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The Burden of Care: Cultural Taxation of Women of Color Librarians on the Tenure-Track

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Chapter 11

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Tarida Anantachai and Camille Chesley

Introduction

As a service-oriented profession, librarianship is often seen as being in the realm of care work. A charitable interpretation of this perception suggests that librarians operate in the literal service of others; however, there are also deeper, more troubling implications at play. The emotional, affective labor of care work is also largely devalued. Within higher education, for instance, academic librarians are often viewed by other faculty as support staff rather than equal scholars, even when they too hold faculty status.[1] Not only is their work perceived as requiring none of the intellectual capacities that are typically valued in academic work, but it also is largely ignored or rendered invisible.[2]

Historically, caregiving and other service-related jobs have been considered the responsibility of women. The concept of "burden of care," which arose in medical literature in the 1980-1990s, is typically used to

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1. Lisa Sloniowski, "Affective Labor, Resistance, and the Academic Librarian," *Library Trends* 64, no. 4 (Spring 2016): 660.

2. Sloniowski, "Affective Labor, Resistance, and the Academic Librarian," 657.

refer to the physical, emotional, and social toll experienced by family caregivers (usually women) over an extended period of time.[3] Numerous studies have examined the gender division of household labor and found that, even when such duties are divided more equally, women continue to bear the burden of the invisible mental and emotional labor of the household (e.g., assigning tasks, researching physicians, and otherwise "noticing" and being more attentive to problems).[4] Indeed, even in higher education, a number of studies have corroborated that female faculty engage in more domestic and "institutional housekeeping" than their male colleagues, ranging from the more official (e.g., committee work and teaching) to the unofficial (e.g., mentoring students and volunteering for projects outside of their regular duties).[5] These gendered labors often go unrecognized or are undervalued during tenure and promotion reviews. They are especially significant when considering how women faculty are underrepresented in higher education. According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics, women made up 44% of total faculty in 2013, but only 37% of tenured faculty (i.e., at the associate professor or professor rank).[6]

3. Gail O'Neill and Margaret M. Ross, "Burden of Care: An Important Concept for Nurses," *Health Care for Women International* 12, no. 1 (1991): 111-115.

4. Suzanne M. Bianchi, et al., "Is Anyone Doing the Housework? Trends in the Gender Division of Household Labor," *Social Forces* 79, no. 1 (September 2000), 191-228; Marjorie L. DeVault, *Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Susan Walzer, "Thinking About the Baby: Gender and Divisions of Infant Care," *Social Problems* 43, no. 2 (May 1996): 219-234.

5. Sharon Bird, Jacquelyn S. Litt, and Yong Wang, "Creating Status of Women Reports: Institutional Housekeeping as 'Women's Work,'" *NWSA Journal* 16, no. 1 (2004): 195; Cassandra M. Guarino and Victor M. H. Borden, "Faculty Service Loads and Gender: Are Women Taking Care of the Academic Family?" *Research in Higher Education* (2017): 672, 676-677; Shelley M. Park, "Research, Teaching, and Service: Why Shouldn't Women's Work Count?" *Journal of Higher Education* 67, no. 1 (January/February 1996): 55; Kelly Ward and Lisa Wolf-Wendel, *Academic Motherhood: How Faculty Manage Work and Family* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 57.

6. "Full-Time Faculty in Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions, By Race/Ethnicity, Sex, and Academic Rank: Fall 2009, Fall 2011, and Fall 2013," accessed July 5, 2017, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_315.20.asp?current=yes.

Along similar lines, the concept of "cultural taxation," coined in 1994 by Amado Padilla, refers to the burden that faculty of color assume as a result of their cultural background (e.g., extra diversity-related service roles, tasks, or other responsibilities) and the resultant strain caused by these demands.[7] While these time-consuming and emotionally taxing activities are undertaken in support of their institutions and the students they serve, they are also typically overlooked or undervalued by their colleagues—again, presenting additional hurdles to achieving tenure.[8] These also have grave implications when considering the underrepresentation of faculty of color, who made up only 21% of total faculty and only 18% of tenured faculty in 2013.[9] While representation of faculty of color in academia has historically been low, the makeup of academic librarians of color is even lower. According to the 2009-2010 update to the American Library Association's "Diversity Counts" report, they made up just 15% of academic librarians.[10]

The intersections between the burden of care and cultural taxation faced by women of color in higher education are already apparent. For women of color librarians, the burdens they face as a result of their intersectional identities are further exacerbated by their professional characterization as care workers. In this chapter, we will examine how

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7. Amado M. Padilla, "Ethnic Minority Scholars, Research, and Mentoring: Current and Future Issues," *Educational Researcher* 23, no. 4 (1994): 26.

8. Audrey Williams June, "The Invisible Labor of Minority Professors," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 8, 2015, accessed December 21, 2016, http://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Invisible-Labor-of/234098; Patricia Matthew, "The Invisible Labor of Faculty of Color on Campus," *The Atlantic*, November 23, 2016, accessed December 21, 2016, https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/11/what-is-faculty-diversity-worth-to-a-university/508334.

9. "Full-Time Faculty in Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions, By Race/Ethnicity, Sex, and Academic Rank: Fall 2009, Fall 2011, and Fall 2013," accessed July 5, 2017, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_315.20.asp?current=yes.

10. "Diversity Counts 2009-2010 Update," last modified September 2012, accessed April 25, 2017, http://www.ala.org/offices/diversity/diversitycounts/2009-2010 update. (Note that while this report provides data on the diversity of academic librarians as a whole, it does not include data on how many of these librarians hold tenured status.).

the burden of care and cultural taxation intersect for women of color on the tenure- or promotion-track. In addition to reviewing the higher education and library literature, we will examine data and comments gathered from a survey aimed at investigating these experiences within academic librarianship. We do this in order to bring the lived experiences of women of color librarians to light and explore how they are reconciling their identities within an academic system that has historically been defined by the majority culture.

Women of Color Faculty: A Literature Review

Over the past decade, discussions of the unique challenges facing both women and faculty of color in academia have increasingly garnered attention. The recently published book *Written/Unwritten: Diversity and the Hidden Truths of Tenure* documents the discrimination and cultural barriers that directly affect faculty of color on the tenure track.[11] Inspired by her own experience being denied tenure (later overturned by appeal), Patricia Matthew and her fellow contributors offer numerous examples that speak to the burden of care and cultural taxation facing faculty of color (in particular, women of color faculty). These hurdles range from the demands of taking on extra service-oriented tasks to the penalties they face in their time, emotional well-being, and tenure reviews by doing so. Joanne Cooper and Dannelle Stevens' similar volume, *Tenure in the Sacred Grove: Issues and Strategies for Women and Minority Faculty*, also echoes these concerns, including the problematic and limited view of what traditionally counts as tenure-granting work and the bargains that women of color make in order to succeed professionally in the eyes of their white male colleagues.[12] Likewise, in *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia*, Gutiérrez y Muhs et

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11. Patricia Matthew, ed., *Written/Unwritten: Diversity and the Hidden Truths of Tenure* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

12. Joanne E. Cooper and Dannelle D. Stevens, eds., *Tenure in the Sacred Grove: Issues and Strategies for Women and Minority Faculty* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002).

al. further emphasize the structural issues and problematic biases within academia that disproportionately hinder the advancement of women of color.[13] These personal stories are not merely anecdotal; rather they are emblematic of the systemic inequities within higher education and its tenure processes. Indeed, academia has seen a number of highly publicized controversies regarding the denial of tenure to faculty of color, raising, or strengthening, the institutions' supposed commitment to diversity and inclusion.[14] What these works and other similar literature suggest is that women of color faculty are uniquely positioned at the intersection of racism and sexism on their campuses—that is, doubly subject to discriminatory practices.

A common trend in the literature notes how women of color often feel pressured to contribute to service beyond what is required, both as a result of the gendered expectations to undertake such "motherwork" (i.e., burden of care), as well as the personal, political, and emotional duty to support the marginalized communities that are turning to them in greater numbers on their campuses (i.e., cultural taxation).[15] These service obligations sometimes provide a meaningful outlet for women of color to build deep, valued relationships with the communities they are serving. However, the value of such caregiving work is often not recognized by tenure review committees, which have historically been

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13. Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs, et al., eds., *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia* (Boulder, CO: Colorado State University Press, 2012).

14. Colleen Flaherty, "Campus Unrest Follows Tenure Denial of Innovative, Popular Faculty Member of Color," *Inside Higher Ed*, May 17, 2016, accessed December 21, 2016, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/05/17/campus-unrest-follows-tenure-denial-innovative-popular-faculty-member-color; Colleen Flaherty, "American U Scholar Says Provost Cherry-Picked Negative Ratings of Her Teaching to Deny Her a Promotion," *Inside Higher Ed*, June 29, 2017, accessed July 5, 2017, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/06/29/american-u-scholar-says-provost-cherry-picked-negative-student-ratings-her-teaching; Kari Lydersen and Rachel Cromidas, "Questions of Racial Discrimination on Tenure Unsettle DePaul," *New York Times*, December 23, 2010, accessed December 21, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/24/us/24cncdepaul.html.

15. Kimberly A. Griffin, Jessica C. Bennett, and Jessica Harris, "Marginalizing Merit? Gender Differences in Black Faculty D/discourses on Tenure, Advancement, and Professional Success," *Review of Higher Education* 36, no. 4 (Summer 2013): 503.

governed by the majority white, male culture's view of what qualifies as quality, tenure-earning work (i.e., traditional research output). For instance, race-, gender-, and other culture-related scholarship are considered less "traditionally academic," and their applied and community-based research methods are often discredited, ignored, or viewed as inappropriate.[16] In addition to their research, women of color faculty are often judged more harshly due to gender- and race-based stereotypes about their abilities.[17]

Numerous other studies also note the predicament that many women of color face in negotiating parts of their identities, such as self-silencing, struggling to "fit in" with the dominant culture, and often losing a part of themselves in order to survive professionally. In addition to being tokenized, these negotiations create additional hardships for faculty who are already more vulnerable to isolation and marginalization on their predominantly white campuses.[18]

Historic systems of inequality also manifest within the academic library profession. As a historically feminized profession, academic librarians function in a unique place that "[straddles] both academic and nonacademic work"[19] within their institutions. Yet, despite the wide variety of titles and responsibilities they possess, the popular image of librarians focuses on their expected role as "care workers" or waged domestic laborers.[20] This problematic view renders invisible the

16. Linda S. Behar-Horenstein, et al., "Resilience Post Tenure: The Experience of an African American Woman in a PWI," *Florida Journal of Educational Administration & Policy* 5, no. 2 (Spring 2012): 71; Tammy Boyd, Rosa Cintrón, and Mia Alexander-Snow, "The Experience of Being a Junior Minority Female Faculty Member," *Forum on Public Policy* 2 (2010): 5; Cooper and Stevens, eds. *Tenure in the Sacred Grove*, 4, 6-7, 37; Griffin, Bennett, and Harris, "Marginalizing Merit," 492.

17. Behar-Horenstein, et al., "Resilience Post Tenure," 69; Boyd, Cintrón, and Alexander-Snow, "The Experience of Being a Junior Minority Female Faculty Member," 4; Griffin, Bennett, and Harris, "Marginalizing Merit," 491.

18. Behar-Horenstein, et al., "Resilience Post Tenure," 69; Boyd, Cintrón, and Alexander-Snow, "The Experience of Being a Junior Minority Female Faculty Member," 4.

19. Sloniowski, "Affective Labor, Resistance, and the Academic Librarian," 659.

20. Sloniowski, "Affective Labor, Resistance, and the Academic Librarian," 659-660.

intellectual contributions librarians make in the academy, potentially hindering their ability to earn tenure.

This inequity of expectations also extends beyond university campuses and into the home. For instance, some women faculty librarians struggle to balance their family responsibilities with the demands of tenure, especially given the social assumption that they take on the majority of familial obligations.[21] Academic librarians of color have similarly expressed the challenges of being increasingly expected to serve on diversity committees, as liaisons to cultural groups and units outside of their libraries, and as their libraries' "diversity specialist" for the spectrum of identities across all underrepresented populations.[22]

Still others note the systemic microaggressions affecting librarians of color, such as having their intelligence or ability questioned, overextending themselves in order to disprove cultural stereotypes, and being held to biased performance standards established by white, male norms.[23] Meanwhile, the systems that both perpetuate and diminish the work of women of color librarians also reward those of the majority culture, who are allowed the time to focus on research or other projects that are generally held in higher regard. In other words, the imbalanced service workloads and the devaluation of the burdens and taxations facing women of color librarians ultimately create an inequitable environment that hinders their work-life balance as well as their prospects for earning tenure and professional esteem.

21. Quinn Galbraith, Leanna Fry, and Melissa Garrison, "The Impact of Faculty Status and Gender on Employee Well-being in Academic Libraries," *College & Research Libraries* 77, no. 1 (January 2016): 73, 82, accessed December 21, 2016, https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.77.1.71.

22. Ione T. Damasco and Dracine Hodges, "Tenure and Promotion Experience of Academic Librarians of Color," *College & Research Libraries* 73, no. 3 (May 2012): 298, accessed December 21, 2016, https://doi.org/10.5860/crl-244.

23. Jaena Alabi, "'This Actually Happened': An Analysis of Librarians' Responses to a Survey about Racial Microaggressions," *Journal of Library Administration* 55 (2015): 181-182, 189.

Methodology

While prior studies have described the struggles of both women faculty and faculty of color, we noticed a lack of actual narratives from women of color librarians about their own experiences. We recognized a need to uncover these stories in order to amplify their lived experiences and draw attention to their significant implications. To begin this process, we designed an online questionnaire aimed at capturing how identifying as a woman of color can shape the types of responsibilities and services they assume, and the impact this may have on their overall career advancement.

After scanning the literature to identify topics to further explore, we created a series of questions organized by themes. For example, we asked participants to reflect on their general experiences navigating the tenure/promotion process, including the clarity of its requirements, the support systems in place, and the pressure to adjust various aspects of their portfolios to achieve tenure or promotion. We expanded this line of inquiry by further examining the burden of care and cultural taxation of service activities these librarians shouldered as a result of their race and/or gender identity. In another section, we queried participants on other issues related to identity and inclusion, particularly as they relate to support and professional advancement. These included questions regarding the climate of their work environments, the negotiation of their identities to conform to expectations, and the experience or observance of unjust practices due to race and/or gender identity.

In order to better parse our results, we gathered demographic data, such as the gender, racial and/or ethnic group with whom participants most identified, their rank and tenure/promotion status, and their number of years in the field. We incorporated multiple choice, Likert scale, and open-ended questions, as well as multiple opportunities for participants to further elaborate on their responses. All questions were voluntary and offered options for participants to self-describe or to withhold whatever personal information they did not wish to share.

Recognizing the need to specifically target women of color librarians, our main mode of distribution was through selected mailing lists, including ALA's ethnic affiliates (e.g., the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association), ACRL Residency Interest Group, ARL Diversity Programs, and Spectrum Scholars listservs. Additional postings were disseminated through selected social media and other online forums, such as those for the alumni of the Minnesota Institute for Early Career Librarians from Traditionally Underrepresented Groups, the ALA Diversity Member Initiative Group, and "we here" (an independently created and burgeoning community of library professionals of color). We sought to recruit women of color who were currently working or had previously worked in tenure- or promotion-track positions.

Findings and Results

We began analyzing our data by excluding responses that were incomplete, as well as those outside of our target demographic. We also broke down the data and examined them at a more granular level (e.g., by race, rank, institution type, etc.) in order to uncover any noticeable trends.

In total, 54 women completed our survey. A slight majority of the respondents (36.7%) identified as Black or African American, followed by Asian (30%), and Hispanic or Latina/Latinx (16.7%). A majority (66%) hailed from doctorate-granting institutions, with the next largest group (15.1%) working at Masters-granting institutions.

Respondents skewed heavily toward early and mid-career librarians, with 74.1% indicating that they had been employed as librarians for less than ten years. 46.3% held the rank of Assistant or Senior Assistant Librarian/Professor, while 22.2% held the rank of Associate, and 20.4% held the rank of full Professor or Librarian. When asked about their experience with the tenure/promotion process, slightly over half (55.6%) indicated that they had never gone through the process. 20.37% had been through the process and received tenure/promotion and another 20.37% indicated that they were eligible for tenure/promotion but had

left their positions before completing the process. Only 3.7% reported that they had been denied tenure/promotion.

Job duties and areas of expertise varied among respondents. Unsurprisingly, most respondents selected two or more areas as part of their main job responsibilities. Reference, instruction, collection development, and subject specialization were the areas cited most often, but scholarly communications, administration, marketing, and assessment also stood out.

It is remarkable that, with the exception of a few questions related to perceptions of the tenure/promotion process, our survey revealed a unified experience across all demographic categories for women of color in librarianship. The following subsections detail just some of these shared burdens, taxations, and overall experiences.

Tenure and Promotion

We began our survey with queries about navigating the tenure/promotion process, internal and external support networks in place, and professional autonomy. As some institutions use different terminology despite similar tenure- and promotion-track processes, we use the word "tenure" to also encompass "permanent status" rankings in order to reduce confusion throughout this chapter. As it is possible to be promoted to a higher rank once tenure is awarded, we felt that this nomenclature would be less confusing. As far as we were able to determine, there are currently no data regarding the number of institutions that award librarians tenure versus other types of permanent status.

The majority of our respondents (68%) felt that the requirements for tenure and promotion were clearly communicated at their institutions; only 19.6% disagreed. While responses were generally positive regarding the clarity of their tenure expectations, many librarians expressed dissatisfaction with the support provided by their libraries. Overall, librarians felt free to pursue their own interests, but felt that they lacked internal support systems at their institutions. One respondent explained,

"I have not felt external pressure to change what I do but I also have not necessarily felt well supported in terms of advising my entire career. It was only after seeking out new mentors for myself that I felt like my support improved. I still feel like support from my supervisory line could be better."

Echoing what we found in the literature regarding what institutions traditionally "count" as tenure-earning scholarship, some librarians spoke of proactively adjusting their research agendas and hedging their bets with regards to diversity-related research. One librarian, despite describing her workplace as "generally supportive," still worried how her research would be received: "I consciously tried to beef up my promotion file with other research [agendae] (e.g., instruction) just in case my diversity work didn't end up being as heavily valued when the time came to put forward my promotion file." One librarian recounted a hair-raising story of being denied promotion due to her diversity-related research; only after stripping her dossier of her diversity work and resubmitting it did she receive promotion. Other librarians spoke about the lack of objectivity in evaluations of reappointment and tenure dossiers. For instance, one librarian described feeling as though she was "judged with a different yardstick than others in my cohort."

Departmental support networks and mentoring were two areas where there were divisions within the data that were only revealed by a more granular examination. While an overall majority (57.6%) of respondents indicated that they needed to seek support networks outside of their institution or library, a closer examination revealed that librarians at the Associate or full Librarian rank were more likely to respond affirmatively. At this rank, 70% of librarians had sought outside support networks compared to 55% of librarians at the Assistant or Senior Assistant level. Similarly, while 48.1% of respondents felt that they had received adequate internal support from their libraries, higher-ranked librarians were evenly split, lower-ranked librarians were more likely (73%) to agree that they had received adequate departmental support during the tenure and promotion process. This could be indicative of institutional policies that tend to be more supportive of newer, untenured faculty.

As a self-identified woman of color who has been, or is on the tenure/promotion track, I feel or have felt:

Pressured to adjust or change other areas of my research/scholarship agenda in order to achieve tenure/promotion.

Pressured to adjust or change my diversity-related research/scholarship agenda in order to achieve tenure/promotion.

Pressured to adjust my teaching activities or approaches in order to achieve tenure/promotion.

I have had to seek support networks outside of my institution or library to help me during the tenure/promotion process.

I have received adequate departmental or other forms of internal support (e.g. personal advising, mentorship, collegial...

I have received adequate institutional support (e.g. resources, professional development funding, etc.) during the...

The requirements for tenure/promotion are weighed and evaluated fairly at my institution.

The requirements for tenure/promotion are clearly communicated at my institution.

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree Nor Disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree
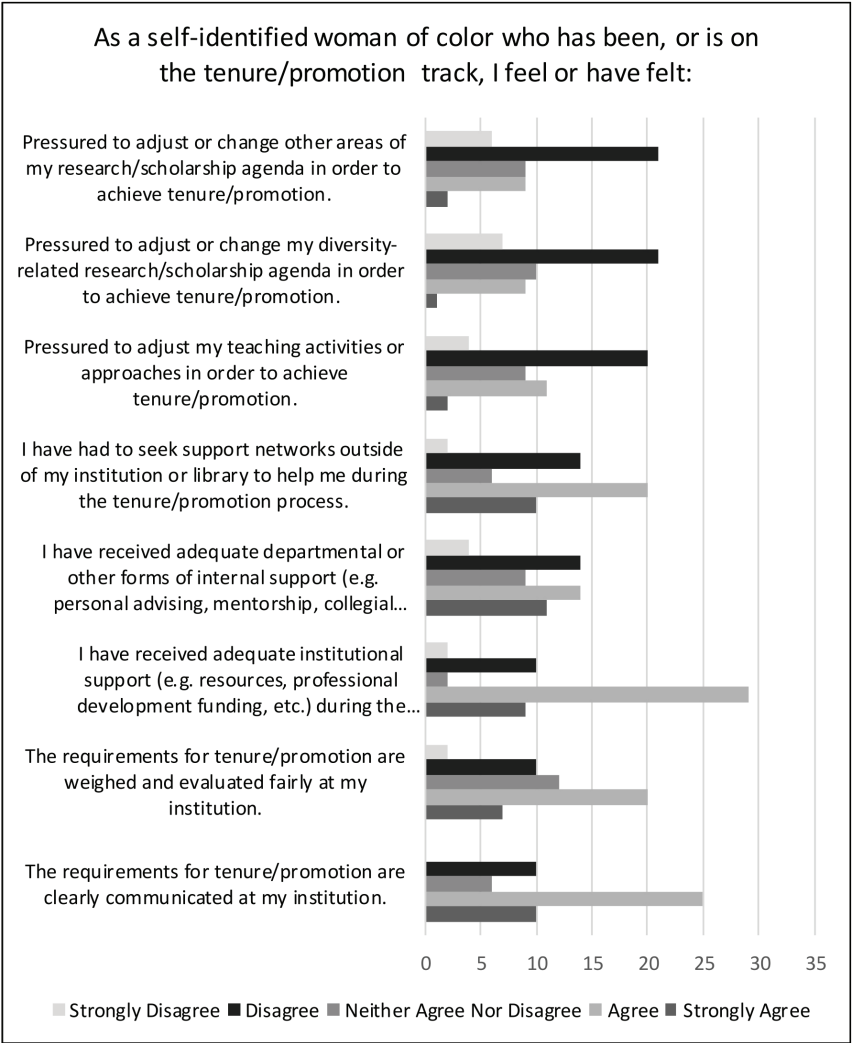
Figure 1. Perceptions of the Tenure and Promotion Process

Service

With regard to burden of care and cultural taxation, our results reflected what we found in the literature. Over half of respondents (56.6%) felt that they took on more service activities because of their racial identity. There were slight differences when respondents were broken down by race. Respondents who identified as Asian were more likely than those who identified as Black or Hispanic to agree or strongly agree that they take on more service work than their colleagues. 66% of Asian respondents agreed, versus 43% of Black respondents and 50% of Hispanic respondents. Responses were nearly inverted when the focus switched to gender identity, which may be due to the overwhelmingly female representation in the library profession. 60.4% of respondents disagreed with the statement that they took on more service activities because of their gender identity. This trend extended beyond their more formal library duties as well, since 52.9% indicated that they were involved in more "unofficial" service activities than colleagues because of their race and/or gender identity.

Some librarians echoed the literature regarding seemingly well-intentioned diversity policies and the burdens that accompany them. One librarian described her experience with the policy at her institution: "I am often the 'diversity' member appointed to committees due to my race and gender so that they can cover all of the bases." However, most librarians stated outright or strongly implied that they considered their heavier service load as part of a self-imposed burden of care, rather than an official duty. Only 35.2% admitted that they felt pressured to take on extra, uncompensated work because of their race and/or gender identity. One respondent elaborated on that, saying:

"I don't necessarily feel pressured to take on other extra work but more so a personal need to do it as a responsibility to our native/diverse students and my native community. I want the library to be involved in the work of our campus's native

student serving programs and know that we wouldn't otherwise participate - so some-
times the only way to support this work is to do it in addition to my 'normal duties.'"

Related to this, nearly two-thirds of respondents (62.3%) replied
that they had been approached by students for help because of their
race and/or gender identity. One librarian expressed her frustration
with what she saw as a burden imposed by a systemic lack of diversity:

"I am at a [predominantly white institution], so any Muslim students or students
from my cultural background seek me out for all sorts of things. So, while I can't
say that I take on more service because my colleagues expect me to, or that I think I
need to in order to be good enough (I don't feel that way), I do take more on because I
know that no one else in my organization will offer the perspective. All my colleagues
are white, except one, and it is so isolating. This whole field is isolating sometimes."

Another librarian put a positive spin on her service: "It's a bit of a
catch-22: I do a lot of diversity work, so I'm asked to do more diversity
work. Intersections of my identity and scholarship and work!"

Work-Life Balance

As noted earlier, the literature establishes that women often take on
a disproportionate share of the emotional and physical labor inside
the home. Guarino and Borden note that women often assume an
imbalanced amount of this labor at work, which has the potential to
disadvantage women when they seek tenure.[24] When surveyed, 56%
of our respondents agreed that they take on additional household and
family responsibilities outside of work. Close to half (48.9%) noted that
they received adequate support from their institution to help manage
their work-life balance.

Slightly less than half (45%) of respondents noted that they did not
feel pressured to reduce service activities because of how such service
might be weighed against other tenure-earning activities. However,

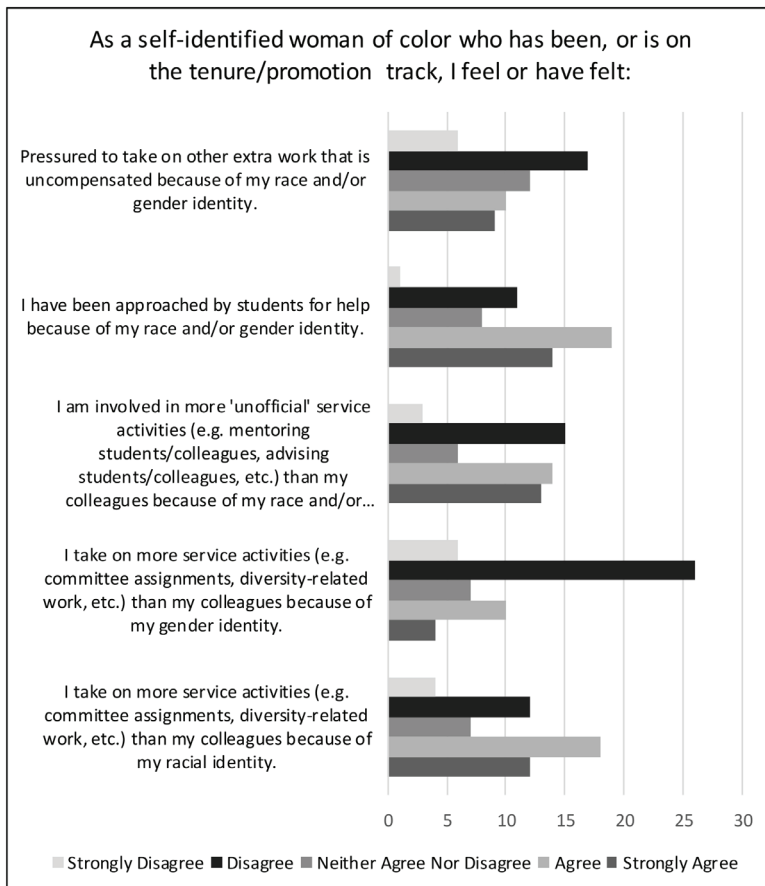24. Guarino and Borden, "Faculty Service Loads and Gender," 690-691.

As a self-identified woman of color who has been, or is on the tenure/promotion track, I feel or have felt:

Pressured to take on other extra work that is uncompensated because of my race and/or gender identity.

I have been approached by students for help because of my race and/or gender identity.

I am involved in more 'unofficial' service activities (e.g. mentoring students/colleagues, advising students/colleagues, etc.) than my colleagues because of my race and/or...

I take on more service activities (e.g. committee assignments, diversity-related work, etc.) than my colleagues because of my gender identity.

I take on more service activities (e.g. committee assignments, diversity-related work, etc.) than my colleagues because of my racial identity.

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree Nor Disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

Figure 2. Perceptions of Service Loads

one quarter (27.5%) agreed with this statement. One librarian spoke of feeling pressured to hedge her bets in order to pursue her interest in diversity-related research: "I feel like I have had to take on a large amount of additional projects just in case my diversity work wouldn't be weighed as heavily. It makes for some really long hours." Respondents were split nearly evenly as to whether they felt pressured to take on extra work beyond their normally scheduled hours, with 41.5% agreeing with this statement and 43.4% disagreeing. Many librarians noted that they voluntarily took on this burden, but their reasons varied. One librarian observed, "I think I am also more involved in diversity related work

As a self-identified woman of color who has been, or is on the tenure/promotion track, I feel or have felt:

Pressured to balance or reduce my service activities because of how they are weighed against my other tenure/promotion-earning activities.

Pressured to take on work that goes beyond my normally scheduled work hours.

I receive adequate support (e.g. childcare/eldercare services, family accommodation policies, flexible hours, etc.) from my institution to help me manage my work-life balance.

I take on additional labors outside of work (e.g. childcare, eldercare, family responsibilities, etc.) because of my race and/or gender identity.

0   5   10   15   20   25   30

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree Nor Disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree
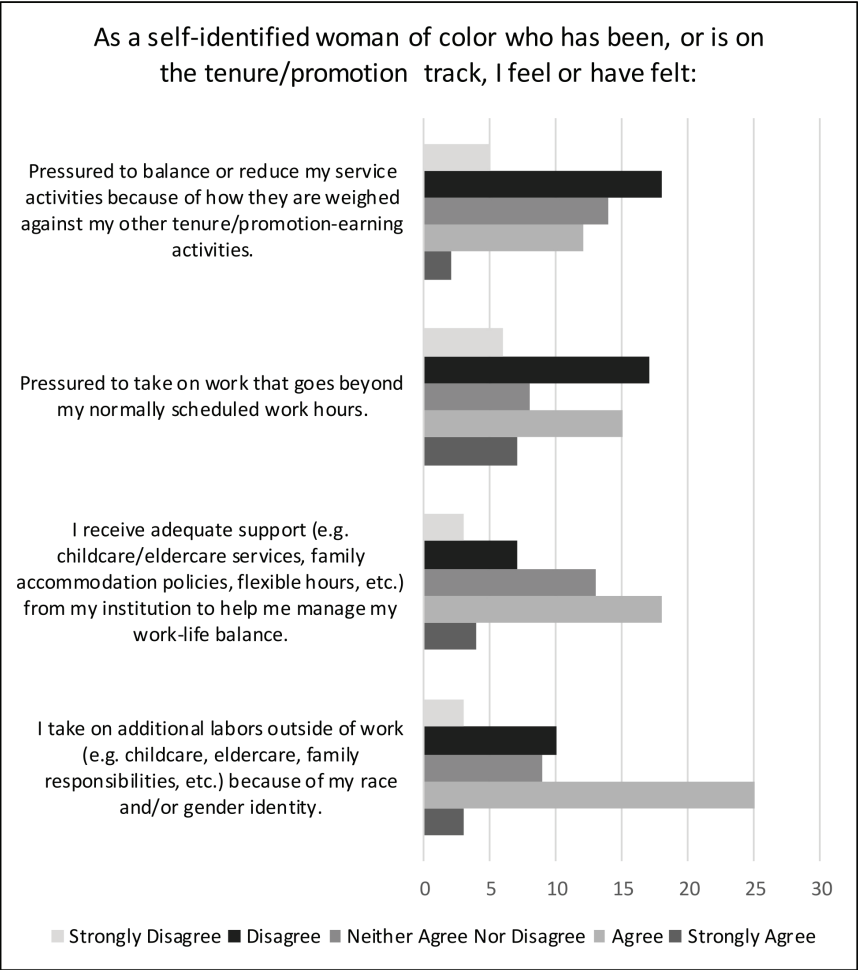
Figure 3: Perceptions of Factors Contributing to Work-Life Balance

because I am more interested in it than others (because it is something I am more aware of as a [woman] of color)."

Several librarians spoke of their experiences with imposter syndrome and how this led them to take on additional burdens or responsibilities in order to prove themselves or disprove stereotypes. One librarian

explained that "as a person of color I always felt like I had to do more than anybody else to prove that Latinxs were as good or better than everyone else. As a total go-getter I never felt pressure from my institution to take on work beyond work hours. I put that pressure on myself."

Some librarians also spoke of the struggle they felt maintaining balance within their predominantly white institutions. In a profession where librarians of color are often isolated, some librarians expressed that they felt as though they could not relax. One librarian put it this way: "I also want to take care of myself and not get fatigued from always expected to be 'on' while away from a support system who share my values. Colleagues assume my needs are the same as theirs or my work style is the same or my commitments are the same."

Institutional Climate

Only 42% of respondents reported being satisfied with the overall climate of their institution, and only 46.3% were satisfied with the overall climate of their library. One consistent theme in the comments was the lack of meaningful institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion. Only 50% of respondents felt that their library valued diversity and inclusion, and a similar percentage (48.2%) felt that it was valued at the institutional level. Several librarians noted that their libraries displayed only a superficial commitment to diversity and inclusion. One librarian described her institution and library as "extremely well-versed at talking about diversity and seeming to support it, but actually on a daily basis promote actions that are diametrically opposed to furthering diversity, equity and inclusion."

Only 39% of respondents agreed that their library actively demonstrated a commitment to being a diverse and inclusive workplace. Several respondents noted that they had to constantly "self-police" to get by. One librarian stated: "I do not feel that my identity will cause problems in promotion. However, it's the work environment that feels uncomfortable. I am often invalidated or interrupted. I work with a lot

As a self-identified woman of color who has been, or is on the tenure/promotion track, I feel or have felt:

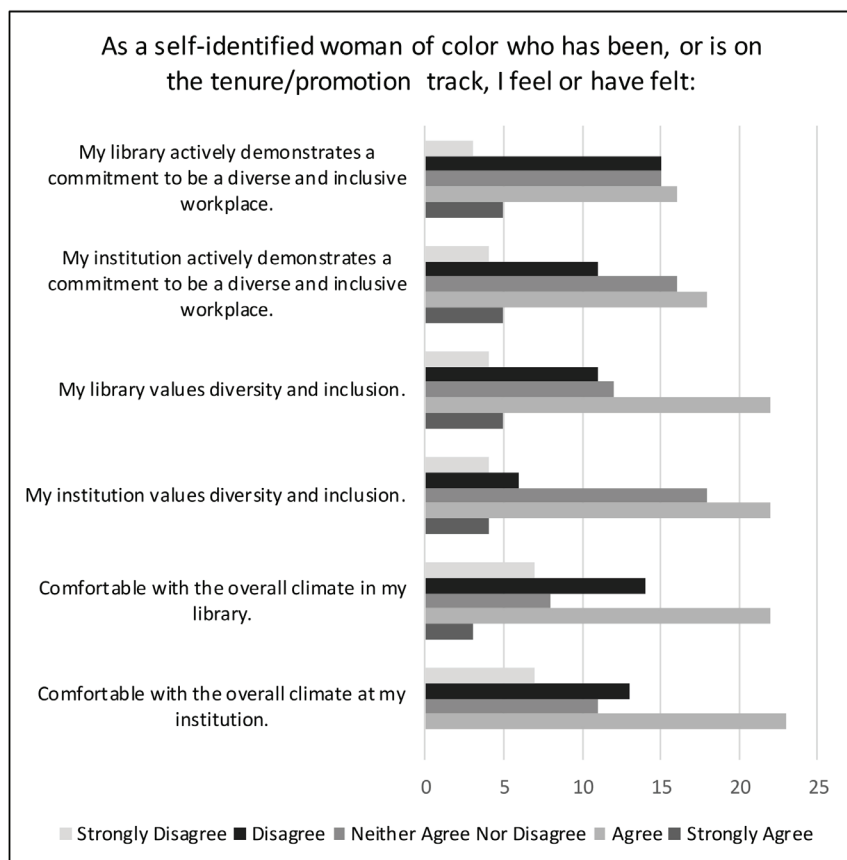Strongly Disagree ▪ Disagree ▪ Neither Agree Nor Disagree ▪ Agree ▪ Strongly Agree

Figure 4: Perception of Institutional and Library Climate

of experienced white women, but I am an emerging Asian American librarian. Everything that comes out of my mouth has been filtered and strategized with a list of back-up remarks to defend myself. I can't just be myself or think out loud EVER."

Many respondents reported incidences of microaggressions, usually typified by "clueless" or "ignorant" comments and implicit biases, rather than overt hostility. One librarian described her colleagues as "well-intentioned," noting that they "struggle with the idea that others'

gender/ethnic experiences do impact work." Another librarian described the impact of working through microaggressions: "I have experienced and observed ignorant comments and assumptions about race that have bothered me and took some emotional labor to address. But they were not hostile in nature, just ignorant." It is also worth mentioning that even in this survey, which explicitly requested respondents who identified as women of color in order to capture their specific experiences, we received a hostile response. One individual began the survey just to note their race as "American." (This respondent's submission was later filtered out of our data because they did not complete the survey.)

Negotiating Identities

Our respondents were evenly split as to whether they had experienced or observed other unjust personnel practices, such as salary inequities and reappointments due to race and/or gender identity. 42.3% agreed with this statement, and 44.2% disagreed. 35.4% noted that they had experienced or observed unjust promotion/tenure or dismissal practices due to race and/or gender identity, while 60.4% noted that they had not. Despite this, many librarians spoke of their struggles navigating their libraries at every level of the organization. One librarian in administration addressed the difficulty negotiating her identity at the management level, noting that "being the only person of color on my organization's senior management team has been a 'tightrope' situation. I have addressed diversity in hiring through my limited autonomy."

Our respondents' comments revealed the complexities and different dimensions of identity, even within their own communities, and the burden this places upon them. Several librarians spoke of experiencing pressure both from within and without while negotiating their identities in the workplace. One librarian noted that she felt pressure from other librarians of color: "I think there is a lot of pressure to give back to the community, and I want to, but I also want to do so when I am not focusing on other things and feel I have more time." Along similar lines, a more senior librarian commented that she had "a hard time

understanding librarians who say they have to wait until they get tenure to become involved in controversial issues that affect communities of color on campus or in the community." While 35.9% agreed that they have had to negotiate parts of their identity in order to conform to expectations in the tenure/promotion process, a higher percentage (45.3%) admitted that they have had to negotiate parts of their identity in order to conform to their work environment.

Microaggressions emerged again and remained a common theme throughout every section of our survey. One respondent described her workplace as "[lacking] empathy and understanding of people of color, even for the students." Another librarian spoke of the direct negation of her identity by colleagues:

"Due to my ambiguous ethnic looks, my colleagues often forget I'm a [person of color] and treat me as another white person. Because of this, I often share in the white privilege that surrounds me, but I find that this situation makes it even harder to speak up when I see behaviors that conflict with their professed commitment to diversity; that and the negation of my identity (e.g., comments like 'you're not really Asian') when I do speak up."

More alarmingly, within this section of the survey, two-thirds of respondents (64.8%) remarked that they had experienced or observed hostility, harassment, exclusions, microaggressions, or other unjust practices at their institution due to race and/or gender identity. Only 20.4% noted that they had not experienced this.

Discussion and Implications

We feel that our data have already begun to uncover the intersectional narratives of women of color librarians on the tenure- and promotion-track, and the unique burdens and cultural taxations they experience. Our next steps include further unpacking these stories by re-interviewing those respondents who voluntarily agreed to be contacted for follow-up and conducting focus groups. We hope to gain more detailed insight
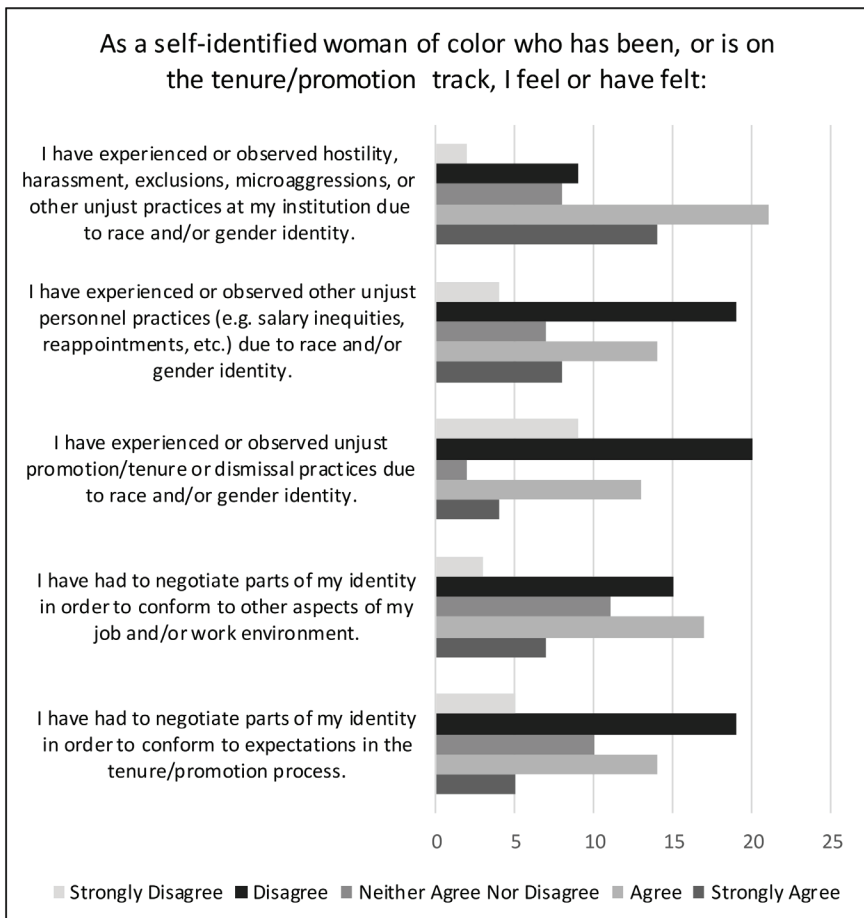
As a self-identified woman of color who has been, or is on the tenure/promotion track, I feel or have felt:

I have experienced or observed hostility, harassment, exclusions, microaggressions, or other unjust practices at my institution due to race and/or gender identity.

I have experienced or observed other unjust personnel practices (e.g. salary inequities, reappointments, etc.) due to race and/or gender identity.

I have experienced or observed unjust promotion/tenure or dismissal practices due to race and/or gender identity.

I have had to negotiate parts of my identity in order to conform to other aspects of my job and/or work environment.

I have had to negotiate parts of my identity in order to conform to expectations in the tenure/promotion process.

0   5   10   15   20   25

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree Nor Disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

Figure 5: Perceptions of Factors Related to Negotiating Identity in the Workplace

into the trends within our data and to clarify other areas, including a few flaws in the survey. For instance, we had not asked for the marital status, age, or parental or elder care obligations of our participants in order to avoid overwhelming them with our opening demographic questions. In retrospect, this would have been useful information. For example, in response to our questions about additional labor outside of work and maintaining a work-life balance, some of our respondents mentioned

that they were single and/or physically distant from family members. Data regarding marital status or other family duties might have shed more light on their responses to our questions.

Our survey clearly showed that the tenure process was not the true issue in the library profession. The majority of librarians in our study felt that their tenure requirements were fairly communicated and applied; however, they also overwhelmingly commented on professional and institutional dynamics that led to situations where external or internal pressures imposed an additional burden upon them. One librarian described her desire to help students of color succeed as an "intense obligation." As another librarian observed, "It's the way of life when one is a minority at an institution. It's tiring at times but we have to start somewhere."

Perhaps one of the most interesting takeaways from our survey was the universality of the results. As previously detailed, there were slight deviations, but our results largely remained consistent, regardless of whether the data were broken down by race, rank, length of time in the profession, or job duties. Thus, we believe our study highlighted many of the structural problems with diversity and inclusion in the library field and higher education. There was a palpable sense of frustration from respondents, and we felt that "burden of care" served as a particularly apt lens through which to view the experiences of women of color. As one librarian summarized, "My library and institution are better than others, but everyone could be doing better, which is painful because they KNOW they could be doing better."

Conclusion

There are still some major questions that remain unanswered—particularly, how can librarians and libraries better advocate for women of color librarians and better sustain them in the field? For women faculty and faculty of color, the literature provides some suggestions: broadly envision the trajectory of their careers, selectively identify the types of service activities that excite them, and opportunistically find ways to

connect service work to their research agenda.[25] Seeking formal and informal mentors—including those outside of one's immediate unit—is also suggested.[26]

However, the onus cannot be solely on these librarians if libraries and institutions are truly committed to retaining diverse women faculty and easing their burden. It is clear from our study that the status quo places a heavy toll on women of color librarians, regardless of whether or not they have experienced explicit harassment, microaggressions, or other such hostilities. Indeed, the causes for these inequities are systemic and embedded, and as such, institutions and libraries must lead the charge to actively advocate for their women of color. Intentional recruitment is one starting point; in particular, those in management and hiring positions need to be proactive about their efforts, not only to recruit women of color (perhaps even taking a more targeted, hands-on approach beyond the traditional search process), but must also make clear to their units that such efforts to diversify their workforce are a priority. Similarly, cohort hires are another method that can potentially provide a valuable peer network and community of practice for incoming faculty.[27] Numerous studies underscore the need for strong mentoring and other socialization programs to encourage ongoing retention and advocacy networks for women of color faculty.[28] Such mentors must also have cultural competency training to better address the unique challenges that women of color faculty face and to act as supportive change agents for them.[29]

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25. Eric Anthony Grollman, "Invisible Labor: Exploitation of Scholars of Color in Academia," *Conditionally Accepted*, December 15, 2015, accessed December 21, 2016, https://conditionallyaccepted.com/2015/12/15/invisible-labor.

26. Behar-Horenstein, et al., "Resilience Post Tenure," 78-79.

27. J. B. Mayo, Jr. and Vichet Chhuon, "Pathways to the Tenure Track: Reflections from Faculty of Color on Their Recruitment to a Research University," *International Journal of Educational Reform* 23, no. 3 (Summer 2014): 233.

28. Boyd, Cintrón, and Alexander-Snow, "The Experience of Being a Junior Minority Female Faculty Member," 19.

29. Behar-Horenstein, et al., "Resilience Post Tenure," 78-79.

Institutions must also be willing to purposefully self-assess in order to address the effectiveness of their policies and procedures in supporting their marginalized faculty. For instance, enhancing support for family leave or specifically allocating time meant for service commitments can better outline the need for and value of such activities.[30] Ultimately, institutions must recognize and champion (both informally and through tenure and promotion reviews) the work and perspectives of these faculty, the new forms of research scholarship they bring to their disciplines, and the meaningful engagement they are building with their increasingly diverse students bodies.[31] Until diversity, inclusion, and anti-racist work become actualized priorities for libraries, not only will women of color librarians continue to shoulder this disproportionate burden, but the institutional inequities that have historically disadvantaged them will continue to severely impede their sense of belonging and ability to advance in the profession.

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30. Boyd, Cintrón, and Alexander-Snow, "The Experience of Being a Junior Minority Female Faculty Member," 19; Guarino and Borden, "Faculty Service Loads and Gender," 19.

31. Damasco and Hodges, "Tenure and Promotion Experience of Academic Librarians of Color," 300; Mayo, Jr. and Chhuon, "Pathways to the Tenure Track," 223.

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