laid back and - but they're both - they both have similar qualities in that they're just good people to be around. Lucky to have good parents like that.

Value of education and Dr. Faith's passion to teach.

When I asked about the value of education, she answered very seriously and quickly:

It was very much a part of the conversations. It was a very interesting time because there were a lot of foster kids in our home when we were all coming up and we [then we] all kind of had different journeys. So my parents made it very clear that they wanted us all to go to school, but there were some kids kind of that were staying with us that didn't value education that much. And so I found that in time that I was being raised, it was kind of like I had to do things on my own. So I knew I had my parents' support, but it was just more of one of those things where it's like "this is what I want to do." So I need to make sure that if I have a meeting at school or something's going on, I have to go to my parents and say "Can you come to this or can you do this?" And they - they definitely did it but I definitely feel the strain of kind of all the other things that were happening around us.

Dr. Faith mentioned that her education was very important to her parents but even more important to her. One of the ways in which she helped her parents was to make sure that her grades were good and remind them of things that she needed them for her education.

Dr. Faith also talked about the difference of expectations that she experienced when she attended two different schools. She attended middle school at a prominent public school in the city she grew up in. The school had grades seven through twelve. She attended there for the first two years of middle school. The school was one that you had to test into and maintain a certain grade point average to stay enrolled. The school was diverse, with students that came from all

over the city. She later enrolled in a neighborhood school that was still a part of the public school district as her middle school.

The conversations about her future plans were talked about very differently at both of the schools. Although attending the premier school, the question was always framed as “what colleges you were going to” and the less prominent school the questioned was framed as “are you going to go to college?” This is relevant to her story because it helped disrupt the narrative that she could not attend college because of where she was from and who she was. Dr. Faith commandeered her own narrative based on who she knew herself to be and what she was capable of; this propelled her to do well in school and pursue higher education.

Dr. Faith talked about how she was a good student throughout elementary school and then when she started to attend the premier school, she was overwhelmed by the expectations:

> In elementary school, I was very much on top of the books. And so much so you couldn't really pull me away. I loved learning. But when I went to [premier school] seven and eighth grade, I think the problem was that I had - I was so used to kind of just getting by and just doing what I needed to do and then I got to [premier school] and I'm like wait, I need to stay up all night. So I think that really took me for a loop, so I think seven and eighth grade were my worst years because I started acting out, and for me, acting out is like kind of talking more in class or doing stuff like that. Things that I just - it was kind of out of character for me because I just wasn't as focused and my grades had slipped, and so I ended up getting kicked out of [premier school] eighth grade. And that's when I went to [neighborhood school]. So I'd say those are my worst years. But when I went to [neighborhood school] and I - I was really discouraged, and I'm so glad that this - it's a much better school now - but when I was there, there was just - I felt like there was more

> attention to discipline in the classroom rather than okay, this - let's focus on the books, let's focus on learning. And so that really helped encourage me. It's like you need to get yourself together, [Faith]. Figure it out. Figure out what it is that you're trying to do and move forward. And I think that helped me to become a better student for when I went back to [premier school].

This experience at the neighborhood school was a wakeup call for both her and her parents. She recognized that she had to encourage herself and reflect on what she wanted for her future. Dr. Faith's tenacity helped her parents to change their perception about her pursuit of her education. This was also true for her younger siblings who are now both in college.

Dr. Faith's passion for education was so strong that when she was younger she knew that she wanted to be a teacher. Though she did not know what she wanted to teach, she had plenty of opportunity to practice as a young child:

> I knew I wanted to teach. I didn't know what I wanted to teach. It really didn't matter, but I always knew that I wanted to do that. I would actually get in trouble when I was younger because we had a - a printer and I would just print out tons and tons of just papers and pass it out to my imaginary class and so every - so my neighbors would - our neighbors would see me outside with papers and laid out all over the ground, talking to my class and so they would tell my mom, you might want to get her checked out - [LAUGHTER] - I don't know what she [sic] out there doing -- but so yeah, so I knew I wanted to teach. Didn't know what. Didn't really matter. I just wanted to teach. [LAUGHTER].

We laughed heartily while sharing how we would make our siblings serve as our students. She would try to remember all the things that she learned at school that day and could not wait to

share what she had learned. She said that her siblings were not always willing participants but she taught them anyway! This shows how education as a career was always present in her life at an early age, and that she wanted and still strives to create and share knowledge. One of the reasons that I wanted to include information from the participants' childhood was to be able to see if education and othermothering were always present and how it may have propelled the participants to pursue education as a career and the decision to othermother. Dr. Faith taught her siblings whatever she knew even if they were not always willing participants. This was something that she carried with her and even practiced with her own students regarding their academics and her othermothering interactions with them. Students may not always want to hear what a faculty member has to say, but the faculty member must tell them anyway as it is necessary for their success and academic survival.

Role of spirituality in othermothering. We also talked about the role that spirituality and faith played in her life. She is a nondenominational Christian. Her family was grounded in their beliefs. She explained:

> So I was raised as a Christian in nondenominational churches and it's something that's very much a part of my family, very much a part of who I am. I - I'm all about - I've got to have my scriptures. I got to have the encouragement around me, especially in academia where days it's like [oh]. [Whoo], Jesus, fix it. So yeah, it's very much a part of who I am. I pray every morning. Whenever I get frustrated, I - that's kind of my first resort is just to find a quiet place and just pray and meditate and - and that - like I said, that's been a huge part of my life since I was younger. We were kind of like the kind of family that went to church every Sunday, you got to go to Bible study and prayer service.

She explained that her faith keeps her centered and able to continue to move toward her goals. As was evidenced by her office décor, she loved to be surrounded by the things that reminded her of her faith. Scriptures, prayers, and other representations of her faith adorned her office. She also wore a thin gold chain necklace with a cross on it that she touched every once in a while during the interview. She felt very strongly that being a researcher and professor was part of a greater purpose.

Our conversation about spirituality was short but powerful. The sincerity of her voice, tender and passionate, made me believe that her faith was strong, and was a source of strength that she relied on. Spirituality is visited because it has served as a catalyst for resiliency and optimism. It helps me to understand how it is a factor in the choice or desire in othermothering, and also how it may help professors during difficult times in their academic and personal lives.

Experiencing othermothering. I asked Dr. Faith if there were any people that she felt had othermothered her, and what was the earliest occasion that she could recall. She explained that her first mentor, Nora, was assigned to her through a local youth program when she was in middle and high school. She received a lot of academic support from Nora who challenged her to accomplish her goals by holding her accountable and investing time in her. She was surprised by the relationship that they established:

> I was just struck by how much she cared, [always] asking me about what was going on with my family and she became a part of the family. I mean, she would come to family events and to me, that really - it just meant a lot. …I knew her family situation and she knew mine, I just felt a stronger connection to her and it just made it - [it's just] like "Oh, wow, okay, I know I can do it because we have similar backgrounds and she has some of the same struggles that I've had." We shared some of that and so it just made it seem it

seem a little bit more realistic for me to obtain kind of similar success that she had. And so it was an interesting experience for me, too, because that was also the first time that I really felt like I had a type of connection. She was white and - and that was my first time having that type of connection with a white woman professionally like that. So that meant a lot.

As we continued the conversation around her experiencing othermothering, she was eager to talk about the strongest othermothering figure she had. She exclaimed with excitement:

And then I definitely have to say hands down Dr. Wise. Hands down. I mean, she - even to - I just got off the phone with her a couple of days ago about an issue and - and she's the same way. Me, she - throughout graduate school, she stayed on top of me about - obviously about grades and make sure everything was fine there, but when it came to family, she was - she knew - she knows my mom. She knows my dad. She always asks about my niece and just really made me feel like a part of the family. She treated her - all of her students like that, so it was more of a family. We could come into the lab and talk about this crazy comment somebody made in class or just the kind of crazy stuff we have to deal with just being the only black student in a cohort of white students and kind of the challenges and nobody really understands those challenges. And it's like - that was the only place that I had academically as a graduate student a place where I'm like "okay, I know I can come here and just get some feedback, make sure I'm not looking into things [too deeply]. Am I - should I be offended or not by this?" That - and I think that's a big part of what helped me get through graduate school.

I smiled from ear to ear and almost lost my professional composure as I had a brief moment of shock! I realized that the person that she was speaking so highly of was Dr. Wise

from my study (see chapter 4) and that they talked about one another! The connection between these two Black women was an interconnected tapestry of othermothering. It is a testimony of support and survival of Black women faculty. It also shows us how othermothering can be cyclical and a component of legacy building. Dr. Wise's legacy has directly impacted Dr. Faith and she will build it into her legacy of othermothering as well.

It was also during this time of the interview that Dr. Faith became comfortable and eager to share her experience. I believe that she spent the first part of the interview feeling me out and seeing if I could be trusted with her story. She was professional, poised, and watched her words. There was emotion that was present but more controlled. When she began to talk about Dr. Wise, she was excited, her tone was lighter, and she became more animated.

Dr. Faith's Introduction to the Culture of Academia, Politics and the Art of Navigation

When speaking of her experiences of being othermothered as a graduate student, Dr. Faith realized that it was an introduction to the culture of academia and all that academia entails. She had only applied for admission to one program and was very nervous to be at a bigger institution. She wanted to make sure that she did what was required and did not make any waves that would later deter her from completion of her degree.

There were several people in her cohort but she was the only person of color. It was already a shock coming from a predominantly white small Christian university to then being admitted to another predominantly white institution where she was the only person of color in her immediate peer group. During her first year, her white male professor said something that was racially offensive.

> I did share it with the lab, and they gave me some advice and told me ways to handle it and they suggested that I didn't say anything in that instance just because it was a bunch

> of things going on behind the scene that I just wasn't aware of. And so I said “okay, that's fine.” But apparently there was a student in the class who was offended as well and they decided to go and tell the head and the - instead - instead of saying I'm [they were] offended by this, can you do something about it, they was like well, we noticed that it offended her - (speaking about me) offended me, so can you say something to her about it.

Dr. Faith had talked about the incident in a group of Black peers. The advice that she was given was to let it go and not get caught up in the politics of what was occurring with the professor and the college. She was content to let it go, but was blindsided when a white peer in the classroom reported the incident to the chair of the department and mentioned that Dr. Faith may have been offended as well. The chair of the department called her in to talk about the incident. Speaking to the chair about the incident was the opposite of her aim to not cause waves.

> I didn't want to - so I had to go to the office and talk to the head and - to me, that was just a very - I mean, it was - it was kind of discouraging because I'm like “I don't - I don't really want to be involved in these politics. I just got here. Just kind of let me do what I need to do to get - graduate and get out of here.” So I ended up getting pulled into that and then there was a lot of politics around this person because I knew the head wanted this person to retire and so they were trying to get any kind of information about this person if they could. And they were like oh, “can you sign these documents saying what he said?” - I'm like “Oh, my gosh.” Dr. Wise stepped in and spoke on my behalf and said no. She told the head of the department that if the other students were offended and expressed their concern, ask them to sign documents.

She felt saved in that moment because she feared that doing this would make her tenure as a graduate student more difficult. Dr. Wise gave her some advice that she remembers fondly and keeps in mind as she navigates the academy as a Black female professor:

> [Dr. Wise] talked with me about how unfortunately this is going to be the one of many types of situations that are going to happen as a graduate student and as a faculty member, and that's really stayed with me because even now as a faculty member I'm finding myself in similar situations where I'm having to navigate stuff [for] students.

Dr. Wise's words to Dr. Faith were helpful to her as a graduate student and as a faculty member with similar desires to help students navigate the academy with success. This again shows me the cyclical nature of othermothering and how it is a component of legacy building. Dr. Wise has been a strong presence during the graduate and professorial career of Dr. Faith. Dr. Faith has learned lessons about speaking up, integrity, politics and how to pay it forward.

Othermothering is an activity that goes above and beyond what is required of a faculty member. It may not hold much value in the promotion and tenure process, but it is an invaluable service that is liberally given to students. Dr. Faith admitted that even though it was an uncomfortable situation, it was necessary to have Dr. Wise model for her regarding how to handle these types of occurrences. Dr. Wise modeled for Dr. Faith the art of navigation of knowing when and how to stand up for a cause. Although there may certainly be moments that not speaking will be warranted; it is necessary to discern in order to determine when and how to speak. Later in the interview, Dr. Faith revealed that she had to speak up and be firm with administrators on her own behalf. This dimension of othermothering, the art of navigation, is important because it helps to build confidence and becomes a perpetual skill the othermother and the othermothered.

We ended the conversation by likening navigating through the academy as an art. It takes practice and constructive feedback as well numerous trials and revisions. Depending on the different intersections of identity that each person brings, the pieces of art may have similarities, but they will never be identical. The art of navigating the academy may be seen as not special or relevant depending on the audience. There are many stories in research about the experience of faculty of color within their universities and departments (Gutierrez et al., 2012). The stories have not always been viewed as valid or relevant by everyone (mainly those who have participated in the oppression).

Tokenism as Inclusion

When I inquired about the service aspect of her job, Dr. Faith sighed heavily and talked about how the service load is so demanding. She said that she was protected during her first year from the demands of service. She ended up being linked up with Dr. Wise through a mentoring program, who reminded Dr. Faith regularly to protect her time. This was great advice but hard to follow because she was one of a few people of color in the department. Dr. Faith explained:

> Unfortunately, I just think it's - it's really hard being an African American female professor because the service load is extremely high and the protection that's had to be given to all pre-tenure junior faculty is not given to all because if you have - like in our case, [there are not] a lot of black faculty within our school. And so - but then there's a pressure from the University to have black people on search committees for their numbers.

Dr. Faith expressed that her identity of being Black and female, her time was immediately demanded to serve the purpose of fulfilling the diversity efforts of the college. Her representation was needed by the university, college, department, and students of color. She was assigned

committees to serve on and specifically to be a diverse representative. She felt she was a number and a physical representation of her department's effort to be diverse.

As a method of "service survival," she and the other Black faculty would get together and split up the service demands. It was professionally necessary to do service for both promotion and tenure, but also to fulfill the department's goal to appear inclusive and to demonstrate that the university's diversity plan was at least attempted. This requirement of service and attempt at inclusivity put Dr. Faith in a position to practice the concept of protecting her time:

> And so I find myself being pulled into things so that the University can get their numbers (diverse representation). And as a result, that leaves me less time for research and things like that. I've felt like this year in particular, I've had to speak up a bit more and sometimes that - that may be perceived as "oh, she's not well, yes, sir. She's just not jumping on it." Like absolutely I'll do it. It's like I've kind of had to say "okay, this - I'll do this but I can't do that. I can't do these specific things" and that's been - I think that kind of rubs people the wrong way because they're used to me saying - kind of being like the cheery black girl that'll do all everybody's work. So that's been difficult and that's caused some strain, I think, in some relationships.

It was absolutely necessary to protect her time, but she often was made to feel as though she was not a team player. Her protection of time became a tool of resistance and a point of contention for other colleagues who then had to carry weight that they had been excused from previously.

Dr. Faith realized that her narrative was changing and that she was finding her voice. She recognized that she was tokenized with service commitments because although she was on committees where decisions were being made, her input was not especially welcomed. One of

the eye-opening experiences she had was when she realized how the process of selection for committees had occurred:

> I've been pulled in more administrative things and I'm doing things that don't even relate to me in any way at all and it's very clear why - why I'm doing things that I'm doing and then I'm receiving emails that people don't realize I have access to, saying Faith, parenthesis African American female, and then listing out other faculty of color and saying which one. So and I have that. You know what I mean? So now it's kind of like - so this is - this is really happening. So I kind of thought that some of it was happening but kind of seeing that email was like okay, I know I'm not making this stuff up.

These experiences helped her to realize that she too would be responsible for helping others to navigate the academy. She would teach the art of navigation and continue to learn it simultaneously.

Becoming Othermother: A Holistic Advisor and Mentor

Dr. Faith was not forthcoming with her own definition of othermothering. We had several exchanges with me attempting to encourage her to define it in her own terms and her trying to encourage me to give her my definition. It was imperative for me to have her define it for herself. I did not want her to take the definition that I use, to shape or determine what examples she shared. Although there are several premises of othermothering that may be similar for those who participate, self-naming and self-valuing allow the participant to own their experience (Hill Collins, 1990). Once I assured her that her answer would suffice, she shared: “I think that othermothering is taking a holistic approach to advising and mentoring students.” When I asked her if she feels that she has had experiences of othermothering students, she replied,

> Uh-huh. Absolutely, as a matter fact, just last night after class, I had a student come to talk to me afterward. An African American female, expressed that she was struggling with groups because of the cliques that exist in the class. So anytime it's time for group assignments and you - [and I have] to grade it based on the group and nobody really wants to work with her and it's also perceived in other classes like she's not working effectively with others. I mean, it's not that. It's just that they kind of all [clique up] and - so I'm just talking with her about those dynamics and just talking about being the only African American in a cohort and discussing issues around race and having to be the representative for everybody in the group. So just kind of helping students to move through those types of situations that can complicate the doctoral experience. I have a graduate student. I'm trying to help her through some of those similar issues with her cohort. And so I'm hoping that even though I - there's not a lab here like what I [have], I'm hoping that at the very least I can try to provide some support for the students that are here, even if it's just a little bit. Because those issues, they do affect the day-to-day, and it's - it's difficult.

In this passage, Dr. Faith believes that a current student whom she is othermothering had similar issues to those she experienced during her time in graduate school. She identified with the student's frustration about being the only person of color in her cohort and her feelings of ostracism. She spoke to the student about how she may need to navigate the situation and how it may not be the last incident that she encounters. Providing that student with support was important to Dr. Faith because the day-to-day implications of racial battle fatigue can be exhausting and detrimental. It was very reminiscent of the advice the Dr. Faith received from Dr. Wise.

Observing Dr. Faith's othermothering. I was fortunate to able to spend time observing Dr. Faith during her last class of the semester. I had asked professors to choose a time that I could observe them when they felt that they were othermothering. Dr. Faith had two students with whom she definitely felt that she had an othermothering relationship. The students who were in the othermothering relationship did not want to be observed. I was invited to a class to observe and hoped to capture these moments from other students. When I arrived to her class, Dr. Faith greeted me with a hug and told me to have a seat anywhere. She was warm in her reception of me and gracious with others as the classroom began to fill. Dr. Faith wore a red sweater with black slacks and flats. Her hair was in the asymmetrical bob that I had seen during our interview. She was looking over notes as students were coming in the classroom and getting settled. I was introduced as a doctoral student doing research and here to observe her in a classroom setting.

There were ten students in the course. There were more women than men. There were three visible people of color. The classroom was large and had at least 30 chairs in it. There were large windows in the white-walled room. The view outside of the windows was of a baseball stadium. There was a whiteboard at the front of the class along with a podium station for the instructor. Some of the students were eating snacks as the class is in the late afternoon. After taking attendance, Dr. Faith interrupts the chatter by saying hello and "Keep calm, it's the last day of class"! After the shouts of laughter and bouts of applause, announcements and reminders commence. Dr. Faith invites students to ask any questions about the last test that they received back. She takes some time to clarify answers to make sure that people understood.

There are several students looking on their phones or laptops at websites that have nothing to do with this course or academic subjects. From my seat I can see some on Facebook

and others on Pinterest. Some students were engaged in the discussion. One student, an older white male, talked more than all the other students. He often asked for clarification as well as checking his understanding the concepts. Several times when he chimed in to participate, others in class looked at each other and chuckled. It was clear from the environment that they were used to him asking lots of questions and giving opinions. Dr. Faith always answered graciously and allowed him to speak his mind. He was not disrespectful or disruptive, but inquisitive and engaging. Dr. Faith took care to thank him for his questions and contributions, "that's a great point [Ralph], thank you for bringing a new perspective for us to consider."

As the class was wrapping up, Dr. Faith thanked the students for all of their insights and hard work. She offered, "I don't want to get too emotional. I have really enjoyed teaching you and learning with and from you. It has been great to see the growth in your understanding over time. I look forward to seeing what you all will contribute to the field." She spoke these words with a smile, a slow pace, and calm tone, and exercised great restraint in order to not shed a tear. She ended the class by saying, "See you later good people." The class applauded and then everyone began to leave.

A couple of students stayed behind to chat with her. Ralph was the last student to leave. He told Dr. Faith that he really enjoyed her class and that he had learned so much. He thanked her for "indulging an old man and his thoughts." She let him know that she was happy to have had him in class and that she appreciated his level of engagement. She walked over toward me and smiled. We ended the observation by giving each other well wishes for a productive summer.

During the observation, I was able to see elements of othermothering from Dr. Faith towards Ralph. Her interactions with him were gracious in spite of the mumblings and groaning

from his classmates. She never skirted his contributions. She made him feel as though his comments and questions were validated. Ralph thanked her by expressing his gratitude to her at the end of class.

Benefits and costs of othermothering. Dr. Faith had enjoyed teaching the class but more than that, she enjoyed the progressive learning that she was able to witness in her students. I wanted to know what othermothering provided for Dr. Faith. I wanted to investigate the benefits and costs of othermothering and its impact on Dr. Faith. When I asked if she believed there were benefits and costs to being an othermother, she explained:

> That's a good question. I mean, definitely there are benefits - I mean, I would say is just having that support and - and I think its support beyond just kind of "these are the classes you should take, let me sign this paper for you," but just the support that you have in knowing that someone cares about you, your well-being. They can talk to you about classroom dynamics. They won't look at you as if you're complaining. They understand where you're coming from and sometimes you just need somebody who gets it and who has possibly been there before and can help you navigate that. So I definitely - I see the benefits there.

Dr. Faith expressed that being able to provide the support that she was given in her graduate school experience was beneficial. Dr. Wise had given her support and had modeled behaviors that Dr. Faith would pass on. In this interview, I see othermothering as a legacy that is passed down. It is a benefit that may not be realized until after a student graduates. The benefits to Dr. Faith may not be fully realized yet as she is still early in her career and still may be in the beginning stages of cultivating othermothering relationships.

When I asked Dr. Faith to talk about whether or not othermothering has cost her anything, she shared:

> In terms of the cost, for me some of the things that I've noticed is that - the time piece. Because like I said, I've stayed after class yesterday with a student and we were there for about maybe an hour and a half and that was some time I had put aside for research. So it's just like not only am I kind of being pulled administratively, but then I have students - and [this is] is only a handful of students and then they gravitate towards me and then they - they want to do research with me and talk [to] me about these issues. And it's hard because I - I don't want to say no because they - they really don't have anybody else to talk to. But then it puts me in a situation where I'm kind of like well, [I've] kind of got to hurry up. I don't - it's - it's a weird - I - I don't - I'm not sure I even have learned how to navigate that. And then just trying to explain to them that it's like well, give me some time to get - because that's one of the things that Dr. Wise told me. She's like you really need to take some time, you got to - realize you have to get tenure because - if you let people take you too much away from [your] research and what you're doing, then you won't be tenured and you won't be here for anybody. So she's like - she said during her first few years, she kind of had to cut some things off, even some students she just kind of had to say you know what, I can't. I just don't have the time. And it was a hard thing for her to do because she wanted to be there for everybody, but now that she's tenured, she's like "okay, I have the time and I can - I'm a little bit more flexible." So I don't think I've quite gotten there yet. But it is something that I think about often.

Dr. Faith explains that the benefits and costs of being an othermother can be rewarding and overwhelming, especially for a new faculty member who has teaching, research, and service

responsibilities. She recognized that because she is one of few faculty of color, students of color gravitate to her. She vividly described the struggle to say no to students because although they need her, she also needs to learn to protect her time better. It is all the more difficult when it comes to how much time that she can devote to students who clearly want her guidance.

Conclusion

During the time spent with Dr. Faith, I found that there were many factors that have contributed to her "motherwork" in higher education. Her parents served as her first examples of othermother as they were foster parents during her childhood. She did not always understand their choices when she was younger, but it ultimately drove her to values education and helping others. Nora, a mentor that was assigned during her middle and high school years became the first person of another race that she considered to be an othermother. She was also othermothered by a professor in graduate school, Dr. Wise (see chapter 4). Dr. Wise served as a professor, guide, and friend. It was Dr. Wise that showed her the art of navigating life as a graduate woman student of color. Dr. Wise continued to teach navigation as she was assigned to be a mentee of Dr. Wise when she began her career as a faculty member at the same institution.

Dr. Faith experienced tokenism as young professor and learned how to protect her time from the over commitment of service for the university. She enjoys othermothering even though she has not been doing it long. She believes the benefits thus far have been helping students to navigate the terrain of graduate school. The costs of othermothering is the time that it can take away from other priorities, which at the moment for her is research.

This portrait helps me to understand othermothering in a number of ways. I have seen through Dr. Faith that the family component and family composition can heavily influence one's desire or choice to othermother. Dr. Faith grew up in a home where there were vibrant examples

of how to othermother. She also experienced the tension between the time that othermothering took and the wear that it can put someone through. This portrait also helps me to understand the othermothering can be perpetual. Dr. Faith saw othermothering from her parents, experienced it from Nora and Dr. Wise, and now she is doing the same. It can be a legacy building service that embodies the notion of "each one, teach one."

The portrait also helps me to understand that being intentional about boundaries of time and self are necessary for junior faculty. Dr. Faith talked about protecting her time or being protected during her first year and how it did not happen as much the second year. She eventually had to be the protector of her own time. Othermothering is a choice and the benefits can differ for each person. What has been common is that it seems to benefit all that are involved.

Chapter 6: A Portrait of Dr. Love

As I prepare to meet Dr. Love, I experienced a myriad of emotions. I was excited that she was so eager to participate and share with me. I was nervous as she was my first participant and I did not want to ruin this interview. Dr. Love and I agreed to meet at a public library that was about 45 minutes from me. During the car ride, I went over my introduction and some of the interview questions. I wanted to clear my mind of any preconceived notions about how the meeting would go, but it was difficult to not be overwhelmed with excitement. I pulled into the parking lot and parked my car. I went to the waiting area of the library and realized that I did not have any idea of what Dr. Love looked like; I had not done a Google search to see images of her. I decided to sit down and look through my information to get her cell phone number to let her know that I had arrived. Before I could pull out my notebook, someone called my name: "Portia?" When I looked up, Dr. Love was sitting across from me on a bench. I smiled and replied, "That's me."

I told her that I realized that I did not know what she looked like and was going to call her. She laughed and said, "I figured. It was easy to spot you though; you look like a doc student with all your bags and eager smile." We both laughed and nodded in agreement. We looked for a spot to sit, and Dr. Love led the way. She was familiar with the library as it was one that she frequented. Dr. Love was about five feet six inches. She was wearing salmon colored top and white capris with a wedge espadrille sandal. She has reddish brown hair that was pulled back into a ponytail that hung slightly below her shoulders. Dr. Love has light gray eyes, and her skin tone is very light. She reminded me of Vanessa Williams. She had a pair of sunglasses on her head, and carried a handbag.

All of the group rooms were signed out, so we found a table in a secluded corner of the library. We looked around to see if anyone was around as we needed to make sure that we were not disturbing anyone. I started to get settled when Dr. Love told me, “Hey Portia, let’s go into this room, the folks in there are getting ready to leave and no one is signed up for it.” I gathered my things and followed her to the room. The room was small, painted white, with a table and two chairs. The door was made of glass so people could see into the room. The library was quiet but busy with people at tables and computer stations. There was a small group of children being walked around with an adult and pointing to the books on the shelves. Dr. Love and I got settled in the space. I set up the recorders making sure that I had more than one option to record because I did not want to lose the information. Dr. Love removed her sunglasses from her head and put them in to her purse. She checked her phone for messages, and then signaled that she was ready by sighing and saying, “My phone is on silent so that we are not disturbed, where we start?”

Early Family Life and Intergenerational Othermothering

Dr. Love began to tell me about her childhood and her family. She is the eldest of four children: two boys and two girls.

> I was born in Jamaica Queens, New York to a single mother who spent the first few days of my life trying to keep me from Catholic nuns -who thought I deserved better than to be raised by a single mother. And of course, obviously that didn't work out. My parents weren't together at the time, but eventually with a lot of - my father is from Detroit. He was born and raised in Detroit, but he - he had family in New York and that's how he had hooked up with my mother and because he was living there at the time with his cousins and so with a lot of pressure from my grandparents and from his family, he - they

eventually decided to get married. To do the right thing. I don't think it was so much about love.

She continued to tell me that she and her sister were 14 months apart, and that her brother was then born two years later. The youngest brother was born 15 months later. They were all very close in age. Dr. Love was the oldest of 27 cousins on her paternal side. Her family moved to Detroit after the riots. Her paternal great-grandparents had migrated there from Alabama and Kansas. She was raised in Detroit, but spent her summers with her siblings with her grandmother. She spoke fondly of her summers in New York with her maternal grandmother:

> And we spent every summer in New York with my mother's mother who's West Indian and we - her father left when she was still pretty young and eventually we met - we met him I think when I was about 10 or 11 or something like that. But for the most part, we spent the time with my grandmother and my cousins. My grandmother was raising my six cousins and so we would go and add to the six and be 10 in a little apartment in the projects, but it was some of the best times we had, I think.

She grew up visiting her grandmother who was raising her six cousins. She explains how it came to be:

> They're my mother's brother's children. It was six of them and their mother, my - my uncle, he's a very famous artist so he traveled the world and lived in Paris and did all of this stuff with his art, and you know how those artist, musician people are. You - it - it's almost - it's almost a sin for them to have a family because they're so focused on their work. They will be unhappy people if they can't do their work. So he was doing all this traveling and my cousin's mother's, I guess she just got fed up one day and she just walked out and she left them there, all of - six of them together were in the apartment

> trying to survive on their own. And my grandmother went over there and - when she found out, she went over there and got them. And I don't know how long that was, but I know they went days trying to keep it together on their own. And so my grandmother went over and got them and she ended up adopting all six of them and keeping them.

Her grandmother provided her one of the strongest examples of othermothering by taking in her cousins. Her grandmother was known as an othermother to many in the neighborhood in New York. Dr. Love explained:

> She took care of everybody kids. Everybody knew who she was. She would give advice to a lot of people. She was also a foster parent and took care of many children. The only reason that she stopped is because she was forced to due to her age.

Helping others was a way of life for her grandmother and also for Dr. Love's mother. Dr. Love believed her mother was the same kind of caregiver to the neighborhood children in Detroit as her grandmother was in New York. She talked about how "kids would fall down and hurt themselves and they would run to my house before they would run home." This was an important aspect of community othermothering because it showed how mothers were working together to make sure that children had what they needed.

Othermothering seems to be a generational calling for the some of the women in her family. She even described that her cousins that she grew up with in New York were older than her and were charged with her care whenever they left the house. In Detroit, Dr. Love was the oldest of her siblings and cousins; it was her responsibility to take care of them when they were out in the neighborhood or at home when her parents were not available. Staying with her grandmother in the summer gave Dr. Love plenty of opportunity to practice taking care of people. She explained, "So there was always somebody new at my grandmother's house for us to

either play with or take care of." I understand this to mean that othermothering was taught to her and modeled by the women in her family.

The value of education. Dr. Love said that her siblings were expected to go to college even though her parents did not receive college educations. Her father's family had a long lineage of educated folks. Her father started college but did not finish, and her mother did not attend college. Even though her parents did not complete degrees, her parents encouraged her and her siblings to attend college.

Dr. Love attended the parochial school that was across the street from her childhood home. She attended it till her eighth-grade year. Her parents divorced when she was 13 or 14 years old. Her father had been laid off, and he moved to New York to find a job to provide for his family. The distance was hard on their family unit and caused tension. When her parents decided to divorce, Dr. Love's brothers had a hard time accepting it. Dr. Love and her sister, however, welcomed the family change as

> A celebration, like thank God! We don't have to hear anymore arguing and the fussing. It was just like thank God. So when my parents - when my parents split for good, my brothers - my father eventually came and got my brothers. By then, he had moved to California, and he eventually came and got my brothers and that just wasn't - I don't know - it just wasn't a good move for them. But even before that I felt like they were struggling in school, especially as black boys.

She talked about how her brothers would often get in trouble at school after her father left and were eventually they moved to California with their father. Their behavior and relationship with education did not get better. Dr. Love believed the relationship with education suffered more because of the relational dynamics between her parents.

> Even when they went to California, I don't think it - it got better, and I don't really think - my father had never been - he [had] always been kind of the - my mother took care of all the hurt feelings and the Band-Aids and the - the cooking the meals. My father supported us financially, and I guess did things here and there but they have very distinct and very different roles. And so for my father to take my brothers was like - [me] - I think an awareness that they needed their father but at the same time he was not prepared to take on that responsibility in any way, shape, or form. But I think he was going to do it anyway just to try to show that he could. And I - I don't- I don't think it worked out well.

She did not believe that her father was ready to take on her brothers' care, but his pride would not allow him to not try. In this narrative, we hear how family dynamics can influence education. Later, in the interview, Dr. Love revealed that one of her students also had change in family dynamics that made the pursuit of education difficult. It was hard for her student to focus on her educational pursuits because of a divorce and becoming a single parent. She had firsthand experiences with changes in family dynamics and the adjustment and tensions that can occur.

Dr. Love's parents wanted to send her to the parochial high school that was in the neighborhood. Dr. Love was adamant about going to the local public school in the neighborhood, but the experience did not live up to her expectations. Her classes lacked intellectual rigor and did not interest her. There was only one class that challenged her, and that was not enough to sustain her motivation to stay at the school.

> By the time I got in ninth grade, I got to go to this school and I was going - I remember I went to sign up for classes and I came back and my mother, who - my mother was always [a] supportive one. Almost whatever you wanted to do, she would support you. Well, I had signed up for sewing instead of signing up for a language, and my mother flipped out

> and it just shocked me. I'm like, “what is her problem?” “If you want to learn how to sew, I'll teach you how to sew, but you need to go take - you need to sign up for [it].” And I was like “well, French was closed.” And “well, you need to take something else.” So she marched me 13 blocks back up to Harrison Ford High School, and I remember I was crying because I was so upset, like I can't believe she's doing this. I was so mad. I was crying.

In this narrative, we can hear that Dr. Love’s mother made sure that she was equipped with what was necessary to succeed: she knew that taking a language would likely help her daughter more than taking a sewing class. The value of education in this situation was expressed via the choice of the classes that were necessary for survival in the real world.

Dr. Love ended up in a Spanish class, and it was her favorite and most challenging class. She enjoyed learning the language, but she was intrigued with the praise that her teacher Ms. Opalman shared.

> Spanish teacher I had in the ninth grade, her name was Ms. [Opalman], and she was an African American woman, and she talked about her daughter all the time, and her daughter went to CALI [pseudonym for the institution]. And she was talking about how much her daughter loved CALI and how much - how much you - how much money CALI was giving her daughter and - and so I remember sitting there in class, and I just got it in my head, I was like I'm going to CALI. And that's the only time I ever said it to myself and I did not actively pursue it but it was just in the back of my head.

This passage helps me to understand that Dr. Love had numerous supporters of furthering her education, and that these inspirations came from different sources. She did not know much about

the college that Ms. Opalman's daughter was attending, but hearing the enthusiastic praise, made her realize that it was a place that she could go as well.

Educational challenges. Having adequate learning materials was also an issue for her at this particular school. Everyone had two sets of books, one that stayed at school and one set that went home with the students. Students did not always bring their books back to school. Dr. Love described the incident that was the deciding factor about being at this school.

> I really had had it because my - everybody liked to have two sets of books. So textbooks were a premium because they wanted to leave one set at home- so they would be breaking in people's lockers and all this stuff. And I remember I walked down the hallway, and not only did they break into my locker, my whole locker was ripped out of the wall. There was just a hole in the wall. And I was like, "okay, I'm done. This is not my thing right here."

In this narrative, we can see the changing landscape of the neighborhood that was in decline. Dr. Love brought up a significant point about this profound shift. The public schools were suffering, and the demographic of the neighborhood had started changing as soon as her family moved there. She talked about how her family bought the house from white people, and by the time that she started school, there were no white families left. The aftermath of "the race riots of 1967" changed the neighborhood, as well as the educational outlook of the neighborhood. The riots cause a mass exodus of people as well as economic turmoil (www.detroithistorical.org). These changes eventually affected the affordability of private schools and the quality of education in the public schools. This is important to note as it directly affected Dr. Love's decision to become more proactive in her own education.

Proactive educational measures. The violence that was happening in the neighborhood, the low academic rigor, the school environment, and the drastic change in the family's finances provided an opportunity for Dr. Love to advocate for another opportunity at securing a quality education. Her mother knew a woman that used to live in the neighborhood that had recently moved to a suburb. Dr. Love used to babysit the child of her mother's friend.

> So it just so happened that one of my mother's friends who I had been babysitting for probably since I was 10 or something like that - I had been babysitting her daughter, and she was getting married, and she was moving to - to [the] suburb, and she needed a babysitter. So she worked it out with my mother. My mother was not - my mother didn't want to. My father didn't think it was a good idea. My aunts didn't think it was a good idea. But nobody could dispute the fact that I would be getting a better education. So I pushed until I got what I wanted. So I left home, and I went and moved in with this woman, and I cleaned her house, and took care of her daughter, and was treated like family and - so I could go to a better school. I slept on the floor or on the sofa bed or wherever and - and then I [went] - most of the time, go home on the weekends until I started doing things with friends in that community that meant I - I would need to stay there for the weekend or something like that. But most of the time, I tried to go home on the weekends because my sister was still there with my mother.

In this passage, I can hear that Dr. Love was committed to her own education and did whatever was necessary to achieve what is necessary for her future. I also understand that she experienced another opportunity where she was othermothering, or taking care of someone else's child. Her first experience othermothering was as a young child while visiting with her grandmother, she was assigned cousins (biological and foster) to care for. From the beginning of her childhood,

she has been trained to help others. The payoff for the assistance in this situation is that she had access to better educational opportunities and another perspective of a different neighborhood demographic. She made sure to go home often because her mother and sister still lived in the old neighborhood.

Being in the suburbs also taught her valuable lessons in thriving in other environments. She was clear that she needed to do well and get out.

> I did very well in high school, even in that high school I did. I mean, I didn't think I was super smart or anything, but I think - I - I know - I knew how to play the game. I knew how to follow the rules, when to speak up and when not to speak up. And I studied. So to me, it was just - it wasn't about any - being brilliant. It was about having a good memory, being obedient. What I did understand is that if I didn't do well, I wouldn't be able to stay there. I knew that.

The lessons that she was learning in high school about knowing how to play the game and being obedient was a lesson that she would continue to perfect as she moved through her educational career. Codeswitching or identity negotiation is something that many marginalized folks have to master in academia (Hinton, 2010). Dr. Love had to learn to change voices, attitudes, and postures in order to navigate the terrain of the new environment.

Dr. Love was not naïve about the system she was a part of and what was necessary in order to thrive and survive in it. For Dr. Love, doing well was a motivating factor to center her when she would have issues with liking the subject being taught or liking the teacher that was teaching it. It only mattered that she did well, and that is what she did. She graduated fourth in her high school class. Dr. Love had learned how to separate what was important in her educational journey. Learning what mattered and remaining focused on that was also what

helped her to thrive in academia. This is important because codeswitching and learning how to play the game is a necessary skill for Black women faculty to succeed at PWI and to balance the requirements of attaining tenure and the desire to othermother.

Dr. Love only filled out one application: to go to CALI for film school. Her father mailed her an application, she did all the paperwork, and turned it in on the last possible day. She recounted that there was no guidance for the process as her parents were not able to help her. “It was just me doing it like I’m always doing stuff. This just how I am.” Dr. Love never talked about having to learn things on her own as a deficit, but just something that had to be done. This speaks to how Black women faculty must take care of things to the best of their ability in the academy when they have not been properly socialized in the environment.

Undergraduate Experience

Dr. Love was accepted into CALI for the television journalism program. Getting accepted in this school was a big deal for a young woman who was thousands of miles away from home and whom everyone expected to go to schools in her home state or to a HBCU. She showed up at orientation, which occurred a week before classes started, to discover that there were separate applications for financial aid and for housing.

> I didn't realize that I had to fill out separate stuff for financial aid and for housing and all of that. So when I showed up to orientation in California that week before school started, and they were like so where is and what are - I was like “I don't know. I don't know but I ain't going home! I got this letter right here [saying] I got in and I ain't going home. So we might as well start trying to figure stuff out now!”

I appreciated the determination of Dr. Love that she was not interested in going home, and letting the college know that it was not an option. Just as she had done many times before, she started figuring out what she needed to do to survive and thrive at CALI.

> In my orientation circle, there were two other people from Michigan, and we hung out during orientation. One of them was a sister from Ann Arbor, and I ended up on her dorm room floor for the first quarter. Then I moved out, and moved into this lady's - I basically stayed in - the hallway in her apartment.

Her father had gotten her in contact with someone that allowed her to stay in her apartment. Even though there was not a lot of room, Dr. Love was grateful for shelter.

At the end of the academic year, she wanted to go back home to Detroit to see her family, but she didn't have all of the funds to buy a ticket.

> I was working at Express, and I remember my problem largely was that my check could never leave the store because I was constantly buying clothes! I so wanted to get out of that lady's house, oh, I just - I just wanted to so bad. She was somebody my father knew, and so I remember I had half the money to go home. This is back in the day when a hundred and twenty dollars was the airline ticket. But I remember I have half of that and then one day I was walking on campus and this white guy comes up to me. He - white man comes up to me and he was like, "You're a student here, right." I said, "yeah." And he was like, "I - do you have - have you bought a computer [out] the bookstore," and I was like, "no." And he was like, "Well, could you do me a favor and go buy this computer for me in the bookstore because students got a massive discount." And so he gave - he put all this money in my hand. I don't even remember, like $500 or something

> in my hand. And so I go in the bookstore, and I get the computer, and I roll it out, and I help the man roll it to his car, and he gives me a hundred bucks.

Dr. Love continues to be able to find a way to make things happen. She admits that it was strange for both her and the white guy to be so trusting of each other, but they both benefitted. In this narrative we hear how she was able to cope despite her circumstances. This also helps us to understand why she relates to some of her students. She had found herself in similar situations that allowed her to sympathize with her students and offer assistance.

Activism as education. Dr. Love talked with me about her parents, and how they had either started and not finished college or had not gone to college. She described how her paternal great-grandparents migrated to Michigan, but she had not said much thus far about her grandparents and their experiences. At this point in the interview, she began to share about her grandparents, who were civil rights activists and were well known in the community and state, with some national reach as well. These stories also offered insight about her father's role in political and activist movements.

> So this is something I haven't told you about my family. Growing up in Detroit, my grandparents were civil rights activists. My father is the eldest out of his brothers and sisters. So he kind of ushers his siblings into the Black Nationalist movement, so he becomes - gets - we get - he gets involved in the very beginning, the [foundings] of the Republic of New Afrika.

As she began to tell me about her family's history of activism, I remembered the beginning of the interview where she described how her father's education was derailed by the assassination of JFK, and that after the riots in Detroit, her family moved back to Michigan. Her father wanted to re-center his new family in the family tradition of activism and community outreach. In telling

this story, Dr. Love began to become more alive in the interview as she chronicled her family's ties with known national movements of that particular time. She was animated with her hand movements, and her rate of speed increased as she spoke.

She also shared a little more insight about her family celebrations and the activities that her family participated in. She shed light on how connected people were with her family in the community.

> And so for all of us growing up, we always celebrated Kwanzaa. We usually did Kwanzaa and Christmas, but my uncle and family, they just did Kwanzaa. And we wore dashikis. We went to hear [Farrakhan] when Farrakhan was in town. My uncle and Farrakhan were good friends so we - we would go hear Farrakhan speak. We would celebrate the birthdays of Malcolm X and Marcus Garvey. We were always involved in some rally or campaign to free a political prisoner or to - whatever. That's just how we grew up. We all had African names, either by birth or naming ceremony. And even to this day when we do funerals or weddings, there are always drums and dashikis or what have you. And on top of this, we grew up Black Nationalist and Catholics. Okay?

This information caught me off guard because I had never heard of people being Black Nationalists and Catholic. It most have showed on my face because Dr. Love looked at me, pointed at me, and said "Right!" We both laughed for a minute, and then gathered ourselves. She said that in her family church, they just knew that the Loves were coming in their own way, and their tradition would be observed.

> So even in our family church, Father Thomas is like, "Here are the Loves." He just knows, right? We come in with the drums and with there's no such thing as hour-long home going in the Love family. It's a big thing all the way to the graveyard.

She admitted that this was not always a point of pride for her. One of the reasons why she wanted to leave her home state was to escape the family reputation and how radical they were. It was a difficult task because when she arrived at CALI, community activism and politics was the focus of everyone's attention. Her family emphasis on activism, community, politics, and religion were things she was trying to leave behind. She did join the Black Student Alliance, and they invited her uncle to speak at an event. He had committed, and then was unable to make it but sent someone else in his place. The change in speakers was a turning point that made her rethink her family's approach to activism and later her approach to research.

> He was scheduled to come, and he was coming, and then something happened, and he couldn't make it so he sends Kwame Ture his place. And I remember sitting back there, and Kwame is talking and talking, and I was just sitting up there like, "wow, I got a responsibility here." It -it was just a shift for me. I think up until that point, I was just trying to get away from it. But at that point, I was like, "okay, this is serious business."

This was a transition moment for Dr. Love. She came to embrace her family heritage of activism and community outreach.. She also later approached her research and how she shares her research the same way: on her own terms.

Activism in practice and teaching origins. After hearing Kwame Ture speak, she began to work with the community engagement office to go into the Watts and Compton communities to lead Saturday school. One of the Black staff from the office would pick a group of college students up in the school van, go into the housing projects, and facilitate Umoja circles (unity circles), teach children about Kwanzaa principles, go on field trips, and teach them about Malcolm X and other Black leaders. Dr. Love credits these experiences as being the beginning of

her teaching journey. Even though she had tutored while she was in middle school, these were the origins of her teaching passion and her research interests surrounding curriculum and race.

When Dr. Love returned to CALI for her sophomore year, she needed to find another job in order to pay for housing. She interviewed to be a teaching assistant at a public school that was situated near but not in a very prominent Black community. She described the neighborhood and the interview for the job:

> This elementary school was at the foot of Aldwin Hills, which is a well-to-do black neighborhood. But at the bottom of Aldwin Hills is a place called the Jungle, which is the hoodie hood, and they had a lot of Crip-Blood issues. And so when I went to the school, and it was [an] African American woman, Mrs. White, who interviewed me. I guess she just took mercy on me. I mean I just had no idea. I had no concept of how you're supposed to dress when you go on [a] interview. I dressed - I mean, I was clean and neat, but it was not interview clothes. I had on some Express clothes, okay? [LAUGHTER]. I had on a white skirt with some Hawaiian - I don't know - pineapples or something on it and - and a green tank top to match the skirt. And that's how I went in for this - and some flip-flops - and I don't know. She just took - she really did take mercy on me because then she became an othermother for me because while I was there. I got that job.

Dr. Love mentioned Mrs. White as the only example of an othermother during her undergraduate experience. Mrs. White was widowed with two children and would invite Dr. Love to dinner with her family. Dr. Love did have family around CALI, but she appreciated being brought into someone else's circle to make her feel at home. Her father was in a different part of the state, and they were not speaking to each other at the time, so Mrs. White became family. Dr. Love experienced othermothering in a work capacity and on a personal level because

she had been accepted as part of this family - a feeling she longed for since she was away from her own family.

Dr. Love's responsibility at the school was to provide one-on-one teaching to students who had severe behavioral challenges. The student demographic was predominantly Black and Latino. It took her a few weeks to earn the trust and respect of the students. Mrs. White had heard her speaking Spanish for a few weeks with students and called her to the office.

> And then she calls me back into the office the third or fourth week of doing this, and she was like, "You didn't tell me you spoke Spanish," and I was like, "Well, I know Spanish. I can read Spanish and I can talk it with some people" but I didn't feel like that made me bilingual. So she was like - it was a school with 60% African American, 40% Chicano, and one teacher who spoke Spanish. So she was like, "We really need your help." They had had [a] earthquake in Mexico the year before and in El Salvador that year, so they were getting a big influx of students. So she took my assignment away, and she gave me this new assignment. She gave me some workbooks and she's like, "You need to go teach them how to read and write in Spanish, and then make a transition to English."

Dr. Love went from a teacher's assistant to an English as a second Language teacher. She was nervous about the transition as she did not consider herself to be bilingual.

She and the students got used to their exchanges and wanted to speak to each other in their respective first languages. They established a system of learning, and it was all abruptly ended when Proposition 187[2] was passed. This proposition changed the dynamic of education as it was an English-only mandate. This meant that undocumented students were not eligible for

[2] **California Proposition 187** "was a state stature ballot that was approved by general election (California Proposition 187, 1994). The purpose of Proposition 187 was to make immigrants residing in the country without legal permission ineligible for public benefits".

special services in schools. These students no longer received the attention the needed to become fluent in English.

> So immediately, the next day, we - they had all these rules about what we could and couldn't do, and we could not talk to them in Spanish at all. I could not give them a grade based on how much they had accomplished. I couldn't give them above a C if they couldn't speak English fluently. And so it just changed everything. Even for the African American children because now they would say - if they said something like, 'Yeah, I usually be happy or something," you couldn't respond to [them]. You had to say, "Excuse me" - until they said it in Standard English. And so to me, that was - that was devastating because I felt like you are just assuming that they just speak this language. They live this language. It's who they are, and then they go home to people who speak this language.

Dr. Love was very passionate during this exchange. I could hear the frustration and the irritation in her tone. She was watching the racism and privilege of a majority take advantage of children who had been displaced by traumatic disasters that were out of their control. She knew the rules and made sure that she was in compliance, but it drove her to make sure she was providing the opportunity for Spanish and English-speaking students to feel heard and important. Dr. Love showed that othermothering for her is a passion and that social injustices move her to become more resolved about impacting others and the way they learn and are treated. She also showed that she longed to be othermothered in the absence of her own family members.

> I mean it didn't make any sense. And if you really want them to learn it, then you have to be open to learning their language as well-which is how I would have class. We would have circle time where we could all - we would all be speaking Spanish, and different kinds of Spanish because all these kids weren't coming from the same place… why make

them think that speaking a second language is a deficit? And why make them think that - that their home language is inadequate? And why would I be excited about learning a new language when you're making me feel bad about my own?

Dr. Love described the tension she felt between what the new law required her to do even though she felt it was adding further trauma to already vulnerable children. She was not interested in perpetuating systems that maintained making marginalized populations feel like second-class citizens.

I just always told them, “Look, here it is. Here - I mean - if you want to do this, this, and this and get this kind of job, then this is what you need to learn this language for. It doesn't make you a better or worse person. It just makes you more able to access some things that you wouldn't otherwise be able to access. And just think about.” You could talk to this person and that person and this person and - just take a different approach. I never did understand. You all are making this so hard.

Dr. Love showed once again the importance of learning the game in order to survive and thrive. She did this in high school and she was returning to that but with activism and resistance. She chose activism on her own terms, even if it meant giving more to students than was expected. She was not going to aid in their destruction.

She stayed at CALI for five years and was a teacher for four of those years. She recalls that when it was time for her to leave, it was bittersweet. She had been working with her third graders to perform a play. The third graders attended the Afrocentric graduation celebration at CALI and performed the play that she created. She enjoyed the feeling of accomplishment that she had when the performance was over. This was the first time that a performance was done that

exemplified her interests. It was the foreshadowing of her research performances. It was the origins of her expression of her research.

Graduate School and Life

Once she graduated, Dr. Love decided to try to break into the field of television and journalism. Even though she loved teaching, she decided that it was something that she could always come back to. It was going to be hard work, getting into television. She had big dreams of working for BET (Black Entertainment Television). An opportunity presented itself when she helped to coordinate the program for the Afrocentric celebration from CALI. A friend of hers and a fellow graduate had a brother who worked for the network and was present for the program. He was impressed with her as she was instrumental in coordinating the speaker and mistress of ceremony, Maulana Karenga and Marsha Warfield respectively. She also was the student speaker. The BET associate interviewed her, and she earned a position. However, during that time, BET's owner was going public with its stocks which put her position in a holding pattern.

She went back home to Michigan and worked for a local new affiliate while she waited for BET to call. She worked in television news for four years and knew within months that she did not want to work in that field. She did not like the politics of television work or some of the personalities that she encountered. She began preparing to apply to graduate school to pursue a master's degree in education. She studied for the GREs and worked. She applied to several schools, was accepted to all, and eventually pursued her education at research-intensive institution in the south.

Dr. Love finding love. While back in Michigan, a friend introduced her to a man, Chance, and they hit it off pretty well. She attended school in his home state and became very

well acquainted with his family. In fact, his mother was a high-ranking administrator at the graduate school that she attended.

Chance did well and moved around in his career in retail management. Dr. Love knew that they were serious, but neither was ready to take their relationship to a more permanent level. They continued seeing one another despite the long distance.

> What the hell? So we broke up. And I had to figure out what to do because I had given up everything so I had to backtrack, and try to pull everything back together, and I was all distraught. But I knew that I had to pull it together, and so my focus became me. I mean I don't know what's going to happen with us in the long run, but I - I need to focus on myself because that's going to be good either way, right? So that's what I did.

She says that Chance's mother checked on her often to make sure she was okay both academically and personally. She referred to Dr. Love as her daughter from the beginning, and that did not change because of the break up. She said it was a traumatic experience because they had been dating for five years at the time, and she had become very close with his family. In this narrative, the breakup shows us how Dr. Love experienced traumatic situations while pursuing an advanced degree. It is another experience that helps her relate to her students as she later helps a student who dealt with a divorce while pursuing a doctorate degree. This is another example that Dr. Love shares that allows her to identify with her students and offer understanding.

Re-defining research on her own terms Dr. Love's adviser pushed her to graduate and attend and present at conferences. She did not mind presenting papers at conferences, but she did not think that these forums adequately got her points across when she was describing issues of access to education for marginalized people. She got together with three other black women to create a performance based on their research that they then performed for the graduate class in

which she was enrolled. It was very well received so they proposed to present it at a conference as well.

> My advisor took us to this conference and it was a big hit at this conference, and - and that kind of sealed my fate right there. You are more likely to see me perform (spoken word, interpretive dance) at a conference than read a paper.

Dr. Love was satisfied with her performance and how she was able to express her interest in another form besides a conference paper. She believed that she was reaching others by not just helping them to add to their research, but thinking about ways that they could make a lasting impact.

> But when you perform, it's on a whole different level. You're stirring up a whole different kind of conversation, and when people leave, they aren't talking about how they can tweak their work here or there. They're talking about how they can change the world, how can we do this and how can we do that. And so for me, that was a drug. I was like, "Well, okay, I can do this, and people like it, and people can respond to it, and it inspires people." So that's - from that point on, that's just the way I thought about my work, period.

She admits that although she enjoyed and did it for a long time, she took a break from performing after she had been a faculty member for a while. Other people had started asking her about how it was helping her to attain promotion and tenure. Dr. Love does not have a problem with traditional research; she just preferred to do her research on her own terms.

> And so I don't have anything against traditional work, but it's not for me. And my whole point and my only point has always ever been is that my area of focus is - is the history of politics [and] philosophy of race and its impact on education. If I just study race through

> this rational lens, I will be missing at least half of the equation. At least half. Race is an emotional bomb and you're going to put it in a context where we're not going to talk about emotions? We're going to talk about just systems and theories? Uh-uh. That's just not enough. It's incomplete.

Dr. Love encouraged students to participate in her research performances as well as to create their own research. I understand Dr. Love's encouragement for students to create research in their own terms as an aspect of research. She is concerned with their long-term productivity and well-being. She mentioned that she needed to be fulfilled by the work she was doing and doing it the traditional way was not enough. Her research performance seems to serve as an aspect of self-care that she also models to her students. She offers a challenge to students to understand that their research interests do not only have to serve as work, but it can be an avenue that encourages them to blend other passions with research. Although not all her students are interested in performance-based research pieces, she encourages students to think outside of the traditional boxes that are in higher education. In terms of othermothering, Dr. Love's audacity to self-define her research and its presentation style foreshadows how she interacts with her own students as a professor. She has done research on her own terms and has something to model to her students to encourage them to do the same.

Loss and Othermothering

From the beginning of the interview with Dr. Love, it was apparent that there were many instances of her being othermothered as well as her being exposed to the act of othermothering. The life and practice of her mother, grandmother, and Mrs. White are prime examples that I believe groomed her to be an othermother. I also believe that her family's involvement in community organizing, outreach, and activism served as another teacher of compassion and

othermothering. Dr. Love has grown up in a family environment that extended its family to more than just a traditional nucleus. She was invited to be part of other families, and she also invited others to be a part of her family. I believe that part of the reason for this is because of loss that she experienced.

At the beginning of our conversation, Dr. Love spoke about two of her siblings in the past tense. When I revisited that detail, she told me of the loss of her youngest brother. She spoke about how her parents had separated, and that her brothers went to live with their father in California. She shared with me some of the events surrounding his death. Her brother, Salim, had recently been robbed after his sister Makia sent him to get her some food from Taco Bell. It was a long time before he returned home. When he arrived, he had no clothes nor shoes. He vowed that he would never be victimized again and decided he would protect himself by acquiring a gun. He was able to obtain a gun from a family friend, and he took it to his cousin Gianni's home.

> My youngest brother, Salim, ends up just dropping out of school basically and working. He was a hustler, and he moved back to Detroit, which was the death of him literally. He ended up getting killed at 17. Salim took the gun over [to] my cousin's house, [Gianni]. And [Gianni] and Salim were two peas in a pod. They hung out everywhere, did everything together. And so [Gianni] was looking at the gun and messing around with Salim, and the gun went off and shot him in the head.

Dr. Love knew that her brother was not going to make it, and she decided that she did not want to see him in that condition, so she stayed out the hospital room. She also explained that she grieved differently compared to her mother and sister. She said that the circumstances made it uncomfortable, and physically divided the family on the day the shooting occurred. Half of the

family was at the hospital in support of Salim, and the other half was at the police station in support of Gianni.

The tempo of Dr. Love's speech varied during this part of the conversation. There were parts where she sped up as if she wanted to hurry and stop talking about it. She maintained eye contact with me, but she seemed to be looking through me as she recalled the details of one of the most tragic events of her life. Then, she would slow down and make eye contact with me as if she really wanted me to hear and understand everything that she said. She did not attend the wake of Salim because she wanted to save her energy for the funeral that was going to be held the next day.

After describing the loss of her brother, Dr. Love immediately went into the loss of her sister, Makia. Makia had a son whom she named after their late brother Salim. Makia was a free spirit, and did things on her own terms. Dr. Love talked about how her siblings had a different relationship with education than she did. Makia went away to college, but did not stay the entire academic year. She was homesick and wanted to be around her family. She would not always make the best decisions, but she was fully aware of any consequences that came with her choices.

One summer, Salim came to stay with Dr. Love and her family so that Makia could start a new job. At the end of the summer when she came back to get him, she had a conversation with Dr. Love and her family.

> And then kind of the same thing when my sister passed away. It was weird because the summer before she passed away, we - Salim had come to stay with us for five weeks or something like that, and it was at the beginning of my pregnancy so that - that was just tough right there. But he came to stay with us, just to get - because she was starting a new

> job and - so she - when she had - she had come to pick him up and we were just sitting around talking or whatever and she was like well, “Y'all know if anything ever happened to me, I want y'all to take Salim.” And I was just like “Yeah, of course,” and my husband didn't say anything because he don't like to talk about that at all. So then, that was - man, just six months later when she passed away. And so it was just - it's just one of them things that just - just affirm again and again that there is a higher power.

Dr. Love lost two siblings at two different times and learned how to deal with the loss. She believes God does not put more on you that you can handle. She admits that “it hurts and it’s tumultuous and all of that, but all I can do is pray and hang on because there's something - it's preparing me for something in some way.” The losses that she had experienced prepared her for different purposes, and that thought allowed her to build resolve in that fact that she can still move forward.

Dr. Love and her husband honored her sister’s request and took guardianship for Salim. She cared for him for several years along with her husband and their two children. She had two children of her own and they considered Salim to be a big brother even though he was not legally adopted. Again, Dr. Love has fulfilled a role that she had been groomed for since she was a little girl. There is no surprise that this transfers into her work with graduate students.

In this narrative, we hear how the loss of two siblings allowed Dr. Love to be the ultimate example of an othermother to her nephew Salim. We also hear how loss allowed her to slow down and enjoy the processes of her career and life. She shared how her perspective on life is to live it to the fullest and to take chances. She took chances on thinking outside of the box in regards to presenting research, and on researching the interests that move you and challenge you to make a difference. Due to the losses, she made a vow to not put off starting a family due to her

career. She wanted to have children when she was ready because the brevity of life does not always allow us to experience things as we may have planned. The losses that she experienced allowed her to develop a deeper level of sympathy and tenacity that she can share with her colleagues and students they may have aided them in their personal lives.

Othermothering and the Professoriate

Dr. Love is an associate professor at a Midwestern research institution. She was recruited for this position after a presentation that she gave at an international conference. Before this position, she was an assistant professor at private liberal arts university in the Northeast. She said that she loved the university that she was at except that it was in a small town that only had one traffic light. She and Chance decided to work on their relationship, so they dated long distance again. What she had learned from their prior separation was that she was going to focus on herself so that she would be okay no matter what occurred.

Chance had recently taken a job in a large Midwestern city and was ready to settle down. He spoke with Dr. Love about their plans and asked her to make a decision regarding their future together. During that time, Dr. Love received a phone call from a professor at the Midwestern research institution about an opening at that institution. The professor was an older white man that had met her at a conference and had attended one of her research sessions. We both chuckled when she told me that the paper was about W.E.B. DuBois and Tupac Shakur. She said he was impressed and called her a few months later about the position. She went to the campus interview, and asked some tough questions about why they were interested in her. She said, “I wanted to know if they really wanted a woman of color or if I was going to be a speck and a check on the diversity efforts checklist.” She wanted to make sure that she and the department had a mutual desire to work together because she was not interested in being unhappy.

She was offered the position and accepted it. She moved to the area, and she and Chance were married soon after her arrival. She and Chance had dated for 12 years and were married for 12 years at the time of our interview). Upon arriving at the university, she was happy to find that she was not the only person of color in the college and that there was interest in her research among the Black Faculty. She collaborated with faculty members and students to conduct research. She said that she had toned down doing her performance research for a while, because of the constant questions she received about it, including comments like, "How is that going to help you get tenure?"

Concerning tenure. Dr. Love talked about how she felt that her purpose was to teach, and that she was not really hung up on attaining tenure as some other professors were.

> I've never had the feeling like I've got to do that. I feel like in academia, there are people who are there because they're career-oriented people and there are people who are there because it's a calling. And sometimes there's some in-between and some mix-up of that stuff, but to me, those are the two ends of the spectrum. And my colleagues who are career focused, career builders, a lot of them men, they're very cognizant about what they have to do to get tenure and they line it up and they do X, Y, and Z, and they do their [due]. They can shut off students and write a paper. Me? It's a calling and so I can't and I don't shut people off, and it takes me forever to complete my work. [LAUGHTER].

Dr. Love believes that she will attain the things that she needs in order to remain in good standing. She loves to research and present her research, but knows that her calling is teach and help students. She always got her work done, but did not enjoy the pressure of deadlines. "I have to do it when I'm moved to do it and not just because this timeslot says research and writing. Yeah, okay, I've arrived at the timeslot but the rest of me isn't there. It's not present."

When Dr. Love received tenure, she found out that she was the first Black woman in her department to earn tenure. She also later found out that several white men in the department were her biggest supporters in getting the job offer to teach at this institution. She said that her comments about diversity efforts did not sit well with the white women in her department. She understood that her allies were not who she assumed they would be, and that she too could be an unlikely ally for others in the academy and those who hoped to pursue doctoral degrees.

Owning Othermothering

Dr. Love talked about how she felt like her career in higher education was a calling. She not only had the opportunity to teach and conduct research, but also the honor of impacting and inspiring others. She shared with me several examples of times when she othermothered students. I also had the opportunity to observe Dr. Love in the classroom with several students who considered her to be an othermother to them.

Dr. Love spoke about a situation with a student, Lauren, with whom she had an othermothering relationship. This student had come to the university to be in the doctoral program at the recommendation of a former professor who was a friend of Dr. Love's. Dr. Love and Lauren would talk often and work on research papers together. Lauren was also a single parent and new to the area. Dr. Love had gone on sabbatical and was nervous about her students and the support they may have needed with her being gone for a semester.

> I mentored her mentor and so her mentor sent her here to me to work with me on - on critical race feminist stuff, and she - she - [she'd] been married, divorced, got a daughter. And so [she] handling her business. So she comes. I go look at some houses for her and - and give her a report back and so she comes. She handles her business. And I'm on leave, so I was worried about that because I'm like, "Oh, man, she's starting when I'm on leave"

> - So I gave her my number. I was like, “You call me,” and I hooked her up with key people. I was like, “Okay, y'all. Look out for Lauren.” So one day I sit down at my computer. I don't know. It was getting close to the end of the semester. And the email says, “Dr. Love, I don't think I'm going to continue in this program because I just don't think I can do it. So I just wanted to let you know.”

Dr. Love said that she did not waste any time emailing her back. She called her immediately and told her that she was on her way. Without much thought, she drove 45 minutes to get to Lauren because she was breaking down and that could not happen on her watch. She told me that Lauren is a Hurricane Katrina survivor, and that she had been displaced and moved to Oklahoma. She was having issues with her home in Oklahoma. She was being scammed by tenants, dealing with being a new place for the second time, and not having family around for a second time. On top of that, her daughter was having issues with reading. Dr. Love explained to her that many graduate students question whether or not they should continue with a doctoral program. She told her that

> Every woman that I know getting a PhD has this moment of literal utter sheer falling apart. And you just don't - you're questioning whether you can. And I said well, “I'm going to tell you something right now. You can and you will because I'm not accepting that you're not going to continue. Let’s figure this out.”

Dr. Love and Lauren wrote down everything that needed attention. She helped her to prioritize what needed to be addressed immediately and what could wait. Dr. Love facilitated an email introduction with a reading specialist that could help her daughter. She also helped Lauren talk with her professors to get back on track with her schoolwork. Dr. Love said that Lauren got back on track and all ended well. She said that this is often something that she does. “People

need to know that they can get through and that there are people that are willing to help them how they need to helped." This resonated deeply with me as it reminded me of instances in my own journey when I needed assistance that was beyond the scope of academic work. I was fortunate enough to have had professors that were available and willing to assist and meet me in my time of need. I have experienced othermothering first hand, and I was eager to observe Dr. Love in the classroom with her students.

Othermothering in action. When I arrived at the class that Dr. Love was teaching, I was greeted with a hug and welcome from Dr. Love. She was wearing black slacks and black flats with a red sweater. Her hair was curled and cascaded over her shoulders and back. The classroom was empty while she prepared before students arrived. She asked about my ride to the institution and if it was pleasant. I explained that it was long and at least it was scenic with the colors of fall. We laughed, and she told me that the class was going to be informal for the evening. Her class was working on a class project that involved putting on a program with other departments, and they were working out the details as well as having discussion on topics of social justice and transformation in education. She told me that the students were aware that I was going to be there for observation, and that they were going to be addressing othermothering in graduate school. I was thrilled to know that I would be able to hear from students about their experiences with othermothering.

The classroom was white with about 15 chairs in it and a computer station in the front. There was a whiteboard that covered the entire front wall of the room. Students started to arrive and take their seats. There were five Black women, two Black males and one white male student present. One of the female students went to the front desk to talk with Dr. Love. They spoke for

about two minutes and it was quiet so I was not able to hear the discussion. They laughed and as the student walked back to her desk, Dr. Love said, “We will figure out!”

Dr. Love called the class to order, and they began by introducing me and the purpose of my observation.

> This is Portia, and she is a doctoral candidate, and she is observing me to gather information about othermothering. Since I told her that I consider myself to be one, I now have to show her what that looks like from my perspective. Would you all agree that I othermother some of you?

There was laughter as the class collectively answered, “Nope, not all! You never do that!” She said, “Oh, so now we are just going to act up in front of company?” Everyone laughed, including Dr. Love and myself. She offered an apology “Portia, please excuse my students. They do not know what they do!” Again, there was an eruption of laughter from the students, and she assured them that “We will talk about this later.”

The class moved on as they talked about the “common good” or general announcements for the class as they talked about a conference that some others attended. Dr. Love thanked them and offered praise and encouragement for four of the young women who performed a research piece at the conference. “It was well received and you all did a wonderful job. I know that it was out of your comfort zone, but I hope that it was also cathartic for you as well.” The white male student said, “I have never seen anything like it and I was impressed. It’s not really my thing, but I respect the expression of the performance.” The women that were a part of the performance nodded in gratitude. Dr. Love talked about how it is important for people to see other types of research “so that we do not become complacent in our thinking and in our perspective research

camps." She was speaking of the tension that happens between qualitative and quantitative research.

Dr. Love observed her students as they engaged in conversation in small groups about social justice. She sat at the desk for a few minutes, and then got up and leaned against the wall. She turned her body toward the group that was speaking and was attentive to the discussion that was taking place. Dr. Love interjected with:

> Everyone does not have to do social justice in the same way. John just said the performance piece was not his thing. He can facilitate social justice by doing whatever his "thing" is. We have to be careful to make sure that we are not dismissing scholars because their lens is different than out own. All of our activism doesn't look the same. I am professor and I use activism as education. Singers use their music as activism, and so on. I use othermothering as activism. I also am aware that everyone doesn't do it and all people do not want to be othermothered.

John, the white student nodded in agreement. He explained that he felt like he knew what he was doing and what he wanted. He was not interested in an othermother and he and his advisor had an understanding about their roles. From this passage, I understand Dr. Love's definition of othermothering to include a mutual relationship between the people involved. The limits and boundaries of the relationship must be negotiated between both parties. Dr. Love is invested in othermothering and I believe that her passion lies more in the impact on students than it does moving through the ranks of academia.

Costs of othermothering. I asked Dr. Love whether she thought her desire to othermother affected her ability to attain tenure. She did not believe so. She said that she always

did what she was supposed to be doing with respect to university requirements and that it was never called into question. She admitted though that time can be a factor in othermothering.

> So I don't tell students no. And that's - that's a good and bad thing. I have very much taken on and owned the role of othermothering with the students, undergraduates and graduate students, and I just remember what I did not have. What I didn't have and what I did have. When other faculty of color left the department and the college, I took on all of their students and it was exhausting.

Dr. Love knew that having a large caseload could be time consuming. Because she wanted to make sure that her students had her undivided attention, she made certain to give all the time she could to assist them. She has been able to combat some issues of not having time to do research and othermother by taking time away for sabbatical. She also credits her husband Chance for the support that he has given and for "having her back" so she could fulfill her purpose.

She does not believe that her parenting and marriage has suffered from othermothering students, but othermothering and parenting her nephew caused some concerns in her family. Salim was contending with the loss of his mother and the abandonment of his father while trying to deal with being raised by his aunt and uncle. He often acted out and was in trouble sometimes at school. Dr. Love struggled with the changing dynamics it had on her family and wanting to make sure that Salim was getting what he needed.

> And I say all the time I think the biggest thing that my nephew taught me is that sometimes you just got to let go. Just let - let him go and pray for him, pray with him, but you got to let him go and figure it out because they can't - he - he can't hear us. And that's the hardest thing to do as a parent. So I - I take that with me all the time that - and seeing

him come into his own, which confirms that sometimes you got to let go. You just got to let it go.

Dr. Love and Chance eventually decided to send Salim back to Michigan to live with her mother. It was a hard decision for them to make but it was right for everyone. They were trying to be helpful and loving and give him what he needed. They wanted him to know that he was just as much part of the family as their biological children. However, his personal struggles with the loss of his mother often drove his behavior and eventually it became too much. This story about Salim also brings up the differences in parenting versus othermothering. Othermothering is with students who are not family and do not have to spend time outside of the classroom with othermothers. Children are constantly with their parents and the tensions that they may experience is always with them. While taking on her nephew was a type of othermothering, the responsibilities are different.

Dr. Love explained that sometimes, despite your best efforts, relationships do not always go as planned. When an othermothering relationship experiences difficulties, it may be necessary to rethink the relationship and decide if it needs to continue. Sometimes, othermothering may come at the cost of the severing a relationship for both parties to be successful.

Benefits of othermothering. Dr. Love talked about what she gains from the interactions of othermothering throughout the duration of our time together. She described how she wants to impact lives of her students so that they are able to realize their full potential as they try to change the world. Throughout our time together, she made it clear that she does not say no to students who ask for her help. From the time that she was teaching English to Spanish-speaking students, to finding her own voice through exploring performance as a way to present research, she has wanted to inspire others.

So this is what I love about it. I've been thinking a lot lately about social justice, inspiration as an act of social justice. Because at the end of the day, you cannot speak for people or stand up for people. The most powerful thing you can do is to encourage people to speak up for themselves and to stand up for themselves. And so for me, it's like how do I inspire. I inspire them and then they turn back around and inspire me right back.

Conclusion

In this narrative, we hear the life history of Dr. Love and how othermothering was an integral part of her upbringing. From an early age, she was exposed to great examples of othermothering through her mother and grandmother. She learned the value of education and developed the passion to help others in educational settings when she left for college. She also experienced situations that taught her how to cope and be able to thrive in predominantly white institutions. She experienced being othermothered and othermothering others at a young age. Dr. Love has experienced disappointment and loss that has helped her to build empathy for others and a level of tenacity that can be considered inspirational. Her reasons for othermothering include helping those who need support in graduate school as well as getting through life during graduate school. In this narrative, we have heard Dr. Love’s stories of survival, support and legacy building.

Chapter 7: Cross Case Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of othermothering in Black women professors at predominantly white institutions and its effects on attaining promotion and tenure. The participants provided data for this study through interviews that chronicled their lives from childhood to the professoriate as well as observations of their othermothering of students in action, field notes of the observations, and researcher memos written throughout the research process.

The portraiture method was used within a phenomenological qualitative approach. The data was analyzed using various techniques including The Listening Guide (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). The previous chapters shared portraits of each individual participant based on these analyses of each participants' data. This chapter focuses on discussing the emergent themes generated when analyzing the portraits and data collectively. This discussion identifies how the portraits and data helped me to understand the different dimensions of othermothering as it pertains to these three women. The themes I identified were othermothering as support, the costs of othermothering, and othermothering as survival and legacy building. The following sections discuss these themes and the related subthemes. In regards to RPT, These themes of othermothering can be a benefit to both the student and the faculty member. Black women faculty that othermother each other is important because they are proactively ensuring that they are learning to navigate the socialization process in their particular departments, and networking in order to extend research collaboration efforts to keep each other accountable to successfully fulfilling the RPT process. Black women faculty that othermother students are providing a service to students that can impact the student's successful navigation through graduate school.

The time that is given to othermothering as a service that largely goes unnoticed in the RPT process can be damaging if it not managed well. The difficulty in this is that Black women professors are often expected to take on students of color for mentoring or othermothering. Black women professors are often life coaches to students of color and therefore invest more time than their white counterparts. The danger in this, is that, they are still expected to teach, conduct research and publish and provide service at stellar levels without additional resources or recognition (that would improve chances at attaining tenure) (Kupenda, 2012).

Othermothering as Support

The idea of othermothering as support in this study is informed by the idea of *community othermothering* (Collins, 2009). Patricia Hill Collins discusses the idea of community othermothering being a part of Black communities for a long time. In community othermothering, other individuals help the birthmother to care for her children. The reasons for this support vary and are numerous.

I believe that Collin's definition of othermothering encompasses the work and support that Black women faculty exhibit in the academy. Collins (2009) explains how this type of othermothering is "mothering the mind" (p. 207) that cultivates a relationship between Black teachers and their Black female and male students. The professors in this study have cultivated relationships with their students in effort to help them to achieve success in the student's graduate and professional careers (Bernard et al., 2000).

Othermothering as support was a theme that emerged in all portraits. For example, Dr. Wise talked at length about her graduate advisor, Dr. Ellen, who was her undergraduate advisor. Othermothering as support for these particular women was displayed in a number of ways: as

observers of supports given, the professors as recipients of support, and the professors as the givers of support to others.

Observing othermothering as support. From their childhood, there was exposure to support all around them. Dr. Faith described the support that she saw her parents give to others as they were foster parents for many years. Even though she admits that she did not always understand why they chose to be foster parents, as she got older she realized that they were doing important work. She talked about having that as an example and inspiration for her own othermothering towards her students. Dr. Love also had a great deal of exposure to othermothering as support as a child. Her grandmother cared for and eventually adopted members of her family and later became a foster parent for many years. She also witnessed her own mother being an othermother to some of the neighborhood children. Dr. Love talked about how the children would get hurt and would go to her mother before they went to their own homes for assistance. Her grandmother was highly sought after and often consulted for mothering advice from many in the neighborhood.

Receiving othermothering as support. All three of the professors were the recipients of othermothering as support during various times in their lives. For Dr. Faith, she experienced support from Nora, a mentor from a program that she was involved in during her middle and high school years. Dr. Faith was surprised about the level of interest that Nora took in her as a white woman. It was one of the first times that she had received support like that from someone other than a person of color. The racial dynamic between the othermother and the othermothered seems to be a poignant point for Dr. Faith. Black Feminist Thought (BFT) confirms and fuses the intersecting dimensions of race and gender that are distinctively experienced in the lives of Black women (Collins, 2000). The complex situation for Dr. Faith with regard to Nora, a white woman

and someone that Dr. Faith identified as being an othermother, causes me to think about the dimensions of race and gender. Can white women othermother Black students? Does the definition of othermothering change because of race? Historically, Black women haven taken care of white children due to slavery and even after slavery as employment (Collins, 2000). I believe that that the dimensions and boundaries of othermothering need to be mutually negotiated between the parties involved. This is also in alignment with the Black Feminist Thought and the right for Black women to self-define and self-valuate their roles and experiences.

Dr. Faith also experienced othermothering as support from Dr. Wise as a graduate student and as a faculty member. Dr. Wise was influential to the support that Dr. Faith received as a graduate student and now as a faculty member.

Dr. Wise herself also experienced othermothering as support in graduate school from Dr. Ellen. Their relationship started to have deeper levels of support when Dr. Wise needed a letter of recommendation for her application to graduate school. Dr. Wise talked about being surprised when Dr. Ellen offered to write the letter for her. She said that she had not really talked to anyone about her desires to pursue an advanced degree. I attribute her shock to the incident with her high school counselor who told her that she did not think that Dr. Wise could make it at a large public research-intensive institution. Dr. Wise then started to see Dr. Ellen as someone who was interested in supporting her.

Dr. Wise identified Dr. Ellen as someone that students of color could go to for support. Dr. Ellen was also on the admissions committee and worked to ensure that the candidate pool was diverse. Dr. Wise talked about how Dr. Ellen also showed her support as a non-tenure track instructor in helping her attain a tenure track faculty position. Dr. Wise said, “But it was like she

clearly believed in me and she opened the door-she opened doors for me and she made such a big difference in my life." The level of support between the two women became a generational endeavor as Dr. Ellen later became the dissertation advisor for one of Dr. Wise's daughters.

Giving othermothering as support. Each of the professors also gave support to others in their othermothering roles. Dr. Love gave support to students and family members. She and her husband took care of her nephew for several years when his mother, Dr. Love's sister, passed away. She raised him as her own alongside her own children. She also supported her students that were being impacted by California Proposition 187. With her own students, she showed support in their academic pursuits through graduate school.

Dr. Wise gave support to George during his practice defense. What really struck me was the fact that during George's dissertation defense rehearsal, she provided support to several people at one time. She encouraged her students to give critical feedback to George, while also being careful to not to discourage them if the feedback was not correct or warranted. I appreciated the care that she took to cater her support so that each of her student received what they needed.

Dr. Faith also discussed the support that she was giving to a Black woman graduate student that was having difficulty in graduate school in her cohort. Although Dr. Faith was in the beginning stages of the experience, she expressed that she wanted to be able to help her to get through the process of graduate school.

Othermothering as support is not without complications. According to all the women in this study, there has to be boundaries on how much support can be given. Supporting graduate students at any level requires time. Professors who are on the tenure track must be careful with the time that they give since they also need time to devote to their own research and teaching. All

of the women in this study talked about how investing time in students can alter plans research and publications.

The Cost of Othermothering: Time

In this study, I asked the participants about the costs of choosing to othermother students. This question was meant to capture any tensions that the Black women professors may experience as a result of othermothering students. The only cost that all of the professors mentioned was the aspect of time. The time commitment for othermothering can be quite demanding. For example, Dr. Wise explained that she had spent at least 20 hours in a two-week period just working with George in order to make sure that he was ready for his defense.

The cost of othermothering as it pertains to time did not manifest the same way for each of the participants. This is supported in the literature: Collins (2009) explained that because Black women have varying dimensions of their experiences depending on the class, region, age, ethnicity, and sexual orientation; thus their individual standpoint may not be the same as other Black women who are located in similar situations. The phase a professor is at in their career will impact how much time they will be able to devote to othermothering. Each of the women are aware that time must be carefully managed in order to be successful as a tenure track professor but also as one who chooses to othermother.

For example, Dr. Wise talked about spending less time othermothering in the early part of her career because of her other responsibilities as it pertained to attaining promotion and tenure. There were other factors that pulled on her time besides othermothering, such as service on committees for the department and college. This helped me to understand that Dr. Wise had to create boundaries on the time that she could devote to othermothering. In order to be able to

devote the time that she now has for othermothering, she needed to be focused on the tenure requirements earlier on.

For Dr. Love, her concern about time in relation to othermothering was not related to the attainment of promotion and tenure, but rather focused on the impact it has on her personal life. She was more concerned with living the life she wanted on her own terms than have her personal life dictated by whether or not she would get tenure. Dr. Love's position on the time costs help me to understand the ways that she stretched the boundaries of her othermothering. Her level of othermothering differed from the other women. She was concerned about the time that othermothering took up from her personal life, while the other participants were concerned about how it took away time from conducting research and producing publications. It helped me to understand that a person could set their own boundaries around othermothering to meet one's own needs and goals.

Dr. Faith's concerns about time related to othermothering also help me to understand that setting boundaries is essential. She was at the beginning of her career at the time of this interview. She talked about how much time she was spending as a new faculty person serving on committees, and how it interfered with her research agenda. She had only mentioned one student whom she was currently othermothering. She noted that the interactions with this student sometimes caused her to miss scheduled time to work on her own research. Dr. Faith expressed that even though she did not want to say no, she would have to be careful with the time she devotes to make sure she is taking time to research and publish.

Othermothering as Survival

Othermothering as survival is a tool for resistance for Black women faculty members and for students that are othermothered. In the literature review, it was mentioned that Black women

faculty had found ways to support themselves and others through networking (Võ, 2012; Harley, 2008; Smith, 2004; Sule, 2011; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001). Othermothering is another way to network and teach socialization skills for the academe for Black women professors and graduate students (Butner, et al., 2000; Fries-Britt & Kelly, 2005).

Professors' survival and othermothering. The professors shared how they have survived and continue to survive as a result of their experiences with othermothering. In Dr. Love's childhood, the same instances of building legacy by helping others was also a method of survival. Dr. Love's grandmother helped her grandchildren to survive. Doing so kept them from being part of the social services system. Dr. Love then leveraged what she knew about othermothering to gain access to a better education by negotiating a living arrangement away from her home in order to attend better schools. She was driven to use othermothering as a way to experience new and better opportunities for herself.

Due to her identity as a junior faculty member, Dr. Faith is still in the early stages of writing her story of survival. She has started using the tools she learned from Dr. Wise to survive. For example, she decided that she would start saying no to some of the requests to resist tokenism and to advocate on her own behalf. The importance of her resistance is that she began to self-define and self-value her contributions (Collins, 2000; Kupenda, 2012). She was countering the narrative and stereotype of the mammy in academia (Kupenda, 2012). In the academy, Black women faculty are expected to take on the cares of the department, university, and their own responsibilities without being provided additional resources. Dr. Faith refused to only be concerned with the responsibility of the department while ignoring the responsibilities of research and publishing.

Othermothering for students' survival. The professors' othermothering of students was also important for their students' survival in academia. Dr. Love aided the survival of her students through the depth of her commitment to them. For example, she drove out of her way to sit down with her student, Tiffany, when she was having difficulty and doubts in her program. She talked about wanting inspire students to think about how they view research that eventually will change the world. Her passion to inspire can be reproduced by her students as they move forward in their own careers.

Dr. Love also recognizes that because she is one of the few Black faculty members in her department and college, she is going to be sought out more often by students of color than her white counterparts. She also recognized that her white counterparts expected her to take on students and would sometimes not even offer to help lighten the load. This example served as the only time that she mentioned a tension about othermothering. She continues to take on students of color because she wants to help them navigate and survive their graduate experience.

Othermothering as Legacy Building

The theme of othermothering as legacy building emerged in all of the portraits in different ways. This theme of legacy building builds on the previous theme of survival in how these women were part of a life-long legacy of othermothers—from the home, community, and the academy. In this section, I discuss the ways in which it presented for each of the professors.

Maintaining a family legacy of othermothering. It is important to note that the professors learned about and observed othermothering through the othermothering that took place at home. This demonstrated a familial legacy of othermothering for these women. For example, Dr. Love's portrait is one that powerfully speaks to how othermothering can be a legacy. The legacy of othermothering starts with the discussion of her maternal grandmother.

Her grandmother raised her own biological children, and then eventually adopted six of her own grandchildren. Dr. Love was present during these times and was able to see the care that was given to her cousins and others in the community. Her grandmother was a community staple who often gave advice to others and helped them in their time of need. Dr. Love learned from a young age that she had a responsibility to help others by seeing her grandmother and others in her family othermother. Her older cousins were responsible for her, and she in turn was responsible for her younger siblings and cousins. She then carried this learning into her time as a live-in other mother for a young child and later in her role as a faculty person. Dr. Love continued in the tradition of community othermothering when she and her husband, Chance, raised their nephew following her sister's death. She sets an example for her nephew and her own children about the importance helping others.

Dr. Faith's introduction to othermothering began as child in her own home. She grew up with over 40 other children alongside her biological sibling because her parents were licensed foster parents. Her upbringing was full exposure to what it looks like to take care of others in their time of need in order to achieve success. This experience was not without tension as Dr. Faith admitted that she did not always understand her parents' choices to foster and that it made her question whether or not she and her siblings were enough for them. She eventually saw the good in what her parents were doing, and it influenced her decision to be a researcher and to othermother.

Academic legacy transmission and othermothering. The transmission of an academic legacy through and of othermothering is also poignant in these women's stories. Dr. Faith's strongest example of othermothering is during her graduate program and as a new faculty member. Dr. Faith was othermothered by Dr. Wise during graduate school and as a new

professor. Dr. Wise offered an example of how to navigate through graduate school. Dr. Wise modeled behavior for Dr. Faith when she found herself in the middle of a political situation. Although Dr. Faith was content to never talk about the situation again and move on, Dr. Wise stepped in and helped to alleviate the situation. As a result, Dr. Faith was able to see how to traverse through difficult terrain in the department.

Dr. Faith is currently building her legacy of othermothering as she has taken on a Black graduate student who needed her assistance. During our interview, Dr. Faith could draw from her own graduate school experiences and as a faculty member because she is still being othermothered. Dr. Faith is self-defining (Collins, 2009) what her navigation of academia looks like in comparison to other Black women who were in similar situations.

Dr. Wise's othermothering legacy building is the most robust of the portraits. This is because, at the time of this interview, she was a short time away from retiring. Her legacy building as a professor began when she recreated the support group that she had in graduate school. She and other Black women professors created a lab group that allowed graduate students of color a space to discuss their experiences and research. At a PWI, there was not a lot of support in place to retain them. Thus, they pooled resources and made their own group, and supported one another in their academic and personal careers. We also see Dr. Wise's legacy transmission in her othermothering of Dr. Faith. This demonstrates the BFT concept of community mothering (Collins, 2000). Dr. Wise enlisted other Black women faculty to act as community othermothers in the lab group that she created. In turn, Dr. Faith, who was herself a student in the lab group, is carrying on the legacy of serving others through choosing to othermother and helping others to navigate the same terrain she crossed.

Dr. Wise's words closed the circle of what the impact of othermothering is for the person who identifies as the othermother. She had spent many years working to successfully obtain tenure and all the while the benefit was to nurture, cultivate, and guide future professors, researchers, and clinicians. She showed me that the choice to othermother has to be tied to a greater vision other than simply getting people through and in the academy. Othermothering must be a perpetual practice that is revered and produces the desire to pass on what was given to those who benefited from being othermothered. In her closing statements about othermothering, she explained that her life as an academic was not just about the publications and grants that she was able to attain.

> I am getting close to that stage where it's kind of like, has your life been worth? And it's my relationships with the students that I'm-will be using to measure my life has been worth it or not. At least in whether my work life has been worth it.

This helps me to understand that the measurement of how well she has othermothered will be showcased in her relationships with others and how the lessons were passed on or not. In the case of Dr. Faith, we can see the Dr. Wise's legacy was indeed passed on.

Addressing the Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of othermothering for Black women professors at predominantly white institutions (PWIs), and how othermothering affects the attainment of promotion and tenure. Specifically, my study asked three questions that I answer individually below.

How do Black women professors experience their role of othermothering at predominantly white institutions? An othermother is defined as "women who assist blood mothers by sharing mothering responsibilities" (Collins, 2009 p. 192). Black communities have

recognized that entrusting one person with the complete responsibility for caring for a child may not be ideal or possible. The concept of othermothering has been expanded from just the Black communities to institutions of education including colleges and universities. The definition was expanded (Bernard et.al, 2000) for this study to include Black women professors who have taken interests in advising students beyond classroom assignments and research interests. An othermother is one who is concerned with the academic and psychosocial aspects of their students.

The experiences of othermothering among the three Black women professors I worked with were diverse yet possessed similarities. The themes of support, time as a cost, survival, and legacy building delved into various experiences with othermothering that spanned from their childhood to the professoriate. Each of the women in the portraits disclosed the various experiences that they had as children, graduate students, and faculty. Although their experiences vary, there were similarities in why they chose to othermother. Their pasts and backgrounds played an important role in their ethic of care (Collins, 2000) and their choice to assist graduate students of color.

What are the central tensions they experience in their role during research, teaching and advising? The professors experienced tensions in relation to their research. For example, Dr. Wise shared her experience in not being asked to be a part of research projects by her white counterparts. She did not believe that it was intentional, but instead a benign negligence due to their lack of interests in one another's research topics.

Dr. Faith also experienced tension concerning her research after her first year. Her time was protected so that she could get comfortable with the department. During her second year, however, she was inundated with assignments to committees that were based on the departments

need to have represent diversity. Although service is definitely a component of being a tenure-track faculty member, she was being used at a higher rate than her white counterparts. Due to the mammy stereotype that Black women are often subjected to (Bryant et.al, 2005; Collins, 2000; Kupenda, 2012), she dealt with identity negotiation (Glenn, 2012) in order to protect her own time. She had to negotiate if she was going to continue to be used to perpetuate a stereotype or if she was going to resist it and redefine how she is utilized. She chose to resist and redefine herself.

Dr. Love experienced tensions in advising when her colleagues became comfortable with her helping all the students of color regardless of their research interests. Her colleagues began sending students to her without attempting to serve the student first. They seemed to be okay with assigning the mammy stereotype to Dr. Love.

How do Black women professors perceive their othermothering to impact promotion and tenure? Each of the women in this study talked about the importance of promotion and tenure. They knew that it was a goal, but none admitted that othermothering affected their attainment of promotion and tenure, despite the fact that they related this to the fact that othermothering might entail time spent away from furthering research agendas, publishing, and family. Each of the women were very cognizant of the requirements of promotion and tenure, and thus were intentional about their time.

At the time of this study, Dr. Faith was not up for promotion or tenure, but was constantly reminded by Dr. Wise to be careful with the time that she spent with students. So even though she wanted to help more, she made sure that she was making her time a priority and setting boundaries for her research time. Dr. Faith being at the beginning of her career has not been fully exposed to how time constraints may impact her. It is possible that the answers that she provided

are due to the lack of longevity in the academy. This also alludes to the fact that even though othermothering and even mentoring is a service, it is not counted as much for the requirements for promotion and tenure.

Dr. Love is currently an associate professor at her university. It may be that the response of how time impacts her promotion and tenure is due to the fact that the associate level is a safe position. Faculty members do not have to attain the title of full professors, they were granted tenure and its job security at the associate level.

Dr. Wise also discussed the importance of time and how service to the university sometimes stalled her from producing as much research as she thought she would by a certain point in her career. She also mentioned that she hoped that her students got what they needed from her in the early stages in her career. Now that she is full professor, she has more control over the time that she can devote to her lab group, including giving individual attention that is necessary to help her students achieve their goals. Dr. Wise mentioned that service took time away from RPT but not the same for othermothering. Service, whether it be serving on committees or othermothering students can take time away from fulfilling RPT requirements.

The three women in this study were aware that othermothering could in fact, negatively affect the attainment of portion and tenure, but they were and have been diligent to make sure that it did not. This finding revealed that time given for othermothering could be a barrier toward promotion and tenure unless one remains vigilant in setting boundaries and making time elsewhere for research and teaching.

Implications for Future Research

This study only included three Black women faculty at PWIs that othermother. Due to the limited size of the participants' pool in the study, the themes derived from three Black women

participants suggest that future research needs to be conducted in an effort to support Black graduate students and Black women faculty. The findings in this study make it apparent that more attention needs to be paid to how othermothering and mentoring can be considered recognized service to the university as faculty go up for tenure and promotion. A note of concern is that if othermothering is going to be a tool for legacy building, it will be necessary to hear the experiences of those who are in the building process. Because of the unfair treatment of Black women faculty and the barriers that exist to obtaining promotion and tenure, Black women faculty are cautioning others to be careful about sharing their experiences.

This study adds to the body of research that exists regarding othermothering experiences of and from Black women faculty at predominantly white institutions, and its effect on the attainment of promotion and tenure. The use of the portraiture method for this study demonstrated their experiences as othermothers and their choice to engage students in that way as well as their own experiences that shaped their understandings of othermothering. The stories provide groundwork upon which other researchers could build to construct other portraits of Black women faculty. Future research could add to this study in a number of ways, such as looking at other intersections of Black women's identities and at different types of institutions.

Portraitist's Reflection

In addition to the need for more literature about this topic, my reasons for conducting this study are deeply personal. Like many of the women in study, I wanted to be a professor, teach at a university, and contribute to the field of student affairs and higher education. Thus, I sought to understand the experiences of the academy for people who looked like me. However, graduate school and life changed my path from the academic side of the university to the student affairs

side. I have always wanted to find a way to give back to students the way that so many others had given to me.

The journey of this study was an opportunity for me to map out strategies to be able to succeed as a professor. I found that the process of being a doctoral student was more difficult than I could ever imagine. I, like some of the women in this study and others who are not, experienced life and all of the changes that can occur when you think you have a well thought-out plan. I experienced different types of loss, isolation, discrimination, and life events that were unexpected. I struggled with finding my voice in my writing and impostor syndrome often paralyzed my efforts to make progress.

In all of these experiences and the extended time that it has taken me to get to this point, I have realized that my childhood, experiences, and interests have influenced my lens and desire to othermother. It may not be in the professorial role, but my experiences have made way for opportunities to impact students in a way that satisfies my desire to build relationships, uplift the Black race, and be an example to those who depend on me the most: my children.

I have been challenged by this experience: in my academic progress, in my drive to find balance with work, school, and family, and many other ways. I have been discouraged by the amount of time that this journey has taken, but I would not change it for anything. I have found purpose in my challenges, found my voice, and discovered my resilience.

The lived experience of the Black women in this study have resonated with me and moved me to seek and give support, survive the experience of graduate school, and build a legacy that is impactful and able to be passed on. I am forever grateful for my experience as student and researcher, and am honored to be able to co-construct these portraits with these amazing women.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Script

My name is Portia Watkins and I am a doctoral student at the University of Cincinnati in the Urban Educational Leadership program. I am conducting a research study that will explore how Black female faculty at predominantly white institutions experience othermothering. This study will also examine how othermothering may impact attaining promotion and tenure.

In order to understand your experiences, I would like to interview you and have the privilege of observing you. I would like to interview you for 60-90 minutes. In addition, if you agree, I would like to observe you teaching classes, in student meetings, and in research meetings. This would help me understand the different dimensions of your work as a professor. This data will be collected and analyzed by myself.

I am happy to answer any questions you might have about this project and then you can decide if you would like to participate. Thank you.

Appendix B: Consent Form

Adult Consent Form for Research
University of Cincinnati
Department: College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services
Principal Investigator: Portia L. Watkins
Faculty Advisor: Miriam Raider-Roth, Ph.D.

Title of Study: Navigating the Academy: Understanding African American women professors at predominantly white institutions.

Introduction:
You are being asked to take part in a research study. Please read this paper carefully and ask questions about anything that you do not understand.

Who is doing this research study?
The person in charge of this research study is Portia L. Watkins of the University of Cincinnati Urban Educational Leadership department of the College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services. She is being guided in this research by Miriam Raider-Roth, Ph.D.

What is the purpose of this research study?
The purpose of this research study is to explore the experiences and perceptions of Black women professors with othermothering at predominantly white institutions. This study defines othermothering as the academic, psychosocial and professional development of a student. It goes beyond mentoring to provide a holistic approach to student success (Guiffrida, 2005). In particular, this research will examine Black women professors origin of othermothering and whether or not it has any bearing on earning promotion and tenure.

Who will be in this research study?
Fifteen people will take part in this study. You may be in this study if:

- You are a Black female professor at a college or university
- You are a Black female professor actively engaged in research
- You are a Black female professor that is in a tenure track position

What if you are an employee where the research study is done?
Taking part in this research study is not part of your job. Refusing to be in the study will not affect your job. You will not be offered any special work-related benefits if you take part in this study.

What will you be asked to do in this research study, and how long will it take?
You will be asked to participate in an in-person, audio-recorded, individual interview. If you do not want to be audio-recorded, you cannot participate in the study. The interview will take about 60- 90 minutes. The interview will take place at a quiet location of your choosing. The following information will be collected from/about you:

- General demographic information regarding participants employer, job title, job description, and family structure
- Information regarding how participant interacts with students in class, during advising, and research
- Types of roles in which participants hold (both personally and professionally)

You can choose your own pseudonyms, or fake names, for the interview to protect your confidentiality and anonymity. If necessary, a follow-up interview will take place if the researcher has additional questions or needs clarification from the first interview.

You will also be observed for 1-3 hours during your professional work day. Observation will include as relevant:

- Teaching classes,
- Student Advising meetings,
- Research meetings.

The interviews will be audio recorded, but the observations will be recorded with written field notes.

Are there any risks to being in this research study?
You are not expected to experience any risks beyond what you experience in a typical day. However, due to the personal nature of this research, some questions may make you uncomfortable. You can refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.

Are there any benefits from being in this research study?
You will probably not receive any benefit by participating in this study. However, your participation could help the researchers better understand how Black female professors navigate research, teaching and personal lives while employed at predominantly white institution of higher education.

What will you get because of being in this research study?
You will not be paid or given anything to take part in this study.

Do you have choices about taking part in this research study?
If you do not want to take part in this research study you may simply not participate. If you stop participation before the interview is completed, you have a choice to keep your data in the study. There will be a box to check at the end of the Consent Form if you wish to keep your data in the study or not.

How will your research information be kept confidential?
Information about you will be kept private by:

- Using pseudonyms, or fake names, for key identifiers like names, locations, titles, departments, etc. that would personally or professionally identify you
- Not including your name on the typed transcript
- Erasing audiotapes as soon as they are transcribed
- Keeping research data on a password-protected computer

Your information will be kept electronically on a password protected computer in the researcher's office until the study has been completed. It will be kept in hard copy form in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office. Signed consent documents will also be kept in a locked file folder in the researcher's office. After that it will be destroyed by deleting all computer data files and shredding all hard copy data files. The data from this research study may be published; but you will not be identified by name.

Agents of the University of Cincinnati, which may include various faculty, may inspect study records for audit or quality assurance purposes.

What are your legal rights in this research study?
Nothing in this consent form waives any legal rights you may have. This consent form also does not release the investigator, the institution, or its agents from liability for negligence.

What if you have questions about this research study?
If you have any questions or concerns about this research study, you should contact Portia L. Watkins at [information removed for inclusion in this dissertation] or 513-XXX-XXXX. Or, you may contact Miriam Raider-Roth at [information removed for inclusion in this dissertation] or 513-XXX-XXXX.

The UC Institutional Review Board reviews all research projects that involve human participants to be sure the rights and welfare of participants are protected.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant or complaints about the study, you may contact the UC IRB at (513) XXX-XXXX. Or, you may call the UC Research Compliance Hotline at (800) 889-1547, or write to the IRB, 300 University Hall, ML 0567, 51 Goodman Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0567, or email the IRB office at [information removed for inclusion in this dissertation]

Do you HAVE to take part in this research study?
No one has to participate in this research study. Refusing to take part will NOT cause any penalty or loss of benefits that you would otherwise have. You may skip any questions that you don't want to answer.

You may start and then change your mind and stop at any time. To stop being in the study, you should tell Portia L. Watkins at [information removed for inclusion in this dissertation]

Agreement:
I have read this information and have received answers to any questions I asked. I give my consent to participate in this research study. I will receive a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep.

If you drop out of the study before it is completed, please check whether you would like to keep your data in the study or you would like your data removed from the study.

□ I would like my data included in the study if I drop out of the study before it is completed
□ I do not want my data included in the study if I drop out of the study before it is completed

Participant Name (please print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent _____ Date _____

Appendix C: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Life history

When and where were you born?

Tell me about your childhood? Parents? Siblings?

How was education valued in your family?

What type of student were you in elementary, junior high and high school?

What did you want to be when you were growing up?

Can you tell me about any religious or spiritual beliefs that you or your family followed or still follow?

Describe your experiences, if any, of being othermothered in your childhood.
How would you describe or define othermothering?

College

Was there an expectation from your family that you would attend college?
Describe your experiences, if any, of being othermothered in college
Tell me about your college experiences as an undergraduate and graduate student.

Doctoral Studies
Tell me about your experiences as a doctoral student.

Describe your experiences, if any, of being othermothered in your grad school

What your university predominantly white? Teaching or research intensive?

Transition to the professoriate
How long have you taught at this university?

Why did you choose to apply to teach here?

Were you recruited?

Have you ever taught anywhere else? How was that teaching environment compared to your current one?

Current University Experiences & Relationships with colleagues

What are some examples of difficulties that you have experienced with colleagues?

What are some examples of your most satisfying experiences here with colleagues? How do you feel as one of the few African American academics in your dept?

How connected do you feel to other African American faculty on campus, either in your department or across campus?

What are the costs and benefits of othermothering?

How has othermothering impacted your pursuit of attaining promotion and tenure?

Relationships with students

What are some examples of your most satisfying teaching experiences that you had here, concerning students?

What are some examples of the unique difficulties of teaching here concerning students?

Have you experienced roles of othermothering with students?

In what settings or situations do you feel you othermother the most?

How does othermothering affect your promotion and tenure process?

How do you think campus climate affects your decision to othermother?

Research

What are your research interests? How did you come to want to study them?

What are some examples of difficulties that you have experienced with your research participants?