Abstract

Title of Dissertation: NARRATIVES OF FIT: UNDERSTANDING WOMEN FACULTY STORIES OF MAKING SENSE AND FINDING PLACE IN GENDERED ORGANIZATIONS

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"Fit" is used widely in academia to indicate whether someone is admittable, hirable, or tenurable, despite concerns that fit is poorly defined and could serve as a covering term for bias. The small body of literature on faculty fit focuses primarily on the complementary attributes that exist between research institutions and their academic staff, and the role of fit as a predictor of outcomes such as intention to leave, productivity, stress, vitality, and satisfaction. Little is known about differences in fit for women and people of color. The majority of literature in the higher education and business labor sectors does not account for how organizational practices and changes over time shape members' experiences of fit.

This study centers women's experiences of fit at a small liberal arts college by exploring how their sensemaking about themselves and their experiences in the organization have shaped their choices. Employing narrative and institutional ethnography research methods, the organizational experiences of seven tenured women faculty members at a highly selective, private liberal arts college were documented through interviews, observations, and document analysis. A narrative theory of fit as

embedded in time was paired with feminist theories on inequality regimes, standpoint, and intersectionality to guide analysis.

Faculty members' narratives of fit chart how they came to enter the institution, their experiences pre- and post-tenure, and how they accommodated, resisted, and engaged the organization to cultivate a sense of fit. Cross-narrative analysis identified salient institutional events, narratives, and inequality regimes that contributed to faculty narratives of fit. These included the effects of the 2008 recession, the deployment of student evaluations of teaching in the tenure review process, and anticipated changes in leadership and policy at the college.

Overall, fit for faculty emerged as a process of sensemaking influenced by institutional inequality regimes, faculty members' organizational and identity standpoints, and their resulting agentic choices. This study enhances understanding of women's experiences of fit, faculty experience at the liberal arts college, and the role of inequality regimes in higher education organizations. Recommendations for practice focus on mitigating the effects of inequality regimes for pre-tenure faculty.

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by

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

> For those of us in higher education, questions of 'fit' arise on a routine basis, and as we move into a new academic term in a few weeks, raising questions about fit now seems appropriate. We can ask questions such as, 'Does the new hire fit the department?' 'Is she a fit?' 'The fit's not right with him.' 'It's a good fit!' Questions such as these make it sound like we're trying on a new pair of jeans. But we ask the questions nonetheless. This term, though, is difficult to define, especially for new-minted PhDs beginning their first academic appointments. Even for seasoned academic professionals, the understanding of this term can be unclear. The understanding of "fit" seems to be one of those, 'I'll know it when I see it' sort of definitions.'— Billie Hara, Chronicle of Higher Education, 7/27/2011

The issue of "fit" between faculty and their departments pervades conversations regarding the faculty job market, tenure and promotion processes, and stories of why some faculty "make it" and others do not. With a job market flooded with applicants featuring similar qualifications and training experiences, faculty appointments are often filled on the basis of whether committees and departments can see candidates "fitting in" to the research, teaching, and service cultures of their departments and institutions (Rittenberg, 1998). Fit is the sense that individuals or their hiring departments have that

she's "one of us," that he'll be successful in obtaining tenure, that they'll connect with students in the classroom and on thesis committees. These assessments, particularly in the hiring phase, may be described as the result of a "gut check," in which indefinables or intangibles shape decision-making.

Others argue that assessments about fit hide discriminatory practices against under-represented groups, like women and people of color, and ignore the potential intellectual and collegial contributions of those who are different (Kamnik, 2007; Manger, 2008a, 2008b; Simmons, 2011). Those critical of fit and its role in hiring and promotion worry that it perpetuates and hides an "old boys' club" in which women and people of color are not welcome. Given the challenges that these groups face in attaining tenure track positions, tenure, and full professorships, letting fit remain an intangible seems irresponsible. Understanding of fit for faculty, then, needs to move beyond a "know it when I see it" assessment in order to inform faculty candidates, tenure-hopefuls, search committees, and institutions on how best to evaluate, enhance, or accommodate different levels of fit while also achieving institutional goals of diversity and equity.

More importantly, the conversation about fit needs to become more balanced. Both the popular literature, as published in The Chronicle of Higher Education or Inside Higher Ed, and the research literature focus almost entirely on assessing fit from the perspective of institutions, and is embedded in the assumption that individuals must fit completely or perfectly to be successful. We know little about what influences fit for those who have chosen academia as their career path. Even less is known about how fit might be a function of individual identities interacting with the distinctive cultures and power dynamics of particular institutions. To address this gap, this study utilizes a

narrative research approach to explore how women faculty members at a liberal arts institution craft their institutional, departmental, and disciplinary experiences into a sense of "fitting" in the academy.[1]

Women's Experiences in the Academy

Despite recruitment and retention efforts, female faculty members' representation in the academy still presents an uneven trajectory. When looking at the professoriate in aggregate, in 2011, women accounted for 39 percent of all tenured and tenure-track faculty with women of color accounting for 10 percent of all tenured and tenure-track faculty (Curtis, 2014). Women have consistently earned salaries at 80 percent of men's (Curtis, 2011; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). In aggregate, women are also less likely to be tenured, and are likely to spend more of their time on teaching activities (Nettles, Perna, & Bradburn, 2000). However, women's representation varies greatly by institutional type. They are still over-represented in the lower ranks (as assistant professors and lecturers) at research universities, while they reach parity with men, in terms of representation, at all ranks within community colleges (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). At private baccalaureate institutions, women comprise 42 percent of tenured and tenure-track faculty (Curtis, 2014), and their representation across ranks has been fairly consistent as well (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Women account for 52 percent of all part-time faculty, and 50 percent of full-time non tenure-track faculty; in other words, 76 percent of women in faculty appointments are in contingent, non-tenure-line positions (Curtis, 2014). Women of color account for 28 percent of all part-time faculty, and 9 percent of all full-time non-tenure-track faculty; 77 percent of women of color are in

[1] A note about gender in this study. Gendered and racialized organizational affect all members of the academy, including men, and trans and non-binary academics. The scope of this study focuses on woman-

contingent faculty appointments (Curtis, 2014). Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) highlight that women are less likely to move from non-tenure-track positions to positions on the tenure track.

Women's stronger representation at community colleges, liberal arts colleges, and comprehensive institutions, and in non-tenure line positions, can be interpreted many ways. In some ways, these institutions and positions may be providing the kinds of environments and job structures women prefer; on the other hand, these institutional types and appointments are often considered lower prestige, less rigorous, and the kinds of positions people "settle for." Some discussions about these patterns, within and outside the academy, attempt to frame women's representation in lower prestige positions as the result of choices women have been empowered to make, while others contest the "choice" narrative suggesting that women are operating within a set of constrained options (e.g. Golombisky, 2011). Whether women are opting out or being pushed out of the most prestigious faculty appointments, their lack of representation has consequences for the women faculty themselves, their students, and intellectual diversity in the academy. These consequences include fewer women in positions of leadership in the college, fewer visible mentors for women students, and less research oriented to community problems and partnerships (Allan, 2011).

In addition to disparities in women's representation in appointment types, there persists a gendered divide among disciplines. Women's degree attainment, while surpassing men overall at all levels of education, is overrepresented in some disciplines (humanities, social sciences, biological sciences), and underrepresented in others

(computer science, physics, economics, philosophy) (Rosser & Taylor, 2009). These patterns of degree attainment tend to match trends regarding which fields are considered most in demand and paid the highest, with women overrepresented in lower-paying and lower-demand areas. For those fields where women comprise the majority, the "glass escalator" functions to provide men with higher pay and to be offered more leadership and advancement opportunities (Williams, 2013; Wingfield, 2009). The glass escalator functions by making men, who are highly visible within women-dominated fields, more likely to receive promotions, rewards, and higher pay within women's work; or, in other words, their male-ness is rewarded even in fields that might be expected to value women's contributions, and styles of communication (Williams, 2013). The glass escalator does not function for women in men-dominated fields. Instead, tokenism, the phenomenon women or people of color who are the only one or only one of a few are subject to more scrutiny and face additional barriers for promotion and success, comes into play instead (Kanter, 1977).

These issues of representation raise questions regarding why women's advancement remains a phenomenon of "the higher, the fewer" (Allan, 2011, p. 2). Women faculty may find that the academic environment is structured to "fit" a White, masculinized, ideal worker who has a stay-at-home partner to manage the household (Acker, 1990; Cress & Hart, 2009; Winslow, 2010). As studies of work-life balance or the "baby problem" have shown, women are still associated with motherhood, partial or waning commitment to the work place, and having bodies that are marked as different, which can have implications for their options and interactions within the academy (Mason & Goulden, 2004). These associations can undermine women's success in the academy even if they don't have

children, or engage in behaviors identical to men regarding managing family and work commitments (Kelly & Grant, 2012; Schlehofer, 2012; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012).

If being labeled a good fit is a function of matching or successful socialization into the White, masculinized norms of the organization, those faculty who are least associated with those norms (i.e., women or faculty of color) will face greater challenges advancing and being successful in the academy. Disparities in norm-matching become apparent in studies demonstrating women's experiences in the academy as consistently different, and often less fulfilling, than men's. Women faculty report more hostile climates (August & Waltman, 2004; Callister, 2006; Jackson, 2004), higher levels of stress (Cress & Hart, 2009; Hart & Cress, 2008), and lower levels of satisfaction than men in the academic workplace (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Rosser, 2004; Seifert & Umbach, 2008).

Winslow (2010) argues that most research focusing on faculty takes for granted women's free, unconstrained choices on how to spend their time, rather than acknowledging the social or cultural pressures that may exist that they take on certain roles within their institution, department, or outside-of-work lives. Women are expected to fulfill a greater proportion of care-taking roles, articulation work (organizational maintenance tasks), and teaching responsibilities; rejecting these expectations may not be a possible strategy for untenured faculty, creating a lack of freedom how they structure their work (Winslow, 2010). It may be that the dissatisfaction, stress, and different activities that have been captured about women's experiences are the result of constrained choices for women embedded in academic cultures created when the professoriate was largely homogenous dominated by White men (Cress & Hart, 2009). The expectations held of women faculty may build upon gendered norms, rather than

equitable opportunities to engage in professional and academic development. These gendered norms, some suggest, are likely written into the very fabric of organizational life (Acker, 1990, 2006; Sallee, 2012).

While women are not the only group of faculty who face challenges and do not fit the norms of the organization, feminist standpoint theories and intersectionality theory suggest that women's points of view may provide new insights into higher education organizations (Crenshaw, 1991; Naples & Naples, 2003). Standpoint theory suggests that particular social locations within organizations, communities, and societies lend a clarified view of operations of power, normalizing assumptions, and barriers to access (Naples & Naples, 2003). These positions, or standpoints, are created by taking the view from those individuals, rather than the objective view from nowhere that pervades organizational science (Haraway, 1988). The opposite of the view from nowhere, the view from below allows different perspectives on old problems to emerge that possibly challenge the status quo and typical ways of understanding and addressing problems (Haraway, 1988).

In this study, women's perspectives of their academic institutions contribute a particular view on issues of promotion, tenure, and fit that may not be seen from men's perspectives. Intersectionality theory suggests that interlocking race, class, and gender power structures shape individuals' views and their experiences of the world (Acker, 2006, 2012; McCall, 2005). Viewing the faculty as a composite block of like-individuals ignores the kinds of specific needs, desires, and experiences that might differ across and between groups (Crenshaw, 1991). Diverse women's perspectives, then, will inform how the academy is structured to privilege particular ways of being while simultaneously

alerting us to possible alternatives that are not currently embedded into the cultural norms of the academy.

While many studies do account for the varying pressures on women faculty, few have provided a nuanced view of women faculty lives that accounts for how their organizational experiences may produce different perceptions and senses of fit. This study explores how women's social locations based in gender, race, class and sexuality interact with institutional cultures that prioritize particular gendered and racialized arrangements of priorities for faculty work. Focusing on female faculty members' stories of fit, or the sensemaking they engage in via their positions and experiences within their institutions and departments, provides insight into female faculty lives.

Theoretical Frame: Faculty Fit

The concept of fit is used both theoretically and in everyday practice to describe whether and how particular individuals belong in their given academic environment. Fit functions in two ways. First, organizational experiences drive how faculty members evaluate prospective new hires or tenure candidates; they may deploy a fit assessment to determine which candidate to hire or promote, and this assessment view fit from perspective of the organization. Fit can also by assessed by the individual, in terms of understanding how the self "fits" within the current environment. This study focuses on the latter, while incorporating a sensitivity to institutional messages or practices that might be shaping the former.

Only a handful of studies examine what is colloquially and theoretically called "fit" for faculty (Bogen, 1978; Burns & Kinkade, 2008; Castiglia, 2006; Lindholm, 2003; Lyons & O'Brien, 2006; Narayanan & Sekar, 2009; Olsen, Maple, & Stage, 1995;

Shanafelt et al., 2009). These studies draw on conceptions of fit from organizational and management perspectives, which posit fit as the degree to which organizational and individual characteristics align, particularly along the dimensions of traits, preferences, and orientations (Chatman, 1989; Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006; Kristof, 1996). These theoretical approaches result in an understanding of fit that captures a single moment in time. Critics, such as Jansen and Shipp (2011) and Billsberry and colleagues (2005), argue that these models do not take into account cultural scripts of the organization or larger society, and that they are based on the theorists' *a priori* assumptions about what contributes to fit. In addition, these models allow little room to incorporate individuals' sensemaking in understanding their environments, desires for particular work experiences, and agency within organizations. Kristof-Brown and Billsberry (2013a) suggest that this is only one domain or paradigm of fit, calculated fit; the other domain is perceived fit, and is built upon individuals' interpretations of their organizational lives.

One significant contribution from models of calculated fit is that fit operates at multiple levels between the individual and levels or portions of the organization. These include person-organization fit, person-group fit, person-vocation fit, and person-job fit (Kristof, 1996). These varying levels of the environment introduce complexity to the models of fit presented above. Given the nature of academic employment, it is clear that different kinds of fit may matter for faculty. Faculty members may have strong vocational fit regarding the intellectual pursuit, may have group fit within departments or even disciplinary associations, and may or may not have organizational fit within their institutions. In fact, the degrees of fit that an individual faculty member experiences may determine whether her strongest affiliations are at the local level (department and

institution), at the cosmopolitan level (within the discipline), or as a hybrid of these orientations (Gouldner, 1957, 1958; Rhoades, Kiyama, McCormick, & Quiroz, 2008). These different kinds of fit have rarely been distinguished in the studies of fit about faculty performed so far, yet it is apparent they are relevant to understanding faculty fit.

Existing studies of fit for faculty are limited, and deploy different definitions and levels of analysis. Some studies of fit for faculty do not define what it means or offer a conceptual model for fit (e.g., Burns & Kinkade, 2008; Shanafelt et al., 2009). Others rely heavily on models that produce inconsistent results (e.g., Castiglia, 2006; Lyons & O'Brien, 2006). Contradictory findings and lack of theorizing about the concept in higher education suggest that how fit has traditionally been deployed has not adequately captured what matters for faculty work or the context in which it is performed. The literature has not yet answered the question, “What matters for faculty fit?”

Lindholm (2003) has advanced the most thorough study of fit for university faculty. Using interview methods, she explores how both men and women faculty members understood their experiences of organizational fit. Adapting formal organizational theories that posit fit as a function of similarities and complentarities between individuals and their organizations, Lindholm (2003) focuses on how individuals assess their fit in order to connect this with a sense of vitality— faculty members’ productivity, connection to the institution, and engagement with academia. Lindholm’s study also highlights the challenges for faculty at a large research university in identifying with the institution, and even their departments. However, the complexity of the institution hinders a clear translation of complementarity, similarity, or even understanding of shared values from the organization, or a large department, to the individual and their “fitting." This raises

the question of whether fit can be studied at the organizational level for universities, and prompted, in part, the selection of a liberal arts college as the site of this study, both for the smaller size and the distinctive culture of these institutions.

Lindholm's and other studies conceptualize fit as the mechanism which produced some other outcome, including satisfaction, intent to leave, or burnout (Bogen, 1978; Burns & Kinkade, 2008; Castiglia, 2006; Lindholm, 2003; Lyons & O'Brien, 2006; Narayanan & Sekar, 2009; Olsen et al., 1995; Shanafelt et al., 2009). These studies have contributed to an understanding of faculty work and provided guidance for how this study was designed and executed. The uneven application of theory and the adoption of management perspectives that may not adequately account for the nature of faculty work has resulted in faculty fit remaining poorly understood. Evidence persists that faculty are deeply committed to and satisfied with their work as faculty, which suggests that models based on work roles within other industries may not be sufficient (Kaminski & Geisler, 2012; Rosser, 2004).

The faculty role, which is built upon years of training, socialization, and commitment prior to attaining the role, has been shown to be appealing to faculty members despite dissatisfaction (Austin, Sorcinelli, & McDaniels, 2007; Olsen et al., 1995; Trower, 2010; Trower & Chait, 2002). For example, Castiglia's (2006) participants suggested that their satisfaction with their jobs as faculty was high, despite unhappiness with their institution's changing culture, and a poor fit with the institution's culture. In the parlance of calculated models of person-environment fit, faculty have high levels of person-vocation fit that carries them through these situations (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006). The seeming contradiction between commitment to faculty work as a vocation and

dissatisfaction with particular work environments suggests that faculty may accommodate less than ideal conditions in order to pursue their chosen profession (Ryan, Healy, & Sullivan, 2012). Faculty may also be able to find "fit" in multiple places, suggesting that there is agency or self-determination in the process of determining fit. This study assumes that fit does not happen to faculty; rather they craft a sense of fit in response to and in conjunction with the organizational cultures, demands, priorities, and values they encounter. This suggests that understanding what matters to faculty in assessing fit is important.

An emerging area of fit studies, perceived fit, takes an interpretivist approach based in individuals' experiences of fit (Billsberry et al., 2005; Kristof-Brown & Billsberry, 2013a). These interpretivist approaches are more concerned with the meaning that organizational participants make of their experience than the degree of congruence or similarity between organization and individual (Billsberry et al., 2005; Kristof-Brown & Billsberry, 2013a; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Extending this idea of interpretive fit, a narrative conception of fit suggests that this meaning making incorporates a sense of fit from the past, present, and an anticipated future (Shipp & Jansen, 2011). Particularly, Shipp and Jansen's theory focuses on individuals as *in medias res,* or in the middle of things, capturing how changes in individuals and organizations affect the relationship between them. Narrative can be understood, in part, as the result of sensemaking processes, in which individuals extract clues about their organization and use those clues to inform their identity within the organization and decide how to do what comes next (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005).

An interpretivist conception of fit also prompts attention towards how individuals are making sense of the organizations in which they are embedded. This study assumes that organizational cultures are not neutral. Post-structuralist and critical approaches view organizational culture as the embodiment of the values of those in power, and that those cultures serve as constraints on what is possible within the organization (Alvesson, 2002; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). These constraints can come in the form of tenure and evaluation priorities on teaching, research, and service activities, resistance to women's likelihood to take less traditional approaches to teaching and research, and unfriendly policies towards those who are not willing to work like the masculinized "ideal worker" (Acker, 1999, 2006; Alvesson & Billing, 2009; Hart & Cress, 2008).

Since culture is typically set by those who came before and changed by newcomers, it may raise the question of why some elements of culture do not get changed as organizational participants demand new things. However, Alvesson (2002) argues there is the possibility that culture serves as "world-closure" that prevents organizational members from envisioning an alternative vision of what the organization is, does, and should do. This world-closing occurs through power — as both enacted in interactions and as embedded in the structures of the institutions. In terms of faculty work on a liberal arts campus, this may be as simple as an expectation that faculty be on campus after hours to support students' out-of-class activities, a cultural assumption that precludes the possibility that faculty may have family responsibilities, need to work a part-time job, or may be introverts who need to time to recharge before teaching the next day. Faculty who feel they cannot meet this expectation may feel that their chances of tenure are reduced, or that they are not considered fully-vested members of the community. They may not

feel it is an option to “opt-out” and other faculty may not accept their questioning of this tradition.

The world-closing nature of an organizational culture may also come in the form of prescribed gendered, racialized, and classed hierarchies within the institution. The theory of inequality regimes suggests that that organizations are made up of processes that order life through patterns of and distinctions between gender, race, and class (Acker, 2006). Gender, race and class are neither neutral nor an after-effect; the privileging of masculinity, Whiteness, and the upper-middle class are fundamental to defining what is advantaged and disadvantaged in processes, dynamics of exploitation and control, frames for action and emotion, and definitions of meaning and identity within an organization (Acker, 1990, 2006). Therefore, this study examines how gendered and racialized inequality regimes—the norms, practices, policies, symbols, hierarchies, and patterns of interaction that preference masculine ideals within departments and institutions — may be contributing to faculty women’s perceptions and experiences of fit (Acker, 1990, 2006).

Considering fit as a narrative also provides space to incorporate the discursive narratives that may be at play in work contexts (Shipp & Jansen, 2011). These narratives include organizational myths about tenure horror stories, guidelines about what to include in a tenure file, stories about “great men” or “great women” who have been the college ideal, and departmental politics. Understanding of fit derived from these sources become an ideal used regularly by faculty to understand and make decisions about how they and others belong within particular organizational, departmental, and programmatic units (Rittenberg, 1998). Therefore, individuals craft their understanding of what fit means in

their academic contexts in conjunction with departmental and institutional stories about who has and has not fit here in the past, present, and future.

As discussed above, a majority of studies of fit focus on the outcomes affiliated with faculty life as a result of fit. These outcomes tend to be goods generated for the organization: productivity, satisfaction, intent to leave, and so forth (Bogen, 1978; Burns & Kinkade, 2008; Castiglia, 2006; Lindholm, 2003; Lyons & O'Brien, 2006; Narayanan & Sekar, 2009; Olsen et al., 1995; Shanafelt et al., 2009). Jansen and Kristof-Brown (2006) identify work attitudes (including satisfaction and commitment), intent to leave, stress, pro-social behavior, and work performance as individual-level outcomes of fit, a perspective adopted by a majority of fit studies about faculty. These individual-level outcomes are typically discussed in terms of the benefits that accrue to the organization as a result of employees' attitudes and behaviors. These are rarely viewed in terms of the benefits that accrue to participants, particularly how these help them meet their own goals and values. How these processes carry meaning for employees and how these perceptions of fit come to be formed, however, is relatively unknown. Taking this approach enhances both an understanding of how fit affects attitudes and behaviors (Kristof-Brown & Billsberry, 2013a) and the importance for employees as individuals with lives more complex than that of their job roles. The saliency of fitting or mis-fitting may vary by individual, and its benefits to the employee and the organization in and of itself are unknown.

Taking into account existing perspectives on fit, the importance of culture, and standpoints, a new definition of fit is advanced in this study. Drawing heavily from Shipp and Jansen's (2011) theory of narrative fit, Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfield's (2005)

discussion of sensemaking, and critical views of organizational culture (Alvesson, 2002; Alvesson & Billing, 2009), this definition of fit moves away from the calculated to the interpretive. Fit is defined as an individual's process of sensemaking about her place in an organization, as produced through interactions within and with the organization over time. This definition of fit accounts for changes in individuals and organizations over time, evaluates organizational discourses of power/knowledge, and incorporates individual subjectivities as located in interstices of power and privilege.

Liberal Arts Context

In order to appropriately situate women's narration and sensemaking about their fit, attention must be paid to the organizational cultures in which they are operating. This includes focus on the general environment in which higher education is operating, as well as the specific context in which the study is situated: a liberal arts college. The multitude of sub-cultures within large research universities, paired commonly with a more individualistic, research-oriented culture, may have reduced the ability to identify the dynamics of fit in many studies situated at research universities (Lindholm, 2003; Ryan et al., 2012). In contrast to liberal arts colleges, research universities are large, complex organizations with diverse interests, goals, and agendas that may affect faculty experience; in addition, research universities may not have strong collegial or collegiate cultures, reducing the likelihood of similar experiences across the institution. Liberal arts colleges, on the other hand, often have fewer departments, less hierarchy, and more cohesive cultures focused on undergraduate learning. This difference makes the liberal arts college an ideal location to investigate potential organizational dynamics of fit. In addition, the majority of published studies on faculty in the twenty-first century have

focused heavily on research institutions. The majority of studies focused on liberal arts faculty are decades old (i. e. Bonvillian & Murphy, 1996; Breneman, 1990; Dubrow, 1992; Friedrich & Michalak Jr, 1983; Hartley & Robinson, 2001; Hersh, 1999; Michalak & Friedrich, 1981; Neal, 1990, 1991; Nelson, 1994; Quinn, 1994; Splete, Austin, & Rice, 1987; St. John, 1991; Stark & Morstain, 1978; Wylie, 1986). Given the broad changes to faculty work life that are addressed below, this is a significant gap in our understanding about the current experience of liberal arts faculty, and the women working there. Although liberal arts colleges have been generally considered friendlier environments for women (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006), understanding the specifics of faculty work at liberal arts colleges is imperative to advancing knowledge about women faculty at those institutions, and to making better policies that support women faculty.

The nature of faculty work at all types of higher education institutions is changing in response to increasing economic and accountability pressures. This has produced a change in the hiring, appointment, and promotion landscape. As such, institutions are moving increasingly towards contingent, fixed-term appointments for faculty in order to create more limber institutions able to respond to shifting demands and priorities (Cross & Goldenberg, 2009). Many institutions also prefer scholars who will contribute significantly to an institution's research cache through publication in prestigious journals or presses, bringing in large grants, or engaging in technology transfer; in sum, these characteristics lean towards a professoriate that seemingly matches a single model of the ideal professor (O'Meara, 2007). While there are certainly institutions hiring with other criteria in mind, the attendant pressures on institutions to generate their own revenue, attract competitive students, and contribute to the "knowledge society" may be creating a

new set of standards for university and college faculty that diminish valuable kinds of diversity among who is hired and promoted (Rhoads & Slaughter, 1997). These pressures may also reduce the diversity of purpose, structure, and reward systems of different institutional types, changing the experience for faculty members at institutions that typically had not focused on research (Gardner, 2013; O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011).

Liberal arts colleges have been required to defend their model in the face of the increasing costs of the residential education model, their high reliance on enrollment for fiscal stability, the increasing focus on preparing students for careers and the job market, and new competition from the online and for-profit sectors (Baker, Baldwin, & Makker, 2012). Liberal arts colleges are responding to these pressures by playing the prestige game (Volkwein & Sweitzer, 2006), by continuing research development at the elites (Michalak & Friedrich, 1981), and by diversifying their activities to attract tuition and other revenue sources (Brewer, 2010; Kraatz, Ventresca, & Deng, 2010). They engage these strategies while attempting to maintain what makes them uniquely different from public comprehensives, community colleges, and universities: a focus on undergraduate, liberal education (Baker et al., 2012).

The pressures on and expectations of faculty at liberal arts colleges are different than those at research universities, particularly as liberal arts institutions' central value is oriented towards undergraduate education and development (Baker et al., 2012). For new faculty, these values may be in contradiction to the messages about faculty life that most doctoral students receive at the research universities where they are trained (Austin, 2002a; Austin & McDaniels, 2006). Often privileging teaching over research, faculty applying to positions at liberal arts colleges may either have previous experience with the

institutional type, or have romantic or uninformed perceptions about the work environment and expectations (Baker et al., 2012; Bodenhorn, 1997; Gaff, 2002; Marston & Brunetti, 2009; Michalak & Friedrich, 1981; Pascarella, Cruce, Wolniak, & Blaich, 2004; Ruscio, 1987). These institutions are significantly smaller than research universities, often have smaller departments, and require more institution-level interaction, commitment, and engagement (Chopp, Frost, & Weiss, 2014). Liberal arts institutions, for example, place high demands on faculty for face time (interaction with students and other faculty) as well as contributing to a sense of community and the development of students out of the classroom (Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006). Additionally, these institutions may have particularly rich cultures that place strong emphasis on tradition and ritual that saturate the faculty experience in significant ways, including high touch student experiences and high expectations for scholarship (Ruscio, 1987). These institutions may expect faculty to engage students outside the classroom, to develop meaningful mentoring relationships with undergraduate students, and to help create a collegiate atmosphere (Baker et al., 2012; Bodenhorn, 1997; Chopp et al., 2014).

The social, economic, and political forces affecting liberal arts colleges may have an effect on the faculty culture of liberal arts colleges, and may affect women's experiences at these institutions. Since women's representation at the full and associate level are higher by percentage at liberal arts colleges than at other institutional types (Curtis, 2014), there is some indication that the faculty culture of the liberal arts college is working to support some women faculty as they advance through tenure and promotion. Faculty experience studies, including those focused on gender, have overwhelmingly focused on professors at research institutions, or have studied faculty in aggregate,

making it difficult to ascertain if women at liberal arts colleges feel differently about their positions than those at other institutional types. As Wolf-Wendel and Ward (2006) note, the literature focusing on faculty life at institutional types other than research universities is sparse, and rarely focuses on issues of gender or race, suggesting that an attention on this institutional type would fill an important gap. This constellation of cultural legacies, current challenges, and women's long-standing significant representation at this institutional type position a liberal arts college as a compelling environment in which to embed a study about women faculty.

Research Design

Utilizing narrative research approaches, I advance an understanding of faculty "fit" that a) takes into account changes in individuals and organizations over time, b) evaluates higher education institutions as gendered and racialized organizations, and c) incorporates individual subjectivities as located in interstices of power and privilege. This study explores how women faculty members at a liberal arts institution craft their institutional, departmental, and disciplinary experiences into a sense of "fitting" in the academy. I also examine how women faculty accommodate, resist, and create their own ways of "fitting" in the academy. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What are women faculty's narratives of fitting and mis-fitting?
2. How do women construct these narratives in relation to their disciplinary, institutional, and departmental experiences in an organization with gendered and racialized inequality regimes?
3. What disciplinary, institutional, and departmental discourses are reflected in these narratives?

4. In what ways do women's narratives reflect choices and pursuit of action or inaction that develops or maintains a sense of fit?

In order to situate my study within a distinct organizational culture that might expose differentiated levels of "fit" from participants, I focused on the early career experiences of tenured faculty women within a single residential liberal arts college. The cultural elements of the organization were explored using methods drawn from institutional ethnography, a feminist perspective that examines how the practices of organizations shape the experience of people's everyday lives (Smith, 2005). Engaging with both large (the big life story) and small (the momentary stories dependent on situations) narratives (Georgakopoulou, 2006), I combined in-depth narrative interviewing with seven participants, observations of those participants in varied work settings, document analysis of participants' tenure dossier personal statements, and communications from and about the institution.

Significance

Women faculty and faculty of color still face what some call a plexiglass ceiling or glass obstacle course (De Welde & Laursen, 2011), wherein they are recruited heavily but then depart the institution prior to tenure review due to lack of support, miscommunication about benchmarks for tenure, cultural taxation, or other stressors (Allan, 2011; Ryu, 2008; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). In addition to failing to meet stated goals of diversity and inclusion, institutions are wasting precious resources on recruiting faculty they do not promote. These costs include direct costs for recruitment, application, and interview processes; orientation, training, and start-up packages; severance and benefits; and indirect costs to productivity, morale, and student retention

(Betts & Sikorski, 2008). Therefore, it is important to understand how women faculty make sense of their experiences in their institutions to uncover the dynamics in the faculty workplace that contribute to decreased levels of satisfaction (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Rosser, 2004; Seifert & Umbach, 2008), greater intention to leave their institutions (Callister, 2006), more stress (Cress & Hart, 2009; Hart & Cress, 2008), and hostile workplaces (August & Waltman, 2004; Callister, 2006; Jackson, 2004).

Emphasizing the challenges facing the creation of an equitable faculty job environment, this study is concerned with the organizational dynamics that create barriers. A given faculty member's process of negotiating the academy is shaped by culture, individual desire and agency, as well as their individual standpoint. Having women faculty members share stories about salient, meaningful, or typical experiences that were most important in shaping their sensemaking about their institution allowed hidden challenges and unnoticed "helpmeets" to emerge.

This work advances the study of faculty fit to examine the interplay of institutional culture, policy, perceptions, and understandings of self that contribute to a sense of fit. This study focuses on fit as the concept of interest, exploring what contributes to the process of fitting. The study identifies features of the faculty experience at a liberal arts college that play the most significant roles in determining fit, helping future researchers to appropriately shape their own studies of faculty experiences.

Reframing faculty experience into narratives of fit shaped by inequality regimes should help scholars and institutional leaders identify broader parameters for discussing variation in faculty life. The faculty in this study enact multiple approaches to their careers, despite the cohesive culture of their institutional environment. For some, there

was a productive alignment with the expectations of the institution and their own values and priorities. Others found way to incorporate what they valued most, such as community service learning, into their experiences. Faculty also found themselves hitting up against constraining norms that caused personal and professional challenges.

In addition, this study adds understanding of faculty life as structured by a set of inequality regimes— offering insights for administrators and academic leaders to examine processes and policies surrounding tenure, work-life and work-family balance and integration, representation in leadership, and the ratcheting of faculty expectations in response to institutional striving (O'Meara, 2007; Zemsky & Massy, 1990). Some policies and practices are reinforcing gendered ideals, such as the use of biased student evaluations of teaching (Chesler & Young Jr, 2007; Ford, 2011; Pittman, 2010; Smith & Johnson-Bailey, 2012). Informal interactions on campus may make conditions hostile for women faculty of color (Gregory, 2001; Harley, 2007; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2011; Oliva, Rodríguez, Alanís, & Cerecer, 2013). Other practices may be increasing the alignment between some women faculty's desire to focus on teaching and mentoring relationships with students by rewarding those activities (Kim, Twombly, & Wolf-Wendel, 2008; O'Meara, 2011; Wolf-Wendel, Ward, & Twombly, 2007).

Finally, this study contributes significantly to our understanding of faculty experiences in liberal arts colleges. Research about faculty life at liberal arts colleges strongly populated the literature in the 1980s and 1990s (Bachman, 1968; Bonvillian & Murphy, 1996; Breneman, 1990; Dubrow, 1992; Friedrich & Michalak Jr, 1983; Hartley & Robinson, 2001; Hersh, 1999; Michalak & Friedrich, 1981; e.g., Neal, 1990, 1991; Nelson, 1994; Nicholson & Miljus, 1972; Quinn, 1994; Splete et al., 1987; St. John,

1991; Stark & Morstain, 1978; Wylie, 1986). However, more recent research on faculty has primarily focused on the research university, with a smaller cadre of studies focused on community colleges. Despite the smaller share of students and faculty at liberal arts colleges, these institutions offer a distinctive environment for learning and faculty work that deserve attention — especially as the pressures on institutions and changes in the faculty job market have changed the nature of faculty job searches and interest in particular types of positions (Chopp et al., 2014; Lang, 2000). In addition, given its emphasis on teaching and student engagement, the liberal arts college may provide different outlets for women faculty to fit than research universities.

Overview of Dissertation

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on faculty socialization, including graduate school and early career experiences. I also review literature that provides context for four dominant faculty cultures: the academic profession, the discipline, higher education organizations, and institutional types (Austin, 1990). In order to better understand the nature of women's different experiences, the literature focusing on women faculty outcomes is examined. I also explore evidence in the literature of inequality regimes at work in higher education organizations, as suggested by Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organizations and other work (Acker, 2006). The literature on faculty fit is also examined in depth.

Chapter 3 provides the conceptual model for this study taking into account theories of narrative fit (Shipp & Jansen, 2011), agency (O'Meara & Campbell, 2011; O'Meara, Terosky, & Neumann, 2008), narrative identity (Ezzy, 1998; McNay, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1991; Redman, 2005), inequality regimes (Acker, 1990, 2006, 2012), and

organizational culture (Alvesson, 2002; Alvesson & Billing, 2009; Schein, 1984; Tierney, 1988).

The Narrative Interlude shares my story of fit in higher education and student affairs. This is offered as a view on my positionality as a researcher, to expose the commitments and experiences that are shaping my research process, and to honor my participants' sharing of their stories.

Chapter 4 explains narrative and institutional ethnography methodology and procedures used to capture women faculty narratives of fit within liberal arts colleges (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Mishler, 1986; Rhodes & Brown, 2005; Sandelowski, 1991; Smith, 2005). This includes data collection and analysis procedures, as well as a discussion of trustworthiness.

Utilizing the interviews, observations, and documents collected from participants, Chapter 5 presents the fit narratives of the seven faculty participants, as well as brief narrative about Serena College to help situate those narratives.

In Chapter 6, I explore the dynamics within the institution that were instrumental in shaping the fit narratives of the participants and in creating patterns of inequity and challenge. These dynamics are supported with evidence from participant interview data, institutional documents, and the personal statements for tenure provided by the participants.

Chapter 7 opens with a review of the study and the findings. I then discuss the understanding of fit as a process drawn from the study's finding. The chapter concludes by identifying new directions for research and practice.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature related to studying women's narratives of fit in the academy. Therefore, this chapter attempts to provide multiple perspectives on faculty work, and how women, in particular, experience the faculty role. The chapter begins by examining literature regarding how organizational and institutional cultures affect faculty work experiences, including the role of socialization for faculty. A section on liberal arts colleges explores what is known about faculty work at this institutional type.

I then review the literature on women faculty experiences specifically, focusing on the most common metrics used to evaluate faculty life and work experience — satisfaction, departure, stress, and productivity. In an attempt to examine how culture may be producing the outcomes women experience, literature on women faculty is reviewed through the lens of inequality regimes and the gendered organization. Finally, I review the extant literature on faculty fit, and its contributions to understanding faculty life.

Socialization and Faculty Cultures

This study examines the cultures embedded at the site of study, a liberal arts college. This includes cultures of the academy broadly, the culture of disciplines, how culture is embedded within higher education organizations, as well as the cultures endemic to liberal arts colleges as institutional types. With roots in anthropology, culture can be defined as "webs of significance," or meaning, in which people are embedded (Geertz, Martin, & McIntyre, 1994, p. 214). Culture is much like water to fish or air to humans —

we tend to notice it most when it is challenging, disruptive, or not working for us. Schein (1984) argues that understanding culture as shared meanings is not sufficient to understand from whence culture arises and how it changes; instead, he argues, culture is

> …the *pattern of basic assumptions* that a *given group* has *invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope* with its *problems of external adaptation and internal integration*, and that have *worked well enough to be considered valid*, and, therefore, to be *taught to new members* as the correct way to *perceive, think, and feel* in relation to those problems. (p. 3) (Original emphasis)

Schein's conceptualization forms the foundation for this study's approach to understanding culture at institutions of higher education, particularly as it relates to the experiences of women. Culture, in this study, is not taken for granted, but rather questioned and critiqued as a source of dominant narratives about who belongs in the academy (Alvesson, 2002; Alvesson & Billing, 2009; Tierney, 1997; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Additionally, culture is seen as the lens through which faculty learn about what is valued in their institutions and as a mediator of their sense of fit with their institutions. In short, culture, and an individual's socialization into that culture, may be creating confining experiences for individuals who cannot, will not, or do not want to learn the *correct ways* to perceive, think, and feel.

First the literature on faculty socialization is reviewed in order to focus on how organizational cultures influence individual faculty members' experiences and understanding of their work. Socialization theories and perspectives are summarized, and critiques of socialization are examined. Then, utilizing Austin's (1990) characterization as a guide, the cultures to which faculty must be socialized are discussed. Collectively,

this section provides an overview of the nature of faculty work and how individuals are introduced and inducted into that work. Multiple cultures for faculty are introduced, exposing how faculty experiences are differentiated by discipline, institutional type, organizational pressures, and views of the academic profession itself.

Socialization for Faculty

Early in their careers, new faculty must transition into the role of scholar. This transition requires more than developing competence as a scholar, but also being the correct kind of scholar for their institution, discipline, and department. The process of individuals coming to know the correct ways to "perceive, think, and feel" within a particular culture is a result of socialization (Schein, 1984, p. 3). Socialization can also be seen as the identity work of faculty — as the process of coming to know themselves in the academy (Trowler & Knight, 1999). Professorial identity is achieved through socialization into the domain of academia, and is marked by both cognitive and affective maturation (Reybold, 2003). Considering socialization as identity work allows for individual faculty autonomy and agency in the process to emerge; attention can be paid to how faculty actively make meaning of the messages sent to them by other institutional actors, and position themselves in relation to these messages (Tierney, 1997).

While socialization for college and university faculty is often defined as the practices of graduate education, socialization occurs at multiple levels and time points throughout a career. Each new institution (organization) or role will introduce a new culture which faculty need to learn. Socialization processes occur within three dynamics of understanding and sensemaking for a new member of an organization (Feldman, 1981; Trowler & Knight, 1999). These three dynamics are the skills or tools of the work, an

understanding of the roles an individual may play, and third is an adoption of the norms and values of the organization.

First, skills or tools, characterized by successful practices or behavior, allow individuals to complete the tasks associated with their role. Individuals can be over- or under-skilled. Consistent, equitable and high quality delivery of feedback on successes positively affect skill acquisition. Annual reviews, casual conversations, and mentoring can all contribute to this process for faculty.

Second, developing an understanding of roles, or the division of labor, requires a member of an organization to make sense of the goals and orientation of the organization (or department) and how their own responsibilities complement and complete those goals. Allowing individuals to take part in their own role-definition increases their understanding and commitment to roles. For faculty, this may include allowing professors to create their own course syllabi, supporting the evolution of scholarly interests, or providing opportunities and recognition for service to a professional association or underserved community.

Finally, norms and values, or rules and conventions, inform the inherent assumptions, ethics, and the interpretation of events occurring within the organization (Feldman, 1981; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). Faculty engage in activities and communication in attempts to build understanding of these meaning-making dynamics within their organizations and departments. Rites and rituals of the organization, such as convocations or graduations, and how other faculty respond to those rites and rituals, help faculty make sense of some norms. In addition, faculty may observe behaviors and values in others, such as how often other departmental faculty are in their offices, whether people address each other as

“Dr." or by first name, and if faculty are expected to attend non-academic student events on campus.

Critics of socialization processes for graduate students and faculty suggest that the academy’s understanding of these processes does not take into important realities of graduate education. This includes not accounting for the fluidity and dynamism of academic cultures (Tierney, 1997). Most accounts of socialization do not address the implicit assimilation narrative of socialization that denies or inhibits healthy expressions of diversity of thought and experience (Antony, 2002). Socialization narratives also ignore how the Bourdieusian forms of capital (social, cultural, and economic) interface with the habitus of graduate education to reinforce differences in capital, with new capital accruing most readily to those who already have the most capital (Gopaul, 2011). Griffin and colleagues (2015) found that women graduate students receive messages from their faculty that the norms of science do not align with their habitus as women.

Rosch and Reich’s (1996) model focuses on the stages through which faculty typically learn about their cultures, rejects defining the ideal outcomes of socialization, and eschews reifying a particular form of culture. Rosch and Reich (1996) define socialization as the process by which faculty learn the cultures in which they are embedded. This process occurs across four stages: pre-arrival, encounter, adaptation, and commitment. Their model allows for a variety of cultural dynamics in faculty lives, and incorporates how faculty members learn and subsequently accept, reject, or attempt to change cultures, rather than becoming entirely in tune with them.

The pre-arrival stage is marked by the experiences of graduate school, during which faculty members develop shared values around autonomy, academic freedom, scholarly

activities, intellectual climate, and self-motivation and reliance. The encounter stage involves the job application and interview process, and is a time when faculty develop a sense of shared values between themselves and the institution as well as a sense of the expectations the department and institution may have of them. The adaptation stage marks the early organizational entry period for faculty. During this stage, faculty make sense of the disparities between their anticipated experiences and the realities of the organization. In the final stage, commitment, faculty dig deeper into organizational culture by dealing with unexpected circumstances, new understanding of the motivating beliefs and orientations of the institution, and confirmation of their learning with senior faculty colleagues. The following section focuses on the socialization experiences of graduate students in the pre-arrival stage and faculty in the encounter, adaptation, and commitment stages.

Anticipatory/Prearrival Stage. Socialization occurs across time, with various career milestones introducing new cultural and organizational information to be made sense of. Most studies of socialization posit an anticipatory or pre-arrival phase during which individuals have not yet become organization members, but are beginning to make sense of the organization (Feldman, 1981; Rosch & Reich, 1996). Pre-arrival socialization for the faculty role tends to occur during graduate school (Austin, 2002b; Austin & McDaniels, 2006; Ellis, 2001; Gardner, 2008, 2010a; Gopaul, 2011; Rosch & Reich, 1996). The primary tasks of socialization for doctoral students are to learn the role of a graduate student, to learn the skills of the discipline or field, and to gain information about the academic life and profession (Austin & McDaniels, 2006).

Doctoral education is fundamentally structured to develop disciplinary research skills; the dissertation serves as the key process through which an individual moves from a student/apprentice to a teacher/master (Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). Students enter doctoral programs with varying career goals, academic interests, and motivations (Adler & Adler, 2005; Bieber & Worley, 2006; Golde & Dore, 2004). Yet, the structure of doctoral education remains focused on the development of disciplinary skills, tools, and knowledge bases (Wulff, Austin, & Associates, 2004). In the wake of the massive expansion of higher education post-World War II, the nature of the professoriate, and the ideals attached to it, shifted greatly from the gentleman scholar to the research scientist model (Rice, 1986). Doctoral study exposes students to this set of ideals, and to the norms of research, which vary widely dependent on the discipline or field being studied (Anderson & Louis, 1994; Golde & Dore, 2004). While many attribute the label of apprenticeship to doctoral study, this model is more applicable in science disciplines, where research projects are often directed by the Primary Investigator, are collaborative, and nascent scholars may be tasked with increasingly complex responsibilities in the research process over time as they master new skills and abilities (Golde & Dore, 2004; Wenger, 2000). On the other hand, in the humanities (e. g English or History) collaboration is infrequent, and nascent scholars are expected to craft their own scholarly projects from start to finish (Golde & Dore, 2004). The social sciences tend to offer hybrids or variations of these models, with fields like psychology and economics structured more closely to the sciences with lab structures and sharing of data collection and analysis, and other areas structured more like the humanities with graduate students designing and implementing their own independent research projects. Collaboration in

the learning environment influences to which and what degree of Mertonian norms of science (universalism, communality, disinterestedness, and organized skepticism) and counternorms (particularism, solitariness, self-interest, and organized dogmatism) graduate students in the sciences, social sciences, and engineering subscribe (Anderson & Louis, 1994).

As Austin and McDaniels (2006) suggest, doctoral education is also a time when students are socialized into the academic profession. While disciplinary values are imparted through the mastery of the dissertation, the values attendant to the profession are not often explicitly taught, but rather are modeled and structured through informal interactions, relationships, and departmental politics (Golde & Dore, 2004; Nyquist et al., 1999; Weidman et al., 2001). Students' investments in teaching or research may be determined, in part, by the opportunities granted them during their studies, often determined by the funding models of their disciplines. Students in the sciences, engineering, and social sciences are more likely to be funded through research grants, and students in the humanities are usually funded by teaching positions. Conceptualizations of graduate training rarely take into account the funding models and subsequent exposure to activities that might vary by discipline, and instead tend to focus on the formal curricular aspects of graduate training (course work, research training, the dissertation or thesis). These funding opportunities are typically not structured to enhance student learning, but instead to meet institutional needs (Austin, 2002b). Assistantships or fellowships often serve as key informal learning opportunities to which students are exposed, but are rarely structured with the intentionality that their significance might demand.

Some individuals enter doctoral study seeking to emulate and become faculty because of the teachers they experienced as undergraduates, and continue to state a desired preference for a focus on teaching throughout their doctoral studies (Bieber & Worley, 2006). This emphasis on teaching as a primary value orientation towards faculty life can persist despite the emphasis on research in both determining success in graduate school and the broader disciplinary reward systems (Bieber & Worley, 2006). Graduate students who seek validation for their desire to teach, or models for balancing research and teaching, may not find them, particularly at institutions that are attempting to enhance their research profiles or place high emphasis on research. Institutions or departments who hire faculty research stars in pursuit of enhanced prestige may alienate students who were drawn to the institution's emphasis on teaching and a quality learning experience for their doctoral students (Gardner, 2010c). In addition, for nascent scholars from underrepresented backgrounds, the value placed on teaching (high by the students, low by departments or institutions) often serves as a primary tension point during their graduate and early faculty careers (Antony & Taylor, 2004). The reconciliation of roles learned in graduate school with personal values results in role-orientation, a key component of pre-arrival socialization (Rosch & Reich, 1996). Given the dominance of research as the primary dynamic of formal graduate training as well as the nature of the majority of institutions that provide graduate degrees, students invested in teaching may learn early on that the academy values research.

Another challenging aspect of socialization to the academic profession in doctoral programs is the potential mis-match between the institutional type of the training ground (research universities) and that of potential employment (comprehensive universities,

community colleges, and liberal arts colleges; Pruitt-Logan & Gaff, 2004). Preparing Future Faculty Programs, which became popular in the 2000s, attempt to expose doctoral students to a wider range of institutional experiences and to address the mismatch between the focus of doctoral training, students' post-PhD career goals, and the exigencies of the modern faculty career (Gaff & Pruitt-Logan, 1998; Pruitt-Logan & Gaff, 2004). Despite these efforts, the depth of engagement with these other institutional types is not sufficient to prepare future faculty for the realities of resource and time constraints, different student populations, and other differences. Newly minted faculty who are hired at teaching-intensive institutions may be unprepared to adapt to the intensity of teaching-focused positions; they may also have trouble identifying outlets for the research skills and interest they developed during doctoral study (Bieber & Worley, 2006).

The final element of socialization to the academic profession during graduate school is the development of identity as a professional scholar. Trowler and Knight (2000) suggest that this is the primary task of academic socialization. While learning and adapting to the cultural mores of the discipline and institution are important tasks, Egan (1989) argues that professionalization requires changes in the view of the self, attitudes, and thinking processes. Doctoral study, however, in particular, demands high levels of independence in terms of direction of scholarship and internal motivation while simultaneously cultivating a high level of dependency where students' academic progress, financial security, and social standing is often controlled by faculty (Egan, 1989).

For graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds, including women and people of color, stereotype threats—confirming or fear of confirming negative stereotypes about a social identity group—may undermine a sense of belonging and accomplishment as their credibility is questioned due to racial or gender biases (Gardner, 2008; Taylor & Antony, 2000). These students are also likely to have a sense of imposter syndrome, in which self-doubt exists, leading to the sense of being a phony or imposter (Clance & Imes, 1978). Women graduate students may also face trouble accessing necessary networks and experiences through lack of sponsorship and accumulated disadvantages (Clark & Corcoran, 1986). Even still, White women students typically have more access to these opportunities than their women of color peers (Turner & Thompson, 1993). These experiences of stereotype threat, imposter syndrome, and barriers to accessing networks, opportunities, and sponsorship within their graduate studies may confound efforts to identify oneself as a member of a community of scholars and researchers (Carlone & Johnson, 2007).

Socialization, then, requires that graduate students manage a variety of relationships, expectations, and competing desires and demands, while developing themselves as researchers. The task of managing this extreme ambiguity in the context of varying levels of support from faculty and other experienced elders affects graduate students' ability to self-direct and remain successful (Gardner, 2010b). Students who do not have support in managing these tasks may struggle to complete their degrees, and to successfully transition to faculty positions. Graduate students' self-direction and motivation is a key emotional competency that is implicit in the development of graduate students, but is rarely addressed in formal ways (O'Meara, Knudsen, & Jones, 2013). Graduate students

are expected, by faculty, to manage themselves and their work, but are not given explicit guidance in how to do this.

In sum, the most important, and viable, role of socialization during graduate school is exposure to and adoption of the values of the field and profession (Nyquist et al., 1999; Rosch & Reich, 1996). While graduate education ostensibly provides training for the roles and tasks of faculty work, in reality, as doctoral recipients transition into faculty roles in specific institutional contexts, a new understanding of the tasks, priorities, and expectations of faculty work must emerge. The partial understanding of faculty work evidenced by graduate students is sometimes framed as a failure of doctoral socialization (Bieber & Worley, 2006); yet, the experience of faculty work is strongly determined by the nexus of field, department, and institutional cultures and practices, and as such requires engagement with the specific role and institution in the early career (Trowler & Knight, 1999).

Encounter, Adaptation, and Commitment Stages. Despite all the preparation and exposure that doctoral education may provide in relation to faculty work experiences, evidence suggests that faculty can only truly learn to be faculty once actually in the role. Rosch and Reich (1996) identify the primary phases of faculty enculturation after graduate school. These include encounter (the job search and interview process), adaptation (the comparison of anticipated experiences and expectations with reality), and commitment (the weighing of the experienced culture with the desired culture).

Encounter. The encounter phase is marked by the application and interview processes through which a candidate-turned-faculty-hire first experienced their new institution and began developing expectations for their anticipated experiences with

faculty work. Rosch and Reich (1996) suggest that faculty form impressions, define their expectations of the institution, and develop goals for their own performance in order to meet institutional and departmental expectations. Although the search process is a key element in faculty development, little empirical data, beyond that of Rosch and Reich's (1996), exist to extend knowledge about how this encounter phase is experienced and the subsequent role it plays in faculty socialization. Most publications focusing on the academic job search are treatises full of advice and individual reflections on the process (Broughton & Conlogue, 2001; Domosh, 2000; Iacono, 1981). Alternatively, they explore the decision processes of search committees and hiring officials (Madera, Hebl, & Martin, 2009; Meizlish & Kaplan, 2008; Mullins & Rogers, 2008; Sheehan, McDevitt, & Ross, 1998; Wakelee & Cordeiro, 2006). There is limited information about the choice and experience processes of faculty on the job market. In her discussion of the experiences of African American women navigating academic careers, Glenn (2012) shares examples from Black women's experiences on the market in which they were explicitly assumed to have increased interest in doing diversity service work, teaching classes related to race and gender, or performing scholarship in those areas. The prospective faculty were not just assumed to have these interests, they were also tested on other "core" knowledge in their field. These examples show how messages about roles, culture, and fit are transmitted in the encounter phase.

Adaptation. During the adaptation phase, faculty compare the expectations they developed during the job search and interview process with their actual experiences in the institution and department (Rosch & Reich, 1996). These comparisons are developed through formal and informal learning opportunities, perceptions of the climate of the

department and institution, observations of cultural patterns of interaction and priorities, as well as defining and managing their work expectations. Rosch and Reich (1996) primarily identify this period as the first semester of appointment; however other scholars break down early career experiences at different time points, and suggest that the first several years of a faculty appointment are filled with constant change and reevaluation of expectations, roles, and responsibilities (Olsen, Deborah & Crawford, 1998; Ponjuan, Conley, & Trower, 2011).

The most common forms of formal learning in the institution are orientation programs and mentoring programs (Fink, 1992; Keating, 1996; Welch, 2002). Little is known about the effectiveness of orientation programs for facilitating faculty socialization; the extant literature focuses mostly on recommendations for faculty orientation programs based on what is known about new faculty adjustment and socialization experiences (Fink, 1992; Keating, 1996; Welch, 2002). Mentoring programs are widely heralded as a solution to faculty issues such as unclear tenure expectations, climate issues, disparities in promotion, tenure, and retention of underrepresented groups, and socialization (Bilimoria, Perry, Stoller, Higgins, & Taylor, 2006; Cawyer, Simonds, & Davis, 2002; Gibson, 2004, 2006; Haynes & Petrosko, 2009; Pedrioli, 2004; Schrodt, Cawyer, & Sanders, 2003; Wasburn, 2007; Wylie, 2011).

Despite the prominent role of formal mentoring in discourse about faculty experience, some argue that informal experiences may be the most critical for faculty socialization. Increased affinity and shared experiences between mentor and mentee (Diggs, Garrison-Wade, Estrada, & Galindo, 2009; Trower, 2010) and shifted power dynamics between mentor and mentee (Dallimore, 2003) can improve the nature and volume of information

shared in an informal mentor-protege relationship. Reliance on informal mentoring relationships, however, leave some faculty at risk for not receiving adequate mentoring (Haynes & Petrosko, 2009; Patton, 2009; Turner & Thompson, 1993; Washington, Augustine, & Carolina, 2011; Welch, 2011; Zambrana et al., 2015). Ineffective, inadequate, or absent mentoring has been attributed by some faculty to stalled progress in their careers (Zambrana et al., 2015). Faculty of color and women faculty are at higher risk for not receiving informal mentoring from senior colleagues, and are left to navigate their institutions and disciplines independently (Patton, 2009; Turner & Thompson, 1993; Welch, 2011). When present, mentoring provides affirming support and guidance for scholars from underrepresented minority backgrounds, and helps to not only build confidence and self-efficacy, but can model the effective navigation of predominantly White and masculine academic systems (Zambrana et al., 2015).

The experience of a hostile or chilly climate is a pervasive factor affecting the socialization of underrepresented groups in the academy, and plays a role during the adaptation phase. A chilly or hostile climate can be defined as the "informal exclusion, devaluation, and marginalization" of particular groups or individuals from those groups (Maranto & Griffin, 2010, p. 3). A chilly or hostile climate is felt by faculty through interactions with individuals, systems, and cultures within an institution. Studies about climate for faculty of color and women faculty repeatedly demonstrate the challenges that those from underrepresented or undervalued identity groups face within the academy (Fries-Britt, Rowan-Kenyon, Perna, Milem, & Howard, 2011; Griffin, Pifer, Humphrey, & Hazelwood, 2011; Hart & Cress, 2008; Jayakumar, Howard, Allen, & Han, 2009; Settles, Cortina, Malley, & Stewart, 2006). These include barriers such as poor teaching

evaluations (Chesler & Young Jr, 2007), disengagement from the institution (Griffin et al., 2011), increased stress (Hart & Cress, 2008), devaluation of research practices and topics (Fries-Britt et al., 2011), and decreases in satisfaction and perceived influence in the department (Settles et al., 2006). In addition to having negative consequences for those for whom the climate is negative, one study using HERI faculty survey data found that hostile racial climate was associated with higher intention to remain for White faculty, implying a hostile racial climate may enhance feelings of support and commitment for White women (Jayakumar et al., 2009). Faculty who are attempting to make sense of their place, role, and purpose within an organization, and who experience a hostile climate, may not be able to fully engage or connect with the institution and their peers within it, stunting their socialization into other important aspects of the institution or faculty role.

As faculty move through the adaptation stage, they are also defining their work expectations. Faculty must balance and prioritize role demands, develop teaching styles and methods, and identify their place within their departments (Rosch & Reich, 1996). These challenges include managing high expectations for productivity and autonomy that may be unrealistic in the workplace (Perry, Clifton, Menec, Struthers, & Menges, 2000), over-preparing for teaching (Boice, 1991a), and managing long-term planning (Boice, 1991a). In addition, new faculty have difficulty recruiting or being assigned dissertation advisees, which may stunt their research agendas or make them feel less valued in the department (Reybold, Brazer, Schrum, & Corda, 2012).

For some faculty, service expectations are difficult to manage, especially women faculty and faculty of color who may have higher service demands on their pre-tenure

time due to expectations of gender- or culture-based service (Dallimore, 2003; Padilla, 1994; Stanley, 2006). While service related to gender and culture creates additional work for faculty, many also define these forms of service as critical to their engagement and purpose within the academy, as well as their ability to navigate hostile climates in other areas of their work lives (Baez, 2000; Griffin, Bennett, & Harris, 2013). These faculty members, then, are having to navigate between activities they value, yet are not necessarily valued in institutional reward systems, reaffirming a sense that these faculty have to work harder to achieve equal rewards. Faculty members whose expectations are not met and who are deterred from their preferred actions have increased dissatisfaction (Reybold, 2005) or increased burnout (Shanafelt et al., 2009). New faculty struggle to make sense of these varying experiences alongside institutional narratives about tenure, success, and demands for teaching and research activities (Cooper & Stevens, 2002).

Commitment. The commitment stage is when new faculty begin to make sense of the cultures in which they are embedded. As their preconceptions are challenged, they have both an emotional and cognitive response. If their values align with those of the institution, they will identify strongly with the institution (Rosch & Reich, 1996). However, if their values are incongruent, faculty commitment to the institution will be reduced (Lawrence, Ott, & Bell, 2012). They may also question the organization's attempt to alter their self-image, and resist those attempts. If they accept those changes, then they become increasingly attached to the institution (Rosch & Reich, 1996). One example of this tension relates to the role of public service and community-focused scholarship. For many individuals who prioritize and value this kind of research, there can be a lot of pressure to eschew these efforts (Bloomgarden & O'Meara, 2007; Jaeger

& Thornton, 2006; O'Meara, 2002; Reybold & Corda, 2011). Faculty are forced to reconcile what they have learned or thought they knew about the academy with their experiences (Rosch & Reich, 1996). For many faculty, their pre-tenure existence is at odds with the sense of collegiality, community, clear guidelines for tenure, support (financial, technical, and emotional), and intellectual engagement that seemed promised during their anticipatory or encounter phases (Austin & Rice, 1998). This reconciliation process may lead to unhappiness or dissatisfaction.

Faculty Cultures

While the faculty socialization process takes places across multiple stages, focusing solely on the department or institution may not sufficiently capture the complexity of the process. Rosch and Reich's (1996) model focuses on the interactions between an individual and their institutional setting. Faculty life, however, is comprised of more facets than just that of the institution, and is affected by multiple dimensions of faculty work. Austin (1990) suggests that there are four cultures academics navigate and embed themselves within. These cultures are the academic profession, discipline, academic organizations, and institutional type. This section is focused on identifying the key elements of these four cultures, and the impact they may have on faculty experiences.

Academic Profession. The defining feature of the culture of the academic profession, according to Austin (1990), is a dedication to higher education's purpose to "pursue, discover, produce, and disseminate knowledge, truth, and understanding" (p. 62). Other defining features of this culture include autonomy and academic freedom, intellectual honesty and fairness, collegiality, and service to society (Austin, 1990). These features

take the form of core values that unite faculty across discipline and institutional type, and often serve as a source of tension with the needs of higher education organizations.

As discussed previously, the production of knowledge serves as a key factor in the socialization of faculty via doctoral education — namely the production of dissertation work. Dissemination of knowledge could be interpreted as publication, a dominating factor in promotion and tenure decisions at research universities, elite liberal arts colleges, and striving comprehensive universities at minimum (Green, 2008; Seipel, 2003). Dissemination of knowledge also takes the form of instruction, which may be more highly prized at liberal arts colleges, community colleges, and other teaching-focused institutions (Green, 2008). The centrality of the production and dissemination of knowledge also leads to the discipline being the primary organizing feature of the academy through departments, as well as its attendant internal hierarchy structure, made apparent through funding, pay, and other structural efforts (Austin, 1990).

Autonomy, often defined in terms of academic freedom, has been a defining feature of 20th and 21st century academic life. Since the introduction of the American Association of University Professors' Statement on Government of Universities and Colleges in 1945 (AAUP, 1978), the faculty have sought to draw boundaries around institutional influence on the content of the production and dissemination of knowledge. As a result, faculty retain significant levels of autonomy over the curricula, over promotion and tenure decisions, and on the operations of individual academic units (Clark, 2001; Lattuca & Stark, 2009; O'Meara, 2004). When asked why they chose the academic profession, autonomy is one of the most common and appealing aspects of the academic profession (Agarwal & Ohyama, 2013). Despite their enduring influence, the

nature of autonomy and academic freedom is constantly shifting as the environment in which institutions and faculty operate changes (Henkel, 2005).

Intellectual honesty and fairness are also key values of the academic profession. Processes of peer review are meant to serve as checks and balances to ensure the quality and veracity of research claims (Trower, 2010). Ideals of intellectual honesty and fairness are highly contested notions in the academy, with differing philosophical orientations grounding the definitions and measures of these efforts. These debates can crop up within a single disciplinary body or department, or at the institutional level as tenure and funding decisions are made. The role of honesty and fairness is critiqued by many who question the myth of meritocracy in academia; these critics suggest that paradigmatic blindness, bias, quantity, and cults of personality may play a larger role in assessments of intellectual products than intellectual honesty and rigor (Carlone & Johnson, 2007; Griffin et al., 2013; Lawrence, Ott, & Celis, 2011; Thornton, 2013). Therefore, while honesty and fairness are lofty ideals, contested definitions and understandings may shape an academic's experience within the profession.

Collegiality, or a sense of intellectual community and shared enterprise, is another key dimension of the culture of the academic profession. Rhoades (2008) builds on Gouldner's (Gouldner, 19571958) work, classifying faculty as either cosmopolitans or locals — determined by their primary source of collegiality. Cosmopolitans are invested in collegiality at the national, disciplinary level; locals are focused on building collegiality at the institutional and departmental levels. However, Trower (2010) suggests that the nature of collegiality has changed over time, with the current cadre of faculty more invested in community than previous generations because of changes in the world

of work and increasing desire to live balanced, integrated lives. More faculty are part of dual-career families, which restricts their ability to relocate as needed to move up the academic rungs. The current faculty generation may be more invested in building cosmopolitan networks of colleagues, while simultaneously seeking to be deeply embedded in one place, rather than engaging in the peripatetic faculty career of yesteryear (Trower, 2010). This allows faculty to be engaged in their disciplinary communities, while not uprooting their lives and those of their partners on a regular basis.

Whether cosmopolitan or local, rooted or peripatetic, the values of collegiality live alongside, and undergird, the competitive nature of academic life. Competition is a defining feature of academic life, with the promise of competition producing the best ideas and knowledge about the world. This competitive component of faculty life, however, may be highly cultivated in some settings (Adler & Adler, 2005) or discouraged in others. The level of internal and external competition expected may vary widely, and therefore create a mis-match in expectations for faculty and their colleagues.

The final value of the culture of the academic profession is the role of service to society. This value is constructed and understood differently by different constituents, with some viewing basic science or knowledge production as fulfilling this need, and others viewing service to society as requiring direct interaction with communities and individuals (Boyer, 1990). These competing conceptions of service to society are often shaped by the institutional environment (such as land-grant or regionally focused institutions placing a greater emphasis on service to communities) and the preferences of the individual faculty member (Bloomgarden & O'Meara, 2007; Jaeger & Thornton, 2006; O'Meara, 2002; Reybold & Corda, 2011). Debates about the role of service lead

Austin (1990) to conclude that service to society is not pervasive in all views of the academic profession.

Disciplines. As mentioned above, disciplines serve as a primary organizing feature of academia; and each discipline is rife with its own culture and values. Departments serve as the local manifestation of disciplines and disciplinary cultures at individual institutions. These departmental cultures can be distinctive from institutional culture as well as the broader disciplinary cultures which they are intended to embody.

Austin (1990) suggests that the importance of discipline in faculty cultures has also lead to an internalization of disciplinary hierarchy. The emphasis on understanding and emulating the structures and processes of the biological and physical sciences is evident in both the nature of disciplinary categorization schemes such as Biglan's (1973) hard-soft/pure-applied schema, and in the focus of studies on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) faculty and disciplines (e.g. Burnett, Bilen-Green, McGeorge, & Anicha, 2012; Hughes, n.d.; Kniola, Chang, & Olsen, 2012; Millett & Nettles, 2006; Syed & Chemers, 2011; Towns, 2010; Tran, Herrera, & Gasiewski, 2011; De Welde & Laursen, 2008, 2011; Xu, 2008b). A more recent approach to categorizing disciplines centers the role of disciplines as learning communities, with distinct values (Trowler, Trowler, Saunders, & Bamber, 2012). Trowler and his colleagues advance a view of disciplines as enacted in local contexts, critiquing what he describes as a 20th century notion that faculty have primary affiliations to their broadly defined disciplines.

While faculty training during doctoral study is focused on exposure to, familiarization with, and mastery of disciplinary ideas, ideals, norms, and practices, each specific iteration of a discipline is shaped by the values and norms that emerge in a given

department at a given institution. Therefore, faculty who have been trained in what they assumed were the values of the discipline may find upon taking a new position that those values were, in fact, the product of the department in which they were enculturated (Nyquist et al., 1999). Different departments in the same discipline may have different approaches to interdisciplinarity (Boden & Borrego, 2011), varying expectations and support of research and productivity (Fox & Mohapatra, 2007), and distinctive definitions of the role of teaching in both how assignments are made and how prominently teaching features in evaluation of faculty work (Umbach, 2007).

Academic Organizations. The third faculty culture is that of academic organizations. Academic institutions, while hosting the ideals of the academic profession and disciplines, have operational responsibilities and multiple goals which complicate the "pure" cultures of the academic enterprise (Meyer & Rowan, 1978; Walker, 2002). The pressures facing academic organizations are intense, and significantly shape how they maintain cultures that balance collegiality and autonomy and that support the endeavors of knowledge production and intellectual development (Austin, 1990; Caboni, 2004). As open systems with unclear goals and products, higher education institutions are subject to the demands placed upon them by changing funding structures, changing priorities for state-funded institutions, increased competition from for-profit and online education, and a variety of other external changes (Austin, 2002a; Birnbaum, 1998). Several major trends have emerged at institutions of higher education in response to these changing dynamics: managerialism and bureaucracy; academic capitalism; and the rise of contingency in the academic workforce.

In terms of managerialism, as higher education institutions grow in complexity, a complementary administrative structure has also grown (Deem, 2001, 2004). While higher education institutions have traditionally been viewed as being managed through shared governance, shifts in the structures of these organizations has lead to a corps of administrators who serve to manage the academic enterprise. As the professional activities of the faculty are increasingly being monitored and managed by those with administrative authority, tensions arise between the faculty and their administrator counterparts (Etzioni, 2000). These tensions are often ironic, as many administrative staff are promoted from the ranks of the faculty, yet they are seen as non-faculty by their former peers (Esterberg & Wooding, 2013). As concerns have increased about the growing costs of higher education by the general public, legislators, and degree-seeking students, the increase in administrative roles on campus has come under increasing scrutiny (Esterberg & Wooding, 2013).

The rise of managerialism, or what some call administrative "bloat," is in part a response to the rise of academic capitalism. Academic capitalism is the result of the increasing need for institutions to find sources of revenue to fund their operations, either through technology transfer (e.g., patents), extramural funding of research, revenue-generating academic programs, or campus-industry partnerships (Rhoads & Slaughter, 1997). These trends place increasing demands on faculty to monetize their endeavors. Institutional priorities and reward systems, at times, are reconfigured to reflect these demands, shaping the nature of faculty work across the institution (O'Meara, 2011). While some disciplinary areas are well suited for these endeavors, particularly STEM fields, others see decreasing investment in their fields of study at both the institutional

and national levels (education, social sciences, and humanities). These strategies to diversify revenue streams add to the complexity of institutional missions, and may result in what some call mission creep, institutional striving, or what feels like the loss of the academic mission (Jaquette, 2013; Lane, 2005; O'Meara, 2007; Paradise & Dawson, 2007).

Another way that institutions as organizations have chosen to cope with these changes is to move towards contingency in the workforce. The contingent workforce is comprised of short-term contract or part-time non-tenure-track faculty (Cross & Goldenberg, 2009; Harper, Baldwin, Gansneder, & Chronister, 2001). Contingency is often implemented as a way to minimize human resource costs (the vast majority of most college and university operating budgets) and to allow institutions flexibility in the face of dynamic enrollments and insecure, unsteady funding streams (Cross & Goldenberg, 2009). Critics of contingency, particularly among the faculty, often point to the rise of administrative positions as one of the contributing factors (Fish, 2003). The percentage of contingent faculty has grown exponentially in recent years, and faculty working at any institution will need to be aware of this dynamic. At some institutions, tensions run high between full-time, on-track faculty and their contingent counterparts; governance documents often limit the participation of contingent faculty in governance decisions, and many off-track, non-full time faculty are subject to insecure labor conditions and have little voice, or even space, within their departments (Besosa & Maisto, 2013). Additionally, there are significant concerns raised by some regarding the efficacy of education by contingent faculty, with some studies finding that increased use of contingent faculty has a negative effect on retention of early career undergraduate students (e.g., Jaeger & Eagan, 2010).

Institutional Type. The final faculty culture is that of institutional type. The majority of studies on faculty work, life, and attitudes either take for granted that faculty experience at research universities is representative of the faculty experience generally, or focus specifically on this group (e.g., Campbell et al., 2002; Daly & Dee, 2006; Demb & Wade, 2012; Fairweather, 2002; Gardner, 2012; Gonzales, 2014b; Kuntz, 2012; Maranto & Griffin, 2011; Reybold & Corda, 2011; Rice, 2006; Rosser, Tabata, & Smart, 2010; Toutkoushian & Conley, 2005). Notable exceptions to this focus on university faculty include: Cooley and colleague's focus on faculty-student research partnerships at liberal arts colleges (2008), a focus on teaching evaluation at liberal arts colleges (Keig, 2000), studies on multiculturalism and cultural competency among faculty at liberal arts colleges (Alemán & Salkever, 2003; Helms, 2003), the role of scholarship on teaching and learning at liberal arts colleges (Peters, Schodt, & Walczak, 2008), and the role of faculty in cultivating critical thinking at liberal arts colleges (Halx & Reybold, 2006; Tsui, 2007).

Research and doctoral university faculty comprised the largest proportion of full-time faculty by institutional type (45.1%) in 1998, while faculty at other types of 4-year institutions, such as liberal arts colleges (9.6%) and comprehensive universities (24.4%), comprised 34% of all faculty (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006)[2]. This is a significant proportion of faculty about whom little is known. Therefore, many assumptions about the nature of faculty work, and the cultural expectations about faculty within a given institution may be shaded by the emphasis in both research and popular press on the activities and experiences of research faculty. In particular, studies have not adequately

[2] Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) use the Carnegie Classifications circa 1998 to classify their data. These designations were significantly revised and renamed in 2005. See McCormick, A. , & Zhao, C. (2005). Rethinking and reframing the Carnegie Classification. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, *37*(5), 51-57.

captured how the more intensive student contact at other types of institutions may affect faculty work generally, or generate gender, racial, and other differences more generally, especially as it relates to burnout, stress, and other faculty outcomes (Lackritz, 2004). In order to better understand the context in which the faculty of this study are working, this section details more clearly the state of the liberal arts college, its mission and curricular orientation, as well as the nature of faculty work at these institutions.

Liberal Arts Colleges as a Faculty Culture. There is a strong cultural imagination about what constitutes a liberal arts college, and defining which characteristics, values, and orientations are reflected in the label "liberal arts college" used in this study is required. In order to contextual the liberal arts college as a site of socialization for faculty, the current state of liberal arts colleges in the United States, the mission of these institutions, the role of selectivity and designation as "elite" institutions in creating a different working and learning environment, as well as who becomes a faculty member at liberal arts colleges are discussed. This background information illuminates the factors that make elite liberal arts colleges distinctive places to work, and begin to demonstrate how faculty culture functions differently for elite liberal arts college faculty than for faculty at research or other types of institutions.

At last count (circa 2000) there were 220 liberal arts colleges, or approximately 4.7% of all institutions; these institutions, enrolled 484,554 students (2.33% of all students) in 2014 (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Carnegie Classifications Data File, February, 2012).[3] The Carnegie designation for Liberal Arts colleges however, may be too inclusive of institutions that offer a signification number of graduate or

professional degrees, or offer a small number of liberal arts bachelors degrees resulting in substantially different curricular and economic structures (Breneman, 1990). In response to this, Breneman (1990) created his own criteria for the designation of liberal arts college, including a Carnegie designation as Liberal Arts I (currently: Baccalaureate — Arts and Sciences) or Liberal Arts II (currently: Baccalaureate — Diverse Fields), awarding at least 40 percent of undergraduate degrees in the arts and sciences, and having no significant graduate or professional programs. While Breneman (1990) identified 212 liberal arts colleges in the late 1980s, Baker, Baldwin, and Makker (2012) identifed only 130 using Breneman's criteria among institutions in 2009, with 70 percent of these (91 institutions) falling under the category of Liberal Arts I or Baccalaureate — Arts and Sciences. Baker and colleagues argue that the number of liberal arts institutions has likely decreased due to absorption by larger universities or mergers with similar sized institutions, and the addition of other degree or graduate programs that shift the balance of curricular priorities. This decrease also may be due to increasing utilitarianism and vocationalism among students and parents, concurrent changes in delivery modes of education (especially online), the increasing costs of the residential model, and increasing resistance among families to pay high sticker costs for higher education (Baker et al., 2012).

The small proportion of liberal arts colleges belies their significance in contributing to conversations about educational purpose (Lang, 2000) and their role as a bellweather for trends and challenges facing all higher education institutions (Hartley, 2003). In fact, advocates suggest that the benefits they offer to students in terms of educational and

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[3] The Carnegie Foundation no longer uses the classification of "Liberal Arts." These enrollment data were generated using the old classification, but with current data about student populations contained within the

personal development outcomes (Astin, 2000; Baker et al., 2012; Pascarella et al., 2004), their distinctive role in American education history (Bonvillian & Murphy, 1996; Hawkins, 2000; Lang, 2000), and their potential contributions to pedagogy and knowledge creation demand their preservation (Benston, 2005; McCaughey, 2005; Ruscio, 2005). Therefore, while liberal arts institutions may not educate the largest number of students or employ the largest number of faculty, understanding their purpose, their structure, and how faculty work is comprised there is important to understanding the breadth and diversity in faculty life in the United States.

Indeed, the liberal arts moniker elicits a particular vision of higher education in the United States. Baker, Baldwin, and Makker (2012) suggest that institutions with varying missions and foci purposefully adopt the label, and thus the vision, of a “liberal arts college." It is possible that institutions seek to draw upon an ethos or compelling narrative about the benefits and distinctive experience that a liberal arts college may offer, despite variation in actual purpose, curricula, or size. Definitions of the liberal arts college typically highlight these institutions’ continued commitment to providing a student-centered experience that emphasizes community, small class sizes, a residential experience, and deep faculty engagement (e.g., Lang, 2000). A majority of studies about liberal arts colleges and the experiences of their faculty and students were conducted decades ago (Bonvillian & Murphy, 1996; e.g., Breneman, 1990; Dubrow, 1992; Friedrich & Michalak Jr, 1983; Hartley & Robinson, 2001; Hersh, 1999; Michalak & Friedrich, 1981; Neal, 1990, 1991; Nelson, 1994; Quinn, 1994; Splete et al., 1987; St. John, 1991; Stark & Morstain, 1978; Wylie, 1986). This makes characterizing the nature of these institutions in the 21st century difficult.

Carnegie Classifications Data File.

Distinctions in both the experiences for students and faculty, and how liberal arts institutions operate, may be drawn by their designation as selective or non-selective. Selective liberal arts colleges are often competing for students with Ivy League and other top private national universities (Braxton & Nordvall, 1985). These institutions rarely face the enrollment-based financial challenges of their non-selective peers, allowing them to adhere to the liberal arts mission as historically defined. Many of these institutions have sizable endowments that allow them to offer substantial grant and other aid to their student bodies, as well as commit to need-blind admissions policies. While the majority of liberal arts college faculty embrace the emphasis on teaching, student engagement, and moral/ethical development that comprise the central mission of the liberal arts college, faculty at selective liberal arts institutions are also expected to place an emphasis on scholarship that mirrors more closely that of faculty at private research universities (Ruscio, 1987). In addition, faculty are expected to work closely with the undergraduate students at the institution to develop those students into potential graduate students by offering research experiences to those students, and, ideally, enhancing their own scholarship with undergraduate participation (Cooley et al., 2008; Weight, 2010).

Non-selective liberal arts colleges have their own distinctive set of challenges and opportunities. They may be competing with local comprehensive colleges and universities or with other religiously affiliated institutions. These institutions are more sensitive to fluctuations in enrollment that limit their income, and may be more likely to introduce degree programs designed to find their graduates employment (O'Connell & Perkins, 2003). Faculty at these institutions may be expected to shift their foci as institutional needs dictate fresh revenue streams or to enhance prestige to improve

enrollment. For example, at institutions where research is becoming an increasing focus, there may be two “guards” of faculty: older faculty who focus mostly on teaching and newer faculty who focus more on research (O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011).

Whether selective or non-selective, the liberal arts college experience for faculty is marked by a few key characteristics. First, there are expectations that faculty be highly engaged with student learning, both in the classroom and outside of it (Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006). These institutions may expect faculty to engage students outside the classroom, to develop meaningful mentoring relationships with undergraduate students, and to invest in a collegiate atmosphere (Baker et al., 2012; Bodenhorn, 1997). For doctoral students who are drawn to the vocation of teaching, the liberal arts college may be an ideal institutional type. However, faculty may find that they have few colleagues who are invested in the same scholarly topics at the institution — the small department size often means that faculty have little overlap in their subject area expertise (Marston & Brunetti, 2009).

Women faculty, perhaps because of the high-intensity of engagement in campus activities, face a distinctive set of challenges in balancing work-family conflict at liberal arts colleges. While faculty at all institutional types have high demands on their time from “greedy institutions” (institutions that demand loyalty and complete commitment), faculty at liberal arts colleges are expected to put in a particular amount of face-time, with faculty presence expected at student events, community activities, and in co-curricular activities (Wright et al., 2004). For some women faculty, they find the demands to be on campus after hours to be a difficult expectation to manage while also sustaining commitments to family and outside of work interests (Ward & Wolf-Wendel,

2012). Some studies have found that faculty who have high teaching and other student-focused work loads experience higher rates of burn-out, stress, and feelings of overload (Lackritz, 2004). This work-family conflict may be slightly reduced with a better campus department climate (Berheide & Anderson-Hanley, 2012), but the limits on these expectations must be clearly articulated.

Summary and Implications

In short, while it is tempting to talk about how faculty are socialized into their roles as a straightforward process, it is clear that each faculty member is facing a unique nexus of experiences and cultures. The resulting experience is derived from their socialization as a graduate student into academia and discipline, how they envision and desire the academic profession, the discipline and department in which they are embedded, the external challenges facing higher education organizations, and the type of institution at which they are working. Each of these factors play a role into how faculty see themselves, and the environment in which they are working.

While this section captures how specific this process may be for each individual, it does not address how these processes and cultures may have disparate impact on faculty from particular identity or cultural backgrounds. One reason for this is the comparatively small amount of literature explicitly connecting experiences of socialization and aspects of identity. It is reasonable to assume that socialization into these particular cultures functions differently for women (Clark & Corcoran, 1986; Dallimore, 2003; Griffin et al., 2015) and people of color (Jackson, 2004; Johnson & Harvey, 2002; Sule, 2008). These differences likely arise because of the historical dominance of White men in the academy, and the evolution of these cultures based on the value structures of those men. In

addition, socialization into the academy is generally premised on the ideal that the pursuit of knowledge and the subsequent pursuit of tenure-track work at the most prestigious institution possible is the goal for all students and all doctorate holders. As the academy becomes more diverse, people are bringing different ideals to the table, including integrated, coherent lives that balance commitment to community, cultural background, and extended family (Haley, Jaeger, & Levin, 2014).

In addition, most writing about enculturation and socialization treat these cultures as non-problematic. Critiques of how socialization is written about and studied is based upon these different, and constraining experiences, and a persistent blindness to how these cultures and processes may be serving some groups of individuals better than others (Antony & Taylor, 2004; Brown, 1985; Dallimore, 2003). These cultures and processes are not value-neutral. At the core of this study exists a concern with how these cultures may be sending messages about who and what is acceptable in the academy (Alvesson, 2002; Alvesson & Billing, 2009). In order to offer these critiques, however, it is important to lay out the dominant discourse that embeds these processes to serve as a counterpoint for the experiences, desires, and understandings exposed in this study.

In understanding how culture shapes the expectations placed upon faculty and their experiences in meeting these expectations, fit can be understood as much as a function of acceptance or rejection of these various cultures as it is a result of making the "right choice" of institution, discipline, or location. Mis-fit, in fact, from the institutions' point of view, may be serving as a proxy for identifying individuals who are resistant or abnormal within the regimes of institutions. When individuals fail to succeed in the typical terms (such as have negative early-career reviews, are not granted tenure, or not

promoted to full professor), this outcome is often attributed to poor fit. Inherent in this determination of fit is that the person is not a good match to the environment/organization. However, this understanding problematically assumes that organizational cultures are not deeply embedded with racist, sexist and other dynamics of privilege and power that fail to "fit" their employees.

Outcomes for Women Faculty

While socialization into faculty work is an important way to begin thinking about women's experiences in the academy — particularly in attempting to identify how they learn to be faculty at the liberal arts college—it is an inadequate frame to understand whether there are patterns of different experiences across demographic groups, such as gender or race. As Alvesson (2002) suggests, the cultures in to which we are socialized are not neutral, and reflect the biases and preferences of the groups with the most power. Therefore, despite the pervasiveness, and perhaps consistency, of socialization experiences, women regularly have different, and, in many cases, worse experiences than men in the academy (Allan, 2011). One way to chart these different experiences are the outcomes that are often studied for faculty — satisfaction, departure, stress, and productivity (Barnes, Agago, & Coombs, 1998; Blackburn & Bentley, 1993; Edwards, 1996; Hagedorn, 1996; Hagedorn & Laden, 2002; Hart & Cress, 2008; Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2011; Rosser & Townsend, 2006; Sax, Hagedorn, Arredondo, & Dicrisi III, 2002). By exploring how these outcomes may be mediated for women, and what patterns emerge, a better picture of women faculty experience forms. This section of the review focuses on these major outcomes studied for women faculty: satisfaction, departure, stress, and productivity.

Satisfaction

The literature uses varying definitions or models of satisfaction. The most prevalent approach for modeling satisfaction for faculty is based on Hagedorn's (2000) model. Hagedorn, adopting Herzberg's (1964) theory from the management literature, identifies three types of characteristics that serve as mediators for satisfaction: motivators and hygienes (or demotivators), demographics, and environmental conditions. In addition, major life events, or triggers, also affect where on the continuum of satisfaction an employee might be.

Before moving on to the literature, determining how fit differs from satisfaction is key. Satisfaction is primarily a measure of the individual's perception of their job; fit is the interaction between an individual and an organization – and fit can be viewed from either the individual's perspective, the organization's perspective or both perspectives simultaneously. Though not reflected in Hagedorn's model of satisfaction, fit is generally considered to be predictive of job satisfaction (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006). Satisfaction, therefore, may be an indicator of fit, but is not the same concept or experience.

Motivators and hygienes. One key element of the Hagedorn (2000) satisfaction model is the presence of motivators and hygienes (demotivators) that mediate or affect the sense of satisfaction a faculty member might feel. These motivators and hygienes include achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and salary. In terms of motivators and hygienes, the literature examines most closely the role of salary, the work itself, and advancement via tenure.

Generally, women are not satisfied with their salaries across several studies (Sabharwal & Corley, 2009; Seifert & Umbach, 2008). Hagedorn (1996) found that the existence of wage differentials between men and women faculty led to increased dissatisfaction for women, indicating that salary may serve as proxy for other inequities in the workplace between men and women. In addition, Sabharwal (2011) finds that foreign-born women are more dissatisfied than U. S. -born women with their benefits, including salary, contributing to a decreased sense of satisfaction. A study on part-time faculty found that women part-time faculty are more satisfied than men with their overall benefits, but less satisfied with their salaries and less satisfied overall (Toutkoushian & Bellas, 2003). Salary, therefore, is just one component of a benefits package that may affect women faculty satisfaction.

Several studies explored women's preferences about work tasks and the relationship of those preferences to their overall satisfaction (Olsen et al., 1995; Park, 1996; Rosser, 2005; Seifert & Umbach, 2008). While women faculty and faculty of color have been found to have similar preferences for research activities as men, how their time is distributed in relation to these tasks differs, particularly with more time spent on teaching and service. This distribution, however, has a minimal effect on satisfaction (Olsen et al., 1995). Women are also found to be less satisfied with a sense of job-related autonomy and the time available to complete their tasks on the job (Seifert & Umbach, 2008), which may be attributed to expectations that they spend more of their time on teaching and service activities (Park, 1996). Rosser (2005) found that women were less positive than men regarding various work-life issues such as professional development opportunities, the amount of committee and service work expected, and the lack of

administrative and technology support. how academic work is structured for women, particularly in relation to their goals, the expectations placed on them, and the support offered to them, may negatively affect their satisfaction.

Experiences related to advancement, namely tenure and promotion, serve as another motivator/hygiene for women faculty. In most studies, women perceive greater barriers to their advancement than men (Bornholt, Poole, Hattie, & Welch, 2005; Gardner, 2012; Rosser, 2005; Sabharwal & Corley, 2009); however, there are points along women's career trajectories that bring greater amounts of satisfaction than others. Sabharwal and Corley (2009) and Rosser (2005) found that women at higher ranks felt a greater sense of satisfaction than those at lower ranks, which suggests that once they achieve tenure, women feel more possibilities are open to them. Bornholt, Poole, and Hattie (2005) also found that satisfaction varied most by rank. Despite these increases in satisfaction that accompany increase in rank, women have expressed a greater dissatisfaction than men with the tenure and promotion process overall (Gardner, 2012).

Demographics. Another element that factors into faculty members' satisfaction in Hagedorn's (2000) model are demographics such as gender, ethnicity, institutional type, and academic discipline. In terms of the mediators grouped as demographics, the most salient for satisfaction are gender and race, although some studies have considered disciplinary affiliations as well. Overall, as suggested thus far, women have been found to be less satisfied with their faculty jobs than men in most studies (August & Waltman, 2004; Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Callister, 2006; Hagedorn, 1996; Olsen et al., 1995; Rosser, 2004; Sax et al., 2002; Seifert & Umbach, 2008; Toutkoushian & Bellas, 2003). August and Waltman (2004) did not find race to be a significant predictor of satisfaction

for women faculty; no other studies looked at race and gender in intersection and the resulting satisfaction, indicating a key area where more research is needed to better understand satisfaction of women faculty.

Qualitative studies with women faculty of color, however, suggest that there are many constraints on their experience in the academy, which may reduce satisfaction including increased responsibility for service and care taking, microaggressions, and diminished expectations and opportunities (Gregory, 2001; Harley, 2007; Kelly & Fetridge, 2012). On the other hand, these studies also indicate that women of color derive great satisfaction from mentoring students and contributing to underserved and underrepresented communities in both the academy and the communities in which academic institutions are embedded (Baez, 2000; Griffin, 2013). Most studies of satisfaction do not incorporate these kinds of orientations and preferences beyond a general category for “service."

Disciplinary differences have been found to have a mixed influence on women’s satisfaction. Seifert and Umbach (2008) found that differences between men and women in satisfaction varied by disciplinary characteristics such as type of publications emphasized (focus on books as publications led to lower satisfaction, articles and presentations to higher), proportion of women in the field (more women, lower satisfaction), and salary (lower salary, lower satisfaction). There are significantly lower percentages of tenured women faculty across disciplinary groupings of science (38.7% of women tenured versus 56.7% of men), social science (46.2% of women, 66.5% of men), engineering (37.2% of women, 61.8% of men), and health (40.0% of women, 51.2% of men) (Sabharwal & Corley, 2009).

Institutional differences in women's satisfaction can be seen in a small handful of studies. Charting how institutional type affects satisfaction is difficult as datasets have changed and as the Carnegie Classification system evolves. Carnegie stopped utilizing the Liberal Arts/Comprehensive classifications in 2000. Ethington, Smart and Zeltmann (1989) found that all faculty at liberal arts, two-year, and less research-intensive comprehensive institutions reported the higher levels of satisfaction (at both the institutional and department levels) than faculty at research universities. In addition, they found that women faculty at comprehensive and liberal arts colleges reported the highest levels of satisfaction overall (Ethington et al., 1989). The data from this study, however, are from 1984 so limited conclusions should be drawn regarding whether this study reflects the current satisfaction of faculty by institutional type. A similar study has not been conducted since, and it is not clear how satisfaction for faculty varies by institutional type and gender in the 21st century (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Women are overly represented in teaching-focused institutions such as community colleges and comprehensive institutions (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006); yet, most literature has focused on the satisfaction of women at research institutions. The majority of satisfaction studies featuring non-research institutions are set in community colleges (Antony & Valadez, 2002; Flowers, 2005; Kim et al., 2008; Twombly & Townsend, 2008; Wolf-Wendel et al., 2007). Studies of women at community colleges suggest that these institutions create more amenable environments for women with families (Wolf-Wendel et al., 2007). Community college faculty are consistently reported to be among the most satisfied of any group by institutional type (Twombly & Townsend, 2008), and the studies that do focus on satisfaction among community college faculty either do not find

a gender difference (Kim et al., 2008) or do not analyze gender (Antony & Valadez, 2002; Flowers, 2005).

Environmental conditions. Another element of Hagedorn's (2000) model of satisfaction is the environmental conditions faculty encounter, including collegial relationships, student quality and relationships, administration, and institutional climate and culture. A more recent group of studies has attempted to account for the systematic differences between women and men's satisfaction, and most of these studies have focused on how these environmental conditions –collegiality, student relationships, and climate and culture—differ for men and women. Women's satisfaction has been found to be related to internal relational support, while men's may derive from internal academic support (Bilimoria et al., 2006). Pre-tenure women place significantly more importance on collegial peer relationships than do tenured women (August & Waltman, 2004). In addition to findings about the importance of collegial relationships, Kelly and Fetridge (2012) found that relationships with students enhanced tenure track women's experiences, even while creating tensions about how they should be appropriately spending their time. Other qualitative studies specifically focused on the experiences of women of color also support the importance that student relationships play in women's experiences (Harley, 2007; Turner, 2002).

Although not studied directly in many of the studies of women's satisfaction, climate is often proffered as an explanation for gender differences (e.g., Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011). Climate, in these studies, is defined either as a gender-based sense of exclusion from the department or institution (Maranto & Griffin, 2010), a sense of hypervisibility or invisibility within their classroom, department, or institution (Crawford & MacLeod,

1990), or broadly as "the shared perceptions of the work environment" (Callister, 2006, p. 367). Many studies on satisfaction, however, do not define climate, and instead utilize a constellation of variables meant to represent climate as defined by particular national datasets (i.e., UCLA's HERI faculty survey, or Harvard's COACHE data). Maranto and Griffin (2010) note that few studies that discuss the "chilly climate" for faculty adequately theorize its causes and mechanisms, and often fail to differentiate between departmental and institutional climates. Callister (2006) suggests that departmental climate is responsible for mediating satisfaction for women faculty. However, even in studies using datasets in which departmental climate variables are available, many do not incorporate any measures to control or study the effects of these more localized institutional or departmental effects on satisfaction or other outcomes.

The majority of the studies on the satisfaction of women faculty use the same large national datasets (e.g., HERI's Faculty Survey, NCES' National Study of Postsecondary Faculty, NSF's Survey of Earned Doctorates, or Harvard's COACHE Survey) which may be reinforcing the patterns present in the literature about women's satisfaction. While Hagedorn's (2000) model is the most prominent understanding of satisfaction utilized, some studies made use of whatever satisfaction measures were contained in the datasets, and did not overtly theorize satisfaction. The drawback of the use of these large datasets is that they often hide the complexity introduced by faculty members' strong commitment to the faculty career (Olsen et al., 1995), their local and/or cosmopolitan perspective (Gouldner, 1957, 1958; Rhoades et al., 2008), or the lack of data at the departmental level (Callister, 2006). Given that many faculty lives are simultaneously lived at both the local department level and the institutional level, the importance of the department in shaping

women's experiences is key to capturing satisfaction. Departmental cultures and climates can vary widely within an individual school, college or unit, let alone across an entire institution. The few studies that employed mixed or qualitative methods produced further insights into this dynamic by highlighting the role that individual interactions and experiences played in affecting women faculty's satisfaction (Bilimoria et al., 2006; Gardner, 2012; Viers & Blieszner, 2004).

Departure and Intention to Leave

Another common outcome studied regarding faculty work is departure or turnover. Departure, or a faculty member leaving the institution for either a different faculty job or a different role altogether, is difficult to capture; most studies of departure focus on faculty members' intention or desire to leave, rather than the circumstances surrounding their actual departure. Intention to leave can be parsed in different ways: intention to leave their role, intention to leave their institution, or intention to leave academia altogether. If someone wishes to leave their role, for example, they may be happy at the institution and working in an academic environment, but no longer wish to remain a tenure-track faculty member. For someone who wants to leave their institution, they may wish to remain in the faculty role, but be at a different institution. Others may wish to leave academia for other enterprises such as for government or private sector work, or to start a career in another field altogether. Studying departure is incredibly complex; despite studies that show strong correlation between intention to leave and departure in the cases where departure occurs, it is not clear that all intention to leave results in a departure (Bluedorn, 1982; Lee & Mowday, 1987).

With only a handful of studies focusing on faculty members actual departure (Gardner, 2012, 2013; O'Meara, Bennett, & Niehaus, 2016; O'Meara, Lounder, & Campbell, 2014), understanding of what may actually induce a faculty member to leave their institution or academia is somewhat limited. Xu (2008a) suggests that intention to leave jobs or academia is mostly likely to be influenced by subjective perception of the work environment, rather than objective conditions. This means many faculty may be making sense of their place in their job or institution by comparing themselves to others and to other opportunities in the external environment. As such, many studies have attempted to capture the relationship between personal and environmental characteristics and intention to leave.

A majority of these studies have identified that faculty members' satisfaction with aspects of their jobs, their institutions, or their lives overall contribute to intentions to leave both institutions and academia more broadly (Daly & Dee, 2006; Rosser, 2004; Smart, 1990; Xu, 2008a). Callister (2006) suggests that department climate has a strong influence on both satisfaction and intention to leave; she defines climate in terms of faculty members' perceptions of their relationships and connection to others, the amount of support and information provided, and the sense of autonomy, meaning, and competence that faculty feel in their roles. Others have noted that the factors influencing intent to leave academia vary by discipline, with disciplines seeming to feature robust employment opportunities outside of academia, such as applied sciences, having the highest rates (Barnes et al., 1998; Kaminski & Geisler, 2012; Ryan et al., 2012; Xu, 2008b). This is not surprising, as Daly and Dee (2006) found that having a job opportunity negatively affects faculty members' intention to stay, in spite of the level of

satisfaction or organizational commitment that a faculty member may have. In this recent era of constrained resources, faculty who have not found instrumental support for accomplishing their goals at the institution and who feel compelled to obtain an outside offer to obtain those resources may consider those outside offers seriously (O'Meara et al., 2016). In addition, institutional actors often adhere to particular scripts to make meaning of faculty members' departure, leading to a blindness or ignorance of climate, satisfaction, or support issues that may contribute to actual departures (O'Meara et al., 2014).

The findings about intent to leave for women faculty are less clear than the overall findings. Some studies have found that gender does play a role in intention to leave (Barnes et al., 1998; Callister, 2006; Kaminski & Geisler, 2012; Smart, 1990; Xu, 2008a). However, two of these studies identify men as being more likely to leave (Barnes et al., 1998; Smart, 1990), and two studies condition women's higher rates of departure on their discipline (Kaminski & Geisler, 2012) or Biglan discipinary classification (Xu, 2008a). Callister (2006) finds a more steady relationship between gender and intention to leave, but suggests that women who are happy with their departmental climate have a reduced intention to leave. In some studies where satisfaction is modeled to predict intention to leave, women indicate lower levels of satisfaction but the gender effect is not reflected directly in intention to leave (e.g., Rosser, 2004). In her mixed methods study of gender, satisfaction, and departure for faculty at a research university, Gardner (2012) identified that women faculty at the institution had much lower rates of satisfaction with their career progression, their work being valued, their emotional wellbeing; women faculty also reported higher levels of isolation than men. The interviews Gardner conducted with

women faculty who had departed confirmed that this sense of dissatisfaction with recognition, salary, and the work itself were reasons they had left.

These studies of intention to leave and departure focus almost exclusively on faculty who hold tenure-track appointments. Women are overrepresented in non-tenure-track appointments, forming a bulk of the contingent workforce (Allan, 2011; Wolfinger, Mason, & Goulden, 2009). However, in comparison to their men counterparts, women PhDs in the contingent workforce are more likely to remain contingent, or to be out of work entirely. In a recent study of doctorate recipients, the National Science Foundation identified that women of all racial/ethnic backgrounds who were not working in science and engineering jobs overall were more likely than men to identify family commitments as a reason for working either part time or not at all (National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, 2015). While not every women has dependents upon which they are basing career decisions, it is clear that women are more likely than men to make decisions about their departure based on family responsibilities, and are more likely to stop out of the academic workforce entirely when they do have young children (Wolfinger et al., 2009).

Stress

Stress is another outcome commonly studied — and is often related to the study of fit. Studies of faculty stress have primarily utilized a single dataset, the Higher Education Research Institute's (HERI) Faculty Survey. Analyzing both national and local institutional data, the studies focusing on stress have universally found women to be more stressed than men overall, and particularly in response to particular kinds of work activities (Griffin, Bennett, & Harris, 2011; Hart & Cress, 2008; Thompson & Dey,

1998). Hart and Cress (2008) complemented their analysis of the HERI data by conducting focus groups with women faculty to unpack the findings about stress; women identified teaching as a labor intensive, stressful activity. Service was stressful for women as they reported that they were expected to do more, but were not rewarded for their efforts. Women identified committee work as a particular site of stress, where they often felt that they were not heard on committees and that, instead, men who offered the same ideas were acknowledged and rewarded. Finally, research activities were stressful, especially if the faculty engaged in research with a feminist or woman-focused slant. These findings were echoed in another mixed-methods study comparing Black women and men faculty (Griffin et al., 2011).

Productivity

One final major outcome studied for faculty, and of increasing interest to institutional processes such as tenure and promotion, is productivity. Productivity for faculty can be measured in a variety of ways. In its usual form, productivity is a measure of the research output – publications – by a given faculty member. Studies that focus on the productivity of women faculty, however, indicate that they are productive in service and teaching in addition to research, whether that work is rewarded by their institutions or not (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999; Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2011; Xie & Shauman, 1998). Xie and Shauman (1998) suggested that gender differences in publication productivity were diminishing over time. These changes may indicate stronger sorting measures for tracking women faculty into particular types of positions, or they may be a signal that women have become more savvy about their publication activities. One study of biochemistry faculty found that women published fewer articles over time and, despite

equally high citation indices, were less likely to be tenured; the authors concluded that quantity, and not quality, is a significant driver of tenure in their field (Long, Allison, & McGinnis, 1993). Long (1993) suggests that women may wait longer to submit manuscripts for publication, seeking a higher degree of quality and perfection in their work. Other studies suggest that women and faculty of color often feel their scholarship is scrutinized more harshly than White men (Griffin et al., 2013; Paterson, 2006); this may account for different productivity rates in some disciplines, or at least a different mentality about publication productivity for some faculty.

Women faculty at different institutional types define productivity differently, in light of the institutional goals. Faculty at liberal arts colleges devote significant time to student research and intellectual development, and faculty at research institutions emphasize publications (Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006). Women at research universities often feel pressure to choose between family and research careers; women faculty at community colleges, who do not face the same kinds of pressures for research productivity, are more satisfied with the balance of work and family they find (Wolf-Wendel et al., 2007).

Summary and Implications

Before reviewing the conclusions that can be drawn about women faculty experience from outcomes literature, a significant caveat must be addressed. Ideally, the literature would allow for conclusions to be drawn about the variation in experiences for women — allowing more finely grained understanding of how race, class, sexuality, and ability also play a role for women faculty experiences. Overwhelmingly, however, research on outcomes for faculty rarely include intersectional analyses, often lumping all women together and all people of color together, losing the ability to speak to the specific

experiences of women of color, when gender and race are included at all. Additionally, few studies include information about other aspects of faculty identity such as class, sexuality, or ability that may affect faculty experiences. This presents a major limitation of this review, and a significant gap in the literature that this study addresses only partially due to its scope and focus.

Women's outcomes overall suggest a qualitatively different set of experiences in the academy. First, women's satisfaction in the academy has consistently been reported as less than men's. Given the studies that show how women receive lower pay, experience diminished feelings of control over their career and time, experience hostile environments when their representation increases, and continue to be housed in departments with chilly climates, it would suggest that they might experience good fit at lower rates. Fit may occur at different levels for individuals: the job level (specific tasks of faculty work), the group level (department), the organization level (institution), and the career or vocational level (choice of profession) (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). As Olsen, Maple, and Stage (1995) suggest, faculty are generally thought to have good vocational fit, and some of the studies of satisfaction and fit indicate that this holds true (Castiglia, 2006). The prominence of person-vocational fit may make distinguishing organizational fit using quantitative, large data sets troublesome. In addition, findings about the role of departments in determining satisfaction and intent to leave (Castiglia, 2006) suggest that person-group fit may be the most important level of analysis for faculty.

In terms of departure, accounts of women's departure from academia or particular academic jobs are difficult to track. The literature broadly suggests that satisfaction and

perceptions of the work environment play a significant role in intention to leave. The literature also suggests that women are widely less satisfied with many elements of their faculty experiences, particularly those based in interpersonal dynamics. However, few of the studies show a significant gender-based trend in departure. Griffin, Phifer, Humphrey, and Hazelwood (2011) suggest that departure may not always lead to a professor resigning her post, but may in fact take the form of "leaning out" or disengaging with certain activities and investments at the department level as a way to deal with hostile climates and racism. Other studies have identified that some women may choose not to pursue, for example, a full professorship because they do not see the benefits or believe the effort to achieve full professor takes away from their attempts at a balanced life (Shaw, 2007). Therefore, understanding women's departure may be more complex than purely charting changing jobs or professions; women may depart at several points along their academic career, choosing non-academic work, choosing or being forced to accept contingent work, or choosing to stall themselves at particular points in their careers because of competing demands from home or family. This push towards contingency due to pressures on women faculty to balance work and family has been called by some the "mommy track" (Wolfinger et al., 2009). The concurrent rise of contingency with women and people of color's increasing enfranchisement in the academy has created a challenging situation to chart their entry and departure into academia; studies and efforts focused on battling contingency should be making note of the demographic make-up of the contingent faculty workforce (Cross & Goldenberg, 2009; Kezar & Gehrke, 2014; Kezar & Maxey, 2015).

Studies of women faculty and stress indicate that women's experiences with certain activities, particularly service, promote stress. It could be that women are more comfortable expressing their stress. However, when given an opportunity to elaborate on their experiences, men tend to express stress as a function of time management challenges and women as a function of the nature of the relationships and interactions in which they engage (Griffin et al., 2011). This suggests that women approach faculty work with a different mindset, which is reflected in studies that show women faculty are more motivated and interested in the intrinsic rewards of faculty life (Sabharwal & Corley, 2009).

Pushes from external demands for accountability have begun to shape the conversation about what matters regarding faculty work, changing the nature of who and what determines success (O'Meara & Campbell, 2011; O'Meara et al., 2008). Faculty reward systems serve as one way in which messages are conveyed about who and what kind of work "fits" within the institution. Therefore, reward systems that focus on one particular form of productivity (typically scholarship of discovery) reward only particular orientations, values, and priorities. Bellas and Toutkoushian (1999) suggest a variety of ways of framing productivity, recognizing more than just a publication record by acknowledging public scholarship, community engagement, and other activities. This may reflect a greater diversity of contributions to the academy, and provide multiple narratives about who fits.

Beyond providing a more amenable and welcoming environment, reframing productivity in broader terms has institutional benefits as well. When productivity is reframed in terms of multiple forms of scholarship, and varying kinds of productivity are

rewarded, institutions find that faculty work more closely aligns with institutional mission (O'Meara, 2005). In her analysis of published faculty narratives, Ropers-Huilman (2000) suggests that women faculty place particular emphasis on the “ability to engage in scholarship for social change, teaching and learning relationships, colleagues and collaboration, and coherency” (p. 23). In many ways, women are filling the unstated, yet mission driven, needs of the academy by engaging in scholarship for the public good, valuing and advancing collegial environments, and supporting students and student learning.

Extant studies of fit assess how the stated organizational needs match what individuals offer, and may miss how women contribute to institutions, thus creating their own kind of fit. This misalignment and blindness to these unstated needs is reflected in promotion and tenure policies that overemphasize research and teaching activities despite placing strong service burdens on women and people of color. Women faculty at the associate and full level at research universities are asked to engage in non-research opportunities (i. e. teaching and service) more often than men, and may feel constrained by gender role norms to agree to these responsibilities (O'Meara, Kuvaeva, Nyunt, Waugaman, & Jackson, 2017). This work is often not recognized as faculty work; instead, it is viewed as voluntary and unnecessary, to the detriment of those who perform it (Golombisky, 2011).

Ropers-Huilman’s (2000) comments regarding a coherent life anticipate some of the outcomes seen in the productivity literature. She suggests that women faculty seek to go beyond “balance” to integrate their identities and actions as scholars, community members, mothers, daughters, sisters, and colleagues. In fact, some studies have found

that satisfaction with life outside faculty work is positively predictive of satisfaction with faculty work (Ecklund & Lincoln, 2011). And, as the research on productivity suggests, women may be seeking a coherence and complementarity between their work and out-of-work lives. Fit, then, for women, may be a function of that sense of coherence and complementarity within their work lives and out-of-work lives, rather than an assessment of congruence between themselves and their institutions.

Inequality Regimes in the Organization

Studies of socialization into institutional culture may provide insight into one set of cultures and world-views that shape the faculty experience, but they do not account for why women's outcomes are systematically different than men's across most institutional types. In reviewing women's outcomes, it becomes obvious that the culture in which faculty are socialized produces different outcomes for men and women. Turning a critical eye towards the culture of academe is necessary to understand what is happening for women. Cultures are not neutral, and their elaboration in academe is subject to the current and historical trends in the structure of the academy including increasing corporatization and academic capitalism (Rhoads & Slaughter, 1997), historical domination by men in the education enterprise (Thelin, 2004), and styles of relationship that prioritize competition and individualism over collaboration and collectivism (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Therefore, the trend for women to approach academic work with different expectations and goals than men may result in a cultural mismatch.

Cultural mismatching, or mis-fitting, may be one cause of women's more negative outcomes in the academy. Culture, Alvesson (2002) argues, serves as blinders or a "world-closure" that prevents organizational members from envisioning an alternative

vision of what the organization is, does, and should do (p. 37). Culture closes worlds via elaboration of asymmetrical power — with those embedded in leadership and positions of authority setting a culture that reinforces dominant norms and values. A focus on power does not have to entail domination, but rather allows the identification of the subtle control of "the correct ways to perceive, think, and feel" (Schein, 1984, p. 3). Hence, power motivates certain rewarded activities and individuals by identifying them as correct and silences certain critiques or alternative ways of being by identifying them as irrelevant or wrong (Alvesson, 2002).

This section, therefore, examines an elaboration of power within academic institutions that has an effect on women faculty experiences. Literature focusing on women's experiences as academics are examined here through the lens of Acker's (19902006) theories of inequality regimes and gendered organizations, which suggests that gendered, racialized, and classed processes within organizations shape what is possible (and what is not) for organization members. Viewing women faculty experiences, as evidenced in the literature, through the lens of these processes highlights why academic women have different experiences than men, and provides an initial critique of the dominant culture endemic to academe.

The Gendered Organization and Its Gender Processes

Evidence of the mismatch, and the labeling of certain behaviors as irrelevant or wrong, between many women faculty and the cultures in which they are embedded are highlighted in recent qualitative studies of faculty women. These studies have noted that women identify their navigation of the academy as "wrong" (e. g. Griffin et al., 2013; Haley & Jaeger, 2012). Many women faculty are recognizing that their approach to

faculty work is not in alignment with the dominant narrative or world-view validated by academic culture.

For women faculty, this sense of being wrong or irrelevant may be particularly heightened by higher education organizations functioning as gendered organizations, resulting in a masculinized ideal worker. The masculinized ideal worker is created via the nexus of a variety of university practices that structure the behavior of its employees by gender (Acker, 1990). Acker (1990, 2006) argues that organizations are made up of processes that order life through patterns of and distinctions between gender, race, and class. Gender, race, and class effects in institutions are not neutral or after-effects (Acker, 2006); they structure processes through determining what is "advantaged and disadvantaged, dynamics of exploitation and control, frames for action and emotion, and definitions of meaning and identity" (Acker, 1990, p. 146).

Gender-structuring processes manifest in organizations in the concept of the masculinized ideal worker through the meeting of two functions: abstract jobs and disembodied workers. Abstract jobs are created without reference to the embodied person who will perform them. The disembodied worker is a being (person) without physical, emotional, or non-work needs or desires. This disembodied worker is completely devoted to the abstract job. Acker (1990) argues that this disembodied worker has been premised on a masculine worker who is able to devote himself entirely to the job and has another person – typically a wife – who takes care of everything else, including his personal needs, children, and other desires. Since organizations create these job descriptions premised on this ideal, they are inherently masculinized positions. These gendered assumptions are also written into the hierarchy of organizations, where unfettered

commitment to the job is considered a prerequisite for promotion and advancement. In addition to being a gendered conceptualization, these inequality regimes also assume certain racial, cultural, and class formations of family, responsibility, and availability to work (Acker, 2006). Tierney and Bensimon (1996) identified the presence of a phenomenon they labeled the "structured absence" of family, bodily, gender, and personal life in their discussion of faculty socialization (p. 91). Faculty in their study discussed how who they were apart from their productivity was ignored or only tolerated in a variety of situations — particularly in relation to family and children.

Acker (1990) identifies five interacting gender processes that reinforce the idealized, disembodied masculine worker. The first is the structuring of divisions by gender. These well-documented divisions occur in space, labor, power, and in spaces of labor markets, the state, and family. The second process involves the elaboration of symbols that reify (and sometimes contradict) these gendered specifications. These symbols take the form of images that serve as ideal types that workers, parents, students and others measure their worth and acceptability against. The third set of processes involves the gender structure of relations between men and women. These include both communication strategies and roles that reinforce dominance and submission. The fourth process structures individual identity, setting ways of performing, or doing, gender (West & Zimmerman, 1987, 2009). The fifth process involves gender's role in constructing fundamental social processes, and particularly organizational processes. These processes are not only embedded within the organizational structure, they interact with each other, creating gender structures in the organization.

While inequality regimes function to structure power in organizations through gendered, racialized, and classed processes (Acker, 2006), this review of literature focuses specifically on gendered processes. Gendered inequality regimes maintain differing levels of visibility, legitimacy, and compliance mechanisms (Acker, 2006). Intersectionality suggests that gendered processes vary for individuals as result of their multiple identities and social locations (Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007; i.e. their race and class; Acker, 2012; Crenshaw, 1991). When possible, this review of gendered processes notes these variations.

Gendered interactions. Gendered processes play out through interactions and relationships in the academy. In terms of relationships between academics, Bronstein and Farnsworth (1998) find that men feel more appreciated by their colleagues than women in the early faculty career stage (pre-tenure or in the first six years), and women at all stages were less likely to feel free to express themselves in their departments or their research. Women early career faculty have also been found to have less positive relationships with senior faculty than their men colleagues, resulting in limitations to their access to mentoring, networks, information about successful strategies, and a lowered sense of belonging in their departments (Ponjuan et al., 2011). These studies show that relationships within the academy vary by gender, whether because of a perceived chilly climate, lack of access to collegial relationships, or gendered dynamics to their interactions.

Women and men faculty face different expectations from students as well. Women faculty engage in much higher levels of student support activities such as mentoring and teaching entry-level classes (Allan, 2011; Ford, 2011; Park, 1996). Despite this increased

activity around student support, students may penalize women for not enacting caring or motherly-type orientations (Kardia & Wright, 2004). Men faculty, however, can be forgetful, neglectful, or harsh with students, and these traits are attributed to faculty members' brilliance (Ford, 2011; Kardia & Wright, 2004; Smith & Johnson-Bailey, 2012). When men do demonstrate caring traits, they receive disproportionate recognition for their dedication to students' development.

Another difference in interactions is based in how women interact with each other. Women often engage in co- or peer-mentoring relationships with each other (McGuire & Reger, 2003; Ponjuan et al., 2011). Cooper (2006) writes about the "sista network" as a key way that women of color survive the academy — providing needed support, reality checking, and connection in predominantly White spaces. While women often find support from each other in their efforts to succeed, there is also evidence that women are placed in the position of competing for resources and advancement with each other. Latina scholars have also identified the role that co-mentoring has played in helping to affirm their identities and to provide spaces where they were not forced to choose between being Latina and being scholars (Espino, Muñoz, & Kiyama, 2010; Gonzales & Murakami, 2013; Núñez, Murakami, & Gonzales, 2015; Oliva et al., 2013; Sulé, 2011). Due to perceptions that women may be in their positions because of affirmative action policies, and to the other barriers that women face in interactions, symbols, and so on, women may find themselves competing for resources and advancement (Bailyn, 2003; Cummins, 2012; Subramaniam & Wyer, 1998). This competition reduces women's opportunities for solidarity in addressing systematic inequities.

Gendered division of labor. A plethora of research exists documenting how labor in the academic setting is structured via gender. These studies of faculty time allocation and productivity provide insights into how the activities of academics follow particular patterns based on gender. Some accounts argue that women professors place comparable priority on research as men (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999; Toutkoushian, 1999). Other accounts pose that women show a higher preference for teaching and service activities, which is reflected in how they spend their time (Menges & Exum, 1983; Olsen et al., 1995; Sax et al., 2002; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). The assumption that women have unconstrained choices can be faulty as women may be asked to teach a heavier load of large, core undergraduate courses, to carry heavier service responsibilities (Cress & Hart, 2009; Hart & Cress, 2008; Winslow, 2010) and may have further constraints on their time due to family obligations (Wolfinger et al., 2009). Women are also asked to carry heavier loads of service earlier in their careers than men – often taking on program administration or chair roles at the associate, or even assistant, level (Misra, Lundquist, Holmes, & Agiomavritis, 2013).

Schuster and Finkelstein (2006), among others, note other kinds of gender divisions in the academy. First, women faculty are still underrepresented at the full level, seeming to stall out or get stuck at the associate and opt out at the assistant professor levels (Allan, 2011). Additionally, women are found in greater numbers outside the tenure track, and are less likely to cross into tenure track positions than men (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Women are also more heavily represented in all ranks of faculty and administrative leadership at community colleges, where they achieve the greatest parity (Allan, 2011). Across all these sectors and appointment types, women are

underrepresented in high status institutions and positions, and oversaturated in lower status ones. This feminization of certain areas of the academy has made it more difficult for gains to be made for off-track faculty, an increasing issue of concern for individuals who care about equity in the academy (Cross & Goldenberg, 2009).

While the division of labor in the academy is patterned along gendered lines, it is clear that divisions of labor in the home also influence faculty work patterns. A arm of literature that explores productivity for women faculty (and faculty generally) focuses on the role of family, marriage, and children (Bowman & Feeney, 2011; Fox & Mohapatra, 2007; Fox & Stephan, 2001; Jacobs & Winslow, 2004; Morrison, Rudd, & Nerad, 2011; Sax et al., 2002; Winslow, 2010). Generally, this literature finds that women are more negatively affected by having a family in their attempts to maintain research productivity (Hunter & Leahey, 2010; Kyvik, 1990; Stack, 2004), and the growth and volume of their productivity varies. As women advance in the academy, they are less likely to be married or have children (Mason & Goulden, 2004; Wolfinger, Mason, & Goulden, 2008; Xie & Shauman, 1998), or make the choice to have fewer children than they would prefer, which contributes negatively to their work and life satisfaction (Ecklund & Lincoln, 2011). Having a family also affects faculty members' visibility in their fields, an effect for both genders, as they tend to have less flexibility for travel to academic conferences and other networking opportunities (Hunter & Leahey, 2010). Women faculty are more likely to be married to another academic, complicating matters for their management of work-life responsibilities, and for making dual-career advancement decisions (Mason & Goulden, 2004). This literature indicates that women feel pressure to choose between

family and research careers; though institutional priorities may mitigate the force of this pressure at different institutional types (Wolf-Wendel et al., 2007)

Women and men's experiences with tenure and promotion also reinforce a gendered division of labor. Several studies have documented the pressure on women to fulfill service or teaching obligations, and the costs of those pressures in promotion and tenure. While tenure requirements operate under the rhetoric of merit, several scholars question how truly meritorious tenure processes are (Griffin et al., 2013; Thornton, 2013). Some women scholars have reported that they receive harsher penalties in the tenure process for low teaching evaluations, despite shared comments by men and women that teaching was not valued in their institutional context (Griffin et al., 2013). This indicates that teaching is associated with women's work, and that they receive harsher penalties when they do not exceed those expectations. Women have also been found to be more at risk for harsh student evaluations, often a proxy for teaching quality, due to the expectations they be excellent teachers, despite much wider latitude given for men's teaching activities (Kardia & Wright, 2004; Smith & Johnson-Bailey, 2012).

These patterns that have been documented in the research on faculty activities demonstrate how the gendered division of labor occurs. While women may exhibit a preference for teaching and service (or care-taking activities of the academy), they may also be adopting those preferences due to structures that determine which roles are allowed to them and required by them for success. While many views of the gendered division of labor highlight the barriers to women's access to the privileged masculine position, they do not take into account the penalties that accrue for not wholeheartedly embracing the labor assigned to them.

Symbols and images. The symbols and images of ideal success in the academy are an evolving target that continue to shape the experience of faculty work. Thornton (2013) argues that the ideal, or the symbols that embody the academic, have been evolving over time. This role has changed over time from "being a pre-eminent teacher (the nineteenth-century Newmanite ideal), to being a pre-eminent teacher and researcher (the twentieth-century ideal), to being a pre-eminent researcher and academic capitalist (the twenty-first-century ideal)" (p. 133). Tierney and Bensimon (1996) suggest that prior to the civil and women's rights movements that opened the academy to women and people of color, the image of the professor was bound by the "academic man," evoking an image of an older White man with elbow patches on his tweed jacket, smoking a pipe, and pontificating on grand ideas. Empirical evidence regarding how these ideals translate into symbols and images is difficult to identify, particularly as it relates to faculty members' understanding of their jobs. However, there are some studies that show where images and symbols might play out in how faculty envision their work lives, how they interpret messages in the work place, and the possibilities that are open to them as academics.

Ideal images of academics are often tied to disciplinary values in addition to those of the institution or academe more broadly. Studies of science have shown that science textbooks and lectures often show bias towards men scientists and regularly depict generic scientists as men (e.g., Blickenstaff, 2005). While these findings are not explicitly about academics, some studies have argued that scientist has become interchangeable with academic at many institutions (e.g., Henkel & Vabo, 2006). I argue that the scientist has particularly come to be identified as the ideal academic in its most current iteration. Science and its related fields of technology, engineering, and math (or STEM) are the

most readily mobilized for the technology transfer function that dominates university priorities (Thornton, 2013). Additionally, the deep funding that continues to be available for science research and the concurrent pressures on faculty to generate revenue streams make science one of the reigning ideals (Rhoads & Slaughter, 1997).

The scientist image may be the most dominant image valued in the academy, but there are other archetypes in operation as well. In anthropology, for example, Mills and Berg (2010) find that the ideal is for a wholly committed, disembodied academic who identifies anthropology as a deep-seated vocational choice, a life commitment and identity. This image persists despite, they argue, the very embodied nature of anthropological field work which requires scholars to embed themselves into communities and material cultures. This emphasis on the disembodied, devoted worker, despite the embodied experience of anthropology, reinforces the masculinized, ideal worker image central to Acker's theory.

Other scholars have argued that similar tensions exist in their disciplines as well. Utilizing Valian's (2000) concept of gender schemas (or beliefs about gender and gender differences that are unconscious or subliminal), Poltera (2011) argues that women philosophers evoke a schema conflict. The schema for philosopher (logical, aggressive, hyper rational and masculine) is in conflict with the schema for women (emotional, political, feminine), creating greater barriers for success for women philosophers. Beyond discipline, some studies have identified how narratives about women in the academy promote certain kinds of womanhood within the academy. Berkovitch, Waldman, and Yanay (2012), in their analysis of university publications and documents, note that even as women are increasingly featured in publications and documents, the images of these

women remain feminized and restricted. Thus, like the contradictions that Poltera suggests, women are allowed certain roles and perspectives, which may be at odds with dominant views of the ideal academic, reinforcing their position as other.

Components of identity. Studies of faculty identity are fairly rare, which limits claims about how the gendered organization affects identity. Levin and colleagues (2013) utilize social identity theory to suggest that faculty of color position or foreground acceptable identities in order to enhance self-esteem and reduce identity conflicts at institutions with primarily White staffs. This suggests there is flexibility in academic identity, and there are often conflicts that may exist between the expectations in the workplace and an individual's identity positions. Henkel (2005; 2006) suggests that academic identities are informed at both the disciplinary and institutional levels; therefore, academic identities are contingent on discipline and institutional contexts.

In their qualitative study of women of color in science, Carlone and Johnson (2007) link the development and maintenance of science identity to socialization, noting that learning experiences and introduction to the norms of science brings one into the science community and fosters a sense of membership. Carlone and Johnson found that a key component of the formation of a science identity was recognition and identification from influential others, such as faculty, of the person's identity as a scientist. Therefore, in order to cement an identity as an academic, one must not only adopt the norms that exist, but also be identified as adhering to those norms by others in the academy. Mentors shape the kinds of researcher identities that are considered valuable; during the process of "becoming" a researcher or academic, graduate students and early career faculty may feel forced to forgo or ignore important aspects of their home cultures, preferences, or

identities to be successfully “identified” as scholars and researchers (Hall & Burns, 2009). In one study of post-doctoral fellows in the biological sciences, several women believed they received messages that their “womanly” behaviors, interests, or attitudes were not acceptable as they sought to reconcile their science careers with their identities (Griffin et al., 2015).

Research has also explored how a science or academic identity is formed, and the values that structure that process. In Subramaniam and Wyer’s (1998) study, women graduate students in the sciences described a “Master Culture,” a feature of academic life of which the men faculty in the study were mostly unaware. This master culture evidenced itself in norms for appropriate dress in the lab, what socializing outside the lab looked like, and the amount of time that was needed to be spent in the lab in terms of face-time.

Self-efficacy, or one’s beliefs about her ability to engage in particular acts, may help strengthen a pathway to an academic identity — and is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for identification as a scientist or other academic (Estrada, Woodcock, Hernandez, & Schultz, 2010). Women faculty have been found, in some studies, to have lower scores of self-efficacy, particularly around research-related tasks (Landino & Owen, 1988). These lower scores in self-efficacy may have consequences for research productivity (Vasil, 1992). They also indicate the challenges that exist in integrating the academic identity with a feminine identity. Participants in one focus group study of PhD holders indicated that women participants consistently received messages identifying particular behaviors and viewpoints as being classed feminine and thus undesirable (Griffin et al., 2015). These discouraged behaviors included being too quiet, volunteering

in the community, engaging in teaching, and exhibiting emotion. These behaviors were consistently devalued and stifled by their faculty mentors during graduate school, leading to a diminished ability to integrate these two elements of their identities successfully. These messages led some participants in this study to want to leave academia, some to want to stay and fix things, and others to just manage the contradictions as best they could (Griffin et al., 2015).

Social structures. The fundamental organizing social structure within academia is the tenure and promotion review process. Tierney and Bensimon (1996) argue that although the tenure and promotion process was originally designed as one way to protect academic freedom, in its current state and context, it functions more as a socializing agent that inculcates faculty into particular norms. They go on to argue, based on interviews with faculty, that women faculty are often asked to engage in both “smile” and “mom” work in their efforts to gain tenure."Smile work” is evidencing and enacting an obliging nature that does not challenge or question the responsibilities placed on them."Mom work” is engaging in the care work that has been mentioned previously. Women became especially aware of the disembodied, ideal worker narrative when their own embodiments, particularly through pregnancy, suddenly marked them with difference.

In one study, women’s pre-tenure evaluations began much earlier than men’s, with a lot of “promise” being granted in men’s favor, while women were expected to prove their worth (Winkler, 2000). This came into play in faculty hiring when men were hired at the associate and women at the assistant level, even when their experiences were similar or the woman had more relevant experience. In another study, the disparate assessment of when and which men or women were “ready” played a role in the distribution of key

responsibilities in the department that often had later consequences for promotion and tenure. An example included women being assigned to teach mostly introductory seminars, then being critiqued for not developing upper-level courses in topics that would advance their research and develop graduate student interest (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996).

Tenure also forms, in terms of Acker's (1990) theory, the gateway for one form of hierarchy in the academy. Tenure ensures that those who have demonstrated their unwavering commitment to the job pass through, while those who have not demonstrated that commitment are ejected from their organizations. Several studies have documented how information regarding tenure requirements tends to be nebulous at best, or safely guarded by an old boy's network at work (Cooper, 2006). Women, on average, are more dissatisfied with tenure review processes (Lawrence et al., 2011), likely due to lack of collegial and mentoring relationships. Women, and others who are different from the ideal academic, are then systematically kept at the lowest rungs of the professional ladder.

Summary and Implications

This body of literature suggests that not only are women at risk for general misalignment with their institutional cultures, they may also be at the mercy of regimes of power and inequality that set up particular roles for them as women in the institution. These regimes may place them in a position to be expected to engage in extended care taking (Harley, 2007) or to be willing and silent servants to institutional demands for service (Hogan, 2004; Misra et al., 2013; O'Meara, 2002; Ward, 2003). Additionally, women who choose to have children may come up against a stereotype that they may lose

interest in their academic career or commitment to meeting departmental or institutional goals to lose interest in their career once they choose to have children (Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006).

Viewing the literature through the lens of inequality regimes highlights the particular "glass obstacle course" that women faculty must navigate (De Welde & Laursen, 2011). Institutionally embedded gender beliefs and practices may set up barriers for women faculty to achieve success or to feel as though they are successful. On the other hand, women faculty may find that if they prefer feminized roles, the academy is offering them exactly the kinds of opportunities they want to engage in; unfortunately, many institutions do not reward those behaviors with tenure or promotion (Misra et al., 2013; O'Meara, 2002).

However, faculty are not just victims of these dynamics. Women faculty find ways to manage, mitigate, and resist these expectations throughout their careers. Women faculty navigate these expectations and stereotypes by making choices, recognizing that some decisions may come with greater institutional penalties than others (Cress & Hart, 2009; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011). Women's experiences with the gendered organization may be significant in shaping a sense of fit and creating work environments that perpetuate cycles of inequity. Acknowledging these inequality regimes does not mean that women's experiences in the academy have been predetermined; instead, they highlight power relations perpetuating systemic challenges that could be changed.

Studies of Faculty Fit

While there is a large body of research on fit focused on the business world, there is surprisingly little empirical research on fit in academia. Since fit features so prominently

in most everyday discussions of the faculty hiring and tenure processes, this lack of attention may be due to a general sense that everyone already knows what it means. The literature on fit for faculty is limited, and deploys different definitions and levels of analysis for person-environment fit. Few studies focus specifically on how gender, race, or class affects fit for faculty. While some studies are grounded firmly in the fit theories espoused by management and organizational theorists Chatman (1989) and Pervin (1968), many offer no theoretical explanation for fit, but rather rely on colloquial understanding of the term.

Theories of person-environment fit have been used to model occupational satisfaction and performance since the 1960s (Pervin, 1968). Person-environment fit theories argue that individuals' sense of fit within an environment is based on the degree to which individual and organizational characteristics are in alignment, particularly around personality traits, values, and orientations to work priorities (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). In particular, Chatman (1989) defines fit as "the congruence between the norms and values of organizations and the values of persons" (p. 339). Kristof (1996) extends Chatman by suggesting that fit functions as the outcome of an organization filling the needs of an individual, of an individual filling the needs of an organization, or both. These two perspectives can be classified as supplementary, or the matching of attributes and values, and complementary, the mutual meeting of needs (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Perspectives on global theories of person-environment fit incorporate both strands of thinking, and consider fit at multiple levels: the job level (specific tasks), the group level, and the organization level, the career or vocational level (choice of profession) (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

This study takes this global view as well, incorporating a view of fit as both supplementary and complementary, and taking into account multiple levels of fit.

Jansen and Kristof-Brown (2006) propose a multi-dimensional model of person-environment fit incorporating individual, environmental, and temporal characteristics that contribute to fit assessments at different levels. The varying saliency, or meaningfulness, of the fit assessments at the vocational, organization, group, and job levels contribute to outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment, withdrawal, and adjustment. The individual characteristics included in the model include agreeableness, conscientiousness, social value, and achievement orientation and are best described as attitudinal. No individual-level socio-demographic characteristics are taken into account. Perhaps in attempts to distinguish fit from concepts such as organizational climate, theorists are reluctant to consider how fit may be tempered by individuals' socio-demographic positions of power, privilege, or the lack thereof. I argue that such demographic characteristics play a key role in fit determinations due to the institutionalization of biases and power into organizations, and should not be left out of any comprehensive model of fit.

Faculty Fit

Lindholm (2003) has advanced the most thorough study of fit, focused on research university faculty; her study is grounded in the theoretical framings of Kristof-Brown (2003) and Chatman (1989). Using interview methods, she explored how men and women's experiences of organizational fit affect their sense of vitality. Focusing on the interaction of individuals with institutional factors, Lindholm's participants expressed the role of structural (leadership and resources) and relational (intellectually rich, collegial interactions) elements that contributed to their vitality as faculty members. Each element

was important for only a small portion of the faculty she interviewed. For example, in terms of intellectual support, some women faculty and faculty of color participants suggested that key sources of support were outside their home departments, with "extra-departmental" affiliations providing creative engagement and support (p. 138). On the other hand, White men were more likely to identify the home department as their key source of intellectual engagement and support.

Most compelling in Lindholm's study was that there was little agreement among the faculty she interviewed about what was important for their fit. Although she identifies three main themes, the sources of these kinds of support varied widely, as well the importance that faculty placed on them. Her analysis did not reveal distinctive sub-group differences, but her participants suggested that fit may be a greater challenge for historically underrepresented groups, and she suggests that further research needs to explore this dynamic.

While Lindholm's study is certainly the most comprehensive to date, some elements suggest different paths for this study. First, Lindholm's study did not center "fit" as the concept of focus. Instead, the study connects fit with another outcome, vitality, while borrowing a definition of fit from the management literature. While doing an excellent job connecting these concepts, a dense and nuanced development of fit in the academic context was not advanced with the study. Second, Lindholm's study operated by asking participants fairly directly about their feelings of fit; however, as Shipp and Jansen (2011) suggest, this is often a subconscious process, and direct questions about fit may not elicit much of a response, or may elicit "cover stories," or acceptable accounts of happenings, perspectives, and understandings. Finally, as with a majority of studies on fit, what is

being fit into — the organization and its structures, cultures, and practices — remains unexamined and is treated as non-problematic. These are the starting place for contributing new understanding of how fit functions for one group of faculty (women), understanding this process through narratives about their experiences at one institutional site (a liberal arts college), and how it is structured by the organization through inequality regimes and institutional ruling relations (Acker, 2006; Smith, 2005).

Other studies that have used the concept of fit in the literature on faculty have varied in definitions and operationalization, and, like Lindholm (2003), have used the concept as a predictor of other outcomes. Few have been clearly tied to the organizational literatures, and most have not been clear about what level of person-environment fit they were studying, or whether the level of fit mattered for their study. These include a study connecting fit to productivity (Blackburn & Bentley, 1993), fit as predictive of job satisfaction (Olsen et al., 1995), fit as predictive of intention to leave (Ryan et al., 2012), fit as predictive of satisfaction and organizational commitment (Castiglia, 2006), and fit as related to faculty burnout (Shanafelt et al., 2009).

Blackburn and Bentley (1993) borrowed from the person-environment fit literature to suggest that stress is the product of poor person-environment fit, and that stress would have a negative effect on productivity. In particular, they define stress as the product of a "discrepancy between a person's motivations, abilities, or values and the corresponding opportunities, demands, or constraints of the workplace" (Blackburn & Bentley, 1993, p. 726). Using this definition to identify measures of stress, they operationalize lack of fit generating stress as a disparity between amount of effort given to research versus the desired amount, and the amount of research effort expected by their institution versus

their desired amount. They also included personal and environmental moderators that reduce or strengthen the effect of stress on productivity. Blackburn and Bentley (1993) found that stress was higher in the sciences at almost all institutional types, but especially at research universities. Personal characteristics, such as a strong interest in research and high rates of self-competence and self-efficacy, were most likely to reduce the effect of stress; environmental factors, such as support, did little to enhance productivity for stressed faculty. This 1993 study does include a gender analysis; interest in research was a major moderator for women, reducing the effect of stress from significant to not significant. Self-competence was also a moderator on stress but self-efficacy was not.

Blackburn and Bentley's study is of interest here because of the inclusion of both personal and environmental characteristics, and the conclusion that changing the environment may not be as useful as helping faculty become better researchers. Given that the environmental features included how well other faculty were aware of their work, awareness of support services for research, actual student support provided for research, and the role of grants, it is clear that the kinds of environmental features included could still be highly dependent on disparities of treatment towards faculty based on gendered cultures or cultures built upon inequality regimes.

In another study on faculty fit, Olsen, Maple, and Stage (1995) assessed job satisfaction as a result of fit for research university faculty. Fit was measured in terms of perceived clarity of tenure process, discrepancy between real and ideal criteria for tenure, recognition and support, and satisfaction with academic department. According to their model, these fit elements were shaped by faculty professional role interests and professional satisfaction, and indirectly by gender, minority status, rank, and discipline.

None of these measures of fit are encompassed in a given theoretical framing of fit, and satisfaction at different levels is peppered throughout the model, muddying whether satisfaction predicts fit or is predicted by fit. This may be anticipating future models which see fit as an ongoing, cyclical process (i. e. Shipp and Jansen, 2011), but it is not elaborated as such in their study. At its core, Olsen, Maple and Stage's model was built on a congruence point of view on fit, while not adhering to the theoretical tenets of such a view. The authors found that gender and minority status affected perceptions of recognition and support, which was predictive of overall satisfaction. The 1995 study, as with many others, offered an operationalization of fit, but no theory of fit. Its findings and methods contribute to this study by showing the potential impact on fit assessments of minoritized identities and other individual characteristics not included in most models or theories of fit.

Ryan, Healy, and Sullivan (2012) conceptualized fit in their study of faculty intent to leave as a sense of feeling valued and congruence between the values and priorities of individuals and organizations. They found that fit was not predictive of intent to leave the institution. Utilizing HERI Faculty Survey data for a single institution, factor analysis revealed a "fit" factor including items about feeling good about the direction of their (faculty) lives, feeling that work adds meaning to their lives, and alignment between their work and personal values. While in line, in many ways, with my proposed argument for fit, they do little to ground these factors in literature; that which was cited in the review would be considered tangential at best, and mostly was focused on institutional support.

Ryan, Healy, and Sullivan find that while their fit factor did not predict intention to leave for another institution, an increasing sense of fit did reduce the likelihood of an

intention to leave academe altogether. This suggests that faculty who can make fit work within an individual institution may be likely to assume that their fit is with academia generally, or that the challenges they face in creating a sense of fit remain regardless of the institution. It also could be that person-vocation fit is the most important sense of fit for faculty — and that it may be difficult to assess fit at the institutional level.

The prominence of values and meaningfulness in their factor provides a more complicated view of fit than many other studies, and adds evidence to Ropers-Huilman's concept of coherence mattering more, perhaps, than congruence or complement. Ryan, Healy, and Sullivan's factor analysis also provides some promise for using a national data set like HERI's to capture a more nuanced view of fit which incorporates a sense of coherence. While this study does not use such a data set, it may prove useful in the future to consider how findings generated in this study might be extended or supported by using such a set of data.

Castiglia (2006), referencing Chatman, studied how faculty at a private, religiously affiliated college assessed their fit in a changing environment, and whether that sense of fit affected their overall satisfaction and organizational commitment. Castiglia particularly focused on changes in fit due to shifting level of values congruence between individual and organization. The Q-sort exercise (O'Reilly III, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991) was used to allow the researcher to identify a cultural profile for the institution as well as assess the relationship between that organizational culture profile and the expressed ideal culture profile of faculty members. Castiglia acknowledged, however, that the measure's development for corporate environments made its application to higher education problematic. Despite these issues, Castiglia found a significant relationship

between person-organizational values fit and organizational commitment. On the other hand, no relationship was found between job satisfaction and fit. Unfortunately, Castiglia's study does not compare across different points of time during the change process, and the changes in the organization are described as context rather than measured using the Q-sort or any other measures. Castiglia's study helps build the case for my study by focusing on a changing organization, and acknowledging that those changes may incite changes in organizational members' sense of fit, despite the limitations inherent in her study's design.

Finally, in their study on burnout by academic faculty in medical schools, Shanafelt and colleagues (2009) measure fit in terms of the percentage of time faculty members spent on their favored activity. Faculty who spent less than 20% of their time in their most preferred activity had the highest rate of burnout. This suggests, perhaps, a poor fit, but may also reflect other dynamics of the work as it is a limited measure. Like Olsen, Maple and Stage (1995), there is no theoretical account offered for fit, and this study adds to the range of outcomes that become attached to studies of fit. Shanafelt and colleagues do not suggest that the faculty are responsible for poor choice making, but rather point to demands on faculty regarding tenure, departmental needs, and other factors. While not theoretically grounded, their study supports the idea that organizational demands do not always map onto individuals' desires, motivations, or investments; by framing the organizations as creating this burnout, they moved closer than most other studies to critiquing the organization, rather than the person, as part of the fit problem.

Unique to university, college, and school cultures are the interactions between faculty and students. Bogen (1978) suggests that faculty and student fit affects faculty vitality

and performance. While this is not an empirical study, it does suggest another dimension of fit to consider for faculty, that of their interactions with students, particularly in the context of a teaching-intensive liberal arts setting. How faculty view the students with whom they work and how the students' needs, attitudes, and abilities align with faculty preferences, may play an important role in this study, situated at a teaching-intensive, selective liberal arts college. While most theorizations of fit focus on institutional or organizational features, it seems obvious that interpersonal interactions and complementarity may be a significant factor shaping fit for many people. As noted earlier, women faculty may place higher value than men do on interpersonal interactions in the work environment (Bilimoria et al., 2006; Ponjuan et al., 2011), so maintaining attention to interpersonal interactions —faculty-student, faculty-faculty, and other combinations—is important.

In sum, the literature on faculty fit has created a good initial foray into the topic, but is uneven and hardly decisive about what matters to fit and how it is developed. The literature is predominately focused on the role of fit in producing some other outcome of interest —vitality, satisfaction, commitment, productivity, burnout, or intention to leave (Blackburn & Bentley, 1993; Castiglia, 2006; Lindholm, 2003; Olsen et al., 1995; Ryan et al., 2012; Shanafelt et al., 2009). These studies have been widely under-theorized, with each author developing their own definitions and operationalizations of fit. In addition, these studies have all been quantitative, with the exception of Lindholm's (2003). They have also all focused on research university faculty — creating a clear path for this study to fill gaps in the literature.

Summary and Implications

A small cadre of studies forms the bulk of the work about fit for university faculty. Only Olsen et al. (1995) explicitly study fit for women faculty, and they suggest that traditional conceptions of fit may not account for how women and faculty of color bring a different set of values and interests to the academy. Moreover, they suggest that women faculty and faculty of color may be misperceived or undervalued by faculty evaluation, promotion, and tenure procedures in which negative stereotypes and implicit biases about women and faculty of color override contrary data that indicate high quality of work. As no one has replicated or extended Olsen et al. 's (1995) work, and there are more women and faculty of color in the professoriate, it is important to continue these investigations in the current context of higher education (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006).

These studies attend to a variety of outcomes related to fit — and most always position fit as a contributor to another variable of interest. Shipp and Jansen (2011) suggest that outcomes are important — they feed into a cycle of sensemaking that informs the narratives of fit that are composed by individuals— but they are not solely produced by or determinate of fit. It seems premature to focus on the function of fit in contributing to these various outcomes without treating it as its own concept of interest.

A common theme in research that attempts to capture fit at the institutional or organizational level among faculty, especially via quantitative approaches, is that faculty satisfaction with the nature of faculty work is high, reducing the interaction between some measures of fit and the outcome of interest. For many faculty, the job itself remains rewarding despite inhospitable cultures — but this does not mean that their sense of "fit" is high or strong. In addition, fit has been poorly theorized and applied in higher education literature, allowing few broader conclusions to be drawn about how a sense of

fit evolves, what factors contribute to that sense of fit, and how this form of meaning-making relates to the decisions about their careers that faculty make. This study plans to fill this gap, by situating fit as the concept of interest, and tracing how a narrative, or story, of fit emerges for women faculty as they navigate departmental, institutional, disciplinary, and student interactions at a liberal arts college.

These studies, in total, suggest several directions for this study. First, with operationalizations of fit varying so widely and definitions lacking, it is important to focus on fit itself as a concept of interest. Second, proxy measures for fit abound, in part because asking directly about fit does not always produce useful or meaningful information. Therefore, this study used data collection techniques that approached fit from a variety of angles, while remaining grounded in theoretical bases. In all but one study, the culture and values of organizations (and individuals' fit with those organizations) was presumed static, unitary, and without problem. Even studies that commented on inequalities (such as Olsen, Maple, and Stage's 1995 study) did not capture how inequality may play out for faculty. We also learn, from this literature, that measures, instruments, and models bounded to corporate work environments may not easily apply to faculty work in academic institutions, and may be missing elements that are key to the structure and nature of faculty work. By grounding this study in a perspective on fit that takes into account these lessons, and is built upon an understanding of colleges and universities as training grounds, workplaces, and organizations, a new view of fit for faculty can emerge.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In their recent edited volume on the future of fit studies, management and organization scholars Kristof-Brown and Billsberry (2013b) and their contributors map new frontiers for fit studies. In sum, the scholars in this volume suggest several dimensions of fit that need to be explored and expanded upon that are incorporated in this study. This includes a focus on fit perceptions and construction from the point of view of organization members (Kristof-Brown & Billsberry, 2013a); an attention to interpersonal dynamics in the workplace (Kammeyer-Mueller, Schilpzand, & Rubenstein, 2013); the motivations people have for wanting to fit (Yu, 2013); and the importance of participants' sense of agency over their experiences, perceptions, or the environment in contributing to fit (Johnson, Tain, Chang, & Kawamoto, 2013). My study centers organizational participants' experiences of fit as they define them and explores how the dynamics of the organization's cultures and practices affect those experiences. Focusing on fit from the perspective of organizational participants is important because previous research has been grounded in the *a priori* assumptions of researchers, rather than from the perspective of those participating in the organizations. Billsberry, in earlier writing, argues that an interpretive orientation to fit could enhance, challenge, or complicate decades of research on fit (Billsberry et al., 2005).

In order to ground fit in participants' experiences, a theory of fit as narrative serves as the foundation (Shipp & Jansen, 2011). Narrative, as both a theoretical perspective and a method, is driven by the stories we tell about our lives, the understandings we develop

about our lives and selves through that storytelling, and a sense of continuity (or discontinuity) through time (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narratives are developed as a way to make sense of ourselves and the world we live in, to give meaning to our lives (Ricoeur, 1991/2002a). Some even argue that humans are fundamentally story-oriented creatures (Bruner, 2004). A fit narrative, then, is the story that emerges over and through time as a product of an individual's sensemaking and self-understanding of their lives and work.

While Shipp and Jansen's (2011) theory provides the key components of this study's theoretical approach, other concepts and theories are necessary to both understand the dimensions present in their formulation and to further account for the role of the organization itself. These elements include delving further into the creation of narrative, the concept of the narrated self (or narrative identity), feminist standpoint and intersectionality theories that contribute to how individuals view themselves and make sense of their experience in organizations; and the role of agency in navigating an organization. Other guidance is drawn from institutional ethnography which serves to illuminate dynamics of power at work in the practices of organizations (rather than the people), and provides a context and method for illuminating how the practices of a higher education institution as a gendered and racialized organization shape women's experiences in that organization.

In order to allow these concepts to come to life for the reader, a single hypothetical case of a woman faculty member at a private, selective liberal arts college is introduced and her experiences explored through the components of the conceptual framework. First, a background narrative for our sample case, Dr. Garner, is provided. Then, as concepts

are expanded upon in the conceptual frame, I return to Dr. Garner's story to show how that particular dynamic functions in her experiences. Dr. Garner's narrative is both fictional and grounded in experiences as described in the research literature on women faculty, and particularly women faculty of color.

Introducing Dr. Sandra Garner

Dr. Sandra Garner is starting her sixth year as a tenure-track professor in the philosophy department at Guthrie College, a highly selective, small private liberal arts college in the Midwest. Dr. Garner attended Revere College as an undergraduate through the Posse Foundation, a support program for highly talented students from traditionally underrepresented and low-income backgrounds. As a Caribbean-American woman who grew up in New York City, attending a predominantly White, selective liberal arts college in Western Massachusetts produced significant culture shock. Dr. Garner, as an undergraduate, often felt out of place in her classes with students who had attended better funded schools and had better college preparatory curricula. She struggled to find community, until she joined the Black Student Union and made friends with other Black students at Revere. After struggling academically her first year, she eventually fell in love with philosophy and graduated with honors. Encouraged by her undergraduate faculty, she applied for doctoral programs her senior year, and attended Southern Private University on a full fellowship.

Having spent her entire life in the Northeast, attending Southern Private University (SPU) required her to move to a large city in South. She found a vibrant Black community off-campus, while on campus she struggled to prove her legitimacy with her classmates and some faculty. As the only Black woman in her program, and one of only a

few students of color in the philosophy doctoral program, Dr. Garner often felt she was back in her first year at Revere navigating a hostile and unknown territory. Midway through her first year, she joined the local chapter of the Urban League, and connected with other professional Black women doing racial and community uplift work. Having a strong community off-campus gave Dr. Garner the strength and support she needed during her doctoral studies to navigate the staid halls and old boys' networks at SPU. The faculty in her program expected doctoral students to be committed completely to the life of the mind on campus, so she rarely discussed her efforts at connecting with and serving her off-campus community. One bright spot of her time at SPU, other than completing her doctorate, was meeting and marrying her now husband, also a doctoral student at the time.

Both Dr. Garner and her husband were excited to move to a new region of the country upon the completion of their doctorates, and successfully navigated their dual-career search. Dr. Garner knew she wanted to teach at a small private liberal arts college; her experience at Revere provided her with an appreciation for the liberal arts experience, and her experiences at SPU convinced her that a Research I university was not for her. Her husband accepted a position at a public research university in a medium-sized Midwestern city. They live just outside the city where he works. Dr. Garner commutes roughly forty-five minutes daily to Guthrie's campus in order to take advantage of living in a community with a larger presence of Black professionals. Her time at SPU had shown her the importance of this kind of network for her own success and well-being.

Dr. Garner felt certain she found the best fit at Guthrie. She had been able to make a dual-career search possible, and she felt the warmth and support from her new colleagues, all tenured. Since joining the faculty, she has been constantly improving her teaching — both in tailoring her methods to the students at Guthrie, and in designing engaging, challenging, and interesting courses that would incite a love for philosophy for a broad range of students. Her course evaluations have shown a steady improvement, and her office hours are always full with students seeking feedback on assignments and wanting to talk about philosophy. Students of color flock to her, excited to learn from someone who successfully navigated a similar set of challenges as an undergraduate at a similar kind of institution. Given this, and the acceptance of several papers in highly regarded peer review journals, some co-authored with students, she had been quite confident about tenure and her place at Guthrie going into her fifth year.

Despite her confidence, as the school year began things started to change. A new junior faculty member, Dr. Paul Jackman, a White man with a doctorate from an Ivy League university, started that fall. Dr. Garner was excited to have another junior colleague in her department. However, she quickly began noticing differences in how they were treated, despite her longer time at the college. A college reorganization also resulted in a new department; philosophy is now part of a larger unit called Cognitive Studies. With the reorganization, Dr. Garner realized that the faculty who would be reviewing her tenure materials would no longer be solely fellow philosophers, but also psychologists, computer scientists, and linguists. Dr. Jackman does scholarship that aligns closely with cognitive studies, while her scholarship on Black women's epistemologies does not. Casual and more intentional conversations with her new

departmental colleagues have made her feel like they do not "get" her or her work. Now in her sixth year, she faces the tenure review process with apprehension and has been feeling lost within a bigger department with a much more empirical focus.

Fit as Narrative

One emerging view of fit — that of fit as narrative—centers the viewpoint and perspective of organization participants, as moderated by their interactions with their organization (Shipp & Jansen, 2011). Ship and Jansen's (2011) theory of fit as narrative maps how an individual's sense of fit is affected by who they are and the saliency of experiences in the organization and their past, present, and anticipated future experiences. This narrative, or story, helps to explain how a person has made sense of themselves and their relationship with their institution. A view of fit over time captures a sense of these individuals as moving through time in the organization, and accounts for changes in both the person and organization. The narratives that are crafted then affect particular work outcomes — such as satisfaction — which in turn affect faculty understanding of themselves and their place in the organization. These understandings then fuel a cycle which begins again with a sense of who they are and the salience of the experiences they have, which then shape the fit narrative. In summary, this theory suggests that fit is not a static assessment, but an ongoing process which is shaped by changes in the person (their introspection about themselves), the organization (their extrospection, or reflection about the organization and its environment), and the dynamics between these things and the stories they tell about themselves.

Individual and Experience Characteristics

Several dynamics shape the fit narrative according to Shipp and Jansen's theory (2011). Certain characteristics and orientations of individuals shape how their experiences are understood and made sense of —which experiences, interactions, or anticipations they choose to include in their fit narrative. These selections of snippets are affected by a variety of personality orientations. One of the primary drivers of how a fit experience may be interpreted by a person is their fit-related motives. Another driver might be some personal characteristics such as affect, optimism, temporal focus, and openness to new experiences. Shipp and Jansen (2011) also consider how likely someone is to incorporate disconfirming evidence.

While individual characteristics may affect the selection of a particular fit snippet, the characteristics of fit events themselves matter as well. Fit events, or fit snippets, are experiences that send a message to a person about their fit — positive or negative. The intensity, duration, and temporal distance of the fit snippet makes a difference. For example, Dr. Garner may place equal emphasis on two very different kinds of experiences. She may place high value on a Black freshman woman from Chicago sharing that Dr. Garner's class helped her survive her first semester at Guthrie. She may place equal value and importance on a senior White woman psychologist, with whom she hoped to collaborate, calling her the name of another Black woman professor in front of their departmental colleagues. While Dr. Garner feels generally assured about her teaching and her role as a mentor to students with backgrounds similar to hers, she is most unsure of her place in the department. The snub by another woman professor in her department may be a factor in her current fit assessment.

Motives, or reasons for fitting, are important to fit because they determine the overall arc of the narrative (or theme) and which incidents are selected as salient to fit. Different stories are told by people in order to achieve certain means, to motivate themselves, to appear trustworthy, or to see themselves or their organizations as capable of change (Gergen & Gergen, 1997). Motives may be directed by needs, goals, or values, and may fill a variety of psychological needs for the participant (Yu, 2013). For example, Dr. Garner's desire to work closely with undergraduate students in a liberal arts setting may make positive experiences with students more salient for her. Dr. Garner's sense of her own excellence in teaching may boost her confidence in the tenure review process. Her desire to give back to students in the way she was supported and taught at her undergraduate institution may be the motive that orients all of her fit assessments.

Another set of individual characteristics that Shipp and Jansen (2011) include are the individual's temporal focus. In this instance, for individuals who are more focused on the past, their retrospective fit "snippets" (their term for small stories within the larger fit narrative) play a larger role in their fit narrative. For the more future-focused, anticipated fit may play a larger role. Returning to Dr. Garner, the changes in the department may make her worried that she'll have less flexibility in the near future to design advanced seminars on topics of interest to her. These present changes may be affecting her ideal future. This may make her feel less positive about her place in the department moving forward.

The final grouping of individual characteristics that Shipp and Jansen (2011) incorporate are affect (positive and negative), optimism, and resilience. These shape how fit experiences are interpreted by each person. Professor Garner's experiences growing up

in New York City and then attending Predominantly White Institutions for her undergraduate and graduate degree programs may have contributed to her resilience in dealing with racial hostilities or microaggressions[4] in her workplace. While her resilience does not make these interactions acceptable, she has learned to work past them when they do crop up at Guthrie, enabling her to maintain a better sense of fit than someone with less resilience.

Finally, individuals' openness to new experiences or denial of disconfirming evidence also plays a role in how often a fit narrative changes. Dr. Garner, because of her desire to maintain collegial relationships with the other philosophy faculty in her expanded department, has been rationalizing the marked attention and support shown to her new junior colleague, Dr. Jackman, in the department. Attributing the attention to the closer alignment in areas of scholarly focus, she is ignoring mounting evidence that all is not right in how she has been and is currently being treated.

This incorporation of individual characteristics that shape a narrative is important, but is also an area where this theory may be lacking. Shipp and Jansen (2011) do not incorporate social identities in their theory — such as race, gender, and class. This study attends to these characteristics, despite their absence from Shipp and Jansen's theoretical model. As the research reviewed earlier suggests, something different is happening for women, and particularly women of color, in the academy; therefore, who they are beyond

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[4] Microaggressions "are the verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group" (p. 273).
Sue, D. W. , Capodilupo, C. M. , Torino, G. C. , Bucceri, J. M. , Holder, A. , Nadal, K. L. , & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist*, *62*(4), 271-286.

attitudinal orientations are important for both understanding how they engage in making sense of their experiences and how their organizations may treat them.

Constructing a Narrative

The process of constructing a narrative is informed at its essence by a sense of connections between experiences through time. This is especially important for fit, as Shipp and Jansen (2011) suggest that the variation found in most assessments of fit at the contemporary time point, or what they term "current fit," are likely due to the influence of retrospected fit (looking towards past experiences and assessments of fit) and anticipated fit (looking towards future likely experiences and assessments of fit). As a result, Shipp and Jansen argue for fit as a narrative, a story of a relationship between the individual and the organization, crafted and constructed *in medias res*, or "in the middle of things" (p. 76). The cyclical process that Shipp and Jansen propose, with feedback loops to inform action, action to inform perceptions, and perceptions to inform fit assessments, means that we should not focus on a single measure of fit, but rather capturing the dynamics of fit as a process. People living their lives are always "in the middle of things," moving from one experience to the next, making meaning of those experiences, and having that meaning-making affect their actions moving forward. The introduction of time (past, present, and anticipated future interpretations of fit) produces a more likely construction of an individual's sense of fit. Dr. Garner has had four years of feeling good about her fit (retrospective) and one year of feeling uneasy about her fit (current). She may see an upcoming project with a colleague in linguistics about how Black women's language shapes their thinking as moving her towards a better sense of (anticipated) fit with her new department. Therefore, despite having a low current

assessment of fit, her past experiences and anticipated future experiences may be creating a strong sense of fit overall in her fit narrative.

A fit narrative is the culminating story that individuals tell about and to themselves. Some narrative theorists refer to these overarching narrative constructions as “big stories” (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008). Big stories take the form of stories we with which are most familiar— events progressing through time, building to a climax or cliff-hanger, and then a resolution or denouement (McNay, 1999). The process of placing life events into a coherent timeline of progression is emplotment (Polkinghorne, 1991), and this emplotment evokes the telling of stories as we come to know them through literature and other other art forms. Dr. Garner’s story at the beginning of this chapter serves as an excellent example of a big story, with her life events placed in chronological order, emplotted to tell the story of her academic career. Most narrative research is focused on these kinds of big stories (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008). The challenge with big stories, however, is that their form — and even content— is guided by a particular set of stock or cover stories drawn from the media, from institutional myths, or even popular culture (Bruner, 2004; Polkinghorne, 1991). This may mean, for example, that Dr. Garner is motivated to tell a story featuring her resilience as a Black woman in the academy, given the prominence of the “Black women as resilient” narrative in popular and academic culture, despite regular interactions that demoralize her and make her question her place in the academy. However, just because Dr. Garner enacts a narrative that is drawn from a stock or cover story does not diminish the connection she feels to that version of events, or the power she may actually draw from thinking and talking about herself as resilient. Like cliches, cover stories may sometimes be true, and, in Dr.

Garner's case, actually provide language for her to tap into that gives her strength and a positive vision of herself.

To address the challenges introduced by big stories, "small stories" can serve to illuminate how individuals position and narrate themselves in particular settings (Georgakopoulou, 2006). Small stories can take many forms and are attuned to fleeting moments. Small stories are defined particularly as a part of interactions between people. They may include partial stories, refusals to tell, and references to stories already told (Georgakopoulou, 2006). Small stories include "breaking news" stories, or the telling of some event, thought, or feeling that just happened (Georgakopoulou, 2006, p. 126). Another kind of small story is a "projected, near future" story, which usually serves as a rehearsal for an upcoming planned or hoped-for interaction or event (Georgakopoulou, 2006, pp. 126-127). Stories of "shared events," or the retelling of experiences shared by several people, is another form of small story (Georgakopoulou, 2006, p. 127). Finally "refusals or deferrals of telling" certain stories may indicate a lot about what version of events is acceptable in a given environment (Georgakopoulou, 2006, p. 127). Dr. Garner enacts different kinds of talk and interactions with different audiences in different spaces; these performances and tellings expose nuances to her understanding of these issues. For example, in reference to the experience of being called the wrong name in front of colleagues, Dr. Garner may empathize with a student who had a similar experience — "I've been there"— but not get into details when pressed for them (an example of refusals to tell). She may call an impromptu coffee or dinner gathering with her women of color support group on campus to vent, laugh, and tell a highly detailed version of events (breaking news). She may subtly approach the topic with another senior colleague

in her department, referring to Professor X's "mix-up", and asking for advice on moving forward (shared experience). These small stories, in culmination, may highlight the significance of a fit snippet more than a big story might, and signify the kind of relationships and understandings Dr. Garner is able to share with others.

Introspection and Extrospection

Once a fit narrative has been constructed, this narrative affects how an individual makes sense of themselves and their environment, as well as having an effect on important outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment, and intention to leave. As individuals are taking in and processing the information in their environment and themselves, they engage in a process of sensemaking. Sensemaking is the interpretation with the intent of action within an organization (Weick et al., 2005). It is a key component of organizational life. These meanings and understandings are derived from the context of the organization and are about interpretation rather than decision-making. Sensemaking works within the framework of narrative fit, as it is a process that occurs in flux, or *in medias res.* While Weick and colleagues (2005) suggest a sense of crisis to precipitate sensemaking, in terms of the construction of a narrative of fit, the sensemaking occurs when things are not flowing and are not seamless in the experience of the faculty member. For Dr. Garner, this may be the experience of having to teach a broader range of introductory courses as part of the newly formed department. Dr. Garner, who has always taken great joy in her class design and implementation, may suddenly feel like it is a struggle to design a course that includes topics relevant to a broader cognitive studies curriculum, especially if she had been hoping to teach an advanced seminar on womanist epistemologies instead. Sensemaking is not an internal

process so much as the interaction between a person and her organization. Sensemaking can result in multiple interpretations and understandings of the stories of the organization (Rhodes & Brown, 2005). Dr. Garner's colleague, Dr. Jackman, may be excited about the chance to take an interdisciplinary approach to his branch of philosophy.

This sensemaking occurs regarding both the environment and the self, initiating what Shipp and Jansen (2011) call extrospection and introspection respectively. In terms of introspection, the analysis of the self as an agentic individual within the organization plays a significant role. These assessments will focus on the kind of faculty member she wants to be, and whether she would be able to be that kind of faculty member within the organization. This may also lead the faculty member to think about whether she can integrate, or in Ropers-Huilman's (2000) terms achieve coherence between, her various social identities, including race, class, gender, sexuality, motherhood, and relationship status. Extrospection is the process of assessing and making sense of the environment — the culture, values, and discourses surrounding their work. By borrowing meaning from these sources, the faculty member considers how colleagues, students, and the organization itself might view her contributions, leading to either a sense of alignment or disparity.

In the examples provided so far, we see that Dr. Garner has taken steps to write a paper with a linguist on a shared topic, enacting a sense of control in response to a changing organizational context. Dr. Garner may feel like this is a productive step for her scholarship, or that she is playing the game expected by her new chair. In either case, she has used information both about herself and her environment to make a choice about moving forward. She could have decided that her scholarship, regardless of collaboration,

is not likely to be valued by the newly formed department; therefore, she could focus her energies on teaching. Either path — more collaboration with a colleague or more focus on her teaching — would allow her to prioritize her time on campus, allowing her to maintain integration and coherence in terms of her personal life outside of work. Dr. Garner may know that she is not interested in working ninety-hour weeks, and therefore prioritizes her time accordingly.

Introspection: The narrated self. Proposing a narrative of fit requires understanding the role of introspection, or making sense of the self, in fit assessments. Most narrative conceptions of identity are built upon the assertions of Paul Ricoeur (2002a). Ricoeur (2002a) argues that individuals do not retain an unchanging, stable set of characteristics, but rather a sense of permanence through time that is neither immutable or completely in flux (Elliott, 2005). The lived experience of time plays a key role for Ricoeur and all narrative work; for while a person lives in time, she can only account for this experience through reflection and interpretation resulting in narrative (McNay, 1999). The self is what experiences and then reflects on any given moment in time, and identity is the narrative construction that results from reflection and interpretation (Ezzy, 1998; Ricoeur, 1991/2002b). In terms of our Dr. Garner, Ricouer would assert that her life becomes meaningful when she talks about it, reflects on it terms of stories, or anticipates the kinds of stories she might tell about her experiences. Otherwise, Dr. Garner is just walking through life, interacting and being, without a sense of who she is and why what she does has meaning to herself and others in her life.

When identity is conceived of as narrative, the focus is on understanding the self as negotiating impulses to change and impulses to remain the same. These impulses do not

occur in a vacuum, but rather within social contexts that provide frames of coherence that allow us to interpret ourselves and others (Linde, 1993). Thus, the person in a social context, such as their work lives in the academy, performs her identity in a way that makes sense of and reflects her cultural and material experiences (Elliott, 2005). Dr. Garner may have one set of language, interactions, and movements that she uses when engaging as a professor at Guthrie and an entirely different set of language, interaction styles, and movements that she uses when she is home visiting her family in New York. She is very likely aware that if she used the style of communication preferred by her family — one of overlapping dialogue and language that some scholars have described as gumbo yaya rather than patient turn-taking (Brown, 1992)— that she would be viewed differently, and likely with diminished respect, by many of her colleagues and students for not acting "professionally."

In addition, which frames of coherence, scripts, or cover stories are available to us at any time is contingent upon certain markers about our place in society — our gender, our class, our sexuality, our age, our ability, and so forth (McNay, 1999). These social positions are not stable, but they are also not likely to be wildly changeable either (McNay, 1999). Abes, Jones, and McEwen (2007) suggest that identity is comprised of multiple dimensions, and that these dimensions gain more salience in particular contexts. For example, when Dr. Garner is among her White colleagues in her department, she may be most aware of her racial/gender identity as a Black woman; when she attends a meeting of the Black Student Union as their advisor, she may be most aware of her age, or when she is with family in New York, she may be most aware of her Caribbean

heritage. Hence, her most salient identity may be elicited by a sense of difference or by positive affirmation.

A narrative understanding of self is also determined by the standpoint we occupy. Feminist standpoint theory offers positionally-driven knowledge perspectives that are informed by power dynamics within a setting or society (Harding, 1997, 2008). Standpoint theory suggests that an individual's position in society or organizations provides a particular view on the world, the organization in which they are embedded, and the practices and power dynamics that are available to and act upon that location (Smith, 2005). Early versions of standpoint theories attempted to claim a single woman's standpoint, which often defaulted to a White woman's perspective on the world; this is not the version of standpoint being used here. Instead, in this study, standpoint is serving as an inclusive term that represents both the legacy of standpoint as articulated by Smith (2005) and a number of Womanist, global south, Chicana, and Black feminist theories that have highlighted the necessity of centering the viewpoints, value structures, means of communication, and historical legacies of women of color into analyses of power structures (Anzaldua, 2012/1987; Hill Collins, 2000; Mohanty, 2003; Sandoval, 2000). In addition, these varied standpoints, informed by gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability and other forms of identity, are key to naming and calling out the ruling relations in operation at institutions of higher education (Smith, 2005). For Dr. Garner, being a Caribbean-American first generation college student at predominantly White colleges and universities has always provided her a particular point of view from which to view her educational and employment experiences. As usually the only one of her background, or one of only a few, Dr. Garner has been witness to how the organization affords privileges

and easy access to some individuals (usually White men) and not to her (a Black woman). She also has learned how her actions become both highly visible and simultaneously invisible as a token (or sole representative) in her learning and work contexts (Kanter, 1977). Dr. Garner's standpoint is also informed by her political and academic commitment to honoring the epistemologies of Black women, and she brings that lens to bear on her understanding of the world around her.

According to these standpoint theories, women's experiences within the academy are shaped by systemic, gender-race-class forces; their interpretation and awareness of those intersectional systems is influenced by their knowledge standpoints. While a standpoint may be informed, in part, by these social dynamics, they also remain particular to an individual and her place within an organization. The version of standpoints advanced here does not claim to speak for all women but suggests that a given location within the organization reveals important characteristics about how that organization functions (Smith, 2005). In institutional ethnography, the standpoint serves to illuminate the everyday realities of people's lives, and provide insight into the discourses of the institution by illuminating the particular ways in which organizations shape the thinking, consciousness, perspective, and actions of people in the institution (ruling relations) (Smith, 2005). In the case of Dr. Garner, being tenure-track, but not tenured, provides her access to decision-making, agenda-setting, and process formation at Guthrie. Her access is moderated, however, by her provisional status as tenure-track; she cannot, perhaps, risk antagonizing certain senior faculty on campus, and the priorities and effort she has been putting into particular parts of her career, such as teaching, has been shaped by the

guidance and suggestions she has received about what is most important in her future tenure review.

Extrospection: Organizational components of fit. Another dimension contributing to the *in medias res* process of determining fit is the individual's sensemaking about the organization. This process is called extrospection, and involves taking into account the discursive narratives and culture at play in work contexts (Shipp & Jansen, 2011). In both psychology and sociology, it is suggested that narrative selves are constructed in relation to dominant discourses. These discourses, which suggest possible lives, dictate the forms the narratives may take, and give meaning to social actions (e. g. Bruner, 2004; Ezzy, 1998; McAdams, 1996). In the example of Dr. Garner, there may be certain scripts available for her to understand and express herself within the organization — such as that of a first generation college student and professor who has a special role in supporting students from backgrounds like her own.

McNay argues that Ricoeur's notion of narrative identity "is contingent upon a particular set of social relations; it is not fixed, but neither is it purely arbitrary in that some narratives have a deep historical resonance and durability" (1999, p. 323). Therefore, the forms the self can take, contributing to a sense of fit within the organization, are determined by the stories that are at work in culture and its discourses. Dr. Garner's role and identity are built from those stories, and choosing to countermand the stories available to her and her identity as a first generation Black woman scholar may have the consequence of her actions or positioning being "unreadable" to others in the academy.

The organizational components that are understood through extrospection are largely driven by culture. Tierney (1988) suggests that the culture of a higher education institution is indicated by several dynamics. These include: interpretation of the environment, articulation of mission, how new members are introduced and socialized into the organization, the management and dissemination of information, how decisions are made and strategy is used, and who serves as leaders and how leadership occurs. Cultures may also manifest at the department level, which is reflective of the local iteration of the discipline (Austin, 1990). For Dr. Garner's department, which has shifted from philosophy to cognitive studies, there may be a new culture in formation that seeks to incorporate several disparate departmental cultures into one cohesive environment.

Culture also influences organization members' interactions with colleagues and others in the community. The quality and nature of interactions with others — especially daily interactions — play a formative role in how an individual makes sense of her environment and her place within her organization. Some suggest that even a relationship with a single individual — very good or very bad — can be sufficient to create deep fit or lack of fit (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Relationships reflect the culture in that they shape how information may be shared, whose contributions seem valued, and whose voices are heard at particular points of decision-making. While culture often is described as something out there, suffusing all of life with meaning, the best teachers of culture are other members of organizations — who implicitly and explicitly pass on expert knowledge about the organization. This form of socialization continues throughout any one faculty member's time at an institution, creating a significant portion of their fit assessments (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). Dr. Garner, for example, may be seeking

new information from her new departmental colleagues to get a better sense of the kinds of activities and behaviors that are expected from the larger group of senior colleagues. Her recent experience with the White woman senior psychology faculty member may make her question her fit, even though other faculty are supportive and working with her.

Institutional ethnography seeks to map how culture manifests inside of institutions or organizations through processes, procedures, and the ruling relations that define interactions and the flow of information (Smith, 2005). These ruling relations become apparent from the point of view of particular standpoints — such as that of Dr. Garner. Dr. Garner would become aware of particular dynamics at Guthrie College by virtue of her position as a woman of color, tenure-track faculty member. She may notice that other early career faculty receive far more guidance in putting together their tenure review packages, or that her new colleague in the department is receiving more out-of-work contact with senior faculty. This view of the organization is specific to Dr. Garner's standpoint — her position and view of the ruling relations does not speak for other women faculty, or even other women of color faculty — but rather provides one viewpoint onto how the organization works and how it is structured. By engaging the viewpoints of multiple women faculty, who are located at different standpoints within the institution, a view of how a broader cultural dynamic is enacted should emerge.

One way to understand how cultural processes differ as they interact with individuals throughout the organization is intersectional analysis. Based in legal analyses, intersectionality suggests that individuals or groups of individuals experience policies, laws, and redress in particular formations based on their gender, class, and other social groupings that may hinder or enhance access to restitution and redress (Crenshaw, 1991)

An intersectional analysis, best constituted, moves beyond identifying particular "others" as the center of study, but rather examines power relationships and structural processes as determined by power (Choo & Ferree, 2010). An intersectional analysis is particularly important in this study to add complexity to an understanding of academic women that often centers on the experiences, needs, and values of White women in the academy. Faculty experiences with the cultures and processes within the institution signal that they fit or do not fit are identified through intersectional analysis. Intersectional analyses expose how these processes and structures are implicated in the longstanding disparities in women's outcomes — both as those outcomes differ from men's and how women's outcomes vary by race class, and other social groups. This may mean comparing Dr. Garner's standpoint, and the narratives she constructs from that standpoint, to another faculty member's. These two different stories in how they were mentored through the tenure-review process may highlight certain messages that are directed towards women in the organization (to show a strong commitment to the job despite family and other life concerns) and how those might differ based on their racial identity — for example, a White woman faculty member being given more latitude in her teaching evaluations than Dr. Garner as a Black woman faculty member.

Acker (2006) offers an expansion of her gendered organization theory as an analytical entry point for intersectionality; these "inequality regimes" operate within institutions by creating systemic disparities in power and control in organizations. Inequality regimes include race, class, sexuality, and ability, as well as others that may become more important in particular organizational settings. Acker suggests that inequality regimes may have strengthened due to an increasing pressure on businesses and organizations to

become more efficient, to lower wage and other human resource costs, and due to an increasing legitimacy of inequality. In addition, inequality regimes may be enacted in subtle ways, making it difficult for those on both sides of the equality divide to identify specific practices that may be shaping individuals' experiences. Therefore, fit for many faculty may become increasingly shaped by discourses that suggest that some activities are more worthy of institutional attention and support (such as those of academic capitalism and technology transfer (e. g. Rhoads & Slaughter, 1997) and that fail to acknowledge the increasing complexity of diversity within the academy and subsequent variation in cultural norms (Ryu, 2008). For Dr. Garner, the shift in her department towards cognitive studies may be a sign of a move towards academic capitalism or technology transfer, a shift that may not provide her with support for continuing her own studies of Black women's epistemologies. In fact, the department may feel like her studies are overly identified with who she is personally, and they may want her to move towards teaching and researching more "objective" fields of inquiry in philosophy.

To delineate the workplace as world shaping entirely on its own denies the desire, motivation, or emphasis that any individual may place on living a coherent life, in which their work and home lives are integrated, balanced, or in a manageable flux (Ropers-Huilman, 2000). Acker's theory of the gendered organization lays out very clearly how workplaces are already structured to deny the outside-of-work lives of participants (Acker, 1990); as such, participants may not recognize the denial of a self outside of work that is occurring in their daily lives. In any case, any modification of Shipp and Jansen's (2011) theory of narrative fit has to include an acknowledgement that fit may be about more than the motives of the person inside the workplace. We are all more than

workers; Dr. Garner, our case example, demonstrates that regularly with her choice to commute a long distance for work each day in order to make her partner's career work in tandem with her own, and her desire to cultivate a Black professional community outside of work. Success and commitment to her own career only would not allow her to achieve all of her motivations and goals for herself as a full person; therefore, any theory of fit should take into account an integration between in- and out-of-work experiences, motivations, and desires. This is especially important in fields like academia, where a sense of location might deeply infuse identities.

Agency. The foregoing discussion of frames of coherence, interlocking systems of oppression, and ruling relations, as well as the pressures of institutional, disciplinary, and other cultures, may make it seem like faculty like Dr. Garner have no choice over the kinds of narratives they construct about themselves. While this proposed study attempts to account for how discourse and culture play a role in providing a set of schema for understanding the self, this study also assumes faculty women have a significant sense of agency to navigate their institutions. Women are not unwitting victims of culture or discourse — they both engage in sensemaking and make choices that enable certain possibilities and close others based on the resources available to them as a result of their social location, sources of power, and own sense of ability (O'Meara & Campbell, 2011). Their sense of agency in making change in either themselves or their environments plays a significant role in whether introspection or extrospection have the greater influence in their understanding of their fit, and the subsequent related outcomes (Shipp & Jansen, 2011).

O'Meara and Campbell's (2011) discussion of faculty agency in balancing work-life goals is useful to this study, as it is focused on the role that time — past, present, and future — plays in decision-making for faculty. Faculty make decisions based not just on their current situation, but where they have been and where they hope to be in the future. Johnson and colleagues (2013) argue that a significant factor of a fit determination is how much agency a person can bring to her situation — whether in terms of changing her expectations or changing the environment around her. While Dr. Garner may be unhappy about some of the changes that are happening in her department beyond her control, she has chosen a particular path in response. She has sought collaborative opportunities with other faculty, showing that she has chosen to change her own expectations about the kinds of work that will help her be successful. Dr. Garner could also decide that leaving is her best option, or that active resistance to the change would work best for her — to stand her ground in the face of change. Each option would be a valid expression of her agency in response to the situation.

Outcomes Related to Fit

The fit narrative has a significant impact on outcomes (such as attitudes and behaviors) for the individual through the influence of retrospective and anticipated fit, particularly in terms of comparisons made between the present assessment of fit and past and future assessments. These comparisons are what allow the faculty member to make sense of her changing self and/or environment. The greater the disparity between prior, current, and anticipated senses of fit, the more likely that her current sense of fit will change. These shifts in assessment can be positive ("I fit better now"), or worse ("This place isn't for me anymore"). For Dr. Garner, who started her time at Guthrie feeling

incredibly satisfied, connected, and valued, the current changes in her department have left her feeling somewhat disconnected and demoralized. While her experience with her students has remained consistent, and she still appreciates that both her career and her husband's seem on a relatively good track, this change in the department context may be creating stress. In fact, Blackburn and Bentley (1993) argue that stress is generated by sense of lack of fit "between a person's motivations, abilities, or values and the corresponding opportunities, demands, or constraints of the workplace" (p. 726), and that such stressors may affect scholarly productivity. This may affect how likely Dr. Garner is to volunteer to teach a new course, perform extra service work, or put in additional face-time with students. These changes in behavior are likely to then affect the sense of fit — by enhancing feelings of disenchantment, or increasing feelings of investment in the department and her role within it.

A Conceptual Model of Narrative Fit

To summarize and synthesize, I define fit as an individual's sensemaking about their place in an organization, as produced through interactions within and with the organization over time. These assessments of fit by faculty members within their organizations are driven by a sense of continuity and change within the self and the organization. Over time, faculty members make sense of the messages they receive about what is important, whose work matters, and which parts of themselves are able to engage with organizations that have been set up to preference certain kinds of bodies, ways of being, and household arrangements. This sensemaking process results in a changing evaluation of whether the faculty member fits now in the present, had fit in the past, or will fit in the future. In particular, I have modified Shipp and Jansen's model of

narratives of fit and added more defined organizational elements, social identities, and more focus on the sense of self created through a fit narrative. In addition, I have combined the introspection and extrospection steps into a larger sensemaking process I label “Coherence.” This is to emphasize that faculty are making sense of themselves as individuals and as part of the organization simultaneously, and that who they are outside of work may play a role in those determinations. (See Figure 3.1).

In terms of organizational elements, I suggest that the process of extrospection (or making sense of the environment) is influenced by organizational cultures— particularly those of the institution and the gendered and racialized organization, through socialization. These cultures manifest in intersectional processes and structures that create inequality regimes within the institution. This set of processes influences what changes are likely, as well as the kinds of environmental messages that may be sent to an individual about herself. For example, Dr. Garner’s department shifting towards a cognitive studies model that values a higher level of empiricism may leave her feeling out of sync. This shift may reflect an increasing institutional push towards marketable, transferable knowledge. This may also intersect a new faculty member who is a man coming into the department; his ability to put in longer hours in a lab setting and relate to psychology and computer science faculty more closely may make him seem to “fit better." These changes may lead Dr. Garner to sense that the department is headed into a direction that does not encompass her area or style of scholarship.

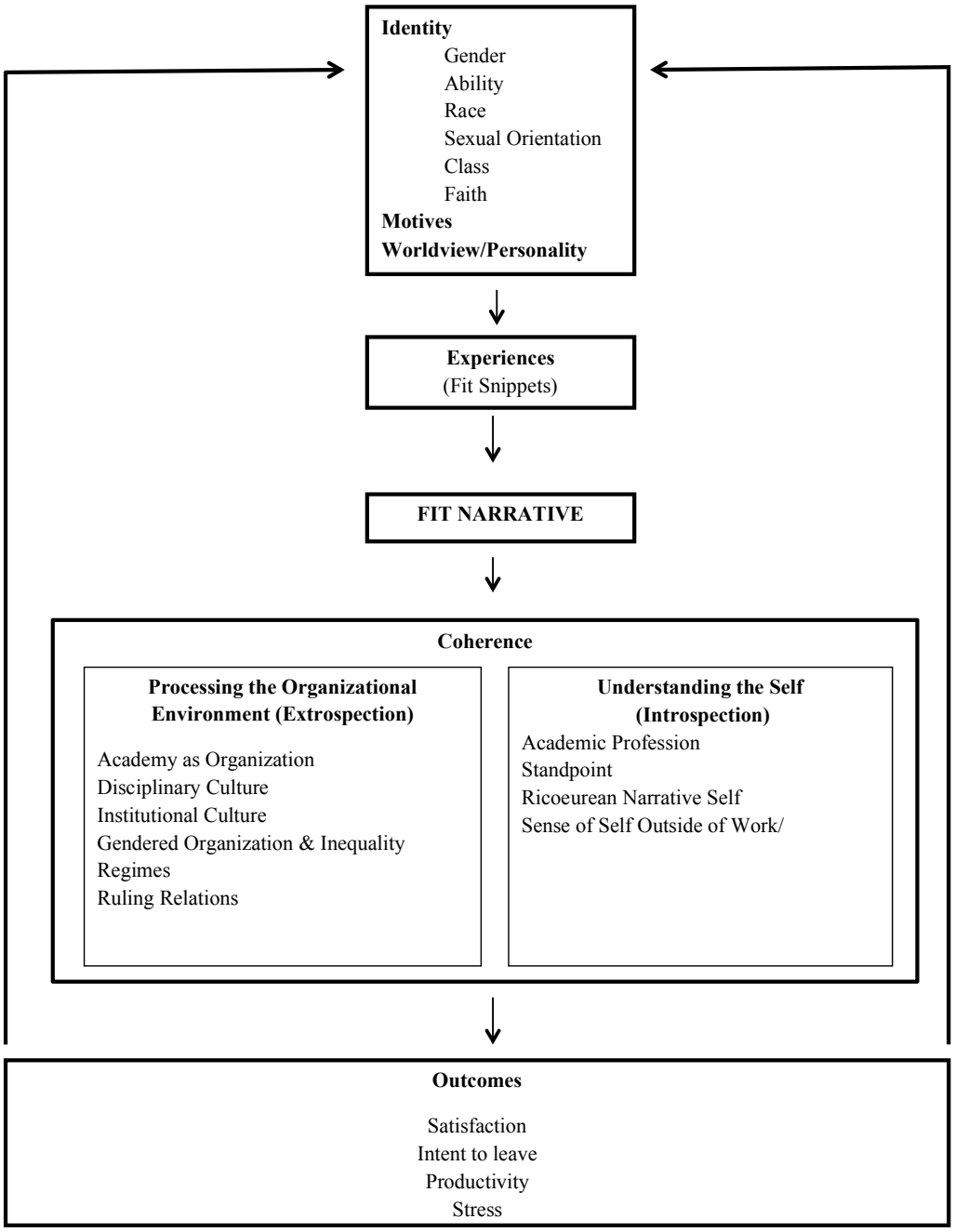

Figure 3.1. Conceptual Framework

When it comes to introspection (or making sense of the self), I argue that women's unique standpoints within intersections of gender, race, and class systems may produce different insights about organizations and themselves during the sensemaking process. Additionally, Ricourean narrative identity theory suggests that there may be certain scripts or ways of being that are more available to women than others, and that these scripts influence how individuals make sense of themselves in their work environments. Dr. Garner may sense that her contributions to faculty meetings have been taken less seriously since her new colleague joined the department, and that her request for pre-tenure sabbatical was denied so that she could teach the introductory course while her new colleague developed a senior-level seminar (an opportunity she did not have her first year). Bringing up these concerns, she might worry that it will reinforce ideas of her in the department as an "angry Black woman," making her feel less empowered to address this unfair distribution of opportunity. Her reactions to these situations might be tempered by the desires she has to attain tenure and be a "good colleague" in her department.

In addition, women faculty in this study may be seeking to create coherence in their lives (Ropers-Huilman, 2000). Coherence is driven by reconciling a sense of the self with an understanding of the organization. It also involves integrating the various identities, values, and opportunities into a way of approaching faculty life that feels whole (Ropers-Huilman, 2000). Women faculty have agency in navigating the scripts and the organizations in which they are embedded, and the emphasis they place on both internal change and external change. This desire for coherence could lead to certain changes in Dr. Gardner's behavior — spending more time on campus for teaching and office hours, publishing less, and trying to find time to spend at home with her partner. These changes

affect how others in the organization respond to her, creating a feedback loop for her assessments and narratives of fit.

This conceptual model of fit accounts for how faculty women are brought into the academy and taught how to "perceive, think, and feel" in their specific organizational context (Schein, 1984, p. 3). It acknowledges how faculty are a part of nested cultures of discipline and institution that are comprised of organizational inequality regimes that privilege masculinity, Whiteness, upper-middle class, hetereosexuality, and ability. Finally, it accounts for individuals' changing understandings of themselves, as well as their desire to live coherent, integrated lives in the academy.

This conceptual framework is the beginning of a process map for fit. It serves as a source of sensitizing concepts that informs the analysis of women's narratives about their experiences in their academic roles. Given that so little is known about what matters to fit from an individual's perspective, I have built a wide-ranging and complex framework to attempt to capture what may matter to women in their fit narratives, and to provide a way to probe those emerging concepts and priorities as the study progresses. Therefore, these concepts provided a starting point for crafting narrative interview protocols for the study, for shaping memoing guides for interviews and observations, and for creating a coding schema for analysis of interview transcripts and other collected data. This is truly an exploratory study, that I hope contributes a starting place for future understanding of what matters in and for faculty fit.

NARRATIVE INTERLUDE: MY STORY

Being the first person in my family to graduate from college as a first-time, full-time, on-time student, my decision to work and study in the field of higher education has been met with surprise and confusion from most of my family. College campuses, however, have always felt a bit magical to me. When I struggled with the transition to middle school, refusing to return to school for several days, my biggest fear was that I couldn't go to college if I was a sixth grade drop-out. Even though we didn't really know what we were doing, my mom and I navigated through the college admissions process with some help from guidance counselors at school and my friends' parents. Attending one of the most prestigious public universities in the country, I felt as if all my dreams were about to come true.

As a kid growing up, I had moved a lot. I was constantly adjusting to new homes, new schoolmates, and social dynamics. It was never in my control, and often, right as I had begun to carve a space for myself, we'd move again. My mom had very intentionally always chosen the best schools, even with all these moves, so my public school cultures were always grounded in middle or upper-middle class, predominantly White neighborhoods, even though our own financial means placed me in a solidly lower economic class than most of my peers. Since this was my continual reality, this was the environment to which I grew accustomed. I grew used to having the values of my much more financially secure peers, while simultaneously living a more precarious reality at home. This cultural dynamic has allowed me to thrive in the more rarefied environments

of my undergraduate institution, graduate education, and work settings. I have absorbed and taken ownership of the cultural and social capital of those around me, aided by my own White privilege that allows me to own this capital without question.

My first three years in the world of work were a time of trying on and rejecting different kinds of roles. Eventually, I realized pursuing student affairs might be a great career path. In search of more immediate experiences in student affairs, I took a job as an administrative assistant in the residence life office at my alma mater. I fully disclosed my plans to apply to student affairs master's degree programs, and they hired me anyway, treating the job as a partial internship where I was given access to people, conversations, and opportunities that someone in my role might not normally have.

Through this opportunity, I developed friends and mentors who were eager to launch me successfully in student affairs; the administrators with whom I had worked as an undergraduate were happy to support me as well. In addition, I was more formally exposed to concepts of social justice, equity, and diversity as part of the field's values. This added to the appeal of student affairs, and I was encouraged by my colleagues to consider graduate programs that centered these values. They helped me refine my applications and wrote my recommendation letters.

My first job after my master's degree was the ultimate "fit" decision. I was, upon facing graduation from my master's program, choosing between two similar institutions offering me similar jobs in virtually the same location. I remember someone asking me where I would be working the next year, and I said the northeast, because I knew I would be taking one of these jobs. These two lovely liberal arts colleges were in idyllic settings, full of greenery, easy access to hiking and other outdoor pursuits, had intelligent student

populations, and paid relatively poorly in comparison to comparable jobs at big publics. But I knew in the final months of my master's degree that I wanted to work in residence life, and I wanted to be at a small, private, highly-selective liberal arts college. I'd never had that experience, and I knew it was now or never for choosing to live-in, to move wherever a job would take me, and to throw myself into applying the learning from my master's degree.

I was weighing several things as I thought about making this fit decision. I knew how isolated the colleges were, and that I needed to feel connected with my colleagues. I also knew that given how student-focused residence life is, that I needed to feel connected to the study body. At one institution, I felt an intense kinship with the people who would be my colleagues. I thought that all of the people I was meeting could become incredibly close friends, confidantes, and colleagues. However, my meetings with students lacked ease. At the other institution, my potential colleagues seemed like nice enough people, but I wasn't feeling the "future best friends vibe." On the other hand, my time with the students felt like a really great first date—we clicked, we laughed, I felt a kinship with them. The jobs were essentially the same with responsibility for a number of residences on campus, doing student conduct, and serving in an on-call capacity. Slowly, as I reflected on how people talked about their work, the day-to-day obligations and responsibilities, and their frustrations and rewards, one campus, where I had connected with the students, emerged as the better fit. This alchemy of role, responsibility, and relationship signaled a number of promises and potentialities.

For the most part, those instincts were right. I clicked into life at the college. The students warmly accepted me, and I felt good about my supervisor and colleagues. My

houses had dramatic drops in student conduct cases over the course of my time there, in part because of my strong relationships with the residents in my buildings. My relationships were so strong that in recent years, I have been invited to be a part of the major life events of a handful of my former student leaders, and cherish them as friends now. I felt like I could be authentically myself – and that was met with an equal recognition from my friends and colleagues. I was recently the maid of honor for a former colleague, and I regularly reconnect with my fellow residence life staff members. I became friends with many faculty at the college, with the small size and a faculty-in-residence program facilitating these friendships. All of this was fantastic, but at the same time, the costs the college extracted often seemed high. This community required high investment and failing to invest meant you weren't on the same page as the students or faculty. It often felt like the only viable commitment was complete and utter devotion and submission.

As my third year at the college began, I made the decision to pursue my doctorate. My experience as the coordinator for the faculty-in-residence program at the institution sparked an interest in studying faculty careers and involving myself in the development of faculty as teachers, mentors, and educators. Hearing about my students' experiences with their faculty helped shape this desire. I heard stories of brilliant and inspiring teachers. I also heard stories of teachers who failed to handle conversations around difference, leaving my students of color feeling wretched and unwanted, especially in the wake of several racial incidents that rocked that entire campus and made many students of color feel unsafe. The faculty I worked and were friends with spoke of their struggles to meet the college's expectations, of creating meaningful collaborative relationships, to

manage generational differences with their senior colleagues, of balancing family, and to be people who lived among students during the most difficult period of their careers. These faculty stories embedded themselves in my mind, and shaped the scope of my research interests.

I observed faculty women giving so much of themselves—living in residence, serving in informal advising and mentoring roles to students from across campus, negotiating parenthood, developing scholarly projects that were viable, working hard to improve their teaching. I wanted to explore more about these experiences and what made them seem so hard yet rewarding. I learned about the vexing problems of a progressive-minded campus, where students often felt that having chosen to attend, they had already mastered social justice and any implication otherwise was an insult.

Leaving the college was both difficult and easy. I felt so at home there. My every-days were filled with getting it. I knew how to communicate with students and how to communicate with the administrators and faculty. I knew where to go and when and why. I loved the beauty of the campus. I loved the ease of my thirty-second commute from my apartment to my office. I loved how supported I felt by my supervisor, and how challenged I was by my excellent colleagues. On the other hand, I was ready to be done with the surveillance state that is living-in-residence; and I was exhausted from three years of intense giving to the community. I was ready to live somewhere with a potential for friends I didn't work with. I was ready to re-immerse myself in learning, reading, and writing—to be a student again. I was ready to solve big problems facing higher education, not big problems facing individual students. I was ready to walk away from the politics of a place where most of the staff had been there their entire careers. I was

ready to not be a front-line employee. I was so sad to leave this place I called home. It was, in all regards, a bittersweet leaving.

Transitioning to the doctoral program was easy. My advisor was generous, kind, and truly invested in developing me as a scholar. My first semester I was writing a book chapter—analyzing data, writing, editing, and working as a team to develop ideas about what we were finding. I had a passion for my studies that I never had previously; I read deeply and thoroughly. I debated in class. My classmates were thoughtful and intelligent. While the university was not in my ideal living location, it offered a focused lifestyle where everyone around me was absorbed in the work. This absorption helped me to focus, but also overwhelmed me. The expectation that academic work be the most important thing in my life was frustrating. I was thirty years old, and didn't want to focus entirely on my career. The location of the university did little to offer me a break. I spent all my time with people in my program, and we talked about the program, the faculty, and our work all the time. Our faculty were undergoing a sea-change, with about half either retiring or moving to other institutions. In fact, I was swept along with these changes, as my advisor was hired at another institution. She invited me to come with her, and I took the opportunity.

My transition to the new program was relatively easy. Finally, I had a personal support network that was not based on school or work, since I had friends and family in the area. I was excited to take classes with and be mentored by a new advisor whose research interests dovetailed neatly into my own. I was happy to continue to work with my previous advisor on long-term research projects. I was able to take courses in an excellent women's studies program to supplement my higher education program courses.

While I felt good about the many ways in which I was supported by faculty in both my programs, I also began to wonder if faculty life was for me. One of the challenges of studying the professoriate as a graduate student is that I became familiar with all the challenges of faculty life without having experienced the benefits. I had so many doubts about whether this was the path for me. This is a truth that is difficult to speak aloud in doctoral programs where often those who desire to be faculty receive more attention, investment, and development from their mentors. It is also a difficult truth when you realize that you are being trained to do one thing: become a faculty member. Questions arose to which I did not have easy answers. How do you prepare yourself to do something else? At what point have you invested too much in getting a doctorate to turn back? How much can you hope to change such a vast and self-perpetuating system by buying into it? What do you do when you don't know what you want to do? The funny thing about these experiences was that I knew others looked at me and saw me as fitting. I was told repeatedly by peers that they saw me as a future faculty member in the way I talk, interact, and try to help them develop and grow in their own process. I have even had my dissertation study participants, faculty themselves, tell me I may surprise myself and pursue the faculty route.

One of the driving reasons I chose my research topic — fit for women faculty — was that I was in search of models, mindsets, and modalities of faculty life that spoke to me. Having spent all of my graduate education at large, public land-grant universities, I knew I had been repeatedly exposed to the same context, albeit with the subtle variations that each faculty member brings to their experience. The research literature on faculty didn't really highlight how faculty can approach their careers so differently, and still fit.

Investigating, up close, how faculty made sense of their careers and institutional environments seemed the best way to answer my own questions. I have been inspired by the many ways my participants have navigated the professoriate. They have shared their anxieties, their perceived strengths and weaknesses, and the ways they have made it work for themselves. More than anything, they have helped me to imagine possibilities for myself in academia.

CHAPTER 4: METHODS

Utilizing narrative research approaches, this study explores how women faculty members at a liberal arts institution craft their institutional, departmental, and disciplinary experiences into a narrative of "fit" in the academy. The research questions driving this study are as follows:

1. What are women faculty's narratives of fitting and mis-fitting?
2. How do women construct these narratives in relation to their disciplinary, institutional, and departmental experiences in an organization with gendered and racialized inequality regimes?
3. What disciplinary, institutional, and departmental discourses are reflected in these narratives?
4. In what ways do women's narratives reflect choices and pursuit of action or inaction that develops or maintains a sense of fit?

Kristof-Brown and Billsberry (2013a) argue that an interpretive approach is needed in order to begin to build concepts of fit from the perspective of organizational participants. Participants' accounts of how they assess and make sense of their "fit" within the institutional context is a key goal of this study, in order to both advance knowledge about fit and about women's lives in the academy. The academy, in this study, refers broadly to women's experiences with Austin's (1990) four faculty cultures: the academic profession, the discipline, academic organizations, and the institutional type in which they are embedded. These elements combine to create a specific nexus of cultures which

women then must navigate, and contribute to their sense of fit. All of these cultures are embedded with the values of the academy as a gendered organization, and the resulting gender practices are shaped by this nexus of cultures (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012).

A focus on narrative within the institution of the academy illuminates the lived experiences of women faculty as they navigate and make sense of their fit. Attending to narrative requires listening to women's stories, respecting their efforts to represent or evade representation of themselves, while also unpacking how their experiences are shaped by the discourses of what the academy values, who belongs, and who does not. Narrative research methods are well positioned to integrate and interrogate the construction of meaning, positionality, and identity with individuals' accounts of their lives, the communications they make to and with other organizational actors, as well as the discursive context of academic life. My interest, then, is in the stories that are told within the academy, and how individual women faculty make sense of these stories and incorporate them into their own narrative of who they are and how they've come to be that way.

The theoretical frame for this study proposed that narratives are composed at two levels: big stories and small stories. Faculty members' structured, coherent stories about who they are and how they came to perceive their fit in the academy are big stories. Interactions, deferrals, and resistances act as small stories (Georgakopoulou, 2006). Small stories may inform the big stories by creating salient experiences that prompt faculty to position themselves within a particular setting with other people. The big stories may inform the small stories by creating an overall arc which faculty members attempt to maintain in their choice of actions and interactions. These big and small stories work

together to provide a more complex, contradictory view of how people view themselves, how they are viewed by others, and how they take up organizational stories to make sense and take action.

While understanding and making sense of fit may be a long-term project, its indications are often tethered to specific moments: hearing the story of the beloved, emeritus faculty member in the department; silence or outright resistance in response to a proposed course change; students leaving notes on the office door or playing loving practical jokes on a faculty member; or the coded conversations as part of a third-year review. In their theoretical account of fit, Shipp and Jansen (2011) suggest that "fit snippets," or short stories of significant experiences, play an important role in the construction of a fit assessment. The length of time away from an experience, its salience and emotional resonance, and its connections to current experiences play a role in how much a single fit snippet shapes an overall fit assessment. Therefore, the methods of this study focus on identifying these key moments through observations and retrospective interviewing.

I am not content, however, to focus solely on the narratives of my participants; fit is not just located in perception — it is a co-construction between the faculty member and academia. In order to expand understanding of fit and how it is constructed within academia at large, this study situates the academy itself as an institution with local contexts of discipline, particular college or university type, and organizational constraints. Therefore, this study pairs narrative inquiry with methods and perspectives from institutional ethnography. Smith's (2005) institutional ethnography is suited to engage the narrative standpoint of individuals moving through organizational experiences

structured through power. Institutional ethnography can identify how larger discourses are shaping the options available to participants (Smith, 2006). Institutional ethnography does not assume a nefarious role for these discourses, but rather seeks to illuminate what may be hidden within particular localities. Smith (2005) defines standpoint as an "entry into discovering the social…. that works from the actualities of people's everyday lives and experience" (p. 10). The focus here is on the day-to-day interactions with people, documents, and bureaucracies.

Building on the work of Foucault (Foucault, 1980), institutional ethnography takes as its subject how our social interactions, or social relations, are deeply embedded with power. Individuals have different abilities and tools at their disposal to navigate these power relations — including their own power in these contexts, how deeply other power discourses embed the institution (here: the academy), and their willingness to adopt certain discourses with or without resistance (Smith, 2005). By exploring every day lives, the "ruling relations" of life are exposed; ruling relations are the "consciousness and organization" of people in their local, embodied experiences (Smith, 2005, p. 13). My analysis sought to create context for individuals' narratives of themselves through my own observations and interpretations of the stories and materials shared with me. This context highlights those ruling relations in which women faculty at one liberal arts college are embedded.

For purposes of this study, I seek to collect both these "big" and "small" stories in order to best capture the discourses of fit that frame the academy and its gendered practices, and specifically the experiences of women faculty with those practices. Within the big stories that faculty women have to offer about their lives, special attention is

focused on the stories that get told repeatedly across multiple interviews. Additionally, small stories are captured by attention on participants *in medias res*, or in the middle of things, in their daily lives. This includes observing their everyday interactions in the classroom, in on-campus activities, or faculty and committee meetings. The resulting narratives should help to reveal how the academy as institution has created practices and beliefs that define "fitting," and determine how a fit narrative comes to exist and be reified.

Researcher Positionality

While these narrative approaches shaped the kinds of information I collected, my feminist commitments shaped the kinds of interactions I sought to have, and how I represented, or re-storied, the women in this study. Rather than seeing participants from what Haraway (1988) calls the "view from nowhere" (p. 581), or a disembodied space of objectivity and infinite vision, I sought to engage my participants within my fully situated position as someone who cannot divorce herself from her background and experiences.

Narrative research is inherently a co-construction (Kim, 2016a). I attempted to monitor how I interacted with and how I represented my participants as the co-constructor of their narratives. I tried to take into account my own position as a single, non-parent White woman in the academy, the knowledge traditions to which I am heir, and the conventions that guide how academic women are typically spoken of and written about. This was not easy, and I would not claim to have done it perfectly. Instead multiple readings of my writing, and reading performed by others, continued to reveal my blind spots and hesitancies at identifying and naming my own position in the research process. Readers who are faculty, who are people of color, who are parents, to name a

few blind spots, will likely identify patterns that I have missed or places I could have gone deeper with participants or myself. The co-construction process continues now as readers engage the textual versions of my participants. While I am invested in bringing forth new understanding about "fit" and its implications for faculty, this study provides only an initial and partial viewpoint of fit for these participants.

I intended to enact a form of pragmatism that incorporated and reflected new materialist feminisms. New materialism focuses on the material consequences for individuals within society, while simultaneously recognizing the importance of self and representation (Dolphijn & Tuin, 2012; Rosiek, 2013). In other words, there is more at stake than representation and identity, yet representation and identity have serious effects on our lived and material experiences. In this study, these dual concerns translated into interrogating the ways that representation and identity are cultivated, challenged, and hidden by the practices of the academy, with a view to exposing some of the more material consequences of the gendered and racialized organization on women faculty. Material consequences took the time of health, time, and money for participants, in addition to representational approvals, erasures, and closures.

More importantly, Rosiek (2013) suggests that a new materialist feminist pragmatic approach requires the use of criteria for evaluating research that rests in the "critical transformation of present and future possibilities for experience" (p. 696). Therefore, this study draws its warrant and criteria for quality in its ability to expose and validate alternative experiences for faculty. In particular, this study reveals the role that institutions play in limiting particular faculty voices or stories, and to highlight how certain kinds of institutional narratives may support a broader range of faculty activities

that work in service of both the institutional mission as well as faculty intellectual, personal, and professional development (O'Meara et al., 2008).

I am emboldened in these efforts to live among the overlapping of the edges of this project by the promise of "promiscuous feminist" methodology. Childers, Rhee and Daza (2013) define "promiscuous feminist methodologies" as comfortable with starting from an unstable platform, playing in uncertainty, open to change and modification, and concerned with the consequences of what research practices may be "doing" for or to participants. This promiscuous feminism also allows a departure from the strictures of "good feminism," or sticking to particular gender stories. In this study, promiscuous feminism means being able to delve into what matters to fit, even if it means telling tales about women behaving badly, or changing themselves to succeed, or acknowledging that successful women in the academy often take very similar viewpoints as those who hold power-positions in social and literal hierarchy. It also means walking the lines between a feminist research tradition, a narrative research tradition, and the potential overlapping edges of those traditions to find ways of understanding the experience of fit that produces new insights into what matters to today's women academics.

I am invested in narrative feminist research for other reasons as well. I have come to know the world through stories — the stories in books and movies; the stories my family, my mentors, my teachers, my friends have told; and in thinking about what I want my story to be. When I look around the academy, the majority of the stories I hear offered to faculty do not resonate for me, and I think there are stories that are silenced, or simplified, or taken for granted that need to be amplified. I also think the world, and the world of work in academe, is incredibly complicated, too complicated to be held by a

single narrative, by a single power structure, or a single opportunity for change. One such narrative that has dominated the literature and conversation about women faculty is the role of motherhood. I was invested in telling a story that did not center motherhood as the site of conflict for women faculty, although most of my participants were parents. Instead, I sought to identify how structures of power and identity in the academy may have intersected with motherhood as one dimension among many that women faculty might be considered "other."

Beyond telling their stories, I attempted to capture my experience with each individual in their narrative, including the energy or physicality they brought to spaces on campus and their interactions with me. Bringing the reader with me into the room, to see the participants through my eyes, my brain, my body, was a tricky dance to engage, particularly as a White woman. I noticed differences between me and my participants--in physicality such as race or age or in demeanor such as chattiness or stillness -- before I noticed our similarities. I had temper, filter, and adjust my experience of differences with mindfulness towards how articulating that experience might reify my own power-full positions of race, class, and ability.

My choice of site and population was driven by my previous professional relationships with faculty at the research site. Through those relationships, I saw how differently than men the women faculty, mostly in their early careers, juggled work and personal commitments, chose to interact with students in a high-touch environment, and deployed their intellectual abilities in working with administrators and students. In an environment that was rich with history as a former women's college, the role of women faculty in the broader scheme of the college's inner workings raised multiple questions

about how women choose to make sense of these experiences. One faculty member with whom I was close, and who shared with me her promotion materials, discussed with me the challenges she faced in having lower teaching evaluations than many of her peers — while her research profile was exemplary. Her confusion and frustration piqued my interest in women faculty careers and how women faculty made sense of their place in the institution.

In practice, these commitments produce a method that seeks to be slightly diffracted. My voice serves as the thread that ties together varying stories from individual participants in the form of multiple interviews, observations, and written materials produced for tenure review, as well as the institutional policies and narratives that surround faculty members' practices. As Elliot (2005) argues, "the *researcher* is responsible for providing an analysis of narratives which makes explicit that which has gone without saying, and which makes linkages between particular cases and underlying social conditions" (original emphasis, p. 148). While I sought to foreground the participants' voices, my role was to reveal the "ruling relations" of the institution — the academy writ large and locally— and how those relations may elicit diverse actions, reactions, and understandings from women faculty. Therefore, I "read through" the participants' stories and narratives to find links to institutional practices — links of which they may have been unaware, or which they did not find problematic.

Methods

Narrative research methods draw from a rich panoply of story-based research. While there are epistemic differences between oral history and narrative study, there are significant similarities to their methodological processes. The main difference may be the

focus of the context for the interviews; while an oral history may focus on longer periods of time – such as an entire life – narrative interviews can be more sharply focused (Leavy, 2007; Mishler, 1986). Mishler (1986) and Riessman (2008) suggest multiple contacts with interview participants. These extended and intensive engagements with research participants can reduce the need for a high number of participants. Engaging in multiple conversations with participants allows the researcher to elicit responses from participants regarding initial analyses, inviting participants to be co-creators not just of the narrative, but also of the analysis itself. Leavy (2007) suggests that while these collaborations may bring up tensions between researcher and participants, it seems better to be able to engage these tensions directly rather than sidestepping them entirely.

A focus on an individual narrative can miss the forces of master or schematic narratives that "permeate the collective life, activity and identity" of individuals, coloring and defining their activities, at times, without their awareness (Esteban-Guitart, 2012, p. 176). Complementing narrative interviewing and writing with an institutional ethnography approach moves the collection of narratives beyond the formation of stories of particular women at this college and allows for observations to made about the effect of the institution on its participants. Or, as DeVault and McCoy (2006) suggest, "(t)he researcher's purpose in an institutional ethnography is not to generalize about the group of people interviewed, but to find and describe social processes that have generalizing effects" (p. 18). Reading through participants' narratives to identify social relations that are inscribed with power moves this study beyond simply reifying particular voices as representative of all women's, but rather highlights how this particular institution of the academy creates and reinforces particular social relationships and power dynamics that

have an effect on women in its midst. In other words, institutional ethnography is focused on “how it happens”, with “it,” in this study, being fit for women.

In order to understand these social relations shaping women faculty’s fit, it was necessary to collect data about the organization in which they work. I engaged a multi-method approach that allowed me to engage with participants and their narratives of fit in multiple contexts and forms of expression. I focused intently and intensively on seven women faculty at a single liberal arts institution. Narrative interviews were the heart of this study. To complement and trouble the narratives that emerge from these interviews, I also analyzed their personal statements for tenure and collected institutional documents that highlighted the possibilities presented in their knowledge worlds. For some participants, I also conducted observations in their classes, meetings with colleagues, or at campus events. These various data sources were analyzed and woven into their stories of fitting. Their stories were complicated and complemented with analysis that sought to identify patterns of among their responses to ruling relations within the academy — those discourses that shaped what was possible in terms of thought, action, and perception.

This study attempted to situate itself on a leading edge of narrative research, by situating narrative within and as a tool to partake in institutional ethnography. Because the form of narrative research in which I engaged does not follow the typical path of either narrative research in education (see Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2007) or other paradigms of qualitative research often used, details on analysis and trustworthiness are included here to help readers understand the choices that I made in this study.

Site Selection

The site of research was a small, private, highly selective residential liberal arts college in the northeast, Serena College (pseudonym). With approximately 2,500 students, a faculty to student ratio of 8:1, and an average class size of 17, Serena College provides intensive and close relationships between faculty and students. Over 70% of faculty live on or near campus, indicating a life for faculty and students that centers around the College. Serena College was founded as a women's college in the mid-nineteenth century, but is now co-educational. It has a national reputation, and for many students it is an alternative choice to attending an Ivy League institution. Entering classes of students are comprised of roughly 30% students of color and 10% international students. The campus community prides itself on progressive ideals, has unionized staff (but not unionized faculty or administrators) for whom many faculty are vocal allies, and a faculty-in-residence program in which many early career faculty participate.

The choice to situate the research at this liberal arts college was driven by multiple goals. First, most research focuses on faculty at research institutions. The nature of the expectations placed on highly selective liberal arts faculty by their institution are different, with relatively high expectations for both teaching and research (Baker et al., 2012; Ruscio, 1987). Second, this institution has a culture of strong collegiality, with faculty and students participating in its shared governance. This culture is distinctive, and offers a particular set of values around who fits (Rice, Austin, & Brown, 2000). Third, while liberal arts colleges provide significantly different contexts than research universities, elite, highly selective liberal arts colleges have historically served highly privileged student bodies while simultaneously fomenting progressive intellectualism

(Keohane, Altbach, & Gumport, 2001). These dual histories create a particular sort of challenge to faculty attempting to fit.

My personal knowledge of the site also contributed to understanding and analysis of the faculty narratives. Having worked professionally with individuals at the institution, I was able to enter the institutional context with some awareness of the norms that guide faculty life at Serena. I had some knowledge of customs and cultures of the institution, had access to key gatekeepers, and had existing relationships with potential participants. This familiarity aided in my extensive data collection procedures, as I knew enough about the college's recent history to probe about key events, to offer my own observations as something for faculty to react to, as well as provide me with a rich insider-outsider perspective on some aspects of their faculty lives (Geertz et al., 1994). At the same time, despite vigilance, my familiarity could prove a liability in this research; there may have been elements of the institution's culture and demands for fit that I did not see, took for granted, or was unable to critique. It has been over five years since I had regular contact with staff or faculty at this institution, and I suspect this time, and my current distance from the institution in both mileage and career positioning, allowed for a critical re-engagement with the community.

Participants

The population of interest is tenured women faculty in a liberal arts college. I identified eight tenured women at one highly selective liberal arts college in the northeast who were willing to participate in the study; one participant withdrew from the study during the analysis stage, leaving seven total participants who are included in the analysis. Purposive sampling strategies (Krathwohl, 2009) focused on identifying women

from multiple disciplines. Although I had hoped to recruit a diverse sample of participants, only three women in the study identify as women of color. Racial diversity was sought in order to capture the variety of social positions for women; in alignment with my feminist commitments, the standpoints of women of color and White women were incorporated in order to ensure the diversity of women's experiences are captured within the study. In addition, faculty participants were required to have submitted materials for promotion (successfully or unsuccessfully). A concerted effort was made, through reviewing course catalogues, to identify faculty who had been reviewed for tenure in the recent decade but had not been promoted. Six such individuals were identified, and none responded to my multiple requests to engage them in the study.

The choice to focus on women who have gone or are going through the tenure review process is based on several motivations. First, these faculty have been embedded within the institution for long enough to have become acculturated to, or at least aware of, the expectations for success, and to have successfully moved beyond the initial transition period. Second, in preparation for tenure review at this institution, faculty must prepare a significant amount of narrative material in which they discuss the evolution of their teaching, research, and service careers at the institution. This documentation is key to providing insight into the ruling relations that structure their positioning of themselves — the format and tone of these documents is often replicated through the sharing of key example texts, and is dictated by how local individuals interpret institutional policies and practices. Smith (2003) suggests that these kinds of documents serve to structure thinking about institutions while simultaneously shaping the practices of institution constituents.

Ultimately, the tenure decision serves as a proxy for a fit determination by the institution (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996).

A combination of intentional and snowball sampling was used (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Initial participants were identified through hand searching the institution's website and identifying faculty who might identify as women. The first wave of recruitment was comprised of women faculty about whom I knew the most, as it allowed me to strategically recruit for racial diversity (see Appendix F for a sample communication). This included many women faculty with whom I had prior relationships. Three of the seven participants were individuals I had met prior to study. Many faculty with whom I had prior relationships were not responsive to participating in the study. Each potential participant was emailed with an invitation to participate that identified the anticipated amount of time participation would require, information about the IRB-approval process, and background information about me as a researcher. I offered each participant an opportunity to talk via phone or Skype prior to enrolling in the study so that she may ask questions and learn more about my project and its aims. I created a website to share information about the study with participants, connected to a Qualtrics survey form to collect some demographic data, curricula vitae, and schedules from participants.

In narrative approaches, attention to the relationship between the interviewer and participant is of relevance and importance. The dynamics that may be shaping the co-construction of the narrative need to be explicitly acknowledged (Riessman, 2008). The kind of relationship that exists between the interviewer and narrator may support certain kinds of disclosures and suppress others, as well as potentially creating a short-hand between interviewer and narrator for topics in which they are both familiar. Both my

existing relationships with participants and my previous experience with staff at the institution aided in creating a common language and shared background the participants, with me asking "confirming" questions about some of my perceptions of faculty experience at the college (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The very familiarity and rapport that a previous relationship provides could also hinder attempts at critical analysis, and may make determinations about the elements of the institutional culture with which I am familiar more difficult. In addition, our prior relationships may have prompted some participants to cling more closely to cover stories, or the stories that are supposed to be told, because of their reluctance to change my perception of them (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Table 4.1

Participant Demographics

Alias	Sexuality	Race/ Ethnicity	Discipline Area	Undergrad Institution Type	Highest Family Education	Marital Status	Parental Status	Age
Karen	Hetero-sexual	White	Science	Public University	Parent-Bachelor's	Married	Has Child(ren)	43
Nora	Hetero-sexual	White	Social Science	Private Liberal Arts College	Parent-Professional	Married	Has Child(ren)	41
Lisa	Hetero-sexual	White	Science	Private Liberal Arts College	Parent-Bachelor's	Married	No Child(ren)	39
Ruth	Female	African American	Arts	Private University	Self-Master's	Single	Has Child(ren)	50
Ana	Queer	White/ Hispanic	Humanities	Public University	Parent-Doctorate	Married	Has Child(ren)	47
Deborah	Hetero-sexual	White	Social Science	Private Art & Design	Sibling-Professional	Married	Has Child(ren)	47
Phoebe	Hetero	African American	Humanities	Public University	Parent-High School	Single	No Child(ren)	49

Sources of Data

Multiple sources of data were collected regarding the seven participants' lives and experiences of fit within the academy. These included: two in-depth narrative interviews;

observations of the participants in their daily lives at the college; participants' materials related to their tenure and promotion process; as well as institutional and disciplinary documents that were be structuring their communications, interactions, or written materials. See Tables 4.2 and 4.3 for the data sources collected for analysis. These multiple sources of data served to provide a 360-degree view of the narratives of these participants. The purpose of collecting multiple sources of data was to provide context and meaning to the analysis and interpretations made, and to acknowledge that narratives do not exist within the teller alone. My role in analysis was to bring together these varying sources to make sense of, and expose, the ruling relations which structure and support the narratives of fit for these women faculty.

Table 4.2

Participant Sources of Data

Alias	**Background Information Form**	**CV**	**Interview 1**	**Interview 2**	**Observation 1**	**Observation 2**	**Personal Statement for Tenure**
Karen	Submitted	Submitted	Completed	Completed	Classroom	Meeting	Submitted
Nora	Submitted	Submitted	Completed	Completed	Classroom	Not Completed	Submitted
Lisa	Submitted	Submitted	Completed	Completed	Classroom	Not Completed	Submitted
Ruth	Submitted	Not Submitted	Completed	Not Completed	Cancelled	Not Completed	Submitted
Ana	Submitted	Submitted	Completed	Completed	On Sabbatical	Not Completed	Submitted
Deborah	Submitted	Submitted	Completed	Completed	Campus Event	Not Completed	Submitted
Phoebe	Submitted	Submitted	Completed	Completed	On Sabbatical	Not Completed	Not Submitted

Participant Background Information Form

Each participant completed an online informed consent and background information form via Qualtrics prior to their interviews, material collection, or observations. This form was intended to ensure that the same information was collected from each participant. This also allowed participants to identify their own racial/ethnic background, sexuality, socioeconomic background, academic area or discipline, and current status at the institution (see Appendix A). Additional data such as educational background and previous faculty positions was collected by asking participants to submit their curricula vitae via the Qualtrics form. Participants were also asked to indicate in which phases of data collection they planned to participate.

Narrative Interviews

I engaged six of the seven participants in two narrative interviews. The focus of the in-depth narrative interviews was to elicit the stories that participants told about themselves in relation to past, current, and anticipated experiences with fit. These repeated encounters served to enhance trust and allowed for the collection of detailed data sets with each participant. Both Mishler (1986) and Riessman (2008) emphasize the importance of casting narrative interviews as far from traditional interview pacing and interaction as possible. It is important, they argue, that participants are given ample space to respond with stories, and that the interview proceed as closely to a dialogue as possible. It was imperative, then, that as an interviewer I was mindful of where the conversation might go, and that I was prepared to prompt and probe as necessary, while allowing participants free range to engage with ideas, topics, and stories they found meaningful. At times, the interviews travelled far afield from the plan I had for them, and

time constraints often created missed opportunities to fill in details on stories, perceptions, or meaning making.

The focus for the first interviews was eliciting participants' stories (see Appendix C). Topics included stories of their transition from graduate school to faculty life, their relationships within their current department and the broader institution, their activities within the job and organization, and their sense of fit with their department, their discipline, and their institution. Additionally, participants were prompted regarding how they know whether others do or do not fit, and whether the tenure process indicated anything to them about their fit experience. These interviews ranged from 60 to 90 minutes to capture participants' academic careers sufficiently and to engage participants as co-constructors of theories-in-use about their fit narratives (Riessman, 2008). One participant (Ruth) only completed one interview due to scheduling issues and lack of availability. The first interviews were audio-recorded for ease of transcription. I took extensive notes by hand for each interview, and drafted initial impression memos.

The second round of interviews focused on eliciting key turning points or moments in their experiences (see Appendix D). Billsberry, Ambrosini, Moss-Jones, and Marsh (2005) suggest pairing story telling with causal mapping to capture a sense of fit. I asked participants to walk me through key points in their pre-tenure and post-tenure periods, focusing on how they made decisions, what sources of information they used to inform their choices, and their sense of their potential success in tenure review and review for full professor. During this interview, I also discussed with participants the documents they supplied me (promotion materials) and shared my impressions of these documents and my initial analyses of the first interviews. Each participant's second interview

protocol was customized using my analyses of their initial interview and their submitted search and tenure review documents. These interviews took between 60 and 90 minutes. Following these interviews, memos were composed to capture initial analytic insights related to overall impressions of the narrative, key narrative moments, indications of ruling relations, indications of fit, potential small stories to follow up, and other key understandings gleaned from the interviews. Second interviews were also audio-recorded.

With the support of a grant from the University of Maryland Consortium on Race, Gender, and Ethnicity's Qualitative Research Interest Group, I was able to have the interview recordings professionally transcribed immediately after each interview. I reviewed and cleaned the transcripts by listening to the recorded audio, comparing against my interview notes as needed. This review of the transcripts allowed me to become more familiar with the content. I did some light memoing while cleaning as particular insights emerged. Reviewing and cleaning the early transcripts also helped me to review my interview skills, and improve my approach to asking certain questions and reduce unnecessary interjections or interruptions in subsequent interviews.

Observations

Georgakopoulou (2006) suggests that observations in real, varied spaces reveals small stories as bounded by place and the attendant norms of location – social and physical. Viewing faculty in these multiple spaces provided insights into these particular locations for interaction as well as eliciting analysis for how participants' presentations of themselves both remain stable and change across these settings.

Participants were asked to identify up to two settings in which they felt comfortable being observed for approximately 60 to 120 minutes. Five of the seven participants

invited me to observe them; two were on sabbatical and were not engaging in campus activities. One invited observation was cancelled on the last day of my last site visit. Most participants identified only the classroom or student-centered events as the space for observations, with one participant also inviting me to a meeting with a colleague. Allowing the participants to choose the space and sub-community on campus ensured that they were comfortable in the environments in which I observed them, and that my presence as an observer did not create interfering tensions or problems for them with colleagues or students.

Participant observation was employed to witness the faculty participants in various social and structural locations on campus (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Most of the observations involved minimal participation; my goal was to participate at the level that allowed participants and others to mostly ignore my presence. In one case, an interactive student research presentation symposium, this required me to circulate with individuals beyond my participant's immediate relationships, and to be introduced at intervals to the individuals as a doctoral student conducting research. For the classroom observations, I composed an email for the faculty to send on my behalf the week before the observation. In the email, I introduced myself, explained my project and the focus of my observation, and asked them to let their instructor know if they felt uncomfortable so we could identify an alternative observation activity (see Appendix F). No students expressed concerns about the observations.

During the observations, I noted key patterns of conversations among the students and faculty member, as well as noting important conversational moments, evidence of particular pedagogies, and my cursory thoughts about their presence in the classroom (see

Appendix E). Memos were composed following each observation, focusing on documenting key moments of fitting or misfitting. I had hoped to identify moments of tension between the participant and others in her work setting; ways in which other individuals check or support her behaviors, actions, or expressions of ideas, thoughts, and feelings; as well as other sensitizing concepts identified in the analysis section. Since the majority of my observations were in the classroom setting where the professor held the majority of power, I observed few instances of these kinds of interactions. In general, the observations were not as generative of insights as I had hoped prior to engaging in the data collection process. The observations were useful mostly in helping to provide a common experience between the faculty member and me; I scheduled the second interviews to occur after each observation, and was able to debrief what I had seen in the classroom with the faculty members.

Participants' Promotion & Tenure Materials

The sense of time inherent in narrative theory and analysis suggests that fit is affected by experiences in the past, the present, and in an anticipated future. Additionally, some conceptions of narrative, particularly those conceiving of narrative as a performance, suggest the important role that audience plays in the stories we tell (Riessman, 2008). Institutional ethnography suggests that the production and interpretation of texts is a key way in which ruling relations are enacted, by structuring how things are written about and the conformity expected in form, content, and so forth (Smith, 2006). The production of these texts is a particular form of work and expression of self and institutional practices and priorities — and serve as a culmination of, or turning point in, particular experiences and interactions within the institution (Smith, 2006).

Participants shared with me the documentation they submitted for tenure review. These documents included their current CV, teaching statements, research narratives, and service documentation. These personal statement for tenures provided participants' argument regarding their fit at the institution, created after multiple years as a part of the campus community but prior to our interviews. These statements served as a particular genre of autobiographical writing, with the audience not being the researcher but those who help determine and create a sense of fit (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Some participants also shared their first post-tenure review documents as well.

As mentioned above, my analysis of these documents was discussed with participants in the second interview. This provided me an opportunity to confirm or challenge my analyses with these participants, as well as providing fodder for their own reflections. Understanding how the faculty approached the creation of these texts provided indications about what matters in the cultural ruling relations of the institution (Serena College and academe).

Institutional Documents

In order to gain a sense of how the participants were incorporating discourses about faculty embedded within the institution, key documents were collected at all possible levels for each participant. These documents were primarily used to support analyses that emerge from the participants' narratives as shared via interview, documentation, and observation, and to inform the narrative about the college itself. Documents included promotion and tenure policies as written at the institutional level, guidance on the tenure portfolio, faculty handbooks, sample portfolios or other such documents that faculty

identified as helpful to them in preparing their tenure and promotion materials. These materials were identified through a search of the college website as well through my conversations with the faculty during our interviews (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Other Sources of Data

Title	Date of Document
"Serena" College Catalogue	2003-2004
"Serena" College Catalogue	2004-2005
"Serena" College Catalogue	2005-2006
"Serena" College Catalogue	2006-2007
"Serena" College Catalogue	2007-2008
"Serena" College Catalogue	2008-2009
"Serena" College Catalogue	2009-2010
"Serena" College Catalogue	2010-2011
"Serena" College Catalogue	2011-2012
"Serena" College Catalogue	2012-2013
"Serena" College Catalogue	2013-2014
"Serena" College Catalogue	2014-2015
"Serena" College Catalogue	2015-2016
"Serena" College Common Data Set	2003-2004
"Serena" College Common Data Set	2007-2008
"Serena" College Common Data Set	2010-2011
"Serena" College Common Data Set	2016-2017
"Serena" Department Chairs and Program Directors Handbook	2015-2016
"Serena" Equal Employment and Recruitment Policy	n.d.
"Serena" Faculty Handbook	2016-2017
"Serena" Governance	2015-2016
FAQ – "Serena" and the Economy	2010
Various Articles from External Online Media Sites	multiple
Various Articles from the Student Newspaper	multiple

Analysis

Narrative analysis techniques, informed by institutional ethnography, were the foundation of my analysis (Mishler, 1986). Analyses at multiple stages utilized Nvivo qualitative research software to look for themes and other points of interest across the multiple data points and sources. Utilizing multiple stages of analysis, all data sources in hand were considered at each stage. Immediately following the collection of each source

of data, memos were composed to identify my own reaction to the interview, observation, or text, and to highlight key points of interest.

The first stage of analysis was focused on coding materials and transcripts collected from each participant by applying both inductive codes drawn from memoing and reflection on interactions with participants, and deductive codes drawn from the literature on women faculty experiences. This combination of coding was developed to ensure that both the nascent and emergent perspectives that participants offered were included, as well as ensuring that attention remained on identifying ruling relations and other organizational effects on participants lives.

The second stage of analysis was concerned with identifying the major fit narrative emerging from each faculty member's interview(s), statements and letters, and observations. Each participant's data was analyzed to identify concepts or stories that captured how she constructs her sense of fit. Attention to language, metaphor, and thematic content informed this analysis. Thematic analysis of this kind can help to draw connections between participants' narratives to previous literature and dominant narratives featured in the media or literature (Riessman, 2008), or within the institution of the academy. I drafted a single narrative, a version of the big story, for each participant. This process followed what Polkinghorne (1995) terms narrative mode of analysis, in which data is reconfigured into a coherent whole (Kim, 2016b). When possible, I tried to note the meaning I was making or impressions that I had as part of the narrative, keeping my role as author of this version of narrative transparent. Inevitably, the effort to tell a single story of the participant's experience resulted in tensions between telling a "good" story (easy to read and easy to understand) and a "faithful" story (adhering closely to the

lived reality of the narrator) (Spence (1986), as cited in Kim, 2016b). Where possible, I tried to do both, but omissions, elisions, or simplifications may have occurred. Chapter 5: Faculty Narratives of Fit presents the results of this analysis.

The third stage of analysis sought to compare the narratives across participants, in an attempt to find patterns across faculty stories of fit and to "find and describe social processes that have generalizing effects" (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 18). Commonalities and differences emerged across participant narratives and highlighted how the ruling relations of institutional practices shaped how these women faculty act and react in response. I also connected participant narratives to larger discourses embedded within institutional practices as in stage two, such as ruling relations. In addition, this stage focused on what Barad calls diffraction, or looking for patterns of difference among the participants' narratives (Dolphijn & Tuin, 2012). This stage of analysis engaged in what Polkinghorne (1995) describes as the paradigmatic mode of analysis, with a focus on thematic categories and the relationships between those, on commonalities identified across the data, and the production of inductive knowledge (Kim, 2016b). These analyses informed the narrative for the college itself, which addressed the historical story (far and recent past) of the college. Findings presented in Chapter 6: Institutional Dynamics at Serena, which explored how changes at the college and its current practices, norms, and values have affected participants' fit, were also identified through these processes.

Throughout all the stages, sensitizing concepts drawn from the conceptual frame were engaged, and integrated into the codebook. These concepts included: distance and intensity of experiences; a sense of past, present, and future; motives (needs, goals,

values); temporal focus of participants; affect, optimism, resilience; openness to new experiences; and sensemaking practices (Shipp & Jansen, 2011). Concepts regarding inequality regimes were also included in the codebook (Acker, 2006). See Appendix G for the Quick Thematic Code Map used during coding.

Trustworthiness

I present the following facets of trustworthiness, suggested by Riessman (2008) as an attempt to situate how readers should make sense of the data presented here: correspondence, persuasion and presentation, pragmatic use, and ethical use. Riessman (2008) suggests that, like much other qualitative research, different standards are required for evaluating narrative research, and that, at their core, "narrative truths are partial — complete and incomplete" (p. 186).

Correspondence

Correspondence is focused on whether the data collected are of sufficient quality, or veracity, to warrant the claims of the proposed study, as well as whether the construct of "fit" is adequately represented by the data presented (Riessman, 2008). Ultimately, this relies on the measure of trustworthiness of the methods utilized to collect and analyze the data. Riessman's (2008) discussion of validity issues for narrative research suggests that the theoretical approach to narrative determines what standards may apply for evaluating validity. In essence, this project is not concerned with capturing "true" stories of the participants in the sense of verifying whether things happened in the way they said they did. Instead, this study focused primarily on capturing participants' interpretation, understanding, and sensemaking as reflected in their narratives. It also focused on how these narratives relate to the discursive environments and constituting ruling relations in

which they are embedded. In addition, correspondence was confirmed through peer debriefing, during which I checked my own interpretations and assumptions against knowledgeable peers' reading of my analyses.

Persuasion and Presentation

The persuasiveness of the presentation of the data in a narrative study is dictated by multiple considerations, including the reputation of the researcher, the audience for whom the study is being produced, and the ability of the author to convey material in an aesthetically pleasing and veracity-confirming manner. I share Riessman's (2008) concern that moving too far into the aesthetic may undermine readers' trust in the data. Therefore, I take up a way of presenting data recommended by Lather (2007) which seeks to balance participants' stories with my own analyses.

The data in this study are presented as extended composite narratives of each faculty member. These story-like expositions of the data are interspersed with analytic commentary as well as excerpted sections of the participants' own words from the interviews. This provides a multi-layered text that offers a cohesive, yet diffracted, view of the participants' narratives of fit (Visweswaran, 1994). This choice was made with the intention to expose how all representations of data are stories, and to allow participants' voices to speak in concert with my own.

Following the presentation of individuals' stories, themes which emerged regarding the ruling relations of the institution in cross-narrative analysis are presented as part of the analysis of institutional dynamics, including quotes from participant interviews as well as institutional artifacts. The cross-participants institutional analysis is intended to provide more clarity for implications for future research and practice, and to offer yet

another view into the participants' narratives of fit. The discussion of fit in the final chapter is the primary way through which the conceptual frame is explored, allowing commentary to emerge regarding the utility of a narrative conception of fit for faculty faculty. In some ways, this chapter is my narrative — the account of what I've come to learn about how women at this liberal arts college negotiate a sense of fit and make sense of the organizational practices in which they are embedded.

In choosing to present the data in three ways, I hope to avoid presenting the data as a single, unitary truth, and to keep my own role more present in the co-construction of this narrative regarding fit. With a focus on presenting a diffracted "story" of the data, I highlight how difference emerges for the participants, including disconfirming data, contradictory data, or disappointing data.

Pragmatic Use

Given the emphasis I place on my research being useful, Kvale's (1995) notion of pragmatic validity suggests that the most important measure of the work is its usefulness. Kvale suggests that, for some readers, exemplars, stories, and narratives may be the most productive for eliciting future change, despite their similarity to craft or art rather than scientific norms. Therefore, telling the stories in a compelling, or aesthetically pleasing, way is intentional to maximize their having pragmatic use for others. By engaging readers in the challenges of women faculty in navigating fit within the ruling relations of the academy, readers may walk away from this study invested in the stories of these women faculty and others. One of my key aims with this research on faculty fit is to offer alternative narratives to the academy, and if my participants' own counter-stories are supported in the process of the research, I will have reached one of my goals of validity.

Institutional ethnography, indeed, is embedded with the purpose of revealing the ruling relations at work in institutions with the aim of changing those relations; therefore, another form that pragmatic validity takes in this research is to clearly lay out avenues for change to readers in the final chapter.

Ethical Use

Riessman (2008), building off of Lather's (1993) arguments for a catalytic validity, argues that it may be important to have provided participants with something (potentially) useful to them. Therefore, it is also important to find ways to connect my participants with the findings - and allow them to find their own uses for and deployment of those conclusions. One way I offered this data to participants is the synopsis of the key findings and understandings of the dissertation for their own deployment and use, posted on the study website as a way to share the findings dynamically and briefly.

Member Checking

Member checking is common among most forms of qualitative research, usually engaged in to enhance the reliability of analyses (Krathwohl, 2009). In addition to verifying transcripts of our conversations with participants, my multiple interactions with participants allowed me to vet emerging analyses and insights with them in real time. Several participants corrected or furthered my understanding of their approach or of activities at the college.

Confidentiality and Participant Protections

Given the nature of the study site, a small faculty community, and the distinctiveness of individual narratives, it was important to weigh the balance of sharing, with detail, the narratives of particular participants and protecting their identities and maintaining

confidentiality in any reports of the research. This process was a negotiation with the participants themselves, empowering them to decide how and when details are to be shared (Elliott, 2005). It also meant that at times the narratives are more vague than might be desired, in my efforts to share participants' experiences while protecting their identities.

In addition, Elliott (Elliott, 2005) highlights that reflecting a narrative analysis back to participants has the potential to be damaging. Narrative understanding of the self may be fragile, and if, as a researcher, I propose too strong a deconstruction (or affirmation) of that narrative, it may be damaging, intrusive, or appear duplicitous. Participants may reject the vision of themselves that I present in my data, or may be uninterested in engaging beyond the formal research interactions (Riessman, 2008). There is a balance to be struck during the informed consent process — which seeks to give a reasonable preview to participants of the research in which they are about to participate, but which may change the nature of the interaction between the narrator and the researcher, changing the narrative itself (Elliott, 2005). The ultimate focus of this study on ruling relations should help to minimize these concerns — the attention on the institution's effect on the participants (rather than the participants' veracity or integrity as people) helped both the researcher and the narrator make sense of the kinds of information to be shared, collected, challenged, and concealed.

Limitations

One of the major limitations of this study is its small sample size and scope. Although each participant was engaged over multiple points in time, the smaller number of participants (seven) makes it more likely that some perspectives or experiences have not

been captured. Although I made significant effort women of color for the study, the majority of the participants were white. This limited the variety in standpoints contributing to the intersectional analysis of data. In addition, because narrative analysis is focused on the particulars of individuals' stories, a typical sense of saturation may not be achieved with the data (Guest, 2006). Engagement with diffraction, not saturation, is the goal of the study.

Another limitation is the location of this study at a highly selective liberal arts college. While it adds to the understanding of a rich, dynamic culture of that institutional type, it does potentially limit transferability to faculty experiences at other institutional types. Faculty at research universities, community colleges, and comprehensive universities may have completely different experiences. Even faculty located at non-selective liberal arts colleges may have different experiences. Despite this limitation, the application of these sensitizing concepts should work for multiple institutional sites, as they are not limited to the liberal arts context, and can be applied to varying institutional settings. Their form may vary across institutional types, but their presence as element of a narrative of fit should endure.

For some, the privileging of story or narrative as a research form reduces the reliability of the information collected; particularly for those who are in search of facts, or who question the role of discourse in shaping lived realities (Rhodes & Brown, 2005). This questioning is positioned in post-positivist ideals of objectivity which rely strongly on a demarcation between science and literature (Rhodes & Brown, 2005). In addition, given that stories are located within individuals' perspectives and understanding, some suggest that critiques are elided by researchers or their readers when dealing with stories

(Brown & Thompson, 2013). This study's strong emphasis on studying how organizational inequality regimes and ruling relations feature into participants' organizational lives should address this concern.

Summary

In summary, this study sought to integrate narrative research and institutional ethnography in order to present an analysis of how seven women faculty made sense of their institutional lives within the context of a single, highly selective liberal arts college. Analyses across the narratives of these participants provided insight into how the institution's practices, policies, and cultures shaped, supported, limited, and suggested particular kinds of narratives for participants. Since fit is a difficult concept to evaluate directly, multiple sources of data, including interviews, materials written by the participants for institutional purposes, observations, and institutional documents, were collected, with an eye to gathering a 360 degree view of the narrative. This wide-ranging view provided data rich narratives for each of the small number of participants and exposed the interactions between these women faculty and their environments.

The analysis and data collection process involved multiple stages which built upon each other — allowing participants' own observations and understandings to drive the next phase of data collection and analysis. A four-phase data analysis process allowed for multiple dimensions of the narratives — and the meaning these may hold for participants in light of institutional norms, actions, and expectations — to emerge. This study sought to be a true co-construction, while allowing ample space for my analytic voice to emerge in the findings and discussion of those findings. Providing a diffracted, and unstable,

representation of the findings emulates more closely the inherently fragile quality of knowledge collected about others and their institutional lives.

CHAPTER 5: FACULTY NARRATIVES OF FIT

This chapter presents the narratives of fit for the seven women faculty participants. Drawn from analysis of the interviews, observations, and documents, each participant's story is told through an introductory section, a section on their process of attaining a position at Serena, their pre-tenure experiences, their post tenure experiences, and a summary and concluding thoughts about what their narrative might mean for their fit. When possible, I have tried to use their own words to represent their experiences, including their selection of a metaphor about their experiences as a faculty member.

The chapter opens with a brief narrative of Serena College itself in order to provide background on the college and the recent history and current context in which the faculty work. The college's narrative is drawn from institutional documentation, public documents about the college, and the participant's data. By presenting this material before the individual narratives, I hope to offer readers an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the culture and language of the college, and to sensitize them to dynamics that might emerge in the participants' narratives.

In order to help readers keep track of these seven women, the chart below provides some self-descriptive demographic information about each participant including their sexual identity, race/ethnicity, disciplinary area, personal and family education background, marital status, parenthood status and age.

Table 5.1

Participant Demographics

Alias	Sexuality	Race/ Ethnicity	Discipline Area	Undergrad Institution Type	Highest Family Education	Marital Status	Parental Status	Age
Karen	Hetero-sexual	White	Science	Public University	Parent-Bachelor's	Married	Has Child(ren)	43
Nora	Hetero-sexual	White	Social Science	Private Liberal Arts College	Parent-Professional	Married	Has Child(ren)	41
Lisa	Hetero-sexual	White	Science	Private Liberal Arts College	Parent-Bachelor's	Married	No Child(ren)	39
Ruth	Female	African American	Arts	Private University	Self-Master's	Single	Has Child(ren)	50
Ana	Queer	White/ Hispanic	Humanities	Public University	Parent-Doctorate	Married	Has Child(ren)	47
Deborah	Hetero-sexual	White	Social Science	Private Art & Design	Sibling-Professional	Married	Has Child(ren)	47
Phoebe	Hetero	African American	Humanities	Public University	Parent-High School	Single	No Child(ren)	49

Serena: An Institutional Narrative

Walking around on Serena College's campus, I get the sense that this is the collegiate campus ideal. Lush, well-maintained lawns are peppered with mature trees to form the integrated on-campus arboretum. Buildings are tucked away in corners here and there, giving the campus wanderer as sense of discovery as they happen upon the buildings that house the dance studios, campus health center, or music and performance faculty. On nice days in the spring and fall, students are sprawled in clusters on one of the many campus green spaces, studying, sleeping, or practicing for a performance of some kind. Low stone walls surround the campus boundaries -- easily scalable, yet clearly demarcating its bounds from the surrounding community.

Originally housed in a single building on campus, that serves as the central hub of student life and the administration, Serena was founded as a women's college by a philanthropic White man in the mid-nineteenth century. The names of buildings on campus are reminders of the privileged class of women who were first granted admission to Serena. Facing declining interest in women's single sex education in the middle of the twentieth century, the college chose to admit men rather be absorbed by a larger university. Co-educational for about fifty years, Serena's alumni fiercely defend the few vestiges of its women's college past: a women's residence hall, annual campus traditions, and maintaining involvement in response to campus activities that contradict their vision of the campus's values.

The majority of students live on campus for their four years at Serena, only departing for study abroad their junior year. Featuring a variation on the residential college model, each of the residence hall communities boast their own distinctive personality,

determined by the elected and selected student leadership teams. One or two faculty families live in each residence hall, and provide academic co-curricular programming for their residents. Most students live in the same residence hall for their freshman through junior years. The college provides apartment-style living for the senior class, giving them an opportunity to move out of the dorms and into “practice” spaces where they cook, play, study, and live before graduating and leaving the commonly referred to “Serena bubble."

Student life predominates at Serena; the newer academic buildings on campus feature ample places for students to gather, relax or study, replacing the more traditional classroom buildings built when the college’s enrollment first expanded over a century ago. With a highly collegiate culture, the students are engaged inside and outside the classroom in student theater productions, musical groups, and other campus clubs. Faculty and administrators are often sighted at the evening student events throughout the school year.

The small campus district hosts a few coffee shops, a couple upscale eateries, and boutiques stocked with items geared towards older, long-term residents. Many faculty live within walking distance of the campus, populating a few nearby neighborhoods. The college also owns a large number of the properties in direct proximity to the campus, offering these as faculty housing. Some faculty choose to live in one of several close major metropolitan areas, commuting to the campus via commuter rail or car several days a week.

For most of its history, Serena has been regarded as both economically and academically elite. It has retained an elite and prestigious status in part through admitting

a predominantly White, wealthy student population, and also through the high expectations placed on faculty scholarship and teaching. Its historically White, male faculty has slowly changed as the demographics of the professoriate have changed. One provost made changing the composition of the faculty his signature initiative by doubling the number of faculty of color through the strategic faculty hires during his five year term in the early 2000's. All of the participants in this study were hired during this time period, many as part of cohorts of ten or more incoming faculty.

Serena also began to diversify its student body in both socio-economic status and racial diversity. A leadership initiative to institute need-blind admission policies, where students are admitted based on merit without consideration of ability to pay, and a commitment to address students' unmet financial needs has created a significant shift in the demographics of student body over the last two decades. Institutional need-based financial support given to students has tripled since 2003. Serena subsequently developed a variety of programs to support this changing student body, including a summer bridge program, collaborations with a national organization that provides a cohort experience to students from low-income backgrounds, and partnerships with local community colleges.

The Great Recession of 2008 prompted many changes to Serena. The endowment lost approximately 24 percent of its value in 2008. Faculty hiring was slowed significantly, and many adjunct faculty contracts were ended. The overall size of the faculty has shrunk, including the numbers of faculty of color, since its peak in 2008. Incoming faculty cohorts have been limited, with two to three junior colleagues joining the Serena faculty each year.

A discourse of restraint and restriction has emerged in a significant way, changing how decision making happened at the college. The Board of Trustees became more involved in the operations at the college, fulfilling their fiduciary responsibilities. Surprisingly, Serena maintained its need-blind admission and generous financial aid expansion during the period of the recession. This signaled the college leadership's priorities, and made the program a central feature to faculty and students at the campus.

Serena College is facing changes in leadership over the next several years. The departure of several campus leaders across the college are signaling a period of change and uncertainty to the faculty. Concerns about the college's continued commitment to the admissions and financial aid policies of the last decade have arisen. These anticipated changes dominate faculty dialogues. (For a detailed examination of the effects of the campus context on the faculty in this study, see Chapter 6.)

Deborah: A Rothko Painting

Walking into Deborah's sun-filled office for the first time, I am exposed to a riot of color. Pictures, drawn by children in the community programs she and her students engage, cover her walls. A studio art major as an undergraduate, Deborah continues to place a priority on art in her faculty professional life. In describing a metaphor for her faculty life, Deborah identified with her first time seeing a Rothko painting. She explains her choice of the Rothko painting, by saying "I think because there, there's just so much to see in it even though it's not very complicated visually maybe. …And it's calming in some ways, too." Deborah's thoughtful, reticent nature and calm energy reminds me of a Rothko painting as well. Deborah emanates a still, calm energy, and I can imagine students finding her a kind, listening ear as they relay their struggles. I became increasingly interested in her as I spent more time with her, as she showed more of herself to me.

Prior to being hired as a faculty member, Deborah and her family—her husband and two children—lived and worked in the area where Serena is located for many years. Deborah's investment in the community outside the grounds of the Serena campus, evident in the pictures on her walls, is a common thread in our discussion. A White woman in her forties, Deborah's previous career as a special education teacher has shaped her perspective on the role of community engagement in her scholarship and teaching. For her, the most important thing she can do in her career is to focus on the outside community, and bringing students into relationship with people's everyday lives. As she discusses the priorities that shape her work and approach to academia, she

describes the sites for the service-learning courses she teaches in local prisons and schools.

> Really what's interesting to me is, um, building relationships between the Serena students and other folks that they may never come in contact with. So that's why I do work in the prison, that's why I take my students to local schools. Um, that for me is the sweet spot, not pushing papers or even like uh, student counseling, it, it's not where…Yeah, it's not where I, I want to…That's not my jam. (Interview 2)

Drawing this distinction among her priorities, Deborah has set up her career in such a way that she feels satisfied with what she accomplishes. She feels that even if she did not work at Serena, she would find a way to do the things she is doing now — engaging the community, doing scholarship on important topics, and mentoring young scholars.

In addition to her investment in serving the community, Deborah's role as a parent of a child with a disability and her scholarship about disability in her social science field has positioned her as a point of support for students with disabilities on campus. These connections serve to place her in a different relationship with students, who seek her out as a resource as they navigate their education at Serena. Her knowledge and awareness about disability is also a pathway for her community engagement, providing her connections with families and populations outside of Serena who may be impacted by disability and the way it is mediated by state and federal entities.

Deborah's teaching experience was mostly in schools that were under-resourced, creating a dissonance for her within the Serena community. She feels she gets more

respect for her faculty role at Serena, more than she received as a special education teacher.

> Like, I think that, if somebody asked me where I work, and I said Serena College, it would be like, "Oh!" Like, it was kind of like, "Oh, well, you know, either you must be smart" It was, I don't know, it was like a point of pride in a way that had never been. My [organization] had never been like that. It had been just the opposite. And so trying to figure out what that meant, you know? Like, in terms of my work with the students here, like what, how, what does that mean? Am I supposed to talk a different way, look a different way? Which you can see, not really (laughs). (Interview 1)

For Deborah, who greatly valued her work as a teacher, extra adulation based on the status and prestige associated with Serena produced more questions than confidence. Deborah has also contended with a lack of respect for her previous career from her campus colleagues.

> People kind of look down their nose at that [K-12 teaching] experience, like it's an easy thing, like it's not as rigorous as teaching at the college level. And, particularly around [my field], I think people just think that the field itself is more soft, maybe, than, you know, definitely the folks in bio or something like that. (Interview 1)

This ambivalence on both sides has only further deepened Deborah's commitment to making change external to the college, and focusing on the development of students in her classrooms.

Getting to Serena

Prior to entering faculty life at Serena, Deborah's role as teacher at under-resourced schools in the same city as Serena grounded her as a member of the community. Working full time while earning her doctorate, Deborah approached her doctoral program one class at a time. In her mind, this has prepared her for the variety of roles and requirements of faculty life.

> So, you know I had absolutely no experience with anybody who was a faculty member anywhere growing up. It was really not, uh, something my family had any access to. So, when my friend suggested that I take one class, I decided to do that, uh, for my entire doctoral program. So even when I was writing my dissertation, I was also still working. And, in some ways, that was. . . I think that was a good preparation for managing the many different roles that I do now. I have two children, um, my youngest child I think was, like, one and a half when I started working here, and so, um, so kind of, always having had a lot of different jobs and a lot of different things that needed to get done, I kind of just mapped that onto what life was like here. (Interview 1)

This early experience in managing her work, scholarly, and personal responsibilities helped Deborah to have clear priorities and strategies for managing her eventual experiences at the college. The first in her family to enter academia, she had no sense of the academic norms, especially at a well-resourced, elite institution like Serena.

Deborah was impressed with the faculty at her doctoral institution who managed to strike a balance among family lives, being engaged with their students, engaged with the communities in which they worked, and involved in significant research.

> You know, all of my, all of my mentors during my dissertation were very, very good at showing passion for their family, showing passion for their research, showing passion for their teaching and I never felt like one superseded the other. And so I think through that kind of modeling it was easy for…that, that was most important because it was with every class and there were some super prolific people who were doing, you know, pumping out crazy amounts of research, really important great research, but they were also, you know, clear. They, I don't know, they also had this…you know, they were great teachers and it didn't, one didn't supersede the other where sometimes you hear like, "Oh, these are great researchers but they're awful in the classroom." Um, and they were always connected to the community. (Interview 2)

This model of faculty life and engagement at a different institutional type provided Deborah with a model she could respect and emulate. By describing what her mentors were good at, Deborah is reinforcing what she thinks would be important in her own career: family, research, teaching, and the community.

Deborah had not really considered entering the professoriate until she was invited to apply for a visiting appointment at Serena. Her doctoral advisor encouraged her to consider the opportunity, although he acknowledged that she had not been planning on leaving special education teaching.

> And so I asked my [employer] for a one year leave, and they said no. And so then I really had to make a decision about what I was going to do there. And, you know, in the end, it felt like the risk of leaving my [secure position] to come and try this out for a year with no guarantees of continued employment was probably

> worth it professionally, just so I did not want to look back and think "Oh, I wish I would have tried that." And so I did. I took a year here, and that, um, position opened up to a tenure track. I applied for that, and accepted the position when it was offered to me, so I guess that's, that's the roundabout story for how I got here. (laughs). (Interview 1)

Deborah's experience with a visiting appointment allowed her to begin the transition from elementary school teaching to college level teaching. Deborah, unlike some other faculty at Serena, had not been sure of her desire to take on a faculty role. Yet, she knew that having the actual experience of teaching at the college would be the only way she could know if it was the right path for her. By leaning into this opportunity, she followed a common pathway into employment at Serena — starting in a visiting or lecturer role and then applying for a tenure-track position.

Pre-Tenure Life at Serena

Although Deborah had the opportunity to teach students at Serena prior to the start of her tenure track position, she found many differences between her role as a visiting professor and the work of a full-time, more fully-vested member of the Serena community.

> So, I think for my, for my visiting year it was a little different in that I wasn't doing any service and I wasn't doing much advising. So, I remember feeling like, "Wow, I have so much time to write, I have so much time to do research, this is wonderful, like …" and then quickly that changed. (laughs) And then I was like, "Okay now, there are these requirements." (Interview 2)

As Deborah transitioned to a tenure-track role, she found her time taken up with other responsibilities, and she had to get a handle on the college's expectations for success. Deborah struggled at first to make sense of the requirements for tenure.

> I'm not quite sure what counts, like, what the level of service is. I'm not sure about um, what makes publishing enough? Like what's the, what's the threshold there for publishing enough articles or enough books for tenure. Um…And I, you know, I had two young children also. And so there were different messages about that I think from um, maybe from the college, but particularly from other women faculty members, uh, who never directly said much to me, but I know other assistant professors had had conversations, they, they pair you up with a mentor, with their mentors about like you know, not having children when you're on the tenure track, uh, not having more than one child while you're on the tenure track, um…And so I think just trying to figure all of that out without…And not, maybe this is everywhere, but without any sort of like, "Here's a book on this." (laughs) (Interview 2)

Like many faculty, Deborah was not handed a blueprint for success at her institution. In addition, she was picking up signals from faculty peers about what success might look like. Particularly troubling for her was this notion that her family, with two young children, would be a problem for her success. Having already worked full time while parenting and pursuing a doctorate, Deborah was hearing second-hand messages that she could not successfully manage this same mix of responsibilities as a professor.

Deborah's attempts at managing these expectations were aided by her early exposure to the philosophy of Kerry Ann Rockquemore, who focuses on helping pre-tenure faculty

be successful. Getting funding from the college to attend a week-long off-site workshop following an on-campus lecture, Deborah praises what Kerry Ann Rockquemore taught her.

> And she's got, like, a very specific framework for how to manage, you know, your life, your work, um, and, you know, the things that you love to do outside of your family, and, and kind of giving time to everything. And that, for me, was super helpful because when I first got here, I definitely [had] been too, like, I, I just focused, like I said, I overcompensated on my teaching. I really focused on, you know, spending way too long on a lesson plan, and then if there was a break, I just wrote. You know, I [put my] head down, and just wrote. And then you know, it was back then to the syllabus. So you know, so now, with her help, I really learned, like, 'okay, if I just write a little bit every day, things continue to move along. ' I don't need to overcompensate on my teaching, because that's just procrastination. (laughs). You know? So there were ways to start to manage it, um, with a real structure that was so helpful to me. (Interview 1)

In addition to helping her be successful in pursuing her scholarship and not overly focusing on teaching, the program also helped keep her academic and family priorities centered. These lessons formed the bedrock of her approach to her faculty work.

She also followed Rockequmore's advice to set up a meeting with her chair to discuss her goals and benchmarks for tenure. This conversation helped to alleviate the stress she had been feeling about unclear expectations.

> In terms of like specific numbers and stuff, my, the um, department head at the time was really the go-to. And, just feedback from the second and fourth year

> reviews about, you know, where you were, um, were there particular areas you needed to think a little bit clearer about. (Interview 2)

With her chair being the only tenured faculty member in her department, she had to place a lot of trust in his guidance. In part, this process of setting priorities and aligning her commitments and obligations with those priorities allowed her to approach tenure process with confidence. Her review letters helped to affirm she was on track and meeting the college's expectations.

Despite Deborah's previous teaching experience, she still struggled to identify the right approach at Serena. Over time, she made changes to her teaching.

> I think that one of the things that I started to change was to do less telling and more kind of engaging in concepts. So, you know, it could be. . . I could talk about IQ [tests], right, and we could do a whole hour lecture on that. Um, but what they really needed to do was to see one, to take one, to look at the kinds of questions, and was. . . for somebody to develop a line of questioning that said something like, "What would make this difficult if you were…just learning English?" Um, or, "how does background experience play a role in taking an IQ test?" So I think, you know, like. . . I think for me, saying, okay what are the big ideas students need to walk away with? And then I needed to kind of create a scenario where they could start to explore those ideas. (Interview 1)

Deborah also had to find ways to center student experiential learning and self-discovery in her teaching praxis. In her personal statement for tenure, she describes several of the pedagogical choices she made during her pre-tenure period, including allowing students to design their own final projects; modeling reflective engagement with the community;

and providing on-site observation and interaction experiences that grounded their learning in life outside of campus.

Deborah had at least one negative classroom encounter in her early careers with a male student unhappy with a grade.

> I can remember being challenged on a grade that I gave a student, and feeling very frustrated with both him and myself that he, that for some reason we were, like, miscommunicating about how he was doing in the class. I remember that same student kind of threatening to go over my head, and talk to, uh, the chair of the department about that. (Interview 1)

Unhappy with a grade, this male student challenged and threatened Deborah. Deborah's experience as an K-12 educator is likely informing her interpretation of this experience, where she is owning the student's frustration and unhappiness as a result of miscommunication. However, most of her experiences with students as a teacher were positive.

Because of her small department, Deborah did not have any colleagues who had similar research interests. As she describes, "a small, liberal arts college can't give you the colleagues who do exactly the same work that you do. And again, sometimes you feel like the superstar because, you know, that's the work I do. You know, and I'm it" (Interview 1). She managed this scholarly isolation by getting involved in a disability-focused sub-group of her professional organization, with a large contingent of scholars at a local university. She also collaborated on a research study with another early career faculty member in her department.

> And, we were looking for different things in that data, which was interesting. Um, and I think the fun part about that was that we were looking for different things, so I would read through a transcript and kind of get one thing, she would read through the same transcript and get something a little different, and then we'd give it to our student research assistants and they would see yet something different. Um, so, yeah, that was really, that was really a great project. (Interview 1)

This kind of collaboration was very productive for her, in both helping to advance her scholarship and in deepening her connections with her departmental colleagues. As a result of this collaboration with a colleague and students, Deborah was able to develop a close working relationship with a peer and advance her scholarship.

Deborah's experiences managing the multiple conflicts of work, family, and academia during her doctoral studies, made her feel more at peace with managing these tensions during pre-tenure. Of course, it wasn't always easy.

> I think, particularly when my kids were little, and there would be an illness or somebody would be sick, and, uh, if my husband was traveling for work, or even if he just couldn't make it, or sometimes the tensions were between me and him."Okay, it's your turn." "No, I can't, it's your turn." You know, and then it would be like, "Oh, who's going to take care of this sick kid and teach this class?" Um, so definitely around young children, illness, (laughs) and having to teach a class, um. . . Otherwise, like, in terms of late night events or things like that, I would say that our parenting style is definitely 50/50, probably more, my husband takes on more during certain months of the year. Like, I'm very clear about April. April's an ugly month, you know, and so you're really going to have to be on the

> ball in April. He knows that July, things are really loose for me, he can kind of focus in on July. (Interview 1)

While a sick child needing care can be difficult for any couple to manage, it appears Deborah was able to make the best of it with her husband. Having a supportive partner in her husband, who was willing to identify sites of compromise in managing their home life to support her professional life, certainly made things smoother for Deborah.

In managing her relationships within the college, Deborah found herself starting from a place of observation. Serena hosts monthly all-faculty meetings, which are often the site of contentious debates, as well as one of the key mechanisms for enacting the college's model of shared governance. Deborah spent her early years learning the dynamics of these situations.

> So the figuring out part was really like, where am I? How are these conversations structured in faculty meetings? Who, who's got power, where's the play here? You know, like, trying to figure out people's roles in the college, um, kind of being like an anthropologist (laughs) figure out what's going on here. (Interview 2)

True to her nature, rather than jumping in, she sat and observed. She learned what was happening so that she could identify whose voices were privileged in that space. She felt unsure of what to think or feel about the ongoing debates, and noticed many of her cohort peers also sat back from participating. More invested in engaging the community external to Serena, Deborah was hesitant to get involved in campus internecine dramas.

As her tenure and promotion review approached, Deborah felt confident in her efforts towards achieving tenure. She felt strong in her teaching and well trained by her graduate mentors; she had a constant cycle of research in her own queue, and felt productive.

> You know, I think that what happened for me was that I got to a place where I was like "I'm happy with my production. I'm happy with how I'm cycling through different projects because they're all for me what I want to be doing. Um, this is how I can be healthy and publish and here it is. And if it's not enough for you then that's okay, we can part ways." I was not, um, if it didn't work for Serena I didn't want to be here. Like I didn't want to have to change to make it work for them. This is what I could do, this is best for me um, and if it wasn't right for you. It would be embarrassing, quite honestly, to not get tenure and to have to, you know, walk away and say goodbye to people I knew on campus, but I was okay, I was, it was okay by me. (Interview 2)

In taking ownership of her priorities, Deborah did not feel frenzied in her approach. Having the tools provided her by Kerry Ann Rockquemore, supportive colleagues, and graduate school mentors who sufficiently modeled a more balanced approach to faculty life, Deborah's journey to tenure was relatively free of turbulence.

During the actual tenure review process, Deborah's department only had one tenured faculty member. Faculty from outside her department were called upon to do her initial review. She thinks her chair, the only tenured faculty member in her department, championed her in the process.

> I think they probably had no issues at all with my teaching, or my um, our student evaluations…. So they certainly could look at those. Um, in terms of the

> scholarship part, I think they probably relied heavily on the outside reviewers, because neither one of them does that work. I also think that my department chair probably held a lot of sway in terms of, kind of, orchestrating how that process went. You know, I think that um, if my department chair had said, "I really don't think Deborah should get tenure." I think it would have, might have been easier for those folks to fall in line with that. I think, I don't think they would have just done it without a good conversation. But I think he was like, you know, I felt that he was very supportive of the process. (Interview 1)

Deborah felt supported and sponsored by her chair through the tenure process. She was content with what she had produced, felt good about her work, and was at peace with any decision that the college might make.

Deborah was tenured without issue. She felt confident that she had learned good habits by applying advice from her chair, her graduate mentors, and Kerry Ann Rockequemore. However, had she not gotten tenure, she knew, from the experiences of colleague, that she would not have chosen to stay for her additional year.

Post-Tenure Life at Serena

With few senior faculty, and the ranks significantly thinned in her department due to the college's new budgetary constraints following the recession, Deborah entered the ranks of administration. Immediately after earning tenure, Deborah stepped into the chair role in her department.

> I got tenured and the next year I became chair of the department. And that first year as chair, I mean even still today, being chair is, is very difficult for me. I, I don't like administration, I don't like the people-worky part of it, like I. In the

> beginning, I said I really feel like I'm a teacher, and that's the work I'd love to do. All of the other stuff is not engaging to me, I don't like it. (laughs). Did I say I don't like it? (Interview 1)

Deborah was still in the chair role during our second interview, finishing her final year. She lamented the lack of support or training she received in this role, saying "there was very little support to, um, new chairs, in terms of what to do."

The stress and desire for extra support as chair was prompted, in particular, because of the responsibilities associated with ushering junior faculty through the campus tenure process. With two colleagues going up for tenure, she felt ill prepared to lead them through that process, and only had her own experiences to guide her. In her first post-tenure review narrative, she writes of the experience:

> My first tasks were to coordinate the tenure review for two of my colleagues [names redacted]. I had not participated in any reviews prior to becoming Chair. It was an incredibly time consuming but enriching and rewarding process to research possible outside reviewers for both colleagues, read their entire publication history, incorporate my colleague's review and the outside reviewers letters into the Department letter. It was a very steep learning curve and an intense experience. I have grown to appreciate and grow in my role as an administrator. I have learned so much about interpersonal relationships, different departments and offices at the College, and managing the budgetary responsibilities of my department. (Post-Personal Statement for Tenure 1)

Here, Deborah is describing her experiences with administration in her post-tenure review very differently than how she expressed these experiences to me. She uses coded

language in her narrative, referencing a “steep learning curve,” growth, and “an intense experience,” rather than her lack of desire to engage these activities. This narrative positioning allows her to frame herself as someone who values the kind of institutional service most rewarded at the college, as opposed to the external service she finds more appealing.

In response to my inquiry about whether she would be interested in future administrative work, she quickly replied with a no. Deborah is firmly invested in other things.

> I think um, not being chair frees me up to do more work um, at…try to start laying the groundwork for getting some grants to do more work in the community…um, so yeah, that will free me up to have more time to do that. Um, I think um, in terms of making sure the prison teaching doesn’t fall through the cracks, that’s going to fall to me. Um, and so I’ll spend my time doing that. (Interview 2)

Deborah reiterates her commitment to the community through her desire to become the steward of a prison education program that places Serena students in a classroom with inmates at a local women's prison. While the program is supported by the college in the sense that they allow the instructors to continue the courses, it does not generate revenue and is resource heavy with two instructors teaching ten inmates and ten Serena students. The program's instructors change regularly, and the originator of the program is retiring. Deborah feels a responsibility to steward this program, and hopes the new administration will remain supportive of the program.

Citing Kerry Ann Rockquemore, Deborah applied strategic communication and prioritization as she weighed possible service opportunities.

> Like, for an example, I was just asked to head the community giving campaign. I don't know if you know what that is but it's like, um, it's a campaign across campus to get folks to donate money that goes to local community organizations. And so, you know, it's something that I feel really strongly about. I think it's a good program, but I just really don't have the time to do a good job at it now. And so, that's you know, pretty much what I said. I'm chairing my department, I'm on the curriculum committee, I have a tenure track search. I don't think I would just do a really good job at it at this point, but I'm happy to help out in other ways. (Interview 2)

By highlighting the commitments that matter to her, Deborah has been able to refuse opportunities that do not help her achieve her goals. This is an important strategy that allows her to "make sure that my family is taken care of and that they're getting what they need." In these comments, she recognizes how the college's needs could take up more of her time, and that she needs to engage in a practice of saying no in order to keep her family prioritized.

With the change in leadership at the college looming, Deborah is most concerned that there will not be the same acceptance of her investments in the prison program and other community projects. On the other hand, Deborah remains hopeful that the new president could renew a focus on community-campus relationships.

> You know, if the next person isn't supportive of the, of the program it could easily be disbanded. Um, and that would be uh, a real crime I think, no pun

> intended. (laughs) Uh, personally, for my own work and um, I think for the college to step away from doing that kind of work would be awful. Um, that said, you know, that, that same person could be very much interested and provide more support for that kind of work which would be wonderful. (Interview 2)

The change in leadership creates uncertainty for Deborah. It is difficult to know what direction the college will lean towards. The provost has been very supportive of her work. This uncertainty does not produce great anxiety for her, but is influencing her thinking about the future. However, in many ways, Deborah has remained the anthropologist in her faculty life at Serena, straddling the line of insider-outsider. Invested fully in the life of her department, she acts as the ultimate insider among her direct colleagues and the other academic programs with whom she works.

Deborah is still learning how to engage with the governance of the college, and is seeing more of her cohort of peers getting engaged. While tenure has freed some of their time for more engagement, she sees their increased activity as a result of initiatives to shift whose voices are heard.

> I definitely see more of uh, the folks that I went through the process of speaking out um, taking leadership positions around the college…. I also think there's been a movement to make some changes at the college and get some voices, particularly maybe of faculty of color in places where um, you know, they're dean of students, uh, in different deanships. (Interview 2)

In her discussion of campus governance topics, Deborah maintains her sense of curiosity, but has not moved to passionate engagement or ownership. When talking with Deborah about a proposed change to reduce the teaching course load at Serena under review by a

committee she chairs, she does not express a strong opinion about the merits of the change; rather she emphasizes that the college needs to try new things. Deborah looks to the future with cautious optimism and measured understanding of the various viewpoints on campus.

Thoughts on Deborah's Fit

In reflecting on Deborah's fit story, her fit is a sense of having identified a vocation — to work with students, to engage the community in meaningful ways, and to make a difference in her field.

> In sum, I feel very fortunate to have found my life's work and to receive the support from the College to pursue it. I look forward to continuing to challenge myself in both the content of what I teach and where and how I teach it." (Post-Personal Statement for Tenure 1)

The college serves as a vehicle for her to engage her commitments, but is not the source of those commitments. She feels she would engage this work regardless of where she worked or in what context — so Serena is incidental. On the other hand, Serena also provided her the opportunity to engage this vocation. Deborah had not planned to become a faculty member; instead, she took a risk and it has paid off immensely.

Despite having a strong culture and high expectations for engagement, Serena allows for some play in the commitments expected of faculty. Because Deborah is invested in her teaching and meets the college's definitions of success for teaching, she is allowed flexibility in how she meets other expectations. Deborah may have to express a certain form of commitment to the college in her formal communications, such as her post-tenure review letter, but there is tolerance in the day-to-day practices and ruling relations of the

college for her to sit more at the margins of certain conversations, challenges, and struggles. While some faculty experience the demands of the college's expectations to be totalizing, Deborah has set her own boundaries for how she responds to those demands, and which demands are worthy of her investment. She also aligns with the most important investment of the college: teaching. Deborah's fit story reaffirms the currency teaching carries in the college. Investment and success in teaching allows for faculty to carry other commitments, despite their alignment with the campus' other goals.

For Deborah,

> I would say that I would never, ever have imagined myself being a good fit here…. I remember one time this colleague of mine saying something about being on campus or, and I, just, like my first reaction was like, "I'm the most happiest not on campus." Like, I'm so happy when we're off campus doing something. And, I think that is just because this kind of place is so foreign to me in terms of my own experiences…You know, it is the bubble. You know, my schooling was all in New York City. …so this whole kind of insular sort of feeling is, is completely new, you know. And, and can be a little suffocating. That said, um, you can find your way in, and you can find that fit…but I think that you have to be active to do it. I think you have to . . . you have to make that happen. (Interview 1)

Ruth: The Fountain

I met Ruth, an African American woman in her forties, on a gloomy Friday afternoon after the 2016 Election Day. Our interview had already been rescheduled twice during my visit; Ruth was struggling to make sense of the results, and had also cancelled her Friday class. Ruth and I only managed to conduct one interview, as getting her scheduled and keeping to a schedule was difficult. Being present in her office clearly worked better for her. Ruth is an artist; she has an MFA and has not trodden the typical path of those in academia. Most of her experience prior to entering her tenure-track role was working as a professional artist. Dramatic and funny at turns during our interview, Ruth approached our conversation with a level of detail about her work and her life that offered real insights into her early experiences at Serena, and that allowed me to understand much of her motivations and experiences.

A single mom to a son in middle school, Ruth's experiences as a faculty member have been strongly shaped by her desire to create a particular kind of life for her child, while also remaining professionally fulfilled. She experienced the challenges of single parenthood as a Black woman living near Serena in marked ways.

> The minuses are, um, for me as an African American female educator, there's not a large pool, and artist, I can say. Um. Not a large pool to really hang with and pull from. But then the ones that are here, I know 'em, and you get to know them. So, there are some challenges in terms of people liking to do what I like to do. …. But it's, but it's good for, yes, again, my kid comes into my world all the time. It's good for my kid cause he's got a community of very bright, um, children of

> motivated parents, um, who make them move outside of their, um, smaller world just by, endemically to who the parents are. (Interview 1)

The isolation Ruth has experienced has produced a kind of visibility in both the Serena and surrounding communities that has made it more difficult for her to find community. In the end, though, she has been able to prioritize her son's experience and ensure that he is growing up in the kind of community that she wants for him.

In reflecting on her experience at Serena, Ruth uses the metaphor of a fountain, "Um, I guess a fountain springs to my brain. Um. Yeah, cause it seems like there's a source and there's um energy and water and spewing out that, that touches many from its source" (Interview 1). When I probed whether she or Serena was the fountain, she elaborated:

> I hope that I'm the fountain, but I see Serena very much, 'cause it touches, Serena is very, very global. Uh, there are many, there are Serena grads in all kinds of places and spaces. So, you know, I could see it as a fount of knowledge. I see it as more positives than there are negatives from Serena. Yeah. You know, it has all its woes. It's got certainly enough of them. Who doesn't and what doesn't, I guess. I mean, there's lots of problematic things for me about Serena but if I was to give an image, I think that's probably the one I would give. (Interview 1)

Ruth is torn in labeling Serena or herself a fountain, because she sees the fountain imagery as purely positive. She acknowledges that there are issues with Serena, but that the fountain imagery still pertains. I find this interesting, because the energy that comes from a fountain could have positive, negative, or a mixture of impact on the world around it.

Getting to Serena

Ruth interacted with members of her Serena department prior to being appointed to a tenure-track role. At one point, she was asked to be an adjunct instructor while a faculty member was on maternity leave. She had some apprehension, because while she had been mentoring other artists in her field through informal means, she had not formally instructed a class at the college level.

> And so [the chair] said, "Don't worry about it. The person doing it now, she's meticulous. She's taking great notes. You'll talk to her. Follow what her notes are." So, I was like okay, well maybe I. So I came to do one, um, semester ‘cause she was leaving. She was pregnant…. So, she was leaving to, uh, deal with being a mom, a stay at home mom, and she gave me all her notes. She literally did, and I literally followed them. And then over time I, I, I adjuncted the next year, and then I think the next year. I would only do it over a semester, because then I would go and work as [a professional artist]. (Interview 1).

Ruth was able to build confidence as an instructor because she had the blueprint from another faculty member for approaching the teaching of her specific course. This allowed her to grow her experiences and learn more about what teaching at Serena would be like.

Ruth moved several times to pursue her art, and eventually had her son. Around that time, she had begun to realize that the demands of her art were complicated by being a single mother. It was difficult to put the time into her artistry that was needed and to also be the kind of present and engaged mother that she wanted.

> So fast forward to me having my own child and working as a professional [artist], and working steadily…but I was away so many nights. I, and I used to, taught other places, too besides Serena. But, um I was not adjuncting anymore at Serena

> at that time. I had realized that I had, um, I had a pretty nice career (gesturing to binders on her walls). (Interview 1)

The feeling that she had had a “pretty nice career” allowed her to think about structuring her next steps differently. She began to consider a teaching role as a viable way to still engage her art, while also providing stability for her family.

However, having not been trained in a more traditional academic field, Ruth had no knowledge or context for how to approach a faculty job search. Fortuitously, as she was beginning to consider teaching roles, a professional colleague approached her about a position at an institution in Kentucky.

> ‘It’s a tenure track position we're looking to fill it with a African American female, um, you know, but she's got to be good because she's going work with a professional company, uh, too’….I, either I must have had a day off or something but [my friend] said, ‘Okay, this is what you do. You need to do this. ’ I was like "I got a two year old, I can’t.” She said "I got the kid. You close yourself off in the room and this is what you need to do." And so, in that time, I closed myself off in the room and I created the CV and the teaching statement and she helped with editing it and figuring it out and um, I interviewed for that job. Well, I learned for that interview and that job, that, how to interview, but I also knew I didn't want that particular position even though it was close to Louisville, Kentucky, which is where my, um, family is. I didn't want that job because another girlfriend of mine was teaching that job. (Interview 1)

This specific opportunity arose while Ruth was staying with her friend who also happened to be chair of a department in her artistic field. Ruth’s friend provided material

support in caring for Ruth's young son and supported Ruth's development of academia-specific application materials. Ruth also encountered how small the academic circles in her field were. Her sense of justice was triggered when she realized she was being considered to replace a friend, and she withdrew from consideration.

This experience of applying for an academic job helped prepare Ruth for when a position at Serena was posted. Although it had been posted previously, Ruth never had the bandwidth to pull together the right kinds of materials to apply. Having done that work for another position with the help of her friend put her in a good position to submit her materials.

> And so, I had seen this position when it became available. I had seen it up before, but I'd never gotten around to going about doing anything to get it or anything. And um, it was after that [other] thing that I said "Well, okay, let me apply to a couple of places." So I, I set up applying to three schools and um, um, and the, and the three schools, I, I, I didn't want to, didn't really want to do the others, but I was like, "I got to get an understanding what this is." Um, Serena works for me because it's close to [an urban center]. I've been there, um, you know, things like that. And so, I applied and, and got, got here which I was very, very happy. (Interview 1)

For Ruth, Serena was a known quantity — she had already taught at the institution and she knew the other faculty. Its location near a major urban center allowed her to feel like she could continue to engage in a robust artistic community outside the campus — a necessary element for her to meet the demands of faculty life and remain professionally fulfilled.

Pre-Tenure Life at Serena

Ruth's pre-tenure period was marked by the challenges of learning how to do a new kind of role, as a faculty member, and navigating single-motherhood in a new location. Her arrival to Serena was stressful, as she had to leave an artistic engagement early to start the semester on time. Despite her best efforts, she was not able to maintain some of the support structures she had put in place while working as a professional artist. Her nanny was unable to relocate with her, and her work schedule made it difficult to secure appropriate housing for her and her son. Figuring out her child care situation so she could do her job was incredibly taxing.

> So I show up with my kid, I have no care, and that was a hard thing. Just figuring out what to do with my beautiful boy. Um, I spent a great deal of money on sitters. Uh, actually, that's how Ana and I got to be, umm, you, you know, good friends because we shared. Um, so we went on care. com, I used a lot of students. It was, uh, you know, it was putting it together. It was a lot of putting it together. I mean, [my son] didn't know who was going to be looking after him from day to day, really. (Interview 1)

While it was stressful at first, eventually Ruth coordinated with Ana, another participant in this study, to share resources for child care. Ruth built other networks of support over time, which reduced some of the stress of managing her family as a single parent.

Unlike other faculty who are able to grade papers, work on a manuscript, or prepare a grant application in their own homes, Ruth's scholarly and teaching responsibilities require in-person engagement with others, either on campus or at locations away from the college.

> Um, I mean, uh, you know, no one, no one talks about, like for my gig, I have to do a lot, um, I have to do a lot of coming to here at night. That's not in any budget, and it, then they would be offended if I said, "Well can I get some. . . financial help with," because many of the people here don't have kids. Or, or they have somebody who, in their house that takes care of them. I, I, I didn't have that. Ana has been, you know, majorly helpful with the care, so it's, it's really something. And something you don't put in your, your fourth year review or your second year review or your tenure package. You don't say anything about that. That's a thing as a woman. You don't say, that is not supposed to be part of the conversation. But it's a huge part of, you know, getting your, your focus. (Interview 1)

Ruth felt the expectations that she manage these pressures with no help from the college to be unfair. In her department, particularly, most of the other faculty do not have children. The mental space and schedule flexibility that this affords is a luxury she did and does not not have.

Ruth was tapped to take over the directorship of a major sub-program of her department almost immediately.

> Now, in terms of here, not just my home life, but here, I came thinking I was going to be teaching…classes, and I was. But, the second semester I was here, I was all of a sudden director of [the program] because the person who was chair at the time decided she didn't want to be chair anymore, and so the person who was director of [the program] had to go, "Oh, uh, uh, okay. I'll be chair." So threw everybody for a big old loop. (Interview 1)

This sudden increase in responsibility during her first year of faculty life added to her challenges of adjusting to the role and to being present as a parent. The program director role required even more presence on campus, and was a difficult task to take on.

Ruth felt very overwhelmed by this challenge. The rigors of full participation in the faculty were strenuous enough because they required her to focus on things other than her art. The added challenge of running a program took her a while to manage. She had to shift her thinking and find connections between her art and running this program.

> Because that I did have [that] as a skillset, so I had to figure out, and that's all about making sure that the people you're working with feel positive about what they're doing and that they don't, feel like they have a, a, a clear task. And uh, can, uh move forward in that task with the little direction you've given them. And that, so I had to say, "Okay," it took me a long time to come to that, that thinking about it. I don't have to do it all. I just have to give them a little direction on that and, and say, "Yeah, great. I know you can do it. This, you got it. Go for it, and come back to me on it." So, it took me a while to get that, to that point. Learning to say no is still, is still something I have to work with. (Interview 1)

Even once she found her way, it was still a challenge. As she succinctly puts it, “All the bureaucracy, all the…woof. It was, you know, it was a lot. A lot.” (Interview 1).

In addition managing the time pressures of faculty life, Ruth also faced ongoing challenges with her teaching. In particular, she finds the students prefer a more straightforward, organized, and linear approach to courses than she feels capable of achieving. She has hopes every year to pull together her courses in a more organized fashion.

> Like, I, right now, this class I'm teaching, I have a skeleton. They seem to be okay with the skeleton, but it kind of looks like that to me. Like see? It has an almost order, but it's really kind of sloppy, too, right? I wish that I had that thing to make it really neat. I don't. It's not, it's not me…. And so that's what I feel like with my teaching. Um, and so, yeah. The problem is, uh, I'm not, um, a linear thinker. And that's great in [art]. Not as great in academia. Academia really applauds linear thinking, even though they want to create people who think outside of the box. To get outside the box. So that's, that's, that's also my work for me, to try to get, to be a left-brained thinker when I really am a right-brained thinker. (Interview 1)

Ruth feels pressure to create a particular experience for her students, based on their needs and expectations. She feels that she has not been capable of achieving the kinds of feedback on her evaluations of teaching that she would like because she is often criticized for her organization.

> I feel as if, um, when I get the [student evaluations of my teaching], one of the things it's going to say is um, not so organized. Now, I have on my syllabus, I will say, "The, the things in this class will change from what the syllabus says, from what it says [online]. It is endemic to the class." (Interview 1)

On the other hand, accounts of her teaching in the campus newspaper laud her for the kind of creative expression she encourages in her artistic classes. She acknowledges that she thinks her students really like her as a professor, despite her challenges with organization. Her passion and knowledge about her craft makes up for a lack of orderliness.

Ruth also had to manage her expectations about how students approach making art.

> Early in my career as a professor, having come from the professional world myself, I did not imagine that transitioning from [professional art] to the classroom could be quite difficult. I am now quite aware, however, that the approach of the professional to the work is not the same as that of the academic. Professional [art] makers have additional pressures that often cause them to move to product-oriented thoughts from day one. This mindset shaped my approach as a young professor. …Professionals make choices more quickly…care must be taken with the more fragile burgeoning ego and voice of the college student. It is a fine line. One must nurture and yet demand that students take responsibility for their work. To mollycoddle is also to hamper their growth. (Personal Statement for Tenure)

For Ruth, the academy presented challenges in how she would train and mentor young artists in her field. Translating her coaching and mentoring styles to be better adapted to the students allowed her to find her voice as an academic instructor of her art.

In Ruth's field, there are different, but analogous, expectations for robust scholarly performance. Just like there are particular scholarly journals or presses that distinguish high quality work, there are a similar set of high profile and quality markers for her art. These include the scope of the projects she takes on, the venues in which these projects are hosted, and the caliber of other individuals involved.

> For me as a, um, performer, firstly, you would probably, uh, come with this. . ."Publish or perish", right? For me it's perform or perish. Because, I'm not writing books. That's not what I was hired for. I'm a practical scholar. So, there are certain venues, in this country that anyone in my profession knows is a great place to

> feather the cap…. To be, you know, it's easy to say, "Okay, I'm going to rest on my laurels, I'm, I'm going to be, you know, happily, and, and, and, there's nothing wrong with it, I'm going to be, you know, comfortable and just be here professoring.” But, it's another thing to say, "I'm at a certain level. A certain caliber." I like that caliber. They (gesturing to the offices around hers) like that caliber. (Interview 1)

Her use of the term “perform or perish” indicates as similar set of pressures as other faculty in the academy, but in venues that are different. Ruth has had to ensure that her work is showcased in the right places and at the right level of challenge to show her continued growth as an artist.

In addition to finding her footing as a teacher and a practical scholar, Ruth also had to deal with the racial dynamics of Serena as a Black faculty member. For Ruth, who was seeking a safe and welcoming community in which to raise her son, her experiences with racial profiling or the harassment of her family and friends, marred her early experiences on campus.

Like other faculty, Ruth felt a lot of concern in the college’s demands for outside reviewers of her work. Due to the nature of her art, she felt there were a small circle of individuals who could appropriately evaluate and understand what she does, especially based on the kinds of individuals they wanted as reviewers.

> The hardest part, I think, well, the most nerve-wracking part —no, it's all nerve-wracking, let me say it's all nerve-wracking —was finding the outside reviewers. Because I sent them a list and I think, um, you know, the department sends a list and the [provost] comes back and says, "Well, you got any more?" Then, okay, I

> give them some more, then they say, "You got any more?" and I finally said, "If you're looking for people who don't know who I am, but understand the path I'm on, you're gonna have a hard time.. Because, and if you want them to be people of color, we can all fit in one car." (Interview 1)

The pressure on Ruth to have engaged her art in particular ways, and have that understood by others, created a lot of concern for her going into the tenure review process. The nature of Ruth's art increased the need for her reviewers to also be artists of color, as they would be uniquely positioned to understand and evaluate her quality, as well as the opportunities available to her.

Ruth's tenure application was also made more complicated by the need to write a narrative. She needed to explain her particular form of scholarship to her department, the college committee, and outside reviewers. Although Ruth has composed written works as part of her professional career, the genre of writing required for the tenure portfolio was an even larger departure for her than it was for other participants. Since she does not write often for her art, she put significant effort into crafting her personal statement for tenure.

> I would, after I had gotten a draft together, send to [colleagues and] say, "Hey, does this make sense?" Fretted a whole lot. Uh. Suffered through writing and re-writing and re-writing and re-shaping and asked colleagues that had retired, so weren't on my particular uh committee to read it. (Interview 1)

Ruth's approach mirrored many other faculty members', but the end product was much more story-driven and conversational. This makes sense, given that Ruth's art is more

narrative based, and she was able to demonstrate how she teaches her topic through her story-based approach.

Ruth's colleagues had reassured her regarding her progress. However, a previous tenure case in her department had gone badly and that made her anxious about trusting the word of her department. The department had never tenured anyone in her specialty, so she had no sense of how the department or Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee would review her case. Despite these anxieties, Ruth was tenured.

Post-Tenure Life at Serena

Following tenure, Ruth has continued to struggle to manage the expectations of her students and her family responsibilities. Especially as she thinks about the evaluation of her teaching post-tenure, she is finding that there are limits to how well she can do in the college's award system.

> And my students, they, they, as far as I know, they really like me, they love me, but I don't know that I get, uh, um, what's the thing called? Distinction. Not many women, you know, get…there's merit, high merit, and distinction when job evaluations come. And with them are different monetary s- stages. Knock on everything, I generally get high merit. Don't get to distinction. So I'm not. . . I do feel like I, uh, knowing very closely working w- with some colleagues that are male that have a lot of time to do nothing but prepare. I mean, they're single, they don't…well, they get distinction. They're available, their office hours are crazy office hours, at eight o'clock at night, and they can go until 10:30, you know, it's uh, so, it's a whole different set of things that…And I'm saying male, and that's not quite fair. Um, but I can say, I mean, I can say the males get more distinction.

> I can say that's true, but I'm not, but the office hours, and that kind of thing, I think that just has to do with having the freedom to move about and…in, in a way that I, I don't happen to have freedom. (Interview 1)

Ruth identifies a pattern among her colleagues who are able to devote more time to prepping their lectures and are more flexible in their availability to students. This may give them more time to address some of the organizational challenges she continues to wrestle with and could perhaps address if she had more time and attention available.

> For me, the weekend has been, "Uh oh, I'm mommy all weekend." Love it, but then I, I can't be a scholar and study for my course.…And I don't want to sound like it's a chore, because I love the kid, I love him. I love that, you know, all of that. But it does mean something gives a little. Something has to give a little. (Interview 1)

For Ruth, the things she has allowed to “give” a little have been her responsibilities as a faculty member. Being a parent is so central to her decision-making, and she has not been willing to compromise her son’s experience.

Ruth is finally starting to feel that she has a little more capacity to devote to her scholarship and art now that her son is in middle school. He can be a little more independent, a little more responsible for things around the house.

> He's fine, he stays, he'll be home by himself. But what that means is, he's in a computer, watching the whatever, video, and I'm hoping he's staying on the, the games, and he's pretty honest about that, but this (gestures to computer) is being his parent. (Interview 1)

However, Ruth is still conflicted, because while he can stay home alone while she is working late, she feels she is abdicating part of her parenting responsibilities to a computer or television screen.

Despite the increasing day to day flexibility, Ruth still has to make compromises in the artistic opportunities she can pursue. She recently had to turn down an opportunity to be a part of a prestigious artistic project because the demands of the schedule would have pulled her away from her son for too long.

> If I were able to do [it], it would totally help me get full professor. It's 10 weeks…. One of those weeks, I think we are not working. Probably about six weeks of that is tricky because I'll be chair. But it's the 10 weeks away from my kid. I would love to do it as an artist…But it's always a gamble. It's all the thing…. So yeah, I like, it feeds me as an artist. But, my kid's in the seventh grade. It's a tough time, middle school, for mommy to be gone for 10 weeks. (Interview 1)

Ruth's artistic work cannot be accomplished on her own schedule — she has to collaborate with others and the schedule is often dictated by financial obligations and seasonal schedules. She has had to find a way to take the opportunities that come to her, while also prioritizing what is best for her son.

When we spoke, Ruth was about to step in the chair role. Given the challenges she felt in handling the other administrative role as a program director, her anxiety regarding this important role is understandable. In particular, Ruth is stepping into the chair role as the college is undergoing its re-accreditation process. This means she will be responsible

for completing and submitting assessments of the department to include in the accreditation portfolio. This will be an extreme stretch activity for her.

> Um, I am quaking in my boots right now, because I'm about to become chair. Not from the idea of being chair, it, per se, but the idea that I have to do assessments. And the language that one has to use to do department assessments and write letters of evaluation and keep up with all the little. . . I- I- I'm, I'm really going to have to depend, they tell me, "Keep depending on the admin. . ." Because I can't keep up with the things going on in my life (laughs). To keep up with all the aspects of the chair job makes me go, “ahhhh." (Interview 1)

In addition, Ruth is also nervous about the review letters of other faculty she’ll be responsible for composing as chair. This is a different kind of responsibility than she is used to. Her concerns about her organizational abilities as a faculty member will be highly tested in the chair role, and her colleagues have encouraged her to rely on the administrative assistant in the department to provide structure and keep her on task.

Thoughts on Ruth's Fit

Ruth, as was clear throughout her narrative, found fit at Serena through the lifestyle opportunities it offered her as a single mother. While some faculty might find fit because of the particular scholarly opportunities made available, Ruth found fit because of the consistency and home base provided her. While there are other mothers among the participants in this study, Ruth’s narrative centered her son in ways that others’ did not. The choices of motherhood are difficult, and Ruth has sought to center her son in every way possible as she navigates her career.

> I like its size. I feel like I'm making a difference, making an end road…I like that, I have to say I like that it has a, a, a, fairly recognized reputation. (Interview 1)

Being able to be part of a small, stable, consistent community was more appealing than the peripatetic lifestyle she had lived as an artist before she was a mother and while her son was very young. Satisfied with the success of her career prior to academia, she has found a space where she has stability, but is also encouraged to continue to develop as an artist. In addition, Serena's nationally recognized reputation both generally and in her field has allowed her to feel confident in the lifestyle change that faculty life has brought about. Ruth expresses a love for Serena in personal statement for tenure, saying

> The moment I stepped into the studio, I knew coming to Serena was one of the wisest decisions I had ever made. And it still is. I loved the campus. The brick buildings and dormitory quad reminded me of my alma mater. I'd come to know some of the [department's] faculty because I had taught at Serena as an adjunct in 2000 through 2002, fitting teaching into my professional [artistic] work. But the classroom stole my heart; the students were warm, witty and eager to learn what I had to teach. Serena chose me and I chose Serena. (Personal Statement for Tenure)

Ruth's comments in her personal statement are much stronger than her comments in our interview. Our interview occurred during a time that was personally challenging for her — she had cancelled her workshop class that day, and was clearly overwhelmed by national events that had occurred. It is hard to know if her enthusiasm for Serena was tempered by her struggles that week, if time has changed her views, or if she had presented a heightened connection to the college in her dossier for tenure. Ruth, more

than other participants, expressed the struggle and pressure with crafting her personal statement for tenure, which may have also influenced how she expressed her connection to the college.

Exploring the faculty life of an artist like Ruth presents some divergent factors that do not factor in the same ways as other faculty. Ruth has dual artistic and scholarly communities to whom she is held accountable for the quality, quantity, and scope of her work. Being a self-identified right brain artist has also created challenges in what she perceives as a largely left-brained academic setting. While acknowledging that the attributes that make her a good artist may not be productive in all ways for her being an ideal faculty member, it is hard to know if she would be the artist she is if she had a more left-brained approach to life and work. For the most part, Serena has affirmed Ruth's approach to being a faculty member of the arts. She has found community among her faculty peers and a home base from which to continue to push herself as an artist and a parent.

Karen: The Catalyst

I first met Karen over the phone. Her voice over the phone was brisk, friendly, and matter of fact. As she described her journey to become a faculty member at Serena, I was struck by how clearly she seemed to know what she wanted; how well she advocated for herself to sympathetic mentors and supervisors; and how her ambitions were clear, but not rigid. In person, Karen is full of energy. A runner in her spare time, she exudes a striking combination of ease and energy that makes me think of a marathoner who has settled into the long run. Her short-cropped dark hair speaks of a no-fuss approach to life.

As a White, Christian woman scientist, Karen's standpoint on the college, and academia in general, is shaped by her own experiences navigating the academy. She has found mentorship and support at every stage in her career, cultivating a trusted group of advisors who help her to make choices at each decision point. Beyond being mentored, Karen has been sponsored – by her doctoral advisor and post-doc supervisor; by senior leaders on campus; by senior faculty in her own department – creating a wide array of choices to which she can apply her highly agentic world-view. She was one of few participants who felt comfortable sharing everything about her career – which suggests a history on campus that has been relatively frictionless.

Unlike other participants who expressed concern over disclosing too much, Karen shared no hesitations to speak her mind, offer critiques of others (in general terms), and let me into her academic life. She is certainly aware, to some extent, of the privilege granted her during her lifetime, stating that her expectations for others to enact their agency is "what this country affords us the opportunity to do, not for everybody, not for

everybody at all times, and not in all the ways that I have been privileged to have, like, but, at least a little bit, right?" (Interview 1).

In response to my request for her to name a metaphor for her experience on campus at Serena, Karen responded:

> So, I think in some ways, like, I am a catalyst for a lot of people, like, for students, for faculty, for the administration. Like, I get us from A to B easier through my energy. Like, sometimes it's my energy that I bring to a situation. Sometimes it's a calmness and a peace, an ability to stay calm in the face of difficult things. A different perspective. (Interview 2)

Karen's description of herself as a catalyst, as a person who reduces the difficulty of getting things done, strikes me as particularly apt. Her mindset to approaching her own career, her work, her students' work, and making change at the college is infused with a deeply-owned agency. Trying to get grants; trying to change the college's approach to assessment; trying to support veteran students on campus through a national support program; trying and failing and trying again. In our phone interview, she described the pile of grant applications she keeps in her office – one pile of grants she has won and a much larger pile of those she has not. When I visited her office in September, she shows me her piles, and reiterates that her mentoring philosophy is "no self-rejection," that if a goal is in the realm of possibility, it should be pursued. This catalytic energy is the driving force of her work and life on campus.

Getting to Serena

As an undergraduate, Karen hoped to win a Nobel Prize in her science discipline. She saw her path as getting a "fancy" post-doc, running a big lab as a PI, and making amazing

discoveries. Instead, as she was finishing her doctorate, she realized that for her, family was most important; she no longer wanted to put off starting a family for the sake of her career:

> [I was thinking],"well, you know, we want to have kids. If we want to have a family, and if my family's more important than my work, then why am I waiting for my work in order to start my family?" And that was just sort of this kind of revelation that there was never any, gonna be any good time to, um, have kids. Like, there's no, it's, there's no point on the path where you're like, "This is the best place. This is where you should stop and have your children." (Interview 1)

Karen followed her own instincts about when the right time was; she did not consult others. In fact, as she looked around her professional life, she saw women who did not have children, whether by choice or circumstance. She decided that continuing to model her career after these women might mean a similar outcome for herself.

Karen chose not to return full time to academia immediately after having children. She defended her dissertation just before her first daughter was born, and after trying a brief stint of working in the lab part-time again when her first daughter was six months old, she realized she wanted stay home with her children until they were old enough to be in school. Although it felt lonely to make the choice to be a stay-at-home parent, she also felt confident in her priorities. Once she focused on being a full-time parent, she found a community of other women at the park, at the library, at the grocery store, who had made similar choices.

She eventually returned to academia to teach a summer course for nursing students at her graduate alma mater. Although this return to work was earlier than she had planned,

she found she liked teaching, and the flexibility and financial gains teaching this course provided. Soon after, she was approached to coordinate a series of intensive introductory science courses for medical students. While still teaching the summer nursing course, and coordinating the medical school courses, she eventually was also running a major NSF-funded project for her graduate advisor's lab. She negotiated with this supportive mentor, and was able to do all of these activities within thirty hours each week. She was able to manage it all, and spend time with her children as she had hoped.

Karen's re-entry into academia following a break to focus on her family is a prime example of her approach to her academic career. She chose the things she wanted to do, and was able to make this complementary mix of activities work through efficient time management and self-advocacy. She asked for flexibility from her post-doctoral research director, and also let him know that if the flexibility wasn't working for both of them, they could re-evaluate.

Karen's engagement with teaching and research through this bricolage of activities also helped her to identify her ideal career path. This path was no longer the pursuit of the Nobel Prize, but rather to teach and mentor undergraduates:

> I would say that it is definitely like my calling. To do the thing, that I was called to do. In that kind of spiritual way, you know, me well, uh, I feel like I'm good at it, I'm a good teacher and I'm a good mentor. Students come to me for mentoring, that is you know, besides, um, you know like helping them with their homework. And, I think I'm good at it, and I get a lot out of it, and I feel like it's what I should be doing with my life. Like I feel like I was doing useful work, which I guess is like one of the, the minimal criteria that we should like, if we can have that with

> our job, it's so amazing. To feel like that, we should have something in our life that feels like good and peaceful, and I feel that with my work. I feel really blessed that, that I have that in my job, because a lot of people don't. (Interview 1)

The language of calling is grounded in her faith experience -- she believes God has given her a particular set of gifts, and that it is her responsibility to use those gifts to the best of her ability. Her husband owns a small business, allowing her to pursue this calling without having to manage the two-body problem of finding work for both partners. With the goal of working at the best institution possible, she applied only for positions at liberal arts colleges on U. S. News and World Report's top 50 list.

The search for a job proved more difficult than Karen had anticipated. Only applying to eight positions, she engaged in a much more focused search than most faculty. Supremely confident, this was the first time Karen had doubts in her ability to achieve a goal. It was also, at age thirty-five, the first time she had ever applied for a job. Karen speaks of how her faith as a Christian helped her to navigate the darkest periods of the process. She tripped and fell at an on-ramp to a major highway while on a run at her annual meeting in the midst of her job search. She describes this experience as pulling her out of her depression:

> I survived that meeting, but I was not a happy person to be around. Everybody was like what is the matter with her? But I get home, I'm at work, and I'm telling my friend Allison the story so that she'll just feel sorry for me, too."I want you to feel sorry for me, like I feel sorry for myself, and how this shows, this shows you how sorry you should feel for me, that I was running and I fell. And I ended up on my back, almost, like, killed by a car going onto I-5." And she looked at me, and

> she said, "Well, what did you do after you fell?" And I was like, "Well, I got up." And she's like, "Exactly," and she kind of walked away. And that was really, like, this turning point for me, that kind of pulled me out of that whole thing. And then a couple weeks later, Serena called me. But it really was this point where I had to like recognize, like, I recognized that, that I, God didn't, God didn't make me fall down, like I don't fall when I run. Like I didn't fall down so that I could be, have my, like, feel worse. I fell down so that I could recognize that I could get up. (Interview 1)

Karen's faith, and the surety that an experience like this is God's way of communicating with her, serves as a regular touch point for her. It helps her to understand, contextualize, and prioritize what is happening in her life, helping her to maintain perspective. It also helps her remain connected with her purpose for pursuing the work -- the calling of being a teacher and mentor.

Pre-Tenure Life at Serena

Karen did not discuss many challenges in her early time at Serena. Settling into a routine at Serena was easy for her because she had already spent so much time balancing various roles during her post-doctoral period. As Karen points out herself, her choice to put her academic career on hold while she focused her attention fully on being a mother also meant that she was older than many of her colleagues when she entered a faculty career. She felt this enhanced her ability to manage the demands of the early career

> I was more able to say no to things and have a better balance of my life than other faculty that I interacted with um. . . I, who were also coming in at the same time as me. [Who] were having more strife now like, with work life, work-life balance,

> uh, how to deal with all that stuff, you know, with problems with their marriage because they were working too much, and you know, I didn't do that because I just didn't. You know I just uh, I just, I think it comes back to that time at the [bench] like, my family is more important than my work, then we're going to act like that. (Interview 1)

Having already spent years negotiating work and life balance while juggling a variety of part-time work, her family, and her husband's career, Karen was able to more confidently make choices about her priorities during her pre-tenure period at Serena. In addition, she already felt sure of her choice to prioritize her family, reducing internal conflict about day-to-day choices.

One of Karen's early experiences at Serena was attending the annual President's Reception at the Alumni Center. Wearing her gold cross around her neck, the wife of another faculty member approached her, saying "You're so brave." This faculty spouse then went on to explain the challenges her husband had in being openly Christian in the Serena community. Karen was not sure what to make of this story, and it raised some mild anxiety that she would not find acceptance for an important part of her identity. Instead, she found her faith proved to be a way that she could engage with students, other faculty, and the community external to Serena. Christian students, even those who do not take courses with her, seek her out as a resource. She engages in faith-based mentoring and counseling, or dialogues with students about reconciling faith and science. She is open about her faithfulness, displaying a cross and other Christian signifiers in her office, but does not proselytize or bring up her faith with students unless they start the conversation. She likes allowing students to see her in multiple dimensions:

> So here I am like a rainbow lanyard, would like associate with like the LGBT community, right, with a big cross hanging off it, locking arms with students, picketing Westboro Baptist, whatever. Here, take all this in people. Yeah, I wanted them to see like I could be, I have a Christian, I'm a follower of Jesus, it does not buy into this bologna anymore, anymore. I needed them to see that. Maybe God is, maybe that's one way that you know, God is calling me to discuss, that matters. (Interview 1)

Karen thinks it is important that students observe how she lives her faith, and that it allows her to act in alignment with the values of the campus community. And, by being a scientist who is a Christian, she is able to model a certain version of Christianity that might allow her to better represent her faith and what it means. She feels no conflicts exist between her faith and her love of science, and she is deeply invested in what science has to offer the world.

Karen takes great pleasure in working with students in the lab to develop their scientific skills.

> You know like, excited about it, and they make me laugh, and, and its like, it's a happy place to be. And I really like to, to, I-I joke the, I like my, my calling is the torture of undergraduates and [I] really like doing that. And so some of them get very frustrated with me because they'll come to me and say, "Well, what is, what should I do with this thing." "Well, I don't know, what should you do? How about you tell me what makes it, to push you to figure it out on your own." And, and they don't always like that but in the end they come to finally appreciate it even if its a couple years of growing. (Interview 1)

Karen views her pedagogy with students in the lab as providing structured opportunities for them to direct their own learning. She jokes that this method is like "torture" to her students, who often come to her expecting answers rather than questions. While students may be frustrated with her in the moment, she knows they will come to appreciate the skills and ways of thinking developed through this method.

While Karen had a fair amount of instructional experience prior to her Serena appointment, mastering the high-impact practices expected at Serena took her time. In her personal statement for tenure, Karen describes how her approach to teaching evolved during her pre-tenure period. Her narrative indicates a definite rising trend in her student evaluations of teaching, and she highlights the steps she took to raise her scores. This included adding more frequent assessments of learning to both increase the frequency of feedback to students and to ensure that tests or quizzes could be accomplished in the time set aside for them. She also reworked her courses to include demonstrations that could tie course content to student experiences in the classroom and developed a portfolio approach to document student learning.

Beyond adapting to the teaching style of the college, Karen was also exposed, for the first time, to concepts of social justice and equity that are part of the daily dialogue on Serena's campus. Early in her time at the college, she was new to these kinds of critiques, and remembers a situation with a colleague:

> And then, then the faculty member said something and made a comment about, you know, being heteronormative. And then I was like, it took me like ten minutes to kind of realize, "Oh she was talking about me, and I think she was kind of insul- that was kind of an insult." And then I had to figure out what

> heteronormative really meant, and anyway like, it just was like "Wow, okay am I heteronormative? Yes, I think I am. I really am heteronormative (laughs) and is that a good or bad thing?" Like things that I had to think about in that realm have been, things that I had not anticipated. (Interview 1)

Karen had to make sense of this feedback, and decide how to incorporate that feedback into the ways she teaches and mentors students. At times, Karen will try to help students make sense of how individuals, including those in the town surrounding Serena, might respond to certain approaches for asking for recognition and respect. Since she is not as invested in social justice as many of her colleagues or students, Karen feels she can often help students learn how to engage people who are not as versed in the language, politics, or view point of social justice as they seek equity outside of Serena. She gives an example of a student correcting the pronoun usage of a cashier at a local supermarket, and how she pushed that student to think about that interaction differently.

In order to ensure she was meeting the appropriate benchmarks, Karen met with her chair to identify what she needed to do to attain tenure.

> [The chair from her first three years in the department] and I sat down and made a plan, like get a grant here, get a paper here, teach these classes here, you know. Your appointment will go in, so you know. I had a plan. I probably still have that sheet somewhere, but I don't want to look around for it. We went and had lunch and wrote it out…. And I pretty much did. I pretty much followed that plan. (Interview 2)

Together, they mapped annual goals for her to meet, particularly around scholarship. Part of that plan included pursuing external funding. She has funded her work in various

streams, producing published research with students and her collaborators at other campuses. These efforts have allowed her to maintain a robust scholarly community inside and outside Serena.

Karen found ways to build a scholarly community at Serena. Her first summer working at Serena, missing the collaborative environment of her post-doctoral lab, Karen decided that she needed to approach working with her colleagues differently. She initiated collaborative lab meetings with another faculty member, advancing both her own and her students' understanding of the work of other faculty at the college in her discipline. Despite being the only person who studies her sub-field, she has found ways to approach her work with colleagues across the college, facilitated by the small size of the faculty and the interconnectedness of the workspace. For one example, she will approach them and they "take my data and like, 'Did I show you this, and I need to talk about this. ' And they just, you just help each other and, so around here that has been sort of the way that I've operated, trying not to work in isolation." Karen has built her own local community of scholars, which has enriched her scholarship and allowed her to see beyond the traditional boundaries that might be drawn between her work and those of scholars with different foci.

Karen also found ways to maintain an active scholarly connections with faculty and researchers at other institutions.

> I've just had to like, keep on the professional connections that I have in my field, so keeping connections with people that I know from the [disciplinary] field who I can call up and say, "You know what, I need help with this," or what do you think about that, or can I send you this, or those sort of things. So I have a couple

> of people that I can send grant drafts to, that will resend to critique them, and uh, other people that I collaborate with, with my [equipment], so those collaborations are, are good and useful. (Interview 1)

These connections allowed Karen to build a strong curriculum vita and research profile that helped her meet the scholarly benchmarks for tenure review. These collaborations also served as a touch point that enhanced her own professional development. She intentionally sought intellectual engagement by colleagues at other institutions why may have had more bandwidth to focus on emergent research techniques or streams of knowledge.

By having a clear plan laid for her by a senior colleague, Karen was able to move towards tenure review with confidence that she had met her goals as laid out in that plan. Her review letters confirmed her progress towards those goals. Having goals along the way to meet allowed her to keep her focus appropriately distributed between her teaching and scholarly endeavors, which helped her prioritize activities and commitments. Her approach to her tenure application was to show how successful she had been in shepherding others into a love of science, and how she made her science work in the context of a liberal arts college. Karen was tenured without problems.

Post-Tenure Life at Serena

With her teaching and research polished and hitting on all cylinders as a result of her pre-tenure planning, Karen described the period following tenure as one of having to find a new focus:

> There's this moment where you get tenure, and you're now, like, aimless. You're like a, a ship without an oar or a rudder, bouncing around in an ocean, and you don't, like, what direction am I heading? (Interview 2)

After working for so many years to reach tenure, she had to recalibrate her priorities, and identify a new path. Since having a plan had been so helpful to her pre-tenure, she felt she needed to have a new plan for the next benchmark, promotion to full professor.

Karen took advantage of mentors in the provost's office on campus to help her identify potential paths forward, including potentially moving into campus administration. One suggested that she step into a role on the assessment committee, which handles accreditation and other assessment activities. This role put her in charge of writing the mid-term accreditation report for Serena. Karen helped to structure a new approach to assessment. She thinks the college could do a better job in demonstrating its success to outside evaluators, but that the process of developing a culture of assessment has to be slow-going, home grown, and meaningful. She likened her approach to guiding this effort as a "couch-to-marathon" process, in which she allowed departments to submit their assessment reports in whatever format they would find most useful to themselves. Her success in garnering participation from all the departments was recognized by leadership.

As a result of her work on the mid-term accreditation report, Karen has been asked to lead Serena's upcoming full accreditation review process, and knows that this will require a significant commitment of time and energy. She has begun conversations with colleagues in the leadership to be appointed to a role in the provost's office to be officially recognized and compensated for the work she will be doing. Not sure if

administration is the route she wants to take, she also shared that she would not know until she tried it. Karen knew that she would not be considered for the role, especially as a woman, unless she made it clear that it was something she wants to do.

> I'm not going to sit back and not be considered for those positions because uh, nobody knows that I'm interested in them, or b, like, I'm not promoting myself. I'm not going to just be the person who's like, well, my good work didn't speak for itself? No. I have to speak for me. And so I think that's it, like, part of it is not, it's not being, um, obnoxiously self-promoting. It's also about, like, you know, people don't know what they don't know. Right? And also the fact that, like, people don't necessarily consider women for those positions over men, like the implicit bias is there. Well, I'm going to, you know, you're going to know that I'm interested, because I'm going to tell you. So I think it's that, that's a major part of it. I don't want to just sit back and let my life happen. And then be like, oh, how did I get here? (Interview 2)

Karen is unafraid to ask for the things she wants or needs, while also recognizing that she won't always know what works for her until she tries something. Rather than follow any one set path, she identifies the activities she feels are worth doing, and then applies her efforts towards making those things happen.

As she considers taking on this larger leadership role, Karen has to contend with how she thinks change can or should function at the college.

> When there's faculty who are putting forth the narrative that this is [Accrediting Agency] holding us hostage. 'These accrediting agencies holding us hostage to assessment and I've been teaching the same way, I teach the same way that

> Aristotle taught, and so therefore, my teaching must be super-wonderful and amazing.' And I'm just like, 'Are you serious? Really? Like, I can't even believe you said that. And, um, like, Aristotle was an elite teaching elites. And we're not that anymore.'….They don't want to change. But maybe, maybe I'm wrong. I don't mind change. I think change is good. I think change is healthy, I think you change, and then if you don't like it, you change back. Like, I'm not afraid of that. Not afraid of making a wrong decision and then going back. But there's a lot of fear. (Interview 2)

Karen's desire to be a change agent who is willing to try new things in order to improve the college on a broader scale is clear here. She does not see a risk in trying new approaches to old problems on campus, especially if they are in service of better education for the diverse students at Serena. However, she perceives many of the faculty around her as seeing change as a bad thing; she thinks other academics depend upon the routine and familiarity of campus life. Describing herself as a natural politician, Karen feels confident that she will be successful stepping into a formal leadership role that will allow her to address these issues. Being "good at spin," she hopes she can communicate to the faculty the need for changes in both how teaching is approached and how assessment proceeds.

The regular acknowledgement of social justice and power relations in campus dialogue came up in a significant way for Karen in our conversations, perhaps because she was the least inclined to identify strongly with these perspectives. Karen is aware that others may not see her as an ally or understanding of these dynamics because of how she presents herself.

> A student told me that I needed to check my power, and I was like I'm not gonna check my power, you don't want me to, because my power is something that I am willing to use on your behalf….I recognized in that interaction that they see me a certain way. That is not really who I am. Um, and around here, it doesn't make a problem, when its a big problem, that students and faculty go around, assuming that we understand that person's scenario or don't mind what jack shit they had to go through. And um, so that's kind of interesting for my to navigate, and to recognize like, all my different narratives, and how, and what students see, and perceive, and, and how I can manage that. Like I recognize my responsibility in managing who they see. (Interview 2)

Karen sees people's disapprobation of her based on their assumptions about who she is, as well as the challenging in letting people see all the different sides of her. While she is entirely willing to use her power as a faculty member on behalf of students looking to make change, she knows that not everyone will acknowledge and recognize her efforts.

Karen has begun to use her power on behalf of students, by "starting to move to practices like that are not just giving privileges to those who are already feeling the privilege of getting that privilege" (Interview 2). One example is her intentional effort to ensure equal access to opportunities for research roles in her lab through restructuring her application and interview process. She has also expressed an increasing comfort with addressing campus social issues in her science classroom. A recent development in her growth as an instructor, she says that

> So um, you know so to, to be recognizing that like, just because I'm not a faculty of color, doesn't mean I can't be part of the conversations, that's engaging these issues that are going on at campus. And especially as a faculty member in the

> sciences, where we don't overtly talk about race or sex or gender or that sort of stuff. (Interview 1)

Karen expresses a desire to be a part of the important, and often contentious, dialogues regarding issues of equity and justice occurring on campus that fall outside of the scope of her discipline. She identifies that the social dimensions of gender and race are not inherently built into the content of her courses, but she feels that should not prevent her from engaging with her students. Karen feels it is important for the students in her classroom to know she cares and that she is willing to hear from them.

However, it is not clear that Karen extends the same empathy to the experiences of other faculty on campus. Her own sense of agency has perhaps made it difficult to recognize how dynamics of privilege and lack of status within power structures may be functioning for other faculty.

> I want everybody to be doing things that make them feel great about themselves and feel fulfilled and feel important and feel affirming, and like, I think that's, like, where I get annoyed with the faculty who are so, like, (muttering noise). If you really are that miserable, change your life. Right? Change something. Choose differently. Make a different choice. You are not stuck here in this moment in time. You have agency. If you're not happy that you can't run a mile, then do something about it. (Interview 2)

While Karen is fully cognizant of the challenges facing undergraduate students, it seems she assumes other faculty operate with the same level and latitude of choices she does. However, with a highly activist and critical faculty body surrounding her, this attitude

towards her peers may complicate her efforts to serve as a change agent or senior leader who works within the systems that exist.

Thoughts on Karen's Fit

Karen has found an excellent fit at Serena. In her own words:

> A lot of jobs that are, don't feel good and useful, and don't feel appreciated. I feel like my students appreciate me, I feel like my colleagues appreciate me, and I feel like I am using my skills and, and my gifts and talents in a way that's good and useful work. So, um, you know, my students drive me crazy sometimes, and uh, I would sometimes want to strangle them, and certainly I just sometimes want to strangle my colleagues. But, uh, for the most part, I like coming to work, and I'm, you know, quite good at it actually, so um, yeah and that goes for like teaching like in the classroom and in the research lab. (Interview 1)

Karen acknowledges that life at the college isn't always perfect, and at times she experiences acute periods of stress where she has to prioritize her faculty role over her family role. On the balance, though, Karen has been able to find a place, a calling, where she is satisfied with what she is doing, who she is working with, and that she is able to contribute to making the lives of others a little better.

In general, my conversation with Karen skewed towards a focus on the future—she seemed more animated and interested in what the future held for her than what the past had contributed to her experience. Beyond doing well with her teaching and scholarship, Karen's ambitions are aligning well with the changes underway at the college. Opportunities in the leadership are likely to open soon, and she has positioned herself well to step into these roles. Both through the strategic choice of service opportunities

and the leveraging of relationships with current leaders, Karen's pragmatic approach to campus life has allowed her to be seen as an ally of the administration.

Another interesting factor related to Karen's fit experiences on campus is the recent higher profile and prominence granted to science disciplines on campus. While the college historically was more focused on the humanities and social sciences, student demand for science majors, pre-med education, and studies that feel more aligned with career preparation have been on the rise. Some of this shifting emphasis has been demonstrated with the construction of a new state of the art science facility on campus. The cache of the sciences on the campus, and her success facilitating a robust scholarly profile within her discipline (her h-index on Scopus is a 12, indicating a highly successful publication record), has perhaps further buoyed her success.

Karen is one of those faculty members who seem to have endless energy and confidence in their navigation of academia, teaching, and faculty life in general. That confidence is both inspiring and intimidating. She describes herself as "unabashedly ambitious." Given my deepening knowledge of the diversity of faculty perspectives at Serena and relationships I was forming with other faculty, I could also see how Karen's pragmatic roll-up-our-sleeves approach to change could rub her peers the wrong way. In addition, Karen's skeptical view of faculty concerns regarding unhappiness with their experiences could be additional barrier to consensus building on important change initiatives. Many of my other participants have struggled to find community and place on the campus, have felt thwarted or undermined by their colleagues, or have grown cynical about using formal power structures on campus to create meaningful change. These differing viewpoints echoed in my mind while talking with Karen, giving me a modest

sense of how her faculty colleagues may respond to her. Yet, Karen and her participant colleagues expressed, for the most part, similar points of view on the changes the college must make to serve its diverse population of students.

In all, Karen's story of fit at Serena has been one of extreme fit, success, and satisfaction with her experience. Her outlook on her work has enabled her to meet the college's expectations with little difficulty. She has grown to incorporate prevailing narratives about diversity and inclusion into her work with students, even if she maintains more of outsider view on perspectives about equity and justice on campus for faculty and students. She and the college have changed together in ways that are productive and complementary. The future looks promising, especially with a major leadership role on the horizon. Her highly agentic disposition, paired with supportive mentors, has created a multitude of paths for her tread – where she goes next is mostly bound by her desires.

Ana: The Video Yearbook

Ana and I have known each other for years — and in many ways her story and experience while she was going through tenure was the inspiration for this study. Because of our prior relationship, our interviews took a significantly different shape than any of the others. They were less structured and more conversational. Ana took the lead in determining what we discussed. Because of our relationship and her knowledge of my research, she consistently brought a gender analysis to bear on our conversation even when not prompted by me. Our conversation focused much more on the mechanisms of the college itself, rather than her personal stories and her role on the tenure and promotion committee positioned her as a key informant on some interesting college dynamics.

Ana is a tall White woman in her forties with a casual, yet chic style that borrows inspiration from the European country she studies in her humanities research. A queer-identified single mother, she recently married a man. Active and energetic, Ana exudes a confidence and comfort with herself that is refreshing and inspiring to be around. Her mannerisms and speech come across as thoroughly academic, perhaps the result of being the child of an academic.

> I have to say, I mean, I have to acknowledge the privilege that I had, which was that my father had a PhD, and even though he was never at a school like Serena he was at a state school, like a second-tier state school. He really pushed me, you know, and he was there and he encouraged me….It was kind of like the family trade, if you will. (Interview 1)

By having a “family trade” in academia, Ana was able to rely on her father for support, motivation, and advice as she moved through her academic career. While other participants have family with advanced degrees, no one else mentions a family member also in academia.

Ana used “frenzy” to describe her approach to accomplishing academic tasks, particularly around research. This pattern of behavior was set in place during her doctoral study, and she has continued to struggle with finding a different approach to finishing her work, approaching it with balance, and finding a way to refocus after a period of frenzy.

> When I was finishing my dissertation, there was a moment where I said, because boy I really got sick and tired of, you know, kind of trying to make [my topic] be, um, sort of, uh, an urgent question for humanity, and, um, because sometimes, you know, you get into this, and it's just such a, it's, I don't know, it's this other field. But, you know, I found a way to link it to issues that were important, I felt, and um, you know, race and da-da-da. And then I just, I said, you know what, for this period of time, I'm going to, I did say that. I made a very conscious decision when I was writing my dissertation to believe that narrative. To get me through. Because I knew that if I didn't convince myself, and sort of perform that role, of being completely fanatical about my dissertation then it just wouldn't happen. So I did. I think what happened though, is that, and this is what I'm bad at, I, I do, I play the role and I convince myself of that role, just like an actor would on the stage, you know, and I really lived that. But then when the play is over, I don't have a good ceremony of closure. (Interview 2)

Ana's need to both tackle her work with frenzy and fanaticism, as well as find ways to connect her work to important questions of humanity continue to be questions she wrestles with. I identify strongly with both impulses, both the intensive engagement with the work at intervals and the concern that academic work often stays too theoretical, too distant from the real challenges of humanity. These dual concerns are fundamental to Ana's experience of the academy, and form the foundation for how she has approached her work and her academic citizenry at Serena.

When asked to identify a metaphor of her time at Serena, Ana referenced a multi-media yearbook-style display that might show the diffractions in the experiences of Serena faculty. The many different realities of the faculty make coming together as a community difficult.

> They're so disconnected. You know? From so much. And I don't have patience…you know, I want to be courteous and civil, and there's no reason for me to be angry, but I don't really...I, I really don't respect them. And it's just hard, though, when, um, you have a little place like Serena that, kind of, tries to, as much as it can, have consensus, and so you. Do you know, the, the one thing that makes me feel good about Serena? Is that there's this, ah, it's a group of, um, about 50 people whose position I really respect. And, you know, they, they're the ones who sign letters, and they're the ones who get it, in my opinion. You know, they get it. They get the critique of the institution, they get, you know, what it is that's really wrong, you know. And, um, and they have a really solid critique of, you know, race, and, um, homophobia, and sexism, and, and classism, and everything.…And then there's, you know, others who don't, who feel, kind of, the

> same way, but they never ever put their necks out there. And they don't, they never, um, they're more cynical, they're, they just don't feel comfortable openly identifying, you know, um, and, and, kind of, speaking about these things. (Interview 2)

For Ana, a feeling of respect and mutuality among her faculty peers is driven by a common devotion to principles of social justice, creating change in the world, and putting one's neck out to advance change. This includes investing in changing the college to reduce injustice. Other factions of Serena faculty do not invest in this kind of change, or are in alignment with the institutional directives as set by the trustees and president. Ana does not respect those faculty who do not actively articulate the values she holds dear.

Getting to Serena

Ana had held several instructor roles before she was hired at Serena. She was a full time instructor at a small private liberal arts college during the period between her master's degree and doctoral study. She also held adjunct instructor positions at several colleges while finishing her dissertation. Serena was the first institution to offer her a job — a three year visiting assistant professor contract. She had this position in hand as she finished her doctorate.

> And it was kind of an ideal job, because it was sort of like doing a post-doc. You didn't have to, really, do any admin- you didn't have to do any administration role. You just taught your classes, and focused on your scholarship. So it was a way of kind of, I saw it as buying time, eh, but it was also pre-crisis, So a lot of people that you would talk to around the college would say, "Well, a lot of people have actually come into Serena, you know, through this kind of back doorway, and,

> sometimes they'll create a position for you. So you should really behave as if you are a tenure-track person." So, um, that upped the ante. (Interview 1)

She felt no hesitation to take this visiting role at the time, in part because she was assured that this was a common pathway to a tenure-track position at the college. Ana, though, was advised to behave as if she was a tenure track faculty in her visiting role, in order to make her more attractive to the department and the college for a potential tenure-track line.

Ana took this advice to heart, and tried to position herself as a colleague worthy of the tenure-track in her humanities field.

> I think that was already…one of the first ways in which I got caught in that trap of doing way more work and then, you know, still feeling like I was trying to squeeze through in the end....In any case, I went through those two years. Everything seemed great, and I didn't really get much mentorship except for, you know, pats on the back, and this is good, you know, everything seemed fine. Um, and I, uh, never really had a serious talk with anybody about my teaching. Um, I was learning a lot, you know, it was, but it wasn't the kind of sustained, really careful mentorship and sort of honest mentorship that goes on now….My, my colleagues hadn't had junior colleagues in awhile in their department, and so, um, I thought I was doing fine, and they, they were genuinely happy with me. (Interview 1)

Ana had been encouraged to work like a tenure-track faculty, and she received positive feedback from the senior faculty in her department. She did not feel she received

intentional mentoring like she sees for junior faculty now, but she attributes that in part to being one of the first junior colleagues in the department for a long time.

The department waited until a faculty member retired to identify a new tenure-track line. Since there were multiple visiting instructors in the department, there was competition between Ana and her colleague to fill this line. Ana perceived resistance on the part of that retiring faculty member to have Ana replace her.

> Unfortunately I had to compete against the other person who was hired in a two year contract that also got extended. So we had to compete for that, and that was, that was difficult, but um, they chose me for, uh, I guess they had their reasons, and um, well because, because of the area [I study]. Um, and then, uh, I went out on the job market, and there was supposed to be, they was supposed to turn something, that third year, they were supposed to create, um, a new line, but the woman who was retiring, really did not like me, in the sense that she didn't think I was up to snuff. Um, there were all kinds of ways that she let me know that, and she, quote, unquote, forgot to turn in the paperwork to request the tenure track line. And so um, I had to wait an extra year, to um, apply for that tenure track position. So I was a visiting then for four years. (Interview 1)

Ana felt that this individual was allowed to exert a lot of power over how the line was filled, and that this resistance was a referendum on her suitability. However, she was assured by her other colleagues that they wanted her on the permanent faculty. She took a big risk, and turned down a tenure-track position at a less prestigious institution to wait for the tenure-track line at Serena. Turning down this position was particularly challenging because at the time, Ana lived with her then-husband in the nearby large city.

This position, located in the same city where she lived, would also have removed the commute she was making to Serena.

Pre-Tenure Life at Serena

While Ana described her pattern of work during her dissertation period as a frenetic, fanatical focus on work to get things done, she also received mentoring and advice that encouraged her to continue that kind of productivity and pace in her pre-tenure period. Being encouraged to publish as much as possible, Ana put a lot of pressure on herself to have a robust and wide-ranging scholarly profile.

> This woman who was, kind of, my prime mentor in the department, I mean, she was really right about a lot of things. Um, but uh, you know, (sighs) God. I don't want to say too much, Um, because, you know, I think she felt like she was doing the right thing, and I think she was. In her thinking, she was doing the right thing, you know? She was really trying to help me as much as possible and she, I took her advice, you know? Um, I think that, uh, she was telling me, “Be on the safe side. Produce as much scholarship as you can." And I guess what I want to say there is that, um, there's something about, you know, and that's what she had to do. She had to, and that's what a lot of women have had to do. They've had to go above and beyond, you know, um, in ways that, I'll just say it, I don't think that my male colleagues have always had to do. (Interview 1)

Here Ana acknowledges that this mentor was not trying to set her up or put unnecessary pressures on her. Instead, in this senior female colleague’s experience, having an unimpeachable scholarly record was what had allowed her to be successful during a time when women’s progress demanded a more intense contribution. Ana expresses a lot of

ambivalence about this support, because she feels that she was pushed to do so much and she has internalized these expectations. She is left wondering if she could have been less frenzied and less intense about her work and still have been successful.

Ana felt that she approached having a robust scholarly profile through trying to have a broad portfolio. In retrospect, she feels that this instinct probably did not serve her well — particularly when she considers successful tenure cases of men at the college.

> You know? I've seen a lot of men go through the system with, you know, who don't feel like they have to take on the world. You know what I mean? And have the above and beyond. They have what they need, and they just focus on that, and they do it well. And they're kind of focused on it. Whereas, um, I mean, I had like every area. It's not like I had just one thing, I had like all these different areas of scholarship. Do you know what I mean? (Interview 1)

She felt that she had to produce not just focused, high quality scholarship, but that she had to have multiple streams of scholarship covering multiple genres in her discipline. Again, the model set by the senior female colleague in her department made it difficult for Ana to distinguish between what was necessary and what was recommended.

In addition to this pressure from her departmental mentor, the pre-tenure years following her appointment to the tenure-track were full of personal turmoil that added a series of complications.

> And then, um, things were actually going quite well, and I had a book contract and several publications. Um, and then my life kind of fell apart. Um, my personal life, and I separated. I got a divorce. I got with someone else. I had a baby. All these crazy things happened. And um, I did not have tenure yet, and so I

> had to kind of summon up the powers to like, that were in the universe to help me complete this book project. (Interview 1)

Over the span of a few years, her life fundamentally changed in ways that were incredibly stressful. Her support network was in flux, and those she could rely on the most were either away from the area or located on the campus and not where she was living.

Ana felt she probably put herself in a professionally and personally precarious position by assuming she would be able to resume teaching soon after having her son.

> I came back to teaching, um, early. Well, that was the other thing. I was stupid. I should have taken off an entire semester on half pay, and instead, um, because I'd had a very healthy pregnancy, this is all before, just before, like two years before tenure. I told them, because I had a healthy pregnancy, I thought, uh, I can go ahead and manage. I'll just come back after two months. And it was a huge mistake. I was physically, practically, incapacitated for a few weeks after labor. It was a nightmare. And um, I had to go back and teach those classes, and I just should never have done it. And of course the classes were not good in the next semester and those classes were horrendous because I was still recuperating in many ways. Physically, not in many ways. (Interview 1)

Instead, Ana felt physically incapable of teaching, including having to manage a commute from the city she was living in to Serena's campus. The stress of being a mother to a baby, of trying to achieve these high standards in scholarship, and of engaging in the kind of teaching required by the college were almost too much for her to bear. These stressors resulted in serious dip in her teaching evaluations brought on by a challenging schedule, intense physical recovery, and difficult logistics.

Having been told to focus on her scholarship as her guarantee for tenure, Ana was now told that there were serious concerns about the quality of her teaching as she approached tenure.

> Because I actually went through a little bit of a, a hitch with my tenure. Everything was supposed to be perfect because my scholarship was great and they couldn't criticize it whatsoever, but there were a couple people on the committee who really did not think my teaching was high quality. Um, and I was, I felt very, very hurt by that. Um, part of it is because I really, I felt like I didn't actually know that for many years. Like I was under the assumption that it was just fine and it was only towards the end that I realized it was, oh no, there's this unwritten rule, this is the other thing. There's an unwritten rule that's not in our faculty handbook that says you have to give, well, it doesn't say, but it's just, it's applied to all tenure cases, all promotion, that you have to receive 80% fours and fives on your [student evaluations]. And um, I never even heard of that rule until after I went through fourth year review. (Interview 1)

Ana learned that her evaluations were not strong enough in time to do damage control — and she was able to make not just pedagogical changes but changes to her life that would allow her to produce the kind of teaching necessary. Yet, she learned very late in the process, from a faculty member outside her department, about the unwritten rule regarding teaching quality. While she had been told to improve her evaluations, she had not realized how specific that recommendation could be. In addition, Ana expresses a sense of hurt by the idea that her teaching was not high quality.

In order to improve her teaching evaluations, Ana decided to move to the town where Serena was located. She hoped the move could ease some of the pressure and stress parenting on the tenure-track.

> So my [teaching evaluations] plummeted, and um, my colleagues were like, you gotta get these up, like immediately, or because I wouldn't have been able to make the argument for myself that I had high quality teaching. So I did. Um, I moved up to Serena I left [the city] and I moved up with my son, and uh, because I realized I just couldn't swing the whole commute thing. Um, I left his father, and um, I just was like, okay this is it. I'm gonna focus on my teaching. And I got my [teaching evaluations] back up, and um, because that's pretty much what I did. I just focused on these classes. And um, that was good because I realized I had the confidence and the wherewithal within me to, to do what they wanted. Um, but still to this day, I have to say, to teach full time at this institution, and to pull off the kind of scholarship that they want to see, I think is, is really nearly impossible. (Interview 1)

She managed this by moving first into campus faculty housing and then into a faculty-in-residence position in a campus residence hall. This allowed her to spend less time commuting between the two towns, to place her son in the on-campus preschool for young children, and to be available to the campus in ways she had not been previously.

Although the move to campus helped in many ways, Ana still felt a lot of stress in managing her personal and professional demands. She felt she was under high pressure to produce the right forms and quality of scholarship for tenure. In order to accomplish this,

and complete her book project in time for her tenure review, she called on a broad support network.

> Um, so, uh, you know, with the help of friends, my family, my parents would come and stay with me for like a month, and you know, uh, and I was also going through major litigation with the father of my son, who was suing me for full custody. It was all incredibly stressful. Um, uh, I ended up producing a manuscript of my book. Um, it was not great. It, it wasn't the manuscript I wanted it to be, but it's what I could produce with the mental energy that I had at the time. I was so supremely distracted in every single way. I mean, working on that book was just painful. You know, because I was either away from my child, or I was just stressed out, or I was, frankly, clinically depressed at the time. I was clinically depressed. I mean, when I look back on it, I mean there were a few times where, um, yeah I was suicidal. Even with a child. I mean, it was just such a dark, dark period because I had such a negative relationship with the father of my son, and I had such a traumatic, you know, uh, separation from my first husband, and um, there was just so much going on. (Interview 1)

By mobilizing a broader support network outside of her local area, Ana was able to manage the stress and depression that accompanied her life changes, and pull herself through finishing her manuscript. In spite of completing her book in time for tenure review in the face of personal challenges, Ana expresses regret that the manuscript was not as high quality as she would have liked. Ana used her tenure review narrative to manage the perceptions that her teaching evaluations were not consistently high enough

by detailing the personal and physical challenges related to her pregnancy and motherhood that contributed to her uneven teaching evaluations.

Despite traversing a rocky path, Ana was tenured. In her own words, she says, “the institution can kind of speak out of both sides of its mouth. Like, they say they want this, but in reality they want, they want it all. And they want it all at really excellent terms” (Interview 1). The tenure process left her feeling unsure about her relationship with her colleagues, due to the mixed messages she received. She had been affirmed by her mentor in the department that her scholarship was what mattered most. It felt like a bait and switch to be told, via a letter from the provost, that she would need to significantly improve her teaching evaluation scores.

Post-Tenure Life at Serena

A dynamic that shifted for Ana post-tenure was having another single mother, Ruth, move into the same residence hall where she served as faculty-in-residence. This, along with her connections to other single mothers, helped her have a stronger network for her day-to-day experiences managing life with a toddler, her scholarship, and her teaching.

> She moved in with her son and we would just tag team. That's what we did that next year. We tag teamed. And uh, so we basically raised our kids together. We, she's a, she was a single mom, and uh, her son was a couple years older than mine, and we just really leaned on each other all the time. And then there were a couple other people, um, single moms as well…. And uh, it's almost like, it was the single moms, you know? That we pulled each other through. The people who had the least time were the ones that gave me the most time. (Interview 1)

Finding other women in similar positions to her own, who were able to understand and offer support, reinforced Ana's sense of solidarity and community with other women on campus. In part, by having more time and more support, Ana was better able to manage her faculty responsibilities post-tenure.

Although Ana found positive identification with women faculty, her status as a single woman was problematic for other women affiliated with Serena. In particular, she describes an interaction with a colleague's wife who expressed relief at her having entered a stable relationship. This comment affirmed a sense of having been treated differently as a single woman faculty member. Ana believes that Serena privileges families, despite a general understanding that academia is friendly for single people.

Ana has better mastered how to perform the kind of teaching expected by Serena students and that produces higher evaluation numbers. However, for Ana, like some other participants, the strategies that produce those stronger numbers also leave her feeling like she's compromising high quality instruction in exchange for being liked.

> The funny thing is that I've learned how to get those high numbers. I finally learned how, not always consistently, because there's always going to be this, unfortunately, this rebel person in me, that I'll get it right, and then there's just something that just has to go against the grain, and part of it is because I don't always agree that the kind of teaching, when I've gotten those really excellent numbers, I'm not always sure that I'm doing the best kind of teaching. (Interview 1)

This ambivalence about whether the form of teaching evaluation valued at the college actually produces that best learning for students is one that worries Ana. While she does

not think the current evaluation model produces the best teaching, she is also critical of attempts to create more elaborate forms of assessment at the college, feeling faculty are already highly surveilled.

These worries are enhanced as she considers the dark side of some faculty members' attempts to use technology to account for their time. Like many participants, Ana has incorporated many of the strategies and techniques espoused by Kerry Ann Rockequemore to help her achieve higher levels of productivity. She sees these strategies as having a potential downside.

> There's this new thing going on with academia with the Kerry Ann Rockquemore stuff. And it's the accountability. So, on the one hand, it's a very good thing. And it's about [how] we carve out that space, and like put other things aside to you know, have our accountability groups, and, you know, um, uh, and then in my writing group. Um, I am actually being very good about structuring my time this year, this sabbatical, but my writing group, we found this software…you get on with a team, and um, it uh, every time you write or take notes, or read, you clock in, so it's kind of, like, factory clocking in-when you're in your writing group, that time you can clock in, and um. . . . So there's this very, on the one hand, it's a way for us to finally say to the provost, we can quantify, this is actually what it takes to do scholarship. You know? Which is good. I mean, because they think that it's just supposed to happen. I don't know, when we're in the shower, I don't know when they think it's supposed to happen, you know? Uh, on the other hand, it has potentially terrible, horrible, scary consequences. About, you know, how, um, our time is, could be surveilled, and micro-managed, and all of that. You know,

> mechanized, like a, the Ford model, the Ford, uh, what do you call it, factory model. (Interview 2)

Like many other participants in the study, Kerry Ann Rockquemore's approach has been helpful to Ana in prioritizing her time, guarding her efforts to be productive, and finding partners for accountability. On the other hand, Ana worries the more faculty do to account for themselves and their time, the greater liability they create in terms of how they might be evaluated, monitored, or have their work quantified. Ana goes on to liken this kind of tracking as similar to that of a FedEx or UPS delivery driver whose every move is monitored.

Ana's concerns about how faculty are monitored and evaluated are informed by her recent experiences serving on the college's tenure and promotion committee. Her critical lens allowed her to see patterns of inequity emerge across the tenure cases that came before the committee. Yet the committee was explicitly discouraged from considering any one case in relation to any other case.

> Because really, if there are patterns emerging, we need to be able to talk about them-and there was a way in which our particular system at Serena worked, where it was like, oop, no, can't talk about them, you just, you just keep moving on, so it's like, our tenure committee which was, it was disempowered from actually kind of, making change in the institution and saying, "Look, these things are an issue." (Interview 2)

The college-wide committee serves in a consultative capacity to the provost and the president, but without any real decision-making power. Ana felt this left disempowered

individuals at greater risk in their departments, and noted that she shares what she learned through her experience with women faculty.

After leaving the promotion and tenure committee, Ana found ways to try to address the inequities she had observed in that role. She was part of a small group of faculty who lead a charge for a faculty salary study by gender. The review was completed by an institutional researcher in the president's office. Ana and her peers were frustrated that the college did not hand over the data directly to the faculty to examine themselves. She expressed distrust of the data report, and planned to continue agitating for another pay study and other efforts to ensure equity across the faculty.

In terms of her own professional progress, Ana is feeling the same anxiety she felt pre-tenure around whether she is doing enough. Even when she compares her scholarly production to her peers, and sees that she is doing quite well, it does not erase the doubt that has been instilled in her.

> I have way more, way more publications than some of my peers. Um, especially, I mean, it's shocking how few publications some of my male colleagues had coming up for tenure, in comparison to me. And how utterly, uh, traumatized I was about maybe not getting tenure. You know? I mean really, they, um…and the same, right now, too. I mean, I know people that it came up for full with half of what I have. And I'm still, I just postponed again. (Interview 2)

She has just made the decision to put off application to full professor for another year so that she could feel more confident in her position. This ongoing doubt and anxiety is a product of both her own desire to be excellent and the messaging she's received about what is enough for a woman scholar.

The same female scholar in her department who influenced her experience pre-tenures plays a part in Ana's current anxieties, as well. Since this faculty member will be evaluating Ana's file for full, Ana is sure the same high expectations will be applied to the evaluation her work.

> And you know what, yeah, and she was giving the best advice she had. Because it wasn't easy for any woman to come up, you know, in her generation. Much less a woman of, uh, in her position and um, but I mean I think that she's just never stopped and kind of taken a look at now, what the academy looks like. And how we should change. And I think that she's been so brutalized and, uh, kind of has gone so far, like she's shot herself out like a star, you know, and then, it's kind of like, "well, everybody should be doing what I'm doing". (Interview 2)

Ana recognizes the socio-historic context that has prompted her mentor's approach, but wishes that this colleague would take into account the changing dynamics of the academy, and allow Ana to distinguish herself in her own way.

Ana is actively working, in part through our conversations as part of this study, to begin to define what success in scholarship might look like for her. It is especially difficult because Ana feels like there are certain topics and pressing issues in society that deserve her attention as someone in the privileged space of academia. This is shaping how she believes she should approach both her own work, and the work of mentoring junior colleagues.

> I mean, we need to keep pushing ourselves, we need to keep developing, but um, you know, intellectual growth I think means, also, really confronting the difficult questions about what are we here to do. As human beings. In this world. In this

> society, you know? And, um, we have the luxury as academics to think about these questions. And if we just keep blindly trudging forward, you know, just to publish, to publish so that I can have more than you, like, I don't want to advise my younger female colleagues, that's not how I want to mentor, you know? (Interview 2)

Ana's recognition of the privilege afforded academics means that she takes great responsibility for using her position to be an agent of change. These values guide her work, and also affects how she appraises and interacts with other scholars at the college.

In particular, Ana sees her role as one of keeping board of trustee and senior administration power in check through advocating for change.

> We have the means to, ah, provoke our Board of Trustees into behaving differently and making different kinds of decisions. And even constituting themselves differently. We have the power to do that, but we don't see ourselves as empowered in that way. We have people who are too, um, under confident about being political, or, you know, or too, um, acquiescent, to power hierarchies, and. . . or just don't want to be bothered, you know? I mean, they can't get, to be honest, it's like we have nothing to lose. We have tenure. I mean, I don't care if the Board of Trustees hates my guts. In fact, I would take that as a compliment, you know? (Ana, Interview 2)

Because the board of trustees do hold the power of the purse strings, many faculty are hesitant to push back or resist against initiatives or directions with which they do not agree. She thinks faculty who try to curry favor with the board are sell-outs, and would never want to be viewed as someone who does their bidding.

For Ana, standing up to the board or senior administrators is part of her duty to protect and empower her fellow faculty in order to then be able to exercise the privilege available to them as academics.

> It's not helping us realize that we do have a great deal of privilege as academics. We really do. Like, on the one hand, we get so stuck in this victim discourse, because yes, we do get brutalized by the system, many times. But on the other hand, we don't somehow, uh, we're not, as women, or, people who have identities that are more marginalized, whether that be transgender or you know, um, non-heterosexual, non-heteronormative. Right? Um, we need to feel confident enough to take that step back, and you know, uh, say that um, and to feel that call, you know what I mean, to um, to be more accountable. You know, not just on the receiving end, and I think that that recognition, that awareness, that consciousness, only, it can't happen if you're in constant survival mode. (Interview 2)

She acknowledges how the academy can be difficult for scholars from marginalized and minoritized identities, reducing their capacity to advocate and agitate for change on campus and turn their attention to creating change in the broader world through their scholarship, activism, and engagement with issues on a larger scale. Creating better conditions for faculty helps to alleviate those struggles, freeing faculty who are people of color, women, trans people, to leverage their academic privilege to activate and promote broader change.

Ana was on a sabbatical semester during our second interview. For someone so involved and committed to changing the college, this was a difficult time to be actively

separating herself from the college activities. With changes in leadership underway, Ana had to mindfully withdraw from the politics of campus governance so that she could focus her energies on her research and writing.

> And I was feeling kind of, like, should I give my two cents? But no, I need to respect my sabbatical. This is my time. This is not my time to be. . . I need to trust the colleagues that I think are good, and who will carry that. You know, because this is really the time for me to focus on other things, and I have to, you know, I can't feel guilty. Or, like, I'm not, I'm like, "No, this is, I have to use the sabbatical for me." (Interview 2)

Being on sabbatical, but in town and living in faculty housing, Ana has had to actively disengage from the campus, and place her trust in other colleagues who she hopes will be her voice.

Ana, while removed from the campus due to her sabbatical, has strong feelings about how the college places people in positions of leadership.

> This is the huge, huge problem we have right now in academia, is that we have these careerist administrators who want to just go from school to school. Kind of the CEO phenomenon, and it's terrible for the institution. There are people who have no clue what the culture is, what, what the people need, want, feel, and they've gone to some, like, provost workshop or president workshop, and got some, like, really cool idea, that they're like, "Okay. This is gonna be my signature." And they don't really tell people at the very beginning, but then they just slap it on you 2, 3 years later, and you're like, "Huh? You want to do what?"

> And everybody's like, "Why? Why would we do this?" I mean, it doesn't make any sense. (Interview 2)

Ana feels that this approach to campus leadership is really harmful, not just because it does not do the work of building consensus that is necessary for progress, but also because it foments an adversarial relationship between the faculty and the administration. If an administrator worked closely with the faculty to vet and develop an idea, she thinks it could be tailored to the institution's culture and have more buy-in from the faculty. Her experience, though, makes her lack faith in the outcomes of current leadership searches. She wishes the college would do more to develop leaders from among the faculty ranks, who are invested in the success and maintaining what is good about the college.

Thoughts on Ana's Fit

Ana views herself as an activist faculty member, who is deeply invested in making change both at the college and in the world more broadly. Despite having worked at a liberal arts college for so long, our conversation almost entirely revolved around the life of faculty at the college, and she expressed only tentative investment in the students at Serena. She expressed far more concern about how the teaching and teaching evaluation processes at Serena are perhaps coddling students rather than accommodating them.

In general, Ana is strongly committed to the idea that, post-tenure, her role as a faculty member is to keep administrative and trustee power in check by engaging in democratic practices and utilizing the power available to her to promote change that improves the lot of the faculty.

> Well, it's an argument that's been used, in terms of, um, organizing workers around issues, which is, why wouldn't you advocate for good conditions for

> everyone. It's not like you can take yourself out of that equation. And it's just about the student…How can we really, truly understand what's best for the students if we can't think of ourselves as dignified enough to deserve the best of circumstances, right? The best of working conditions. We need to create those for ourselves in order to really know what's, what might be best for our students. I mean, if we're cutting, selling ourselves short, and, um, overworking ourselves, alienating ourselves from what we do, um, then we are just reproducing that in our message to students, and, and the kinds of structures that we create for them. (Ana, Interview 2)

Ana sees herself as allied with a wing of the faculty who are trying to make the institution a more just and fair workplace for the faculty. As she elaborates above, by advocating for those conditions for faculty she believes she is also influencing what students learn — in terms of what are just ways to treat workers, how to advocate for yourself against an institution, and how to work collectively to foment change. Her approach is very different from many of her peers', or at least those peers who participated in this study. This particular view on the responsibilities of other faculty and the administration to actively model better conditions, with the classroom serving as a potential utopia, is key to her critical pedagogy.

Her fit is a function of both how she much she can effect those changes, as well as the latitude that is given her as a faculty member to critique, push back on, and challenge the administration and trustees. By having an agenda of change, with no expressed concern about consequences for advacningthat agenda, Ana's story affirms that Serena is a place that allows this kind of activist faculty profile. As she says, "to be honest, it's like we

have nothing to lose. We have tenure. I mean, I don't care if the Board of Trustees hates my guts. In fact, I would take that as a compliment, you know?" (Interview 2). Even if only forty-nine other faculty feel the way she does about the college, the fact that she can identify and be in solidarity with those other faculty provides a sense of fit that she is able to express her emotions and passion about the college and its practices. Serena has provided a space for her to express her values.

Nora: Kind of Amazing

Speaking in a clipped efficient tone, Nora's straightforward recounting of her experiences at Serena reveal a person who confidently chose a life in the academy, and who is finding her stride as a social science teacher and scholar in her post-tenure period. Nora, a petite White woman with short brown hair, just had her first baby when we met. She and her husband are trying to find ways to bring a little more balance into their daily lives; it's easier to not work on the weekends when there is a baby requiring attention. I am greeted at her office by her dog, who sweetly sits on his bed as we talk. Students stop by at different points in the first interview, hoping to say hello to him.

Our second interview, and my class observation of Nora, took place the day following the 2016 Election Day. Serena's student body and faculty are generally known for their progressive politics. The mood on campus and in the classroom was somber. Many people had stayed up late into the night following the election returns; students were hugging each other all over campus to comfort themselves and each other. Faculty and administrators worked long hours to help students make sense of the election results. The election is baked into my second interview with Nora — it frames our conversation throughout the interview even as we both enjoyed digging into her past as a break from the constant dialogue and analysis of the election results.

Nora attended a liberal arts college for her undergraduate education. Similar in history and location as Serena, Nora understood the environment she would be stepping into as a faculty member.

> I am a product of a liberal arts college and value the close interaction between professors and students and the encouragement to explore the curriculum that

> these institutions provide. In particular, I think that by encouraging students to purse breadth in their studies, liberal arts colleges cultivate and reward intellectual curiosity more than other schools. (Personal Statement for Tenure)

The value she places on the liberal arts experience, and particularly the highly involved student culture of Serena, has structured her career because it has allowed her to understand students' needs and expectations of teaching and mentoring.

Nora's experience at a liberal arts college, as well as her work experience in career areas outside of academia, have helped her to frame the role she plays as a faculty member at the college.

> Um, I think setting boundaries are really important, I think not opening up space for students to tell you about their lives is really important. Yeah, because I don't, I really like the students, but I don't need to know about their personal lives, I don't think that's, for me, that's, that's not helpful. Um, that, that's not my job. Um, I think I'm supposed to be an intellectual mentor, but not more than that. Um, I'm not trained to be a counselor, so I don't think I should be in any type of counseling role with them. (Interview 1)

Nora has clear vision about the kind of faculty member she wants to be, while also having confidence that the boundaries she wanted to put in place would not compromise her meeting the ideal of a liberal arts college faculty member. Focusing clearly on the intellectual development of the students allowed Nora to both have the kinds of relationships she wanted with students, and keep herself squarely in her comfort zone.

Nora's experience, overall, has been marked by being incredibly satisfied and supported in her development as a faculty member. While there are have certainly been

difficult moments, overall she has been very happy with her experiences at Serena. As she says,

> Um, you know, whenever I do get to step back, and think about it, it's like, yeah, it's pretty good job. A really good job. Yeah, and intellectually, you know, this sort of idealized model of what academia is where you can, like, "Oh, I'm kind of interested in this topic. Oh okay, maybe I'll teach a class about it, maybe I'll write a paper about it." I found that to be the case, so that's really nice. (Interview 1)

Overwhelmingly, Nora's narrative shows that Serena has been good a place for her. Nora's straightforward approach to life, and disciplinary training, made it almost impossible for her to name a metaphor to describe her faculty life. She struggled to answer, finally just saying, "I'm rarely upset about this job. Like, rarely. It's kind of amazing" (Interview 2).

Getting to Serena

Nora's journey to Serena began while she was working in private industry immediately after undergrad. She realized that she wanted to be in a more academic setting. She changed jobs to find a more amenable environment, and began to interact with doctorates in her field. This gave her insights into how doctoral study could shape her career and prompted her to pursue a doctorate herself. Upon starting graduate study, she immediately found herself butting up against the dominant narrative in her field, that teaching did not matter.

> I taught a fair amount in graduate school and realized quickly that I liked and wanted to continue doing it. My graduate school was a large research university that did not value teaching, encouraging us to spend as little time on it as possible.

> Instead I spent a lot of time on it and sought an environment where these efforts were viewed as worthwhile. I also wanted to be in an environment where growth as a teacher was encouraged. Small classes and supportive colleagues have helped me find new ways to challenge students and generally improve my classes. (Personal Statement for Tenure)

Nora quickly realized that she truly enjoyed teaching during her graduate school period, and sought out opportunities to challenge herself and teach a variety of courses. While Nora specifically mentions her graduate program not valuing teaching in her personal statement for tenure, in our second interview, Nora elaborated on how little teaching is valued in her social science field generally.

Attending graduate school near a major city, she found that she had an opportunity to explore post-PhD career alternatives. She considered working in a more applied setting in her field of study and was able to learn about the work of those settings and weigh the best options for herself. She was initially interested in both policy and academia positions. She had learned through her inquiries that to start a career in policy immediately after completing her doctorate might create additional barriers to working in academia. :

> A lot of people said, if you are going to do academia, you need to do it right after the PhD because it's easy to go from academia out, but it's really hard to go from out into academia, because you are not doing research. And so, if you are not doing research, right, the currency, the currency of academia isn't there. And so it's really hard to convince somebody to, to hire you. (Interview 1)

When she interviewed with Serena and liked what she heard, saw, and experienced, it was not a difficult choice to accept that offer.

> I interviewed at liberal arts colleges, of those Serena just immediately stood out. That is what I was looking for…. I knew after the 30 minutes that Serena, for a number of reasons, was like exactly what I wanted…. I don't know, it just kind of, something about it, just, just felt right. It's kind of a quirky place. It's a quirkier place than my liberal arts college. The one that I went to. And I think that fits me better as a faculty member. Um, it's a little bit less hardcore, let's say. (Interview 1)

The choice to take a job with Serena was obvious to her. In addition to the appeal of her potential colleagues and overall atmosphere of the college, Nora knew the location would work for her, allowing her to be close to family and her partner (now husband). In addition, she liked what she had learned about Serena from alumni she had met over the years.

Given Nora's investment in teaching, the way the faculty in her department spoke about the students at Serena was additionally appealing. She wrote, "I was taken with the number of people who mentioned how much fun Serena students were to teach, and I now echo this sentiment" (Personal Statement for Tenure). Nora was drawn to being engaged by the students she taught, and was looking for a different environment from the one in which she had been teaching as a graduate student, or even the intense experience she had in college herself. Serena was able to offer the balance between these experiences.

Pre-Tenure Life at Serena

For Nora, coming to Serena was a breath of fresh air where her interest in teaching was valued and rewarded. The difference in priorities between Serena and her graduate school program allowed her to feel confident and motivated by the work she was doing.

> I think, so what was defining is that I really liked teaching the students and I think coming straight out of grad school where people thought that teaching was a total waste of time, it was so nice to be in a place where I could openly talk about teaching and ask questions about teaching and think about good or bad pedagogy. Like, that, that was great. (Interview 2)

The ability to engage deeply in her most valued activity — teaching — was exciting for Nora. She was able to find community in her pursuit of good teaching, and develop herself with support from colleagues.

In addition to her focus on teaching aligning with the institution's priorities, Nora was excited about the freedom offered by her department. The senior faculty expressed confidence in her ability to design and teach courses with minimal oversight.

> One thing I really like about the department, um, is that I think similar to the college, they're very open to however you want to teach. So my first couple of years I was like really, nobody needs to see a syllabus, or like the books I'm using or, you know, I could do whatever I want? They're like, "Do whatever you want. And if there are problems, then we'll have a talk about like, students are upset. But that's basically all we are going to talk about, like, students are upset, let's talk about why." Not, "Why aren't you using this book? Why aren't you doing this thing in the classroom? Why aren't you…? I'm the best teacher ever, why aren't you doing what I'm doing?" Nobody does that. (Interview 1)

Faculty at Serena, and in Nora's department in particular, are given latitude to approach their teaching with their own pedagogical choices and priorities, and for Nora that freedom and confidence in her abilities empowered her. In addition, because the student body is deeply engaged in their learning experiences, Nora explained that they will definitely complain if the teaching is not up to standard. This confluence of both teacher and student investment in the learning experience allowed her to thrive as an instructor, and to develop her own approaches independent of other faculty.

Despite her happiness with the freedom afforded her in teaching, her early years in the classroom were not without some troubles. In a recent essay for a women's commission for her disciplinary association, Nora elaborated on some of the challenges she faced early in her career as a woman faculty member in the liberal arts. In the essay, she elaborates on her strategies for dealing with these challenges.

> Although [Serena] has been my only job post graduate school, it has not been my only job, as I worked. …for several years before getting the Ph.D. I therefore was used to aggressive, male dominated environments by the time I arrived here. Despite this, I faced some of the pushback from students that is typical for new faculty. This included: students trying to use me as their personal tutor; requests for meetings outside of office hours; attempts to hijack class time; disrespectful language in emails ("yo [Nora], I'm free during the following weekend times to get help on my problem set"); brazen admittances of not doing the work for class; disputes over course content; and arguments over grades. These encounters largely took place during my first year, and left me feeling disrespected and

> angry. I seethed at the thought that my senior, male colleagues might not face the same problems and became mildly hostile towards the students as a result. (Essay)

Nora's experiences here included feeling undermined in the classroom, disrespected in communications, and doubted as an expert. In many ways, Nora's approach to dealing with these gendered dynamics was to formally reject the expectations that students often have of women faculty. She summarized this approach in our first interview by saying, "It's like, I'm not here to talk about stuff, I'm here to answer your questions, I want you to learn, I'm here to help you learn, and then I have a lot of other things I need to be doing" (Interview 1). By shutting down the expectation that she might be more empathetic than a man to reasons for late work, by building more formal assessments of learning into the classroom, and by creating particular incentive structures into her pedagogy, she feels she was able to side-step some of the gender traps that often reside in the classroom for women.

Finding times to reconnect with her scholarly and disciplinary community was also important for Nora finding her legs as a professor. Serena, like many liberal arts colleges, can demand a lot of face time between faculty and their students. These demands can feel totalizing, and it can be difficult for faculty to remember that they are more than teachers and mentors. Nora describes having this experience during her first year.

> I mean, another side of that was probably spending too much time with the students and sometimes feeling a little bit overwhelmed. And then, facing the challenges that you get as a new professor, that I think the students push the boundaries, they try with new people, they push. Um, and so I also remember feeling, like, a relief when I went to a conference kind of towards the end of the

> first semester to be like, "Right, my entire life is not Serena." "Right, I am also part of this bigger profession." Um, so kind of those two things. Like, this is great, the students are great, and then it sort of took over, and then to be like, "Okay." (Interview 2)

By connecting with her colleagues at a conference and engaging in the disciplinary conversations of her field, Nora was able to take a break from the demands of faculty life at Serena. This allowed her to recalibrate her expectations of herself and her understanding of her role.

In addition to needing to calibrate the amount of time she was spending with students, Nora also struggled in with managing some of the collegial expectations of her department. With its semi-rural location and intense culture, Serena faculty often find their social relationships being formed on campus. In addition, departments will often foster a sense of community through creating weekend and evening opportunities to bond and socialize off-campus. Nora found those opportunities rewarding and valuable in her early years, when she was establishing her relationships and her partner lived in another location. However, as her pre-tenure period advanced, her feelings about these opportunities, and the expectations attached, changed.

> There just, there was a particular point in time when the department, of a lot of the senior people were very into everybody being involved. [By] everybody I mean, like, significant others being involved in stuff. And my husband…is like, you know, “Why do they need to meet me? I don't understand." So he wasn’t really into going to all the stuff and that made me feel stressed out, and it took awhile, I think in kind of the wanting to please everybody, you know, to step back and be

> like, that I shouldn't be stressed out about him not wanting to come to stuff at my job. Like, and him not wanting to do a part of the Serena community of like, why, this should not be a point of contention, you know. You know, every once in awhile you can say, "Okay, maybe there is this work dinner, it would do me a favor. Could you please come?" (Interview 1)

Here, Nora is describing the challenges of navigating a collegial culture that is built on time spent together outside of the office. In the pre-tenure period, choosing to opt out of these activities, particularly on behalf of her husband, presented some challenges. Not wanting to be read as non-collegial, Nora had to find a balance between her husband's willingness to spend time at department events and her own need to be engaged. While she enjoyed friendships with colleagues across the college and spent time with other faculty outside of work, she viewed these departmental social events as unproductive work demands on her evenings and weekends.

Nora was able to manage some of these challenges, and push back on the expectation that she attend so many out of office events, once she received her fourth year review letter. Her department advised her that her scholarly production was not on track for tenure. At this point, she had no peer-reviewed journal articles published.

> And like, like the Chair at the time was very upfront with me about this, and I still to this day thank him for that. Like a letter that was clear in that way and a conversation with him that was clear in that way, kind of, "Look, what you need to do is publish more. Like it is very clear what you need to do, and that is publish more." I was like, "Okay, message received." So I just like cranked up, I was like

> frenzied, and I think I must have looked frenzied because the students really started thanking me for coming to office hours. (Interview 1)

Once this new demand was clear, she felt more confident in turning down social opportunities with the department. This also allowed her to be more strategic in how she spent time with students. She became more restrictive in meeting with students outside her office hours. In addition, she clearly communicated to students the research responsibilities on her plate, which allowed them to understand her reduced availability. Despite some concerns that this restriction in availability would affect her evaluations of teaching, she found her scores did not change at all despite a reduction in her availability.

Nora also found Kerry Ann Rockquemore's workshop helped her to better prioritize her research. As she said, "clearly I wasn't using, like, my research time well. Because I was feeling like I'm doing research all the time, but I wasn't publishing anything" (Interview 1). She elaborated on the way this experience changed her approach in her personal statement for tenure.

> I believe this (my research productivity) is possible because of fundamental changes made to my work style. Many of these followed recommendations made by Kerry Ann Rockquemore in her one day workshop on campus in May 2011. These include working on research for at least one half hour every day, making weekly goals, making semester long-goals, and joining an accountability group to help meet these goals. The last factor has been quite helpful, and I have met with the same group of two other professors on a weekly or biweekly basis for the past two and a half years. (Personal Statement for Tenure)

By changing her strategy, Nora was able to ramp up her research productivity. These strategies continue to work for her, including the accountability group. As she says, “We still meet, so this is like our fifth year. So this is amazing, we meet every week” (Interview 1). By developing a toolkit of approaches to managing her work, Nora was able to get on track for tenure.

Nora also chose to think strategically about her teaching as she approached her tenure review. While she had great teaching evaluation scores , she wanted to be sure that her portfolio showed she had challenged herself.

> So, like, and so they could come at me with, like, "Well, you've been teaching the same classes and you haven't taught a 300 level class." So, I asked some senior faculty, "Do you think I should do this before tenure?" And many of them said yes, so I was like, "Yeah, okay." And I already had the feeling like, "You know, I think I need to do this." So, I managed to do that two times, which was great, it was kind of back to back semesters, so I had, like, one semester to kind of work out some kinks. So, I was like, "Okay, if this is a train wreck I could at least say, like, this was terrible, but look at how it got better!” It wasn't a train wreck. It worked out really well. Um, so then I kind of knew that my teaching portfolio was, like, set with that. (Interview 2)

Challenging herself by teaching new advanced-level courses on specialized topics, and giving herself room to improve if her first efforts were not as strong as she hoped, Nora was able to show her ability to take on a new challenge, and that her teaching strategies were adaptable at multiple levels of courses. This was important for building her confidence going into the tenure review process.

Feeling confident that she had done what she could related to teaching and that she had met the goals set by her department chair for success in scholarship, Nora felt relatively confident going into the tenure decision.

> It was like, okay, if this is not set, like, I don't know what else I could've done. Um, and then with research I basically hit the numbers that I had been given and I think that was probably conditional on teaching being the strong thing. That it's like, "Okay, this is, like, teaching is what you're going to get distinction in if it's anything, so the research needs to be high quality and this is about what we're looking for," and I hit that. (Interview 2)

Having worked hard to meet the goals as outlined by her department, Nora went into the review process feeling like she had done what she could to attain tenure. In particular, Nora felt good about turning around her research portfolio without any damage to her teaching excellence. She established a new pattern of work, and was better able to manage the expectations of students and her colleagues as a result of new strategies gained through interaction with Kerry Ann Rockquemore and others who were subscribing to her tenets. In the end, she was tenured without any major concerns or stress.

Post-Tenure Life at Serena

The push from her department to focus on her scholarship pre-tenure created a real change in how Nora approached her work. Having initially been attracted to the teaching elements of faculty life, once she committed to the process of completing and getting her research published, she found a new passion.

> And then the thing is, once I started doing that, I really liked it. Like stuff started getting published and I felt like something kicked in, that I was like, “Oh, I know how to do this now." And so now post tenure, like I’m still working on a lot of projects, I really like these things. I have a sabbatical in the spring that I chose to do in the spring, not now, I choose to come back to teach after having the baby, because, like, I want a real research sabbatical. Because I’m not going to get one for another three years. I have stuff I’m working on that I’m psyched about, and I want time to develop those things, then, this is very, I mean, this kind of surprised me, I thought I’d be really into teaching and not that into research and now I was like, “Oh, I actually really like, really like this." Um, yeah. (Interview 1)

Here Nora describes strategically saving her sabbatical for when she’d be more productive, rather than in the semester immediately after having a baby. She mentions her surprise at her investment in research, which is indicative of an evolving sense of what matters in her faculty career. In part, her mastery in turning research into publications has provided her confidence to approach new projects.

Her passion for research has been enhanced by joining in a highly productive, positive collaboration with women colleagues in her field who also work at liberal arts colleges. Their research interests and skills complemented each other well, working with others led her to find the research process more rewarding and fulfilling.

> And that sort of evolved, so that's been great. That's been really, really just a fantastic collaboration. It- it feels like all of us contribute equally to the project. And there are three of us, but it still feels that way. And there are always times when, like, one of us is really busy so somebody else manages to do, like, this

> great work on it, and it's like, "Oh, awesome." When, like, the other two of us are busy and somebody else is like, "Oh, I had time, so I just, like, pushed forward." (Interview 2)

For Nora, a productive research collaboration has enhanced her experience post-tenure, and allowed her to move forward with her research agenda. With her collaborators being at similar institutions they are all able to empathize and understand the demands of their roles, sharing responsibilities and moving the project forward as their schedules allow.

As Norah looks ahead on her research career, she hopes to push herself to achieve a higher level of prestige in her publication venues. While her record has been strong enough for Serena, she would like to master the process, language, and technical skills required for her research to be accepted by the top journals in her field.

> I would like to publish more highly. This is one of my post-tenure goals, and I think because I have more time to spend on papers, so I don't need the numbers. So, ideally, that means I can spend more time on stuff and publish more highly. Um, that might help with the impostor syndrome to be like, "Okay, I've figured this out, enough. I do not want to do this all the time.", but, you know…. It's like, "Ah, if I could get into some of these journals I would feel like, okay, I know how to do this, but I might not want to do this all the time." (laughs) I don't, I'm not equipped to be a super researcher who, you know, I don't need to make my name in the field, but that, yes, that may or may not happen. And if it doesn't then I think I'll have to, you know, come to terms with my research in a different way, um, but I haven't given up on it yet. (Interview 2)

Nora seems ambivalent about this goal. She would like to meet it, as that would satisfy the doubts that still exist for her about her abilities as a researcher. Yet, her primary goal is not become a highly prolific, high-profile scholar in her field. These conflicting desires will continue to work themselves out as she advances in her career.

As Nora sought to place more emphasis on research and maintain her teaching, she also had to manage new demands on her time. Shortly after being tenured, Nora was scheduled for her rotational turn as chair. She was able to work with her colleagues to delay her turn as chair for three more years. She had concerns an early commitment as chair would would delay her prospects for full, and slow down the progress she was making in her scholarship.

> So, I will probably be the next department chair. And that's in two years. There was a push to make me the department chair now, um, which I was very against because it would torpedo my research. And it doesn't seem like a good idea to take newly tenured professors and torpedo their research. It's bad for them. It's bad for the department. It's bad for us hiring people because then it looks like the only people doing any research are people trying to get tenure, and then you get tenure and you're stuck, [not] doing anything. (Interview 2)

She also pointed out that “one part of what explains the wage disparity between the gender wage gap in academia is that women are slower to go out to full. They take long. And it's like, I don't want to do that” (Interview 2). Nora’s department was open to to her putting off becoming department chair until she made progress toward full professor. This allowed Nora the freedom she was seeking to focus on her research.

Nora has also been able to focus on her research and teaching by being extremely selective in her other campus commitments. She admits she does the minimum service she can. For her, the time costs of service are too high for her other goals.

> I cannot do the level of research that I would like to be doing and continue to maintain high quality classes and do a lot for the college, so I have to pick, and I pick research. Of the non-teaching thing, I feel like teaching is the thing that stays…. the rest of your time goes to research or service. And I would prefer it to go to research until I am forced to do otherwise, pretty much…I don't go to faculty meetings regularly. I should go more often. I always find a better use of that time, um, yeah, I just…there's never enough time to do enough. (Interview 2)

This focus on being engaged in the academic life of the college, but not the administrative life, feels normal to her. Nora goes on to explain that she has never been much of a joiner, even in her undergraduate experience. For her to focus on teaching and research is enough, and she feels confident in how these commitments are serving her right now.

As she reflects on how she is approaching her work, and what that might mean for her promotion to full, Nora recognizes that she might need to give more service to the college than she currently does.

> I think I need more service. Um, probably something high profile. Being chair might be enough, I don't know. That's something I need to figure out it, it's, you know, I don't think I could do chair in conjunction with a really time consuming, um, committee, um, and I need more publications. And I think teaching, you

> know, it's like maintaining the teaching level. That's not coming at, you know, the expense of suddenly I just stop caring. (Interview 2)

For Nora, learning to manage all three requirements, teaching, research, and service, in her bid for full professor will require another recalibration of her priorities and how she spends her time over the next few years. As she continues to grow in confidence in her research agenda and execution, she may feel better adding more service to meet the college's expectations for promotion.

Thoughts on Nora's Fit

Nora has found a very good fit at Serena. In her mind, the mix of teaching and research allows her to be fulfilled, challenged, and to continually grow.

> I think that this is a very good fit, and when people from like grad school ask, like, "how are you doing?" I was like, my common, my response is, "It's a great fit." I don't want to go anywhere else. Except for personal reasons, but professionally I don't want to go anywhere else. …I think that the balance between teaching and research fits me well because I really like teaching, I don't want to do it all of the time, I'm glad that not all of my job is thinking about the students. …I find research to be really intellectually stimulating, and now at the point where I really kind of push myself more than with teaching. Um, yeah, and where I see for me in the medium-term, the greatest area for intellectual growth. But I also like that I don't have to just crank out publications, um, and become kind of a leader in a field because I think I'm not, I'm not ambitious in that way. (Interview 1)

As she describes being ready to push herself more than with teaching, it indicates a growth mindset that is embedded in her approach to her faculty career. As she takes on more and greater challenges, part of her fit is being in departmental and college cultures supportive of that growth. She is in a secure environment where she can take risks. While she had some early struggles with the social elements of small college faculty life, she has found the confidence to focus on her highest priorities in terms of time and attention. With her focus directed towards the activities most valued by the college, she was able to meet expectations regarding her scholarship and maintain high quality teaching. By having the freedom to choose for herself, eventually she may find a balance between all three legs of the faculty stool—teaching, research, and service—or she may continue to focus on the things that make her feel happiest, challenged, and fulfilled.

Phoebe: Life in the Matrix

I knew Phoebe prior to her agreeing to participate in my dissertation study. We had interacted on a fairly regular basis through professional channels; I was actually a little surprised that she agreed to participate, since we had never enjoyed a particularly close relationship. Due to my planned travel schedules to Serena, and her sabbatical from campus, we only spoke over the phone. Phoebe also elected to only participate in the interviews. She did not share any materials beyond her CV, and I did not have the opportunity to observe her. Despite these restrictions, Phoebe has one of the more public profiles of the participants and I was able to access writing she has done about her academic career for popular online media sites and observe her in an online video of an invited lecture.

It quickly became clear to me through our interactions that our previous professionalized relationship had not allowed me to really know Phoebe. I had assumed that she, a soft-spoken Black woman faculty member who was vocal about racial dynamics on campus, might be critical or unlikely to connect with me as a White woman student affairs professional. My perception of her and our relationship injected a shyness on my part to engage with her in the past. Peppering our conversations with wry and witty observations about faculty life, she exhibited a distance from the vagaries of faculty life at Serena that I found intriguing. This distance is a cultivated stance; Phoebe explains to me that she has had to bring herself to this place:

> I identify as an academic, but I, but I have to work to not identify with the institution at which I'm employed. And that disassociation, understanding myself as an academic and as a worker who happens to be a teacher who happens to

> teach at this particular institution, has brought me the most joy. Like, being able to delineate those things has brought me the most joy. Working with friends outside of the institution who are also interested in the same kind of research things I'm interested in, um, just growing my network beyond my institution, has been the thing that I've done, um, that I think allows me to be the most me. (Interview 1)

Phoebe expresses these lessons learned about how best to protect herself in the spaces of a college that has often not treated her well, and emphasizes a dynamic that often runs counter to many lived experiences at a liberal arts college--this isn't home, this is a workplace. Unmarried and without children, Phoebe's academic career at Serena has been a process of investing and divesting from an intense involvement with life at the college, including stints as faculty-in-residence, as a senior administrator, and as a rank-and-file faculty member.

Phoebe's experiences as a senior administrator early in her post-tenure career significantly shaped her approach to work and life at the college. Having come into close contact with the formal power structures of Serena, Phoebe describes her experiences using an analogy to the character Neo in the movie The Matrix. At the end of the film, Neo has achieved an enlightened state where he is able to see the computer programming that structures the false reality of the Matrix. As Phoebe describes,

> I feel like I'm at a space where I see the ones and the zeros of this institution. Um and once you see the ones and the zeros (laughs) you can't un-see them. And and part of that means you know you have a different relationship to how you interact with everyone and everything, once you can see the framework…You know, like

> that scene from *The Matrix* when Neo can see it, is that there. . . it moves so quickly. But he understands what he's seeing. He understands that this is a structure, and this is an order and you know you can either be in it, or you can be outside of it. But at some point, you're, you're relational to it. And so to me, understanding this larger structure that I'm a part of means then I pick and choose. Like, when am I going to go in? You know, right now it's good for me to be in the, you know, to be outside of [it]. (Interview 2)

This awareness of what is happening in front of her, regardless of her ability to understand it all, informed our conversations about her experiences at the college. My conversations with Phoebe managed to strike a balance between the personal for her (and at times for me) and her application of the critical race, gender, and sexuality lenses she uses in her humanities discipline. These dual tracks to our conversation allowed for insights into college life that were both deeply personal and theoretical.

In addition to her theoretical lens, Phoebe's experience as a first generation college student from a small, predominantly White town in the Rust Belt was formative to many of the decisions she has made in her career. It shaped what she knew and the forms of capital she had access to when first out of her doctorate, as well as her feelings of responsibility towards both making change and creating success for herself. In an essay, she highlights the relative physical safety of her chosen workplace, contrasting it with the physically dangerous workplaces of the grandparents who helped to raise her. She relays a story her grandfather shared with her about a young White coworker who ignored her Black grandfather's advice about safety, and got burned. In reflecting on her own experiences in the academy, she draws a connection, stating that she thinks scholars of

color are getting "figuratively burned" by the university because of their poor treatment, unreasonable expectations, and need to reassert their academic citizenship. No one warned Phoebe of the ways she might be burned.

This ongoing view of life at the college as structured by power significantly shaped Phoebe's narrative and her approach to work at the college. Having consistently felt like an outsider to her educational environments prior to her work at Serena, she is both not surprised by her experiences and invested in making change. Over time, her strategies for attempting change and protecting herself from unnecessary fall-out have evolved as she better understands the matrix of her environment.

Getting to Serena

Phoebe, the child and grandchild of working class people, who grew up in the rural northeast, is a first generation college student, graduate student, and faculty member. Her path into the academy was paved by particular opportunities that had been facilitated access for people of color into the academy. The first such opportunity was a scholarship at her undergraduate institution focused on increasing access for Black students. The second was the McNair Scholars program, which is funded by the federal government through the TRIO portfolio and designed to support low income, first generation and/or students' of color entrance into graduate study. Phoebe learned of the McNair program through a flyer on her campus. Her experience with McNair prompted her to consider academia. She had been considering a middle management job at a big box store's corporate offices, as this kind of position was considered by her family extremely stable and contained the promise of economic mobility. Yet, she chose the very different experience of pursuing academia. This program provided the support for a re-visioning of

herself as someone who could engage the life of the mind as a professional, and teach others about how their lives were structured by systems of oppression and privilege. Through economic and socialization supports from the McNair program, she was able to attend a top-tier graduate program in her field.

She applied for many tenure-track positions, and interviewed through her annual meeting. Phoebe did not receive much mentoring to help her execute a job search during her final years at her doctoral institution. When she got the offer from Serena, she canceled the other on-campus interviews she had scheduled. She considered it the best position she could hope to get. She regrets "shutting down" those other opportunities because they did not put her in a position to negotiate salary or other perquisites. She says, "that's the sort of thing I didn't know coming out of graduate school."

Phoebe chose Serena in part because of its location, wanting to be in the northeast. Serena's location near a large northeastern city much closer to her family and her significant other, made for an attractive post. Phoebe also was concerned about taking on a position at a research university where she would be responsible for graduate students. She says, “at that point in my career, I was relatively, really young actually, and I don't know that I was particularly ready to have graduate students and usher them through their own careers” (Interview 1). Rather than being drawn to the liberal arts college experience, she felt she was avoiding a kind of work (mentoring graduate students) she did not feel ready to do. The relative prestige of the college was also appealing; when choosing to step away from the known currency of a research university, a brand name small liberal arts college, such as Serena, softened the perception that this was a step-down or a compromise.

While she may not have been actively pursuing the experience of faculty life at a liberal arts college, she was attracted to the promise of an engaged student body.

> I'd been teaching [courses] at a state university, and the students, you know, there were times when I was the only person in the room who had done the reading. So, it was kind of the promise that the students were going to do the reading, you know. So I think like, they sold the academic aspect to me. (Interview 1)

Having taught courses to support herself through graduate school at a large public research university, the small class sizes and expectations for academic engagement and achievement among the students was highly attractive.

In addition to the location, prestige, and promise of the student body, the stability and relative size of the financial package offered were attractive. Because of Phoebe's financial and class background, financial stability emerged in our conversations in more concrete ways than other participants' narratives. As a way to extricate herself from the financial pressures resulting from paying for her education, the benefits and salary were major draws. This focus on stability and financial security shaped many of Phoebe’s career choices.

Now Phoebe feels that she really did not know what she was getting herself into, saying "I didn't even really understand what it would mean to come to an undergraduate only institution." Her graduate program and institution did little to help prepare graduates to understand the differences between institutional types, and her own lack of experience with the kind of education offered at a liberal arts college led to a tenuous start. Despite these challenges, she feels she followed what would now be her own best advice of taking a job she could live with in terms of location and scope of responsibilities.

Pre-Tenure Life at Serena

In her early years at Serena, Phoebe struggled to adjust to the expectations that students and colleagues had for her teaching. Attributing challenges to her lack of familiarity with the kind of instruction offered at a liberal arts college, Phoebe had to conform to a new set of teaching and campus ideals:

> I think I did not, I was not equipped to teach within the liberal arts context, which is high-touch, um, and high-engagement teaching inside and outside of the classroom, which, also, means to me, kind of affirming in ways that I had not experienced in my own educational career…. Um, so, early in my career, probably my second semester teaching here, I had, students, usually White women, on. . . I think three occasions, come to my office hours crying that I didn't like them. Um, and literally said, "I don't. . . You don't like me. You don't seem friendly." To which I replied, "I'm your teacher. (laughs) I don't know why I would need to be friendly." (Interview 1)

Phoebe's experience is evidence of a particular racialized set of expectations from her White female students. Her experience may also be reflective of her own educational experiences in which she was rarely affirmed or made to feel liked. These students expected warmth and friendliness from Phoebe. Phoebe did not see this as her role as an instructor, and was befuddled by the expectation from students that she engage in affirming and care-taking behavior as a faculty member.

Despite these experiences, and low scores on her student evaluations of teaching, Phoebe remained, in her words, "resistant" to engaging in the kind of high-touch teaching expected by students at Serena. Eventually, Phoebe came to understand and appreciate

the pedagogical and intellectual approaches that were expected and that would ensure her teaching evaluations were strong enough for tenure. This shift was aided by her choice to serve in a faculty-in-residence role, where she lived in one of the campus dormitories. Prompted to live-in due to the financial benefits (free housing and a campus meal plan), this experience was transformative. She jokes her time in residence manifested a form of Stockholm Syndrome by enhancing her identification with her “captors.” Her increased identification with students allowed her to understand more about the complexity of theirs lives and made it easier for her to offer a more acceptable mixture of intellectual challenge and support.

Even once she developed a better sense of comfort with the teaching expectations at Serena, Phoebe shares that she never stepped into a space of extreme confidence related to her teaching. She explains, "when I first got this job I was always so nervous that I had to buy like a whole different wardrobe because I would sweat through my shirts. So I couldn't wear sleeved shirts. I had to wear like a sleeveless shirt with a dark sweater because I was so nervous." This nervousness has never truly abated for her. Especially, as she describes,

> Serena students can be more focused, my experience, in my experience. Which means, you have to be (laughs) more focused and you have to be…you have to be available in the classroom in ways that you might not've imagined, outside of the classroom in ways that you haven't been trained to be, um, as a graduate student, right? (Interview 2)

This demand to show up for students has shaped how she approaches her teaching. She tries to find a balance between the kinds of practices that students, rightfully in her mind,

expect, and what feels authentic to her. Finding this balance entailed continual hard work during this pre-tenure period that continues for her today.

Beyond her challenges with teaching, Phoebe also had to revise her understanding of success. Phoebe had entered Serena thinking that she would be encountering a meritocratic system. As she said in our second interview, “when I first came to teach here I was convinced that you know if you do a good job and you're a good, a team player, than things unfold as you hope.” She quickly began to have experiences, though, where she realized that her identity as a Black woman would foster different standards for her work. She writes of an experience in the early weeks of her faculty appointment when a senior Black female colleague told her she would likely not be supported for tenure by her White colleagues because she was a Black woman and would have “nothing to offer” them. Phoebe’s colleague was convinced that Phoebe’s contributions would be illegible or unrecognized within her department. Later that year, she saw two men in her department put up for tenure; neither had published a book, a standard expectation in her field. The man of color was denied tenure, the White man was given tenure. This was a signal that Phoebe took seriously, that she would be judged by a different standard because she was a woman of color.

Phoebe experienced racial aggressions in other forms that seemed to shape her belief that she had to do more. At a campus faculty meeting, a senior colleague referred to Phoebe and her diverse cohort as "bloat." This wave of hires had completed by a provost who was committed to bringing more people of color to Serena’s faculty. These experiences shaped her perception of her role at the college immensely. Interesting, Phoebe believes that she and peers who entered at the same time were the last cohort of

scholars of color to have it particularly rough. She felt the campus reached a tipping point of faculty of color on campus that helped reduce the public incidents, such as being called "bloat." These larger numbers of faculty of color created a community to provide support and mentorship.

Phoebe also had to contend with racialized hostilities and resistance within her department. In her second year, her department was reviewing the curriculum for majors, which highly centered the work and knowledges of European and White cultures. As a scholar who studied and taught courses focused on women, people of color, sexual minorities, and other groups whose voices are often marginalized in the academy, Phoebe pushed hard to encourage the faculty to rethink what it considered "core" knowledges in the field. As a result of this pushing, she found herself being erased from departmental dialogues.

> At the beginning of each department meeting, we would go over the minutes of the previous department meeting. And there was a person who was taking the minutes. Um, and this person's minutes consistently wrote me out. (laughs) So. . . every person who ever said anything of note was noted in the minutes by name. But things that I know I said, and that other people in the room knew I said, were attributed to "Someone said." ”Someone said this." "Someone said that." Until. . . Like, it happened a couple of minutes, you know, a couple of times. And I was like, "Wait a minute, I'm being written out of the minutes." (laughs) And I thought it was crazy. I thought it was really funny, because I was like, "wow, this is weird." And nobody's saying anything until, um, there was a woman in the department who was, um, who's no longer in the department. Um, she didn't get

> tenure. She was a White woman. And she's like, "You know, this person keeps writing Phoebe out. Like, these, I want to amend these minutes and attribute these to Phoebe." (Interview 1)

Phoebe experienced a literal erasure as she pushed back on the ways that knowledge was structured for students. And while some of her pushing stemmed from the marginalization of her own courses, she also felt they were doing students a disservice by not exposing them to the current swath of approaches currently in use in their field.

Phoebe feels that, in general, her department was not capable or invested in providing any sort of mentoring to her. She attributes this, for the most part, to a kind of trauma that was experienced by an earlier generation of scholars, mostly White women, who had been treated very harshly in their pre-tenure period. As a result of these experiences, the leaders of the department had enacted practices that did little to illuminate the tenure process for junior faculty. As a result, Phoebe was not mentored, and,

> what should've happened is that, you know, after my fourth year review, I should've been taken into the office to say you know, "Okay, so you have three years between now and when you go up. What you need to make sure is that when you go up, your book doesn't necessarily have to be at press, but what it does need is to have a publisher. You know, you need to be under contract." (Interview 2)

While Phoebe did her best to make sense of the progress she needed to make in scholarship towards getting tenure, she sees now how a simple conversation could have provided clarity and given her time to meet the expectations her colleagues had of her.

Phoebe's concerns going into tenure review were also grounded in what she felt was a set of unrealistic expectations that were not applied to her senior colleagues. These concerns were also tightly tied to the ways she felt her racial identity was understood by her campus colleagues and students.

> So, even though the majority of my colleagues were not held to the same standards of output, um, in terms of academic output, they expected certain things from us that they hadn't had to meet um, and again I don't know if it's particular or if this is just the trend in general in the academy. Um, so, I felt very early there was this, kind of, double-faced expectation that I'd be excellent in the classroom but that I also be a productive scholar. And I'm not sure in, the longer I've been here, I'm almost nearly positive, that those expectations were not the same of people who came before me. Um, and I, and I don't know how to disentangle them from the reality that there was this moment where there was a lot of uh, hiring of people of color. (Interview 1)

This sense that there was a different set of expectations dictating how Phoebe would be evaluated made her less confident going into her tenure review. Phoebe cannot disentangle the sense that this pressure to be both a highly skilled instructor and a highly productive scholar was related to her presence as a scholar of color on the campus.

When Phoebe describes how she tried to describe her work to her reviewers for tenure, she emphasized the nature of the material she teaches and how that work is challenging in a particular way to the student body at Serena.

> I teach very difficult material in that it's about race and gender, and class, and sexuality, that I'm always teaching at the intersection of those things in all of my

> classes. Um, and that it requires me to have a pedagogy that is at once in inclusive, um, but also um, ask my students to challenge whatever their notions of their own privilege, um, so the difficult . . . sort of narrating the difficulty of that…. Um, and to sort of spend 13, or 14, or 15 weeks really pushing people to think about, you know, predominantly White students, to think about their, their complicity and kind of systems and sys-, systemic uh, violences that have been happening and represented in art. You know, it's just intense. (Interview 2)

In considering the reaction of students early in her career, finding the right way to approach this material with the predominantly White student population on campus made for a particularly difficult challenge. With students used to high-touch, high-engagement pedagogies, Phoebe's introduction of a different type of pedagogy alongside material that may be personally challenging might have created a particular nexus of difficulty.

Phoebe was successfully tenured. Either by overproducing or correctly producing the kinds of scholarship that were expected, as well as showing improvement in her teaching over the pretenure period, she demonstrated her alignment with Serena's values. She described no major moments of tension in the actual review process. However, it is clear that she suffered greatly from the ongoing challenges of what she considers academic hazing. Phoebe wrote about how the experiences she encountered in her pre-tenure years both prompted her to take on certain roles post-tenure, and sowed the seeds for overworking herself by continually feeling the need to prove her worth and dedication to the institution.

Post-Tenure Life at Serena

By the end of her first academic year as an associate professor, Phoebe had stepped into two administrative roles simultaneously, one as associate provost with responsibility for hiring new faculty and the other as director of the campus teaching and learning center.

> I think what drove me to do it, was you know, this is, uh. . . it's an opportunity to kind of have a different relationship to the institution than I'd have simply as a faculty member. So, when I was approached to be the Associate Provost, I took the opportunity because you know, I'm just…. I was asked, and I'm a joiner. And I think I can…and, you know, like, I think I can do a good job, like, so there's a certain level of confidence, like if you put a task in front of me, I'm probably gonna do it. I'm gonna try and I'm trying…I'm gonna try to do it really well. Um, so when uh, offered, I accepted and I did a, I think, a good job. (Interview 2)

Phoebe was motivated to prevent others from having the kinds of harmful experiences she had experienced early in her career. Phoebe expresses both a compliance with saying "yes" when asked, and a belief that she could be successful in the role. In an essay about her decision to quit being a senior administrator at the college, Phoebe states that she felt this was opportunity to open professional doors for future mobility. She soon came to wonder if she was, perhaps, harming herself through this role. During this time, she also maintained a teaching load — not required for the positions—in order to ensure that her colleagues saw her excellent commitment and ability to perform these roles simultaneously.

In addition to working beyond the job description by teaching, Phoebe also found herself grinding against institutional norms as an administrator that were disheartening. In

her second administrative position, she served as the chief student affairs officer. Since student concerns were the purview of the role, she became a voice for students and others on campus who had experienced marginalization, discrimination, and recrimination. This experience, in particular, cemented her critique of the institution as upholding structures of power and privilege.

> So, I think that this place is racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, you know, heterono[rmative], you know, whatever phobia and ism you want to apply. It is that. Um…yeah. It is all of those things…And I don't have any idealized, I don't idealize my, my place of employment as some sort of space that should be, you know, this liberal, you know, that subscribes to, whatever, a liberal, inclusive discourse and practices, ‘cause I don't believe in those anyway. So, yeah, I don't get too up-in-arms. But when bad…when, when people do messed-up things, you have to call it out. (Interview 1)

She soon realized the limits of the power available to her in this role, despite her hopes of making deep change at the college. After two years and three senior administrator positions, she resigned and returned to the rank and file faculty.

Instead of slipping immediately back into the daily life of teaching on her campus, Phoebe took a sabbatical her first semester after leaving administration. This time period was a true renaissance for her.

> I took my leave that I had been saving up since pre-tenure. And I really used that time. It was the first time since I got my job. And, so, that would've been like 9 years that I went to see friends. Other friends, who are also colleagues at other institutions, and hung out with them, and…you know, really reclaimed that, the

> friendship. And it's produced. That's why I say, I'm not dissatisfied. If my life were about my research and talking to colleagues about, like, books and ideas, and going to conferences, like those are things that bring me pleasure. (Interview 1)

By re-engaging in the scholarly aspects of her life, Phoebe was able to reclaim what is most important to her about academia. Reconnecting with friends and colleagues, she developed a deepened commitment to her scholarship and her disciplinary community. This connection allowed her to detach from Serena, helping to create the psychic and emotional distance necessary to view Serena as a workplace rather than an all-encompassing home.

When we conducted the second interview, Phoebe was taking a full year grant-funded leave from Serena to dive deeply back into the literature of her field and focus on her second book project.

> For me, the book is more to stay kind of not central, but engaged with my field, my discipline outside of the institution. I say that because I think it is…it has been proven possible by, um, people who were granted full before me in my own department, and outside of the department, um, who didn't have second books or who got full off of, um, a first book. Um, so I feel compelled to live up to standards that (laughs) I think will, or are greater than the standards that some people have had to kind of live up to. Um, but mostly for me, that is kind of just to quiet my own sense of whatever validation you want to call it, institutional, but at least professional validation. So, it's important to me to, um, have a career that is resonating with people outside of the institution. (Interview 2)

Phoebe described this as an essential move for her future career prospects, especially in relation to her goal of attaining a promotion to full professor, and to remain vital in the field. Phoebe's approach to being a professional has been grounded in the advice of a doctoral faculty member who shared that being a professional means being ready to enter the job market at any time.

Phoebe's shift towards engaging her discipline extends beyond producing her own scholarship. As she looks ahead towards her future as a scholar, she is hoping to find opportunities to develop and mentor other scholars. She truly appreciates the impact she might have as a professor and instructor on her undergraduate students, but would also like to cultivate a legacy by mentoring and fostering younger scholars in the field.

> And also there will be you know colleagues, young colleagues who will say about me you know, "She didn't know me. I wrote to her cold and, you know, she gave me really good advice that helped me to like negotiate and navigate this profession," so. . . Or, "You know she wrote me the rec letter I needed to get a job" or, you know, that, "She was always available to talk to." Um, so I really like, would love professionally to be somebody that at the end of my career younger colleagues will say, you know, "She helped me in this profession." that, "She mentored me in really productive ways." (Interview 2)

This is an interesting evolution in Phoebe's career, since she had been so unsure of her ability to mentor other scholars when she first finished her doctorate. By being employed at a liberal arts college, these opportunities are not built into the formal work of her faculty role. She herself has only just begun to form these kinds of relationships with senior scholars in her field, despite being at mid-career.

Although there could be opportunities to mentor other faculty at Serena, she remains hesitant because of her own experiences with being, or not being, mentored during her early career. In particular, she thinks it might be far too easy to revisit the trauma of her own experiences on another scholar.

> I really think like there's a way that people, if you're mentoring internally you really do have to, um, work against your own paranoias and neuroses and, and anxieties to not make toxic somebody else's experience. And I think that's very difficult for a lot of people. My, my sense of this institution, um, is that a lot of people are just so damaged that they're incapable of not being toxic when they try to help you. Um, it doesn't end up being like true help. It ends up being. It can end up being just, like, you know, people wanting to pull you into their issues so they're not alone. (Interview 2)

Phoebe's skepticism of the mentoring that can happen at Serena means that she is reluctant to engage her colleagues as a mentor. It is much easier, in her view, to mentor those outside the institution, where she can focus on the scholarly and retain distance from their experiences.

Despite her investment in enhancing her scholarly profile outside the college, Phoebe remains committed to engaging in the kind of teaching that is valued at Serena. As mentioned earlier, she is still not easy or assured in her teaching,

> I just want to highlight I worry about my evaluations every semester for every class. Like, it is a source of stress and anxiety for me. And I also know when I do a terrible time, when I do a terrible job teaching, and when I do a really good job teaching. And, you know, I think the nitty-gritty part is like, what does it take for

> me to do what my students would consider a good job? And I think, like, that might be a lot different from what it might take for, you know, a male colleague or a White female colleague, or a colleague in science, or some colleague who's not doing, teaching stuff that causes cognitive dissonance, you know? (Interview 2)

Phoebe's comments point to an ongoing struggle that she feels evaluated on different terms than her colleagues because of the nature of what she teaches. This challenging material, paired with her more reserved manner, creates an environment where many students report having been afraid of her when they first had a class with her. In the end, though, Phoebe believes students place a greater value on authenticity in the classroom than anything else, and that she is able to engage authentically with them.

Phoebe's turns towards a more cosmopolitan approach to her career are not surprising given the challenges she's faced while at the institution. This shift towards a more discrete outward focus has also helped to create an emotional and physical removal from the current campus politics surrounding the upcoming changes in college leadership. Phoebe expresses a cynicism about what a change in leadership means,

> Um, in some ways, you know, the callous part of me doesn't care. Like, I just, I think it's all the same, the same, the same, the same, you know? The things that the [leadership] changes, but the, the institution in some ways, all of the players here on campus, are not going to change. And so to, to, and the trustees aren't really gonna change, so there are key constituents that aren't changing and one can try to blame, or hold hope in [leadership] as sort of shifting the institution. And that might happen at, at, initially. There can be a jar and a shift, but, like, we

> all will be settled back into our old grooves. So like the pessimist in me thinks, "Ugh, it'll…everything'll. . . this shift's gonna be status quo in the end." (Interview 2)

In addition to things being the same, she thinks it is likely that the institution will move away from some of the more inclusive admissions and financial aid practices put in place by the outgoing leadership. She points to rhetoric advanced by other senior leaders on campus regarding the difficult financial situation of the college, and sees that as a way the institution is signaling a coming shift in priorities.

Thoughts on Phoebe's Fit

In reviewing Phoebe's narrative — pulled together from both our conversations and the formal writing she has done about academia — one senses a deep tension. The tensions that exist within her, between a first generation college student who found her way to teach at a prestigious liberal arts college, an activist who's committed to creating avenues for change in academia, and a scholar who is highly invested in the life of the mind, have motivated her career choices.

Phoebe's first generation, low-income background has also prompted her academic interest in the ways that financial security and precarity shape faculty life. This interest extends beyond a self-motivated interest in securing her own future. Her satisfaction with her decision to live in the residence halls with students is motivated by the financial security it allowed her to achieve. In an essay, she argues that the induced financial precarity of most first generation Black scholars who come from low income families is a way in which Black faculty are kept in check by the institutions at which they work. The pressures to achieve financial stability may limit their ability to cosign student

movements for change. By tying the fate of Black faculty to that of Black students in her essay, Phoebe identifies financial security as one of the barriers for Black faculty to move beyond embodying structural diversity (by being the numbers) to actively engaging in change on campus.

Phoebe's experiences of hitting the wall with the change she could foster as an administrator early in her tenured career helped to inform her thinking. As she says,

> Placement is not power, so um, understanding, realizing the limits of placement, or the limits in this case of diversity and being the diversity, being evidence of diversity and thinking, you know, "This isn't the best use of my time and my, in my professional trajectory." (Interview 2)

To be a true change agent in the academy, from Phoebe's point of view, requires more security—security she now associates with being a full professor. In her mind, if she had continued to try to be a change agent as an associate professor, she could have gotten stuck as "middling" administrator, unable to move up the ladder and unable to return to the rank and file faculty.

Phoebe's attempts at drawing distance have been shaped by her efforts to de-identify with the institution while remaining financially dependent on the college. Citing Moten and Harney's (2016) *the undercommons: fugitive planning and black study*, she rejects the all-out radicalization called for in the text because, in reality, her dependence and others' on the university writ large precludes that stance.

> But I do think like you need to understand that there are limitations and there are ways of being. And I don't think I'm particularly smart about this or, you know, I'm not offering anything novel. But I think it's easier if I would, say when I first

> came to teach here I was convinced that, you know, if you do a good job and you're a good, a team player, then things unfold as you hope. But I think like too much has shown me that they don't, and that they're gonna unfold in a particular way because they've unfolded in that way (laughs) since the inception of the university. (Interview 2)

Despite seeing the limits of her potential movements, in her essays about academic life Phoebe still expresses a hope for change. She thinks trying to change the university is a worthwhile endeavor. Particularly reflecting on the opportunities that have been opened to her through affirmative action and other programs, Phoebe sees herself as a steward of other young, first generation Black women from rural America who need someone to keep these pathways open.

In efforts to navigate these tensions, Phoebe has come to identify that her life at Serena is good enough; it allows her to do what she wants to do in a location she likes. She also feels, post-tenure, that fit has become more about answering the question, "What is the life I want for myself?"

> "How does the institution that I work at fit into that vision, right? So, I think there are elements of this institution that I really don't. . . like, they're elements that I really don't like, right? There're certain people on this campus who have made, from my time starting, and will probably until they die, make my life hell. (laughs)…. Um, so, I think that being said, there're other qualities that feel like, "This fits my life. Being here right now fits me, because you know, I like my students, or, you know the access, regional fit. Like, it's. . . I like where I am, regionally." Um, you know there's a, probably, I could get a job some place I

> don't want to be, with colleagues who probably are more respectful of me, but then you know, I won't have the life outside of the institution that I want to have. (Interview 2)

This movement away from identifying so fully with what the institution might offer has allowed her to remain at the college for as long as she has. So, while her fit narrative is full of snippets that might indicate that she should leave, her own preservation strategies are helping her to survive until a new opportunity that offers her more comes along.

Phoebe's story of fit, then, is one of right-sized or right-timed compromises. No work place is ever perfect, but Phoebe has developed a much broader philosophy for her career. She is invested in the idealized academy and the values of her field, but she rejects the common ideal of the liberal arts college that insists on a more local emphasis and a more vested interest in the life of the institution. Phoebe's institutional ambivalence and cosmopolitan orientation is a coping mechanism and survival strategy, while she continues to pursue what matters most to her in terms of her personal life and scholarly endeavors.

Lisa: Life in the Ant Hive

I met Lisa in the office attached to her basement lab space on a sunny May day. A short White woman with graying brown hair, Lisa's nervous laughter punctuated her responses to my questions, and she seemed, more than other participants, concerned with giving me the correct answers to my questions. Her schnauzer was settled into his penned corner of her office, and eventually moved into her lap during our first interview.

Lisa is married, and has no children. A faculty member in the sciences, she is also engaged in the Serena community in a variety of other ways, including playing in a well-known campus band comprised of faculty, staff, and students.

> What ends up happening, I guess, is my life really does revolve around Serena quite a bit because like I said, my husband also works here…. and he's also in the band with me…. Like, I feel like I'm, I'm good friends with a lot of, a lot of, uh, my colleagues. Especially, like I said, there's this cohort that we came in kind of together…. I don't have, I mean I have a dog and a cat, um, I volunteer some with the park, um, in the area, um, but I don't, like I said, I don't have, I don't have kids. And I don't have family, neither myself nor my husband have family nearby, so yeah. So in a way, Serena is kind of our family. (Interview 1)

Having built a significant community among her peers at Serena, Lisa has found a way to connect with the campus and build a fully integrated life between her academic and social selves. This gets carried over to the point of considering Serena like her family.

On the other hand, Lisa does not feel compelled or interested in becoming a faculty member who lives on campus among the students. She tries to draw pretty strong boundaries in her relationships with students. Despite calling Serena something like a

family, she also resists the pressure to serve in a mothering capacity for students. As she says, “And I'm not a mom, I never will be a mom. I've chosen not to be a mom and I do feel like there's a lot of pressure in terms of being a mom to these students” (Interview 1). This means she engages in particular relationships with students inside and outside of the classroom.

> I'm never going to be, you know, I'm not going to be the person where I, I mean, I’ll be honest, I'm not the, the person that I think they’ll say, “Oh, the students adore her." In terms of like being invited to their weddings or like other things. Like I don't think I’m, and that's not the kind of, I don’t, I have a, I have a relationship with my students but I don't have a personal relationship with my students. (Interview 2)

Lisa draws these distinctions between the kinds of relationships she’ll have on campus — close ones with faculty and staff, less close with students — while simultaneously placing high importance on teaching, mentoring, and educating undergraduate students.

Her goal, in being a faculty member at a liberal arts college, is to help the students grow and develop. Lisa attended a liberal arts college herself, which is the driving source of these commitments. She says, “I want to model for them, like, you know, what it is to, to be a critical thinker and a scientist. But I also want to model like being a good citizen and caring about people and stuff” (Interview 1). This emphasis on contributing to their development, not just their academic achievement, threads through her approach to working with students. Whether advising pre-med students on their post-graduation plans or mentoring the students working in her lab, she focuses on helping them to identify the best plans for themselves.

Lisa does not feel compelled to necessarily get involved in contentious issues of governance or leadership on the campus, because others are more passionate about that work. For her, the most important contributions she can make to the college are in service of student learning, development, and growth. The metaphor she used to describe faculty life at Serena is an ant hive, which affirms that she holds many roles within the dynamic faculty life at Serena.

> All I can think of is like an ant hive or something. Um, in terms of thinking about like you know working within a larger context. …In terms of you know, so ants they have different you know, kind of different jobs that they do. Um and you know but it's all for like kind of the common thing that we do, and that's why I kind of feel like we all take on these kind of different [roles]. I mean we're doing similar things but we also like service-wise, thinking about like these, these different things…. And so, um and I feel like, I'm like juggling, you know, juggling things, but I don't feel overburdened by it, but I do feel like I'm like it kind of makes life exciting by kind juggling a lot of, a lot of these different individual jobs. (Interview 2)

Lisa has defined her role in the Serena ant hive through her desire to work with and mentor undergraduate students. She is comfortable being on the periphery of certain debates on campus, while also feeling strongly invested in how the college defines good academic citizenship. By acknowledging the diversity of ways in which faculty can commit to campus life, she feels it is important that Serena faculty be contributing to the college in significant ways, while also allowing for difference in those commitments.

Getting to Serena

Lisa attended a small private faith-based liberal arts college as an undergraduate. Lisa's investments in music and the environment, two values she expressed several times throughout our interviews, seem drawn from, or at least reinforced by, the values of her college. She took a year off after college to work for a non-profit doing AIDS-HIV community education.

> And so um, I did end up taking a, a year after I graduated from college to do a volunteer program. And during that program I did some, actually education, a little bit of education. …And I really enjoyed the education part of it, but, um, that, during that same time I was applying for grad schools. (Interview 1)

This experience educating kids about AIDS-HIV prevention helped to affirm that she was interested in teaching young people.

Knowing her interest in teaching early on allowed her to make strategic choices as she moved through her scientific training, especially as she applied to graduate programs. For example, as she chose her lab advisor, she was thoughtful about selecting someone who would develop her as a scientist, but also allow her the space to develop as a teacher and educator.

> I went to, uh, grad school and I, I chose to work with a mentor who would support me, you know, as a scientist, but also as a potential educator in the future. And so, um, because sometimes, you know, I know I had some other, I've had some other colleagues where they felt like they, they were really interested in education, um, and their, their mentors were, kind of, dissuaded them because it was taking away from their time doing research. And so I specifically chose both PhD as well as a post doc mentor who, who really would support me in doing both. And so um

> yeah, and so I did, I did a fair, I did more teaching than I needed to during my PhD. (Interview 1)

By having identified her values early and then selecting a series of mentors who would support her interest in teaching, Lisa was able to succeed in her graduate program without the conflicts many of her peers were experiencing. Having supportive mentors made it possible for her to gain additional teaching experiences as a graduate student, and her efforts to find a faculty job at a teaching-focused institution was easier.

In addition to focusing on teaching during both her graduate study and post-doctoral fellowship, Lisa also made a strategic change to her research agenda as a post-doc. She wanted to be sure that her research program would be viable at a small liberal arts college that might have fewer resources to support science research, and that allow for her primary research support team to be undergraduates. As Lisa describes, "I switched model systems in my post doc, to try to accommodate. Being able to ask the same type of questions, but for a cheaper and more tractable system, for working with undergrads and things like that" (Interview 2). This strategic switch was an important part of Lisa's thinking through the best way to approach faculty work at a liberal arts college. By making these choices prior to entering the job market, Lisa was able to signal tthat she was committed to the teaching and research approaches expected at a liberal arts college.

Lisa's job search focused exclusively on positions at liberal arts colleges, and she searched for two years.

> I got the job at Serena my second year, obviously. Um, and I was just really excited by Serena because it, it kind of seem to fit the bill of everything I was looking for. Um, in terms of, you know, lots of abilities of the faculty to work

> really closely mentoring students, um and having small class sizes and things like that. Um, and so, um, so that's how I came here. And so, so I, kind of, was on this track for, ever since I had really gotten into grad school. (Interview 1)

For Lisa, getting the job at Serena felt like the logical conclusion to the track she had placed herself on at the beginning of her graduate program.

Pre-Tenure Life at Serena

Lisa's cohort of faculty was among the last in a wave of strategic hiring to expand and diversify the faculty at the college. For Lisa, this cohort has been a tremendous source of support.

> There was a lot of camaraderie, in terms of, there were a lot of us who were hired that first year….So I came in, in 2008 and it was like the, one of the last years before the….I mean it really was the economic downturn, but you know we had been hired before that. And so then, I felt really lucky, because we had a really great cohort. I mean a lot of those, not everyone, but a lot of those folks are still here. Uh, which is great. And so that, that first year was really nice, because I had felt like we were all kind of in it together. Um, and people went to different departments and stuff, but that was really nice to have. (Interview 2)

The camaraderie embedded as part of this cohort helped to shape her approach to college life, as well as provided ongoing support as she navigated the pre-tenure period. This cohort was her sounding board for mastering teaching at Serena, developing her tenure materials, and just adjusting to faculty life.

One key source of support from her cohort mates was gaining help in how she approached teaching. While Lisa is highly invested in her classroom teaching, she feels it

does not come naturally for her — she works hard to be the kind of teacher expected at Serena. She is not naturally at ease with students, and felt that the kinds of experiences she had during graduate school did not adequately prepare her. Her graduate school teaching experiences involved handling a discussion section for a large lecture course or leading a small lab. She also had to adjust to having courses containing students with different levels of background knowledge, including freshman through seniors.

> I talked to a lot of my colleagues that first year. Like a lot of my colleagues in terms of, about class and design of classes and things like that, and so I feel like I've…I've kept a lot of those conversations in mind, and I've implemented a lot of things and um that my other colleagues have tried and found worked and stuff and so I'm always, I'm always willing to kind of tweak things and try new things to some degree. (Interview 2)

By being able to connect with her colleagues and explore different approaches to teaching, Lisa was not reliant on just her own instincts or on her senior colleagues to hone her teaching. This allowed her to build confidence as she tried new techniques, and developed a reflective and evolving pedagogical practices.

Although she was focused on constantly improving her teaching, Lisa also encountered an experience in which she and a male student engaged in a slightly hostile exchange.

> There's just one day in particular in the lab [section] where I just, it was a frustrating day because…I was forcing them to really think about what they were doing and why they were doing it and how they design something.... But this one kid was just very resistant and boy that was the worst. (laughter) And I've had,

> and honestly I've had a couple of, I've had a couple of experiences and they always, they always been with men. (Interview 1)

Lisa experienced a lot of pushback from this man student. Her frustration with herself and the student was in response to his attitude about learning — he was not open trying something new or pushing himself. Lisa struggles because she knows her frustration was visible to all of the students in the classroom, and that does not feel professional.

Lisa feels more confident in working with students in her research lab. For her, this is the kind of direct mentoring and teaching she finds most rewarding.

> I also really, really enjoy working with students one on one, or in small groups. And that's, that's in the lab setting that I think is the really, really enjoyable. And so I've had a lot of students work with me. Some just for a semester and some for most of their time at Serena. And um I've seen my students go on and, and do some really good things and are really happy with their time at Serena. And I think part of that has been their ability to work with, with, um, faculty in such a close way. Pre-tenure I couldn't be as flexible in terms of what kinds of projects students could do. Because I really had to be focused on getting, picking, choosing projects for my students that would come to fruition in the form of a paper. Um, or as preliminary data for a grant. (Interview 1)

Lisa expresses here her investment in teaching students in the lab, and also a mild regret that she could not be as open to students' interests or ideal projects in her pre-tenure period. By focusing student research interests into projects that would enhance her research productivity, Lisa was able to ensure that she got to spend time with students in the way she would like while also supporting her success for tenure.

Lisa had to navigate some uneven dynamics within her department. In particular, her department sent some mixed messages during her pre-tenure period. While she felt incredibly supported in her individual interactions with the senior faculty in her department, there were also times when communication to the junior faculty in her department created dissonance.

> And, and you know have tenured faculty say, "Well, you know, people who are un-tenured should always be looking for jobs. They should always be thinking that they're on the job market." (laughter) And to hear that, it felt, like, it didn't feel very supportive. And I, in the end I have felt supported. That's what's so weird about it, is on an individual level, like person to person, I felt, I felt very very supportive, supported…. But they way that it was said was just kind of like, “you're, you're dispensable. Right, we can always find someone else to replace you." (laughter) Which kind of stinks, you know. Uh and then once you get tenure, then you're just, you're, you're no longer dispensable. (Interview 1)

For Lisa, the senior, tenured faculty encouraging the junior faculty to be job searching and out on the market sent mixed signals. While intellectually it made sense to her that she needed to be prepared for a search, it undermined a sense of confidence that she was attempting build among with faculty in her department.

This messaging was especially challenging because Lisa knew she replaced an individual who did not receive tenure. Lisa felt that both she and her senior colleagues approached her pre-tenure career with a directness that perhaps had not existed before.

> You know, when I was hired, I was actually a replacement for someone who didn't get tenure. And so you know. . . And I had heard, you know, when it

> happened and things like that, and so I…you know, I knew that the department after that knew that they had to be very straightforward, with respect to, you know, when they write their letters, they have to be very clear about these are positive things, these are where, places where we think there could be some growth. And so in that sense, like, I felt like going into tenure, I have these other letters, every single year we get a letter going out for tenure that I felt like, "Okay, I'm on the right track with teaching." And I also felt with research on the right track. …. You know, I knew that I had built up a body of work and from talking to people about it, I felt fairly confident, but that said, I mean, I think there was still this level of stress, because I'm a worry wart. (Interview 2)

Her department, it seemed, learned from having someone not be successful in their application for tenure. She felt that things were communicated more clearly in terms of what she was doing well and what she could put effort into improving in her pre-tenure period.

Despite departmental letters about her progress, Lisa still did not feel she had absolute clarity in what was expected of her for the tenure process."I mean it's hard because you know I don't think I … it's, there's nothing laid out that is you need to do this, this and this" (Interview 2). These conflicting feelings — that she had been on the right track and that it was not clear what needs to be done — might be typical for a tenure track faculty member. To manage the stress this generated, Lisa turned to her faculty cohort for support.

> There was a large cohort of us who went on for tenure, so I think there were like 12 or 13 of us who went, 13 went on for tenure that same year. And we all got

> together a couple times and just, just socially in that year that, uh, before, that semester before we put up, put on our, turned in our stuff and we wanted to meet together to just individually be writing and working on our stuff. So that, that was good, but it also. . . if anyone was stressed out in there, it kind of added to the stress. (laughs) (Interview 2)

While this support network did not clarify anything in terms of the expectations, it helped to reassure her that she was not alone in that situation. For her, it was supportive to be around others working on compiling the materials and drafting the personal statement for tenure.

The personal statement for tenure, in particular, was stressful to Lisa because she felt a lot of pressure to explain herself and her research to the outside reviewers selected for her case.

> My biggest fear actually wasn't the department, wasn't the on campus, but was we get external letters…. If it went to the right external reviewers, it would, they would appreciate you know, my ability to kind of teach through the written page. And be able to explain, you know, these complex things and questions in, you know, understandable ways…. . I mean I think part of it too was thinking about, you know, teaching my colleagues as well as [the Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee] about what a publishable unit is depending on what, what part of [my discipline] you're in…. In the end, you know, I kind of just told this story of each of my, my publications…. I kind of explain how one thing led to another and I use that as kind of the, the narrative of that's, that's what I, excites me the most about

> science and about teaching science to students, is that you don't always know where you're going to head to. (Interview 2)

For Lisa, thinking about her research being evaluated by an external audience was stressful because she was concerned that well-regarded scholars in her field would not value her research program, and that local scholars on the Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee would not understand her disciplinary success. In the end, she felt best in telling the story of her research through the lens of what excited her about science and involving students in research.

Despite Lisa's concern regarding her external evaluation, she ended up receiving highly positive letters from her external reviewers. This positive feedback made her feel incredibly good about her research program. With these positive reviews, as well as her strong scores on her student evaluations of teaching, Lisa had a trouble-free tenure process. Although she was ultimately successful, she still had anxiety about her review.

Lisa felt that no matter what, she probably would have expressed worry and anxiety about the tenure process. Having just finished her first year as a tenured professor at the time of our first interview, Lisa describes herself as life-long worry-wart.

> Yeah, I mean I just kind of worry. I mean I remember my mom always called me a worry wart. Like I've always been like that, and so, you know, when I, so that has nothing to do with my, I feel like I would be that way no matter what my context would be. And so I recognize that about myself. I've been trying to, like I said, and, so let's, I've been trying to kind of establish practices that help me kind of work through that. (Interview 2)

Lisa's anxiety about tenure, then, may have been product of her own approach to life more broadly, rather than any indicators from her fellow faculty. In any case, she had done her best to make sense of the messages sent to her by her senior faculty through her annual review letters, and to explain her research quality in her personal statement for tenure.

Post-Tenure Life at Serena

Despite having been tenured at Serena, Lisa is just now feeling confident in terms of her teaching.

> So I feel like after teaching eight years, I'm finally getting a better sense for things…. I feel like this year finally teaching this class (laughter) I finally found the right, the right mix of things in ways to kind of, to draw students out. Um, and really feel like you know we're, we're learning these things together um and that they're learning a lot, uh, about how to think about, uh, science. (Interview 1)

Feeling like she has finally found her voice as an instructor, Lisa is more confident in her teaching. Mastering the kind of teaching expected at Serena has not felt easy to her, especially as she tackles more advanced level courses, tries her hand at new course preparations, or copes with the increasing class sizes in her popular department.

In addition to some anxieties around teaching, Lisa also expresses an ongoing sense of imposter syndrome in relation to her research. Much as she was anxious about the evaluation of her work by outside reviewers during her tenure review, she currently finds herself ambivalent or anxious during professional meetings for her discipline.

> …when I go to scientific conferences I am very hesitant to go up and talk to people I don't know and talk about their science. Because I am a little bit afraid.

> Part of it comes from, my research is not at a high level. Um, compared to, uh, if I went up to you know a PI at a big university and stuff…. I just don't always feel like when I go into another setting um that I would belong talking with them…. I get this like … I sit through some of the talks and I'm like, "Oh my god these are amazing. How did they accomplish all this?" …. But that's more of like, that's the reality of the path I chose. You know, and I still I, I don't regret, regret it at all but I recognize what I, what I'm missing out on a little bit. But I chose what I wanted to do and I feel like I'm, they're missing out on things that I get to do. (Interview 2)

Lisa has made intentional choices in her scholarship to create a program of research viable at a liberal arts college; this, by design, does not allow her to produce the kind of research that would be required at a research institution. She feels ongoing anxiety, though, about how her work might be perceived by others in her field. Even though she is happy with her choice to pursue working at a liberal arts college, it has been hard for her to let go entirely of the value system that prioritizes high level research activities. This emerges as a form of ongoing imposter syndrome, that is only mitigated as she slowly begins to develop relationships among her peers.

Although Lisa feels it is too early to be focused too much on promotion, she is starting to think about the kinds of activities she will need to complete in order to be promoted to full professor. She's seen a trend of colleagues being promoted as a result of their service to the college.

> …It's been really refreshing to see people who have been getting full professor who I think have been doing tremendous things for our institution and for

> students, but may not have been publishing a huge amount. Um, but I feel like that is something that should be incentivized. And that's where I feel like this [provost], you know, there's some things I disagree with what he's done maybe, but, but this is … I feel like we've been moving in a good direction. (Interview 2)

While she enjoys her scholarship, she does not see that as being her best path to full professor. The prioritization of service to the college is exciting to her, since this is more in line with the kind of deepening commitments to the college itself that she'd like to make in her academic career.

In light of this, she has begun to focus on doing more service to the college in meaningful ways. She is not due to take on the chair rotation for at least another 10 years, so she is preparing to expand her role in other college activities.

> So that's what I've been trying to focus on uh is, is seeking out like service that's like more, more student oriented, more education oriented, right? Because there are some service opportunities that would be more about like kind of thinking about faculty governance, and I just really don't. I mean those things impact me and I do value them, but I think there are other people who are stepping up for that. (Interview 2)

For Lisa, focusing on students feels the most fulfilling, and the way she can serve the college the best. Her current service activities include serving on the pre-med advisory committee, and other student life activities.

As her first step towards increasing activity in service of the college, she has taken on the associate directorship of the science summer research program at Serena. This is a two year service commitment, likely followed by two years serving as the director. While

she is excited to do this kind of work, she also says, “somewhat, now that I’ve gotten into that I’m like, ‘Oh no, what have I done?’ I’m so nervous…. So that, I’ve started, that’s probably going to be my focus plus the pre-med committee” (Interview 2). Part of this nervousness is that the current director has established traditions and norms with the program that involve a lot of social time with participating students. Lisa has not typically sought these kinds of interactions and knows she might be pushed out of her comfort zone.

> Will I end up having to devote to these things to have these more personal interactions with students through these programs? Um, and will it be to a level that I’m comfortable with socially? I’m kind of socially awkward in a way, too…. I’m trying to figure out in my head and I'm going to have to negotiate that with the director that I’m working with. (Interview 2)

Managing the anxiety she feels about these more personal interactions, as well as it being a more intense form of student interaction than she’d prefer, will be a site of negotiation as she moves through her assistant directorship of the program.

With the looming changes in leadership, Lisa is hoping there may be broader willingness to change at the college. She thinks the campus has made progress in bringing in a more diverse student body, but that the college has not yet done enough to create conditions for success for the current broader range of students.

> And like I said, it's not just in this department, I feel like it's [resistance to change] across the campus. People are like, "Well that's just not the culture of Serena." And I'm like, well, you know, I think we could, we could change the culture some. And that's why I'm, that's why I'm kind of hopeful with the new president.

> And new, in terms of thinking about like, because we have changed the, the demographics of this college. So we certainly need to also change the culture of the college, and how we think about education and what are best practices and things like that right. And so I, I, I, think we need to be willing to, to shift and move, um, as our campus has moved demographically as well. Yeah. (Lisa, Interview 1)

Lisa expresses a frustration with resistance to change at the college, particularly as the demographics of the student population, and the faculty, have become more diverse economically and racially. As with other faculty, she is hopeful that certain trends at the college will continue, including this movement towards more inclusiveness. Lisa is also hoping for a deeper commitment to sustainability and environmentalism at the college as part of the new leadership.

Thoughts on Lisa's Fit

Lisa embodies a local orientation to faculty life at Serena. For her, the most important issues facing the college and the campus are those of the culture of the college, what it values, and how it rewards those who align with those values.

> I'm more worried about the culture on campus. And I'm more worried about, just for the betterment of again, incentivizing people caring about the institution, and not having to focus purely on their own, own scholarship, scholarship productivity, but thinking of it as a whole, because I feel like those are the colleagues that I want. And I, and I want the college to reward those individuals. (Interview 2)

The values she prioritizes are those of collegiality and investment in the college itself. This explains her excitement about promotions to full professor that were warranted by service to the institution. And it allows her to do the kind of work she finds most meaningful — supporting students and working to make the college a better place for them.

This value alignment is also core to how she views fit. She feels she made a particular set of choices and commitments when she became a faculty member at a liberal arts college, and those commitments are what should determine whether a faculty member fits.

> For me, maybe it's because I made this decision, and I, I do feel like, to be a scientist at a small liberal arts colleges is going to be different than being a scientist at a large university. Maybe being in a college isn't so different, um, but you know, resource-wise and other stuff, and it's different. We practice it very differently. Um, and so, that's something, when I think about fit, at least when we're looking at potential colleagues, is people who really value, um, a, a broad curriculum, um, kind of value, you know, close interactions with students, you know, in their research lab, but also in their classrooms. Um, that really fundamentally care about teaching. You know, and um, because in different areas of academia you can really have, you know different focus, focus on the research, the scholarship versus the teaching. I think your teaching is first and foremost important. (Interview 1)

Lisa is invested in her colleagues contributing to the development of students on the campus. For her, this is why someone should choose to work at a liberal arts college, and

that commitment should be the key test of whether to hire or promote someone. Lisa also recognizes the danger of a loose definition of fit, or one based on how likable or "like-me" a potential colleague is. Instead, she thinks faculty at Serena should be deeply invested in the liberal arts, in interacting with students, and a deep commitment to teaching.

Lisa expresses a clear commitment to teaching and developing undergraduates, despite feelings of anxiety. She believes this commitment is what defines her fit, and should be the defining value of fit at Serena. Defining fit in terms of values, she is most likely to feel a sense of mis-fit if the core values of the college seem to move away from centering students' learning, improving teaching, and supporting students from diverse backgrounds. The upcoming change in leadership may prove challenging, especially as her faculty colleagues speculate on possible reprioritization of campus financial commitments.

Summary

The narratives of fit that emerged from the analysis of the seven women faculty participants in the study highlight the diversity of approaches to faculty life that can be viable in a given environment. As anticipated in the theoretical approach outlined in Chapter 3, what matters to the women in this study—their values, their priorities, their orientations to life—has significantly shaped the contours of their fit experiences. Despite the many variations evident in their approach, there were also commonalities that emerged across their fit narratives.

The participants each experienced periods of adjustment pre-tenure. This included adjusting to the teaching and research expectations of the college, how collegiality and faculty governance worked, and managing the many demands on their time. Some were also navigating parenthood in addition their campus responsibilities.

The tenure review process brought about its own set of anxieties. While many of the faculty received support from their chairs and guidance from their annual pre-tenure review letters, others were struggling to identify the standards expected by their departments. A few had to course correct after fourth year review letters indicated areas of significant concern by their senior colleagues.

The pressures on faculty to meet the benchmarks, often unstated and unclear, in pursuit of tenure are significant. All but one had been deeply socialized into the norms of academe through doctoral study, and all were invested in the outcome of the tenure decision. Their confidence that that they had done enough varied widely.

Having received tenure, the faculty all did enough to meet the college's expectations. Post tenure, some have stepped into leadership roles on campus. Others have chosen to

focus on passion projects such as service-learning or student research. They are all finding more freedom to choose for themselves how they spend their time, still with an eye towards review for full professor.

These narratives reveal that each found ways to fit. Yet, their fit was constructed from a constellation of choices, compromises, and constraints. The faculty found ways to push against the boundaries of Serena's expectations, while simultaneously ensuring their own success in tenure review. Their faculty fit took the forms of the focused planner and strategist (Karen), the invested teacher and newly developed scholar (Nora), the liberal arts devotee (Lisa), the passionate service-learning and community service focused teacher (Deborah), the artist who found solid ground to be a mother and mentor (Ruth), the activist who can safely agitate for change (Ana), and the cosmopolitan and conscious scholar (Phoebe). Each of these ways of positioning themselves to fit were successful at Serena.

CHAPTER 6:

INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS AT SERENA COLLEGE

This chapter explores the institutional dynamics that have a played a role in shaping faculty members' fit narratives. By engaging in cross-case analysis of the participants' interviews, personal statements for tenure, campus observations, documents produced by the College, and the student newspaper, I was able to identify several common issues, experiences, and norms that emerged as salient to the faculty. Analyzing these institutional dynamics is important because faculty fit does not occur in a vacuum. Instead, faculty members are embedded in organizational environments that cultivate "the correct way to perceive, think, and feel" (Schein, 1984, p. 3).

Four institutional dynamics emerged as the most salient and common for the seven faculty members. They are not all encompassing of the fit-shaping experiences of the faculty, but they do reveal the institutional environment in which these faculty operate. Many of these dynamics are endemic to Serena as a small private, highly selective liberal arts college. The following discussion will help to further contextualize the faculty fit narratives, and help to expose inequality regimes.

Four major categories of institutional dynamics are explored. First, the faculty's experiences with changes at Serena as a result of the Great Recession of 2008 are examined. These changes affected faculty hiring and composition, rose debates about the purpose of the college, and brought a nationally lauded need-blind admission and financial aid policy into question. Next, I discuss the dynamics related to the college's

shared governance practices, including faculty decision-making and the relationship between the board of trustees and faculty. Third, I address how faculty experienced the tenure and promotion process including the production of the tenure dossier. Finally, I examine various dynamics of community expectations and their effects on faculty efforts to fit.

Still in Crisis: The Effects of a Discourse of Financial Constraint

Despite its long history as a wealthy institution attended by wealthy students, Serena's discourse around finances changed substantially since the Great Recession of 2008. As Deborah describes, early in her tenure at the college pre-Recession, the President hosted receptions with china coffee cups and elaborate food spreads. Prior to the recession, there was a general sense the institution had deep pockets. Faculty could request and be granted the financial resources they needed for pet projects, additional staff support, and special programs.

The Great Recession of 2008 hit the college hard. The college endowment, like many of its peers', took a loss of 24 percent, and the college leadership sought a variety of strategies to curb spending, while retaining the more open access policies that had garnered the college positive media attention. The resulting changes to the college and its practices and narrative have continued to affect how faculty work. Participants experienced pre- and post-Recession Serena, and the demarcation between these eras was a common thread throughout their comments about the college. Now, as Deborah describes, "conversations around money have changed on campus, particularly, you know, with the financial crisis, and there's constantly talk about what the endowment can and cannot afford" (Deborah, Interview 1).

The college leadership articulated particular values to guide its response to the recession: faculty committed to teaching and scholarly excellence; student engagement with faculty in and outside the classroom; a diverse community of learners; a balanced curriculum; facilities and support for students and faculty to attain their goals; and an environment of respect and consideration. The college also planned to maintain robust levels of financial aid and faculty compensation. To enact cost reductions, the college froze salaries for its highest paid employees, engaged in a hiring freeze; laid off twenty-five staff and sixteen faculty full time equivalents; reduced operating budgets; decreased discretionary capital projects; and offered early retirement to over fifty employees (FAQ - Serena College and the Economy, 2010).

Changes in Faculty Hiring

The provost brought on large groups of new faculty throughout the 2000's, successfully increasing the faculty by seventeen percent, and doubling the number of faculty of color in six years. Once the financial crisis of 2008 began to impact the college's endowment, the college seriously halted its hiring. The faculty diversity that was enhanced through strategic hiring initiatives has not been sustained. Tenured and tenure-track faculty composition has shrunk since its 2008 configuration, including decreases in the number of faculty of color. Much smaller cohorts of new faculty enter each year.

> I feel like there was always a lot of younger colleagues starting every academic year, and that's really stopped. Now there's, like, two or three people every year I feel like. Maybe I, maybe it's just my awareness of it, but it definitely feels like

> every year there were thirteen, fourteen, fifteen new faculty members, and now there's, like, three, you know. (Deborah, Interview 1)

Deborah's accounting of the changing demographics reflects my assessments of the faculty composition based on hand counts of the faculty by department utilizing the college catalogue. The majority of faculty at the college are at the associate level, with most departments having only one, if any, assistant professors.

In addition to bringing in fewer tenure-track faculty each year, the college has also significantly reduced its reliance on contingent faculty. Many of the faculty participants in this study commented on the way the college used adjunct faculty in the past. One of the consistent hiring pathways at Serena prior to the recession was through visiting appointments. Three of the seven faculty participants in this study (Ana, Ruth, and Deborah) had been in visiting assistant faculty positions at Serena prior to their appointment as tenure-track faculty. Ana and Deborah were hired into their tenure track roles from their visiting appointments, and Ruth returned to the college after some time working in her artistic field. These visiting appointments were especially common in the humanities disciplines.

As part of its efforts to reduce expenditures in response to the recession, Serena ended the contracts of a large number of adjunct professors. This choice was highly contentious at the time — with students and faculty protesting the college's choice to let go of beloved instructors in several humanities departments. These changes to the faculty have significantly changed how the work of teaching and mentoring students works at the college. Deborah comments on how these changes affected her department.

> It was just this really, kind of, over the top display of money, and then it felt like it just swung the other way. And we lost so many of our faculty members in this department and we haven't gotten another tenure track line since, um, gosh, over eight years, even though we've lost, like, seven people from the department. And it's always this idea that, you know, the college doesn't have the money. Um, I also think it's coupled a little bit with that idea that maybe we [her department] don't need it. (Deborah, Interview 1)

For Deborah, the size of her social science department has significantly shrunk. With no new hires, and no adjunct faculty, the teaching load for faculty in her department has increased immensely, and the reluctance of the college to fund additional tenure-track lines has sent the message that her department is not a high priority.

Questions of Purpose

Despite marking almost ten years since the height of the recession, resources are still a source of tension and debate at the college. There are concerns regarding the sustainability of the need-blind admission policies, as well as how the college distributes resources among the various programs. Serena utilizes a centrally administered budget model in which funds are collected in the form of tuition and fees and then distributed across the institution to cover the operational costs of the various curricular and co-curricular units. This contributes to some of the tensions among the faculty, especially with the college citing constrained resources as a rationale for why certain programs or special projects are not continued or initiated.

In addition to restricting faculty hiring, the changed economic landscape has also created new demands on departments that have not adapted their curricula or course

management approaches. Lisa commented about the impact of the crisis on her science department:

> I hear from my other colleagues, they tell stories about, "Oh well you know, we used to be able to have these really small class sizes and you know and get to know the students really well." And I feel like a lot of our curriculum is shaped, is based on this kind of previous time when we didn't have as high of enrollments and now we're kind of struggling with our current curriculum of how we can manage this. And feel like we're still doing the types of things that we came here to do. Um, and that's not to say that, I mean, I still teach really small classes here, relatively speaking. (Lisa, Interview 1)

Lisa feels that the curriculum is structured for a time when the number of students interested in the major was much lower. The demands for active and deep learning in her science discipline are more challenging with these larger class sizes. Lisa's department, like Deborah's, has not been able to hire new faculty; they are also being hit by increasing demand from students for her science field.

The recession of 2007 not only affected budget decisions at the college, but also influenced which departments are seeing increases in enrollments. Students are increasingly choosing majors that they feel are more directly related to career paths post-graduation. As Lisa describes:

> Because I came right when the economy went south. And so, in addition, our institution, you know, that really impacted a lot of in terms of, I think, for what major students have been choosing….I think more and more students that are coming into college, they're really worried about what they're going to do

> afterward. And I think the easiest thing is to kind of latch onto the thing that they think is gonna get them a job in the future. (Lisa, Interview 1)

The humanities departments and other specialized programs are not attracting as many students, which is prompting some faculty to propose reconfiguring the distribution of resources at the college. Nora suggested that the sciences and her social science department, which have a lot of student interest, are effectively subsidizing less popular departments like classics. This sense of subsidy fuels some of the tension involved in the deployment of resources at the college, and also contributes to perceptions that some programs have more value than others.

According to Karen, faculty at the college are resistant to stopping programs or activities that are resource intensive, but not as popular among the students.

> To stop a program. Because there's this idea of like, we just need to keep adding and adding and adding and adding and adding. Well, we don't have infinite resources, so at some point, we have to make the decision to, um, stop doing something for the benefit of doing this other thing that we maybe value more. And that's a hard decision to make, but, you know, in the end, it's moving to a better place, but it's really hard to do that. (Karen, Interview 2)

She sees prioritizing activities as a way for the college to better define what is important. For Karen, who is highly invested in the need blind policies, seeing the college engage in activities that may put the program at risk is frustrating. Karen’s appointment in a science department, however, makes it easier for her to not feel threatened by talk of ending activities at the college, as demand for the sciences is growing at Serena.

Nora also mentions that lack of a clear vision for the college contributes to tension and lack of resolution about how resources are dedicated.

> I mean, one thing I do have to say is, with this infighting for resources. I think if the vision of the college were clearer about the type of institution we want to be, that might make some of this infighting a little bit better.…I think some of these clashes come over, you know, resources and a vision of what students should be learning, yeah. And, yeah, just sometimes feeling that there's animosity towards us that is not really rooted in an understanding of what we do. (Nora, Interview 2)

Nora attributes the fighting over resources to a lack of clear vision for the what liberal arts will look like at Serena. She senses an animosity towards her department and others, like the science, that are attracting students because the fields seem more conducive for career paths in the future. Nora is concerned that faculty, particularly those in the humanities, view her social science discipline as not part of the core liberal arts disciplines at the college.

Karen also mentioned a skepticism towards the sciences from colleagues, saying "there's a bunch of faculty who, um, would say that the sciences are taking over and diluting the liberal arts tradition of Serena College" (Karen, Interview 2). Some faculty, like those Karen mentioned, view the expansion of science and other programs as inappropriately capitulating to the careerist demands of students, and not actively privileging traditional liberal education. Others are concerned that the sciences have been invested in heavily at the college through new buildings and faculty hires, while the humanities disciplines have been shrinking and have lost the cadre of adjunct faculty who helped reduce the teaching burden on tenured and tenure-track faculty. These

conversations extend beyond the finances of the college to the purposes and goals of liberal arts education in the twenty-first century, and what Serena considers most valuable.

The Future of Need Blind Admissions

These questions about the vision, purpose, and financial structuring of the college have been heightened by significant pending changes in the administration. Knowing that the senior leadership of the college have a significant role liaising between the college faculty and the college's board of trustees, there are serious questions among the faculty about which agenda will be pushed in the future. Phoebe, in particular, was skeptical of the college retaining its financial commitment to need blind admission and financial aid policies. Serena currently spends over $60 million annually on the program.

> You know I was told that the [provost] has told all of the faculty that we're in a financial crisis. I don't know how we ended up in one when every other (laughs). . . when the stock market is so great and every other institution is just making money hand over fist, but apparently we're in one. I think this is just code to suggest that the [new leadership] won't have, won't be expected to keep up the need blind practice, which you know, again, it just means that the diversity that we've prided ourselves on as an institution for the past decade will disappear. (Phoebe, Interview 2)

Phoebe feels that institutional leaders are signaling that the need blind policies that have helped to diversify the student body at the college are not considered sacrosanct; instead, if new leaders have new priorities, those may be a site of financial investment instead.

Adding to Phoebe's suspicions, some faculty, who have been resistant to the need blind efforts, have been using the discourse of restraint to suggest stopping those efforts in the name of financial security. Deborah describes how she has seen the campus change for the better as a result of these efforts, while acknowledging that not everyone on campus values the program.

> The institution has certainly changed in a lot of ways, and I think one of the ways that it has been made better in a lot of ways is that, um, it's need-blind admissions. It's a more diverse campus than I remember from my first year here. And that has definitely made my classes richer, and it has also, you know, it's also a point of contention with my colleagues who feel like too much money is being spent on need-blind and that more money should be put into resources for their teaching or for buildings and stuff like that. (Deborah, Interview 1)

Deborah recognizes that some faculty feel the college has been spending too much money on the need blind policies. Most of the participants in this study expressed their commitment to these policies. Karen, Lisa, and Nora also expressed a deep investment in continuing the program and wanting to further the college's efforts beyond providing increased access to better supporting the students who come from a multitude of backgrounds.

Nora is hopeful that the level of positive press the college has received for the policy would be enough to convince the board to retain it.

> I mean, the school has gotten incredibly good press about this…because if the board is sold on maintaining need blind then, you know. I don't know how much of a fight it was for [the college] to keep that during the financial crisis. So,

> someone might not need…the sales pitch of why this important. (Nora, Interview 2)

From her perspective, the retention of need blind admissions policies during the financial crisis indicates that the board already recognizes the reputational value of the program. Its implementation had barely begun at the start of the recession, and it would not have been surprising for the college to place the program on hold or to withdraw its commitment altogether.

Phoebe is pessimistic about the investment of the board of trustees and future leaders of the college in maintaining the policy.

> I get news and the news that I'm getting is making me think and anticipate, and brace for, how the institution is finally gonna be. And, this is what some faculty have been wanting from the beginning. Um, stepping away from the diversity that was developed, developed under um [the recent] need blind, uh financial aid and need blind admissions policy, which means ultimately, the classrooms that we have are going to change, become less racially diverse, become less, probably financially diverse. So, I'm bracing for that. (Phoebe, Interview 2)

Growing up a poor Black woman, she perhaps personally identifies with the students who have been admitted to Serena through need-blind policies more than her fellow participants, and has witnessed the resistance from colleagues to programs that have broadened access with this lens.

Collective and Individual Agency in Service of Creating the Institution

As I talked with faculty about their roles at the college and their vision for the college's future now that they have tenure, a tension between the cultural norm of

investment, activity, and voice regarding change and a feeling of individual resignation or powerlessness to make the college what they want it to be emerged. Prior to beginning my interviews, I had viewed the faculty at Serena as very powerful in terms of decision making. The small campus and all-faculty meetings seemed vastly different than the role of the faculty senate at a large university that often seems *pro forma* rather than instrumental in guiding decision-making at the institution. I sought to understand how my participants understood the role of decision-making and change at Serena, particularly as it might relate to the sense of agency they had over the college's broader agenda For some faculty, our conversations around decision-making were general; others offered more specific observations through our discussion of a proposed change to the teaching load currently under review by the faculty. The faculty relationship to the board of trustees also emerged in these discussions.

Faculty Decision Making and Consensus Building

The college's governance statement indicates the faculty determine educational policy. The faculty must confer with the trustees on substantial changes, particularly ones that would change the business model of the college, but are generally given the authority to determine how the educational activities of the college are conducted. While this seems to indicate that faculty should be able to influence the structure of education at the college, particularly through the various committees in place, faculty, instead, seem unsure of the power allowed to them either through the committees or through avenues outside the committees. Deborah, who serves on the committee responsible for curricular decisions, expressed surprise that faculty outside the committee were able to, and had the right, to suggest a reduction in the faculty course load.

> No, I think you're right [about lack of clarity on who's allowed or empowered to make changes at the college], because people have asked about the 2-2-1 (proposed course load) because it didn't come from [the curriculum and program committee] which would be the natural nexus for that conversation. That group is held, is run by the [provost]. It didn't happen there. It happened with this other group of people who were just interested in this…. And at our [the committee's] last meeting somebody from that group was saying, "Yeah, you know anyone in the faculty can start a conversation and bring something up" and we'll all go, (laughs) you know, it's like, "Oh, we thought maybe it had to come from [the curriculum committee]. We didn't know." (Deborah, Interview 2)

Observing a select group of faculty work around and through the formal structures of the governance exposed to Deborah the limitations that faculty at Serena may be placing on themselves due to precedence, culture, and faithful adherence to the formal lines of power and influence at the college. Ana has felt thwarted in her efforts to advocate for gendered pay equity, due to her lack of close relationships with senior administrators.

Karen provides some insights into how she sees power functioning at the college at the department level. She also feels that faculty do not use the levers for change available to them.

> I think like many colleges and universities, we're organized primarily at the department level…. Is there power associated and autonomy associated with that? Yeah, kind of. It's interesting because right now, I personally feel like the power and autonomy that the faculty have, they don't acknowledge or use. And so. . . there's a lot of grumpiness, because the faculty feel put upon by the administration, when in reality, like, we have a lot of power to decide what we do

> with our time, to do what we want with our curriculum, with our major requirements. We just don't ever exercise it. (Karen, Interview 2)

She feels like perhaps her colleagues have a history of learned helplessness, where they commonly are not acknowledging or leveraging the sources of power available to them. As Karen describes it, many faculty feel the administration places burdens upon them, does not consult them, and that they, the faculty, must just grin and bear it. Instead, she believes that there is power available to the faculty; it is just not accessed or utilized.

For the faculty to use the power available to them, they must gain consensus about the direction of the college and the goals of a particular program. They must also demonstrate a willingness to advocate and substantiate the need for the change to the senior leadership and board of trustees. With differing views about the nature of liberal arts and the value of programs that prioritize diversity in the student body, finding consensus may sound easier than it is in reality. Ana, in describing efforts to make change on campus, said, “making a change is very, very hard. It takes so much time to get the consensus, and to organize people, and have the discussion, and really move something forward. And, it's like, is it even worth it?” (Ana, Interview 2)

Consensus building may be hampered by several factors. Lisa described resistance to implementing best or better practices from other institutions. Instead, there is a strong vein in the culture at Serena to mark its own way of doing things.

> I also find that there's a lot of, of struggle with that [change], at Serena…and maybe it's every college feels this way. They somehow feel like we're like somehow different and that we can't, we can look at what other schools are doing, but "no, no, not quite us, or that’s not the culture of Serena” and I'm always, I really push back, cause (laughter) cause I think we make our culture… I'm very

> much more of a practical person in terms of, “well, why should we reinvent the wheel if there are other schools that are like us who have found something that maybe is working? Let's try it." You know, I'm really interested in trying things. (Lisa, Interview 1)

Lisa believes that good ideas can come from anywhere, and that it is better to try something and know it does not work for the institution rather than just assume. She finds the resistance to change perplexing, especially since her goal is to provide the best education for students possible.

Karen describes faculty at large as resistant to change. In her mind, this is not just a feature of faculty at Serena, but faculty in general.

> Like, faculty in colleges and universities are inherently, like, not okay with change. That's why they like their jobs. It's the same job every year. They stay in the same office. There's that stability, and like, that not having to change jobs. Never having to change anything that they just like…And they don't want to change. But maybe, maybe I'm wrong. I don't mind change. I think change is good. I think change is healthy, I think you change, and then if you don't like it, you change back. Like, I'm not afraid of that. Not afraid of making a wrong decision and then going back. But there's a lot of fear. (Karen, Interview 2)

For Karen, change is a good thing that allows a person or institution to try something new. Change, according to her, does not have to be permanent. Since there is uncertainty and fear attached to the outcomes of change, she thinks faculty tend to resist trying new things or risking a failure on a large scale.

Ana presents an alternative view to the challenges of enacting change. She described an initiative that failed when introduced by a former provost. From her perspective, his administrative agenda did not grow organically out of the faculty, nor were faculty given

a chance to own the agenda. Ana, critical of "career administrators," is highly skeptical of leadership coming from outside of Serena.

> They push it, and they push it, and they push it. And with [the former provost], he did that. He pulled one of those, and it got taken down. Of course, it made us look like we're impossible to work with, and we're so this and that and the other…. It was just a bad idea, you know? And he. . . it came from outside. It wasn't organic to our institution. We should've been doing it from the ground up, you know? What is it that we need? You know, learn how to facilitate for, Christ's sakes, you know what I'm saying? (Ana, Interview 2)

For Ana, this attempt to institute a change was doomed to fail because both the idea was not right for Serena and the process did not properly engage the faculty. Ana's view of this change effort may represent the point of view Lisa is critiquing, that faculty are not willing to seriously consider ideas that are not homegrown.

Faculty at Serena have to learn how to engage in faculty decision making, and how to contribute to ideas that take hold among the faculty. Deborah describes her process of learning how dialogues occurred at the monthly faculty meetings. Although faculty members at Serena attain academic suffrage with appointment to a tenure line, she saw her pre-tenure period as a time of learning the organization and its dynamics, not actively engaging in governance herself.

> So the figuring out part was really like where am I, how are these conversations structured in faculty meetings? Who, who's got power, where's the play here? You know, like, trying to figure out people's roles in the college, kind of being like an anthropologist (laughs) [to] figure out what's going on here…. I would say I was mostly thinking about that in faculty meetings in terms of who, um, were

> folks who were repeatedly speaking during those meetings. And whose voices sort of got privileged. Who chose not to speak…. I'm not even sure I knew how I felt about things. I was trying to figure out what the things were. (laughs) But I feel like the folks that I started with and certainly myself weren't really participating in faculty meetings. We were kind of watching what was happening and that has changed. (Deborah, Interview 2)

Deborah describes her early career period as being a time when she and her cohort learned how to engage by observing the faculty dynamics at Serena. She saw patterns emerge in who contributed at meetings and whose voices seemed to be valued. She has noticed that now, her cohort contributes to the conversation. It appears that although suffrage technically exists as part of a tenure-line position, in practice, faculty tend to wait until they are promoted and tenured to engage fully in faculty conversations and governance. Faculty at Serena have to learn when and how to contribute to faculty governance.

Deborah goes on to describes the style of discussion in faculty meetings as "very much a performance, sometimes, rather than it is a sharing of information" and expresses hesitation over asking for clarification or more information since such requests are often met with exasperation (Deborah, Interview 2). Furthering Deborah's observations about particular voices carrying more weight in faculty meetings and a lack of true dialogue, Ana describes her frustration regarding some of those power dynamics at play in faculty meetings. In particular, she feels the faculty meetings do not go far enough to encourage democratic practices.

> Ideas at Serena sometimes take shape because one loud jackass at a meeting decides he's gonna get up and spit. You know, say his 2 cents, and then he's gonna do it 5 times in a meeting, and everybody's like, "Oh, well that's what the faculty think." I'm like, "What?" I mean, can't we run a meeting in some sort of democratic--transparent way where we're, like, we take a straw poll, and we find out what people think? You know, pointers. We have technology, let's fucking use it, you know what I mean? (Ana, Interview 2)

Ana is explicitly critiquing the dominance of certain voices at the college; implicitly, she is pointing towards the inherent privilege and ownership that many White men at the college have of the governance at the college. Despite Serena's history as a women's college, male faculty have outnumbered female faculty consistently throughout its history. In Ana's view, the faculty owe it to themselves to create more openness and involvement to ensure opinions are gathered and decisions made that are representative of all faculty.

Another complication in any drive for change at Serena is the degree to which faculty are invested in departmental control and power. Karen invited me to sit in on a meeting she was having with a colleague about the college's upcoming accreditation process. As we debriefed that meeting in our interview the next day, Karen highlighted how resistant departments are to changes driven from the administration or other entities. She described getting the departments to agree to some minimal reporting requirements to inform the accreditation process like "herding cats. With big claws" (Karen, Interview 2). The autonomy of faculty departments is greatly treasured at Serena, which adds an additional barrier to any changes that affect the college at large. Creating initiatives that can foment

real change while also being adaptable to the various implementation needs driven by discipline, resources, and amenability among the departments is a real challenge.

The Faculty and the Board of Trustees

Faculty decision making is only one aspect of governance at Serena. The Board of Trustees play a significant role in decision-making, and that power has been seen to grow in the wake of the Great Recession of 2008. This increased involvement has changed the dynamics between the faculty, the Board of Trustees, and senior leadership.

Any significant changes made to the educational program, like a course load reduction that would require additional hiring, have to be approved by the board of trustees. According to Deborah, there is a sense among some faculty that control of the college has shifted to the board of trustees.

> I mean, I think it's always been an active campus. Lately, it's been very divisive in terms of the trustees, and the role the trustees play in the college. Many people feel like the trustees are really running the college, not the faculty, and the faculty voice was definitely honored more than it is now. (Deborah, Interview 1)

Deborah's comment sheds more light on the skepticism and mistrust of the board expressed by Phoebe and Ana. Phoebe's comments regarding the need blind policy and the board's priorities show a lack of faith in their commitments to values other than financial gain.

Ana, who refers to the board as a "bunch of one percenters," elaborates on the current relationship between the faculty and the board. In reference to the kind of leader that would be needed to help advance the kinds of changes she'd like to see happen on campus, she explains the role the board plays in the college's decision making structure.

> And it's like, unless we get [new leadership who have] good politics, and who, is someone who is not afraid to stand up to this absolutely reactionary Board of Trustees that we have, because this is a, a company. It's a corporate structure. The Board of Trustees controls everything, at the end of the day. They have the final say on everything. And, the thing that they have the most control over is the pie. The financial, you know, where money goes, how much, all of this. And, the faculty have a terrible relationship with the Board of Trustees (laughing). And, the administrators kind of just sort of tiptoe around them. (Ana, Interview 2)

Ana points out that the board of trustees' role in directing the financial resources has created tensions between the faculty and the board. Ana is critical of the board's emphasis on financial decision making. Her tone was not neutral in describing it as a corporate structure. Instead, it is clear that Ana thinks an emphasis on the financial puts the boards at odds with the kinds of values she thinks should be held by the college, and are held by the faculty.

Connecting Deborah and Ana's observations, the role of the trustees likely has increased since the financial crisis took shape. During the era in which Serena did not feel pressured to monitor its expenditures so closely, the board may have been able to allow more latitude for new programs. Given the concurrence of the recession of 2008 and the shift to need blind admissions, the resource mix of the college has changed significantly. The board may, in fact, be more involved due to holding "ultimate responsibility" for Serena, "managing the property, business, and affairs of the college" (Serena College Governance).

Tenure and Promotion: Shaping and Narrating Fit

The mechanics of the tenure review process at Serena would be recognizable to most individuals familiar with a tenure process at another college or university. Review for tenure typically occurs during the sixth or seventh year of a faculty member's assistant professorship. Deborah walked me through her process, which is a helpful summary of the activities each faculty member engages in to prepare for review.

> So that one [tenure review] was at six and a half years. I created my dossier. I had to give a list of, I believe it was five to seven outside, names of outside reviewers that I had not published with. But it could be people that I knew and I just had to be clear that I had known this person. And then that list went to the [provost]. The only tenured member of my department was our chair at that time, and so he also created a list, and sent that to the [provost]. And then from those folks, the [provost] picked four people to be, four people to be outside reviewers…. And they reviewed my dossier, and sent a letter to the [provost]. And…that committee also received letters from the outside folk. Um, so, so that department committee…got the outside letters, wrote their own letter, uh, made the recommendation to the [provost], and then the [provost] held that information. There's another group on campus [the Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee] and they do faculty reviews as well. So, they did their own review. I don't know, you never hear from them, so I have no idea what happened with them. (Deborah, Interview 1)

Deborah outlines a process in which she prepared her dossier and identified potential outside reviewers. Her dossier was reviewed by external reviewers selected by the provost from lists she and her chair contributed. A departmental committee also reviewed

her dossier alongside the outside letters, producing their own recommendation to the provost. The college-wide Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee also reviewed her dossier, departmental letter, and outside letters. After these steps in the process (all described by Deborah), the college president did a final review. At Serena, the receipt of tenure is always accompanied by a promotion to associate professor.

Serena College is, by all accounts, focused on teaching. Teaching featured heavily and frequently in my discussion with participants. While their perspectives on their own teaching and its evolution over the course of their careers varied, each participant saw teaching as a crucial part of the role and expectations at Serena.

> There is another associate professor [who said,] whenever you talk to people, like, you always ask someone [what] you teach, you never ask them l what they are working on. And that's part of an institutional culture. (Nora, Interview 1)

As Nora mentions here, the primacy of teaching is so infused as part of the institutional culture that faculty conversations focus on the topics being covered in their courses, not the scholarly activities being engaged by the faculty. For the majority of participants in this study, they were perfectly happy with that focus.

Serena expects its faculty to be excellent teachers, engaged scholars, and active campus citizens. The faculty handbook states that,

> [Serena] seeks to recruit a faculty of the highest quality. It looks for certain measures of competence, including achievement and potential in the following areas: teaching, scholarly work or artistic activities, and service to the college. It seeks excellence in its faculty in both teaching and scholarship or creative activity. (Serena Faculty Handbook)

While service to the college is mentioned, teaching and scholarship receive additional emphasis in the handbook regarding promotion and tenure."To get tenure [at Serena],” as Ana described in our first interview, “there are three areas, and you have to have distinction in one of them, but it can't be service. It has to either be scholarship or teaching." Ana’s description of the weight placed on teaching and scholarship, with an expectation for distinction in one, accurately represents the handbook, and is informed by her recent term of service on the Faculty Promotion and Tenure Committee.

The handbook describes at length a variety of ways in which evidence of distinction will be evaluated. The handbook focuses primarily on the evaluation of scholarly work. There is little offered in the faculty handbook to define the necessary evidence for teaching quality or distinction:

> Required are distinction in teaching together with scholarly or artistic achievement of high quality as judged by peers both inside and outside the college, or distinction in scholarly or artistic achievement together with teaching of high quality. In the consideration of scholarly or artistic activity, the primary works to be examined are those published, produced or performed while at Serena or elsewhere in the 6 1⁄2 years prior to submission of materials for review. Other evidence, limited to the same time period, may include unpublished materials, works in progress, papers read at professional meetings, participation in seminars and symposia, and contributions to the creative and performing arts. (Serena College Faculty Handbook)

Scholarly activities are clearly defined in terms of the kinds of materials to be presented and cover a wide enough range to be inclusive of a variety of disciplinary practices. In

this same passage, “high quality teaching” or “distinction in teaching” are the only descriptors of this central faculty role at Serena. The guidance provided to departments on how to evaluate teaching include items ranging from engagement in the topic, contributing to intellectual vitality in the department, empathy for students, ability to engage students in the topic, and willingness to advise students. It also mentions that student evaluations of courses may be considered. Paired with the broad definition that frames this section of the handbook, there is no clarity as to how to evaluate whether a faculty member has maintained command of the subject, makes contributions to intellectual vitality, demonstrate empathy for students, and is able to incite intellectual curiosity.

To support their claims for high quality teaching and scholarship, faculty must provide to their departments and college wide faculty tenure and committee (FTPC) the following items: a current curriculum vita, a teaching portfolio, a personal statement describing their teaching, scholarly/artistic, and service contributions to the college, all scholarship and artistic work from the pre-tenure period, and a statement that contextualizes their scholarship or artistic endeavors for outside reviewers. While most of the items are natural evidence of the work they do — examples of assignments from courses taught, publications, or book contracts — the personal statement is a document over which faculty labor intensively. It is a kind of writing in which most faculty are well-versed, and it is a particular genre in which they must learn to write for the purposes of their reviews by the college.

The sections below elaborate on how faculty experienced the process of being evaluated for tenure, including how they felt prepared for the process by their

departments, how they mastered or attempted to complete the personal statement, and the kinds of stories they had to tell about themselves to the college. In particular, these sections expose how faculty learned to narrate themselves in order to provide and explain the evidence of their excellence in teaching and scholarship. The processes for faculty to learn this genre are explored. Then, the content of the narratives are examined to reveal how Serena College enacts its evaluation of their faculty for tenure.

Experience of the Tenure Process

Each faculty participant in this study was granted tenure, and as such was deemed to "fit" the institution at some level. But how they were guided through the process and their confidence entering the review period varied. Despite being a small college, variance exists across the departments in terms of how faculty are prepared for tenure. Each of my participants were from unique departments, so I am not able to offer any observations about how the experience might be different for two people within the same department.

The majority of departments offered the participants in this study support, guidance, or feedback along the way to help them meet the expectations for tenure. Other faculty experienced a lack of feedback, or received feedback that they were doing well by the standards of the department, when in reality, there were questions about their performance. Deborah, who is the only participant currently serving as department chair, describes how department chairs might approach guiding junior faculty through the process.

> Like you become chair of [a] department and literally get like an hour's training and you are responsible for getting folks through the tenure process. The only thing you can look at is your own experience, unless you've had a lot of

> experience being a chair and taking people through that. And so you can see where people have really bad experience[s] because their chair might just not be prepared to do that….I don't think people naturally want to engage in anything that's contentious with a faculty member if they don't have to. So I can see in other departments where untenured faculty member would feel weird about doing that [reaching out to discuss expectations with the chair] and then the chair would not even engage in that conversation. (Deborah, Interview 2)

Deborah highlights the minimal training and guidance for department chairs at Serena regarding junior faculty development and feedback. A review of the Serena Handbook for Department Chairs and Program Directors (2015-2016) offers no guidance on providing review or reappointment letters during the early career. Since it is often left up to junior faculty to initiate conversations with the chair or other senior faculty about how to appropriately meet tenure expectations, this might feel challenging to the point of impossible in departments with more contentious cultures. Providing appropriately developmental feedback through the review letter process is a skill that has to be developed.

Most participants were in departments that took their responsibility to let junior faculty know if they were not on track seriously. Lisa's department had learned its lesson regarding the importance of accurate pre-tenure review letters due to a recent tenure case that was not successful.

> When I was hired, I was actually a replacement for someone who didn't get tenure. And so…the department after that knew that they had to be very straightforward, with respect to, you know, when they write their letters, they

> have to be very clear about these are positive things, these are where, places where we think there could be some growth. (Lisa, Interview 2)

Lisa's department intentionally moved towards writing clearer letters, highlighting areas of excellence to sustain and areas for growth. Nora received a letter telling her to do more regarding her scholarship that was very clear about what she needed to do, and gave her a starting point for getting more specific guidance from her chair about how to be successful. As she describes, "the Chair at the time was very upfront with me about this, and I still to this day thank him for… a letter…and a conversation with him that was clear, 'look, what you need to do is publish more'" (Nora, Interview 1).

Deborah describes feeling confident that her chair served as her champion during her tenure review process. Her chair was able to provide her "specific numbers and stuff, and feedback from the second and fourth year reviews about…particular areas [she] needed to think a little bit clearer about" (Deborah, Interview 2). Her departmental review committee was comprised of faculty outside her department because there was not a sufficient number of tenured faculty within her department. She says, "I also think that my department chair probably held a lot of sway in terms of, kind of, orchestrating how that process went….But I think he was, I felt that he was very supportive of the process" (Deborah, Interview 1). Deborah felt her chair drove that group to recommend her for promotion. Because of the unique position she was in, having her chair's endorsement carried perhaps a heavier weight than it would in a department where there were multiple tenured departmental faculty members reviewing her case.

Karen was comfortable taking a more proactive stance regarding expectations, and in her first year at Serena scheduled a meeting with the current chair.

> [The chair from her first three years in the department] and I sat down and made a plan, like get a grant here, get a paper here, teach these classes here, you know…. We went and had lunch and wrote it out…. And I pretty much did. I pretty much followed that plan. (Karen, Interview 2)

For Karen, having and following a plan throughout her pre-tenure period allowed her to be confident in the process. In addition to mapping a plan for scholarship, she and her chair also talked about the courses she should be teaching and the kinds of external funding she would need to obtain. As a scientist at a liberal arts college, understanding the nature of the external funding expectations was critical.

Ruth did not highlight anything specific that happened regarding her interactions with departmental colleagues regarding tenure, but there had been a difficult tenure case that happened a few years prior in her department that made her wary of the process. Her general naivety about academia, due to her background as a professional artist, amplified her concerns.

> Extremely nerve wracking, in particular since the year before was it, or two years before, there had been such an ugly tenure trauma. Yeah. Yeah. And where you think you know what your colleagues may or may not think, you go, "What are they really gonna say?" And even if they understand what you're doing, does [FTPC] really understand what you're doing? Cause in my position, there's never been anybody tenured before as a[n art discipline] teacher. There, there, there's nobody in the position but me, right? Here. Um. Many colleges don't do that, don't tenure the [art discipline] folks. (Ruth, Interview 1)

Ruth's tenure case was also anxiety provoking because the area in which she specializing is often not a tenure-track position, and there had been no history at Serena of tenuring a faculty member in her specific field. Despite assurances from her colleagues, she knew enough about the process to know that what she was told directly by colleagues might not align with what was included in the tenure review letters or departmental conversation.

Ana had thought she was on track, especially with teaching, because her two years as a visiting professor had gone successfully and she had been appointed to a tenure-track assistant professor position.

> I went through those two years. Everything seemed great, and I didn't really get much mentorship except for, you know, pats on the back, and this is good, you know, everything seemed fine. Um, and I, uh, never really had a serious talk with anybody about my teaching. (Ana, Interview 1)

However, once she was only a few years from review, she started hearing that some of the senior faculty in her department had thought she was not meeting the standards for teaching. Having been mentored to focus on her scholarship, this was particularly challenging.

> Because I actually went through a little bit of a hitch with my tenure. Everything was supposed to be perfect because my scholarship was great and they couldn't criticize it whatsoever, but there were a couple people on the committee who really did not think my teaching was high quality. (Ana, Interview 2)

Since Ana had been encouraged to be highly productive as a scholar by a senior faculty member, she followed that advice. That focus, along with other personal issues described in her narrative, caused her teaching performance to be uneven over her pre-tenure years.

She was frustrated by this seeming change in standards, but luckily had enough warning to effectively address the concerns.

Phoebe felt that she was not adequately prepared for tenure due to some internal department trauma among the most recently tenured cohort of faculty. Many of them had sought feedback at their fourth year review, and it had backfired, resulting in several not being tenured. She describes what she thinks should have happened to help her prepare.

> What should've happened is that, you know, after my fourth year review, I should've been taken into the office to say you know, "Okay, so you have three years between now and when you go up. What you need to make sure is that when you go up, your book doesn't necessarily have to be at press, but what it does need is to have a publisher. You know, you need to be under contract." (Phoebe, Interview 2)

Phoebe was successfully tenured, but felt she could have been better prepared and submitted a stronger dossier with more guidance. While she felt the lack of mentoring was based on some negative experiences in the department earlier, Phoebe's accounts of persistent racial microaggressions in her department certainly undermined her confidence in her pre-tenure period, and limited the number of senior faculty in her department with whom she could open conversations about her concerns.

Phoebe had also seen evidence that the department seemed to have a different standard for tenuring faculty of color, which pushed her to do as much as she could in preparing a strong case.

> I came in with an academic cohort of mostly people of color. The [provost] at that point in time, was really hiring diverse faculty. At the same time, like there's just

> a lot of stuff that happens at the intersection of an increase in minority faculty, the reality that this is a teaching institution, and then whatever anxiety, I think, that older generation have about the diversification of the professorial class, right? So, even though the majority of my colleagues were not held to the same standards of output, um, in terms of academic output, they expected certain things from us that they hadn't had to meet. I don't know if it's particular or if this is just the trend in general in the academy. Um, so, I felt very early there was this, kind of, double-faced expectation that I'd be excellent in the classroom but that I also be a productive scholar…The longer I've been here, I'm almost nearly positive, that those expectations were not the same of people who came before me. And I don't know how to disentangle them from the reality that there was this moment where there was a lot of uh, hiring of people of color. (Phoebe, Interview 1)

Phoebe entered her tenure review process feeling that she had not been properly prepared, but also having observed and intuited that the expectations for her were going to be different than her colleagues of a previous generation. While no one clearly laid out the reasons for the increased expectations, Phoebe cannot help but tie those increased standards with the increased diversity of the junior faculty at the college, and in her department particularly.

The experiences of the participants in this study were strongly shaped by how well they were mentored by their senior colleagues, how forthright the department chair was regarding progress, and whether those progress reports aligned with other forms of feedback they received as they approached tenure review. This situation is not unique to Serena and has been documented for faculty across the academy. Given Serena's size, I

had thought perhaps there would be more consistency across the college. Instead, as discussed in the section on collective and individual agency, the power at Serena is vested most deeply at the department level.

The Learned Art of Enacting and Narrating Their Fit. The overall process of tenure at Serena aligns with common practices across colleges and universities; there is a particular emphasis placed upon the composition of particular documents that form the dossier. For promotion to tenure, the college requires the submission of:

> (a) an up-to-date vita,
>
> (b) a teaching portfolio,
>
> (c) the personal statement for evaluators within the college that describes the candidate's career and professional development as reflected in teaching, scholarly or artistic activity, and service to the college, department, and community,
>
> (d) all scholarship or artistic work from the 6 1⁄2 years prior to submission of materials for review (a separate list of the items submitted should be included), and
>
> (e) the statement for outside evaluators that places their scholarship or artistic activity in context for the scholars or practitioners in their field. The outside evaluators shall also receive the vita and the scholarly or artistic materials. (Serena College Faculty Handbook)

While this list of submission materials is similar to many other institutions', different levels of importance are placed on particular elements. Given the teaching emphasis of the college, the teaching portfolio and the personal statement require additional attention.

In addition, given that the nature and depth of scholarship at a liberal arts college may look different than faculty at a research university, especially in the sciences and social sciences, the statement for external reviewers, often blended into the personal statement, is considered essential for articulating the realities of scholarship at liberal arts college for external reviewers.

In many ways, these documents, and the personal statement specifically, serve as a pitch document to the departmental committee, to external reviewers, and the Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee (FTPC). The teaching portfolio contains artifacts from the courses taught, including syllabi, learning activities (including examples of students' responses to those activities), and assessments of student learning. The personal statement tends to describe many different elements of the faculty member's evolution at the college, including how they have grown as a teacher and scholar, how they have served the college, how their scholarship has been connected to their teaching, and the role students have played in producing their scholarship. The personal statement is also the venue through which candidates for tenure can address any items that might be of concern to the review committee — low teaching evaluation scores, issues with scholarly productivity, semesters on leave, or other circumstances that may have affected their early career years.

There are no formal requirements for the length of the personal statement; the shortest personal statement provided by the participants in this study was ten pages, the longest was fourteen pages. Ana discusses the challenges with there being no limit on the statement.

> You can do a little bit shorter personal statement, but people write, like, a 10-page, you know. I mean, there is an argument that says, “well, it allows, like, if you have a dip in your course evaluations, because Serena’s so obsessed with these numbers, if you have a dip in your evals, it allows you really to really explain what happened,” and that's very true. You know, some people really want that space, but what happens is now that we have this document, it's just expected no matter what. It's no longer a document that, "Well, I'll write it in case I have a problem." It is a document that everybody does no matter what. You know, and everybody writes , pretty much, because who wants to fall short? You know, just in case. Even if they have everything in order…. I mean it, it really takes weeks. You have to present this essay that's rhetorically crafted. (Ana, Interview 2)

As Ana highlights, the personal statement could be a way to emphasize or explain particular things of note in the career of the faculty member. Ten page narratives have become the norm, and no faculty member is willing to take a risk in writing less. Ana also mentions that the time spent crafting this essay takes away from time that could be spent teaching or scholarship, and that this kind of writing does not lend itself to publication for most scholars

The faculty approached writing this document from different perspectives. Some, like Ruth, felt a lot of anxiety in attempting to understand what was needed, the norms associated, and how much room there was for creativity in the document. She wanted to get it just right. In particular, Ruth’s scholarly activity is not measured in publications, and she does not often write academic prose — she is an artist who produces

performances. She doesn’t apply for grants or submit book proposals or fellowships, so writing about her work was an especially new experience.

> I, um, was dating somebody who was on, who had just gotten through tenure. I was living down the hall from somebody who had just gotten tenure. I reached out to colleagues at other colleges to see what their tenure packet looked like. I went to whatever the seminars that were had here on campus [*sic*] to talk about it. I don't know how much they helped, but they helped me to go to them just to see how they were talking about it…There's grant writing folks on campus. I would, after I had gotten a draft together, send to say, "Hey, does this make sense?" Fretted a whole lot. Suffered through writing and re-writing and re-writing and re-shaping and asked colleagues that had retired, so weren't on my particular committee, to read it. (Ruth, Interview 1)

Ruth sought input on what to include from multiple sources on campus, including colleagues from across the college. She also had numerous people review her statement to help her achieve what she considered a suitable document. Unlike other participants, Ruth also included pictures in her personal statement to bring her art activities to life on the page.

Lisa felt like she had a good start going into tenure review because she had already drafted a personal statement for reappointment at her four-year review. This gave her a starting point as she began to think about crafting a statement that would speak to several audiences.

> What was nice is that we, in our fourth year, we submit something for re-appointment actually. That's the first time that you have to write like a pretty

> lengthy personal statement that touches on all three, you know, portions of our job. And so that was nice going into tenure, that I already kind of had a document that I felt like had to, started to say what I wanted to say about myself…. I kind of had to work through…how to talk about my research knowing that it was going to be read by multiple different people. Right? So people on my department which, you know, I mean they're all [in my field], but they have more or less understanding about [my topic] and the type of things that I study. And then the, the other committee that, what's called FTPC, right? Right? Um, and then the external reviewers. (Lisa, Interview 2)

Lisa spoke a lot about making sure her work was understood by her colleagues, the college committee, and the external reviewers. As a scientist at a liberal arts college, she felt that the scope of her topic and the nature of her studies needed to be explained to the external audience, and that she needed to articulate how her scholarship had evolved over time.

Ana also discussed thinking about the readers when composing and revising her statement. She struggled with finding the right tone: explanatory of the challenges she had faced with teaching but not defensive, confident in her scholarship but not cocky.

> I mean it is the most highly rhetoricized exercise you can even imagine. I mean, I guess the one good thing is that you really learn how to narrate yourself in a way that's beneficial. Um, you learn how to adopt a tone that strikes people as something that they warm up to, as opposed that they turn off [*sic*]. You know, I've done both. You know what I mean? I've learned how you write in a way that sounds defensive, as opposed to writing in a way that sounds confident, but not

> overly confident. But makes people appreciate you, as opposed to feeling exasperated with you, or feeling sorry for you. Or, just having some kind of negative feeling period. (Ana, Interview 2)

Ana knew that she needed to address her colleagues' concerns regarding her teaching in her statement, and this added to the challenge in crafting a message with the right tone. She had to find a way to put aside the feelings of frustration and disappointment she was feeling regarding her colleagues' assessment of her, and instead focus on providing a rationale for her struggles as well as the strategies she had engaged to address their concerns.

Both Nora and Deborah generally felt uncomfortable with the kind of writing involved in the personal statement. For Deborah, it felt like bragging, saying "I don't like to write like glowing things about myself (laughs) or try to make them glowing" (Deborah, Interview 2). To overcome her discomfort with writing the personal statement, Nora focused on what information she would want to know to evaluate a colleague.

> It's an uncomfortable document to write…[So, I thought], like, what would I, what would be informative if I were trying to make this decision? So, that's where the trajectory of trying to say, "Look, this is, here's what I've done, but also, here's where it's heading." (Nora, Interview 2)

Nora's shift to thinking of herself as the evaluator helped her craft the kind of arguments and present the necessary evidence to overcome her discomfort.

The faculty in this study each narrated in their personal statements with slight variations on what fitting meant for them. For Karen, Deborah, and Lisa, their personal statements articulated a sense of confidence in themselves as instructors and scholars,

even if, as in the case of Lisa, that confidence was built on shakier grounds. Karen was the most bold in describing herself in her personal statement, stating:

> Each time I interact with students I have the opportunity to inspire and influence them. They look to me not only to learn fundamental [science] skills and concepts but also for guidance and mentoring. I take this role seriously whether lecturing, leading discussions or teaching in the classroom or research lab. I am an enthusiastic teacher and work continuously to improve my teaching. I have taught at all levels of the curriculum, developed an independent research program focused on [my subspecialty] that attracts students and external grant funding, and become a full member of the Serena community through service to [my] department, [interdisciplinary] program and the College. (Karen, Personal Statement for Tenure)

Karen confidently describes her impacts on the college in terms of her research program and service, and offers a distinctive view of her impact on students as a teacher. As she told me in our interview, her goal was to tell her reviewers that she's "a great and thoughtful teacher who innovates and cares about her students, a successful, effective scholar who's secured external funding and publications and mentored students in that, teaches through that, uses [her] research to empower students, and… serves the college" (Karen, Interview 2). While Lisa and Deborah were more moderate in their assessment of themselves, they told overall stories of success.

Nora and Ruth took the approach of describing themselves as individuals who loved, instantly, the art of teaching, and have taken every opportunity to improve themselves in both their teaching and their scholarship. For Nora, that took the form of actively

enhancing her scholarship once she received a warning in her fourth year review letter. Already drawn to teaching, Nora had to dive deeper to find her passion for research. For Ruth, that involved acknowledging all the ways she's sought to be "better" in her work at Serena.

> For the past five and one half years I have worked to strengthen and build my teaching, leadership, scholarship, skills and service to Serena College and the greater [city] area. I have served with creativity, courage, conviction and generosity of spirit and time. I have chosen to become "better" in all my roles here—professor, Director of [Program], mentor, colleague, and community member. For all these reasons, I enthusiastically seek promotion to Associate Professor of [Discipline] at Serena College. (Ruth, Personal Statement for Tenure)

Ruth demonstrated that she had built on her passion, and that passion has come without reservation regarding the context or new set of expectations that academic life created for her. Ruth started her personal statement with a discussion of how meaningful her time in the classroom has been since the beginning. Then she elaborated how she had mastered the challenge of staying an active artist while also bound to the college, as well as how she has learned to manage the administrative demands of an academic department.

Ana and Phoebe had slightly different approaches to their personal statements. Both entered their careers at Serena drawn more significantly to research and scholarship than teaching. They had struggles with teaching. These struggles also paired with robustly stated commitments to creating social change through their teaching and/or scholarship. As Ana wrote in her statement:

> I am a [Humanist] by training and an Interdisciplinarian in practice. Working and thinking in my discipline keeps me grounded in certain traditions, yet looking beyond the borders to revise and see from different positions is what drives my scholarship, teaching and service. Serena's distinguished and collegial faculty, its interdisciplinary programs, and its generous financial support for research have allowed me to evolve and flourish in this type of scholarly and pedagogical hybridity. (Ana)

Ana's statement, while it mentions teaching and pedagogy, reinforces her primary commitments to her scholarship. Already invested more in that aspect of faculty life, the early mentoring she received emphasized the security a strong a research profile could provide her.

Although Phoebe expressed a stronger affinity and comfort with scholarship in our interviews, her personal statement for tenure was focused on her teaching. Phoebe tried to articulate to her mostly White colleagues how the work of her classroom was different than theirs.

> That I teach very difficult material in that it's about race and gender, and class, and sexuality, that I'm always teaching at the intersection of those things in all of my classes. And that it requires me to have a pedagogy that is at once in inclusive but also, ask my students to challenge whatever their notions of their own privilege, so the difficult, sort of narrating the difficulty of that for colleagues…to spend 13, or 14, or 15 weeks really pushing people to think about, you know, predominantly White students, to think about their, their complicity and kind of systems and systemic violences that have been happening and represented in art.

> You know, it's just intense. The intensity. So, speaking to and about [it] and narrativizing the intensity of that work, and then how I negotiate it as a pedagogue. That's the story. I think another story I was telling, in terms of my teaching, was really, unlike a lot of my colleagues, because my materials aren't perceived as a central to the curriculum…most of my classes are cross-listed, sort of developing course materials that are able to speak to a mixed audience, mixed in a variety of ways, disciplinarily mixed, um, mixed by race, mixed by class, mixed by regional experience, that kind of stuff. So just the difficulty and the ways I negotiate that, that's the story. (Phoebe, Interview 2)

Not seeking to ignore the importance of teaching at Serena, instead she sought to show that her experience teaching mostly White, heterosexual middle class students materials at the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and class required a different kind of pedagogy. In addition to the challenges of her pedagogical and scholarly choices, Phoebe also had to contend with a sense of marginalization for her courses; not central to the curriculum in her department, she taught many non-majors, courses listed in other programs, and courses on the fringes of the Serena curriculum.

Teaching. The expectations for tenure at Serena College are both explicitly and implicitly communicated. The faculty handbook informs faculty that they need to produce high quality teaching and scholarship, attaining distinction in one. The handbook also states faculty should be dedicated servants to the college through service activities. Their personal statements are the primary way faculty convince the institution they fit. The faculty stressed over composing these challenging documents for the right audience with the appropriate tone and best possible evidence. These statements also provide a

window into how Serena's expectations get actualized by the faculty — what it is they think the college needs to hear.

In terms of teaching, despite formal documentation that states scholarship is also a viable path towards tenure, most faculty understood that teaching was the most important factor in their portfolios. Representative of many of her colleagues' comments, Nora describes her understanding regarding teaching's importance during tenure review.

> I get the impression that if your teaching isn't great and you are an amazing researcher, you're probably not getting tenure. If you are an amazing teacher and your research is fine, it's much more likely you'll get tenure. And also the resources, I mean, the way that the school directs resources are so much more towards teaching, so much, you know, you can get money to have conversations with people in other departments um, you know, just to have like dinner with them, but it's hard to get enough money to go to conferences. (Nora, Interview 1)

Nora suggests that distinction in research, if paired with poor teaching, would not be sufficient for tenure at Serena, but perhaps, distinction in teaching paired with low research productivity might still be acceptable. The dedication of resources to teaching within the college ecosphere is further evidence to Nora that teaching is the most important. While all of the scholars participating in this study had robust scholarly and teaching experiences, most of them focused more on the role of teaching in their discussion of and writing about their lives as faculty.

Many of the faculty chose to articulate the passion or intentionality with which they approached teaching in their personal statements. This took several forms. Ruth opened

her statement discussing her general good feelings about the college, and then describes the impact of her experiences in the classroom.

> The moment I stepped into the studio, I knew coming to Serena was one of the wisest decisions I had ever made. And it still is. I loved the campus. The brick buildings and dormitory quad reminded me of my alma mater. I'd come to know some of the [department's] faculty because I had taught at Serena as an adjunct in 2000 through 2002, fitting teaching into my professional [artistic] work. But the classroom stole my heart; the students were warm, witty and eager to learn what I had to teach. Serena chose me and I chose Serena. (Ruth, Personal Statement for Tenure)

Ruth's comment about the classroom "stealing her heart" moves beyond an argument for intentionality and care in the craft of teaching, and indicates a deep emotional and personal connection with the students at Serena and the teaching experience offered.

Ana, one of the few participants mentored to focus specifically on her scholarship, focuses on the theoretical and pedagogical commitments that undergird her approach to teaching at Serena.

> My philosophy of teaching combines Critical Pedagogy with the tradition of the Liberal Arts and Humanities curriculum. Critical Pedagogy originates in Paolo Freire's view that educational dialogue is a humanizing process in which students become more aware of their complicity in structures that oppress our society, and consequently will find ways of changing that situation. Critical Pedagogy complements the goals of Liberal Arts and Humanities, which involve commitment to diversity, critical thought, empathetic understanding, and a belief

> in the directive yet transformative nature of education. (Ana, Personal Statement for Tenure).

Drawing connections between her pedagogical choices and her scholarly choices, Ana reinforces that she approaches the work of the academy from a unified perspective.

Nora focused on the growing interest she had in teaching through her graduate education, and the initial appeal of Serena because of its focus on teaching.

> My graduate school was a large research university that did not value teaching, encouraging us to spend as little time on it as possible. Instead I spent a lot of time on it and sought an environment where these efforts were viewed as worthwhile. I also wanted to be in an environment where growth as a teacher was encouraged. Small classes and supportive colleagues have helped me find new ways to challenge students and generally improve my classes. (Nora, Personal Statement for Tenure)

Citing the experience of working with small classes and supportive colleagues, Nora speaks of growth in her teaching. She is sharing that she had sought the environment at Serena, and had been able to take advantage of her experiences at the college to grow and evolve as a teacher.

In addition to conveying a love or thoughtful commitment for teaching, faculty are also expected to demonstrate their abilities and growth as teachers. Two dynamics, in particular, seemed to emerge as ways that faculty effectiveness in teaching was truly measured at the college. One, mentioned by Lisa below and some other faculty during our interviews, was the importance of course enrollments.

> I did hear, you know, I have one of my friends, is friends with someone who didn't get tenure last year and she heard that some of the conversation surrounding her teaching was, “Oh, well your classes were under-enrolled." And so using popularity. Like using that as some type of proxy for how good a teacher she is. (Lisa, Interview 2)

Lisa, in discussing the experience of a colleague who was not tenured, seems concerned that enrollments were used as a proxy for the quality of her teaching. Sensitive to the changing demands and interests at the college, Lisa is aware that some disciplines or topics may not attracting large numbers of students, but questions whether that is a reflection of someone’s teaching quality.

While the college expects faculty to produce a teaching portfolio to demonstrate pedagogical effectiveness and evolution, many of the faculty felt that the students’ evaluation of teaching far outweighed the portfolio in terms of importance. Ana’s experience serving on the college-wide Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee provides valuable insights.

> You know, I can't speak about any particular tenure cases that I was involved in, because they're all confidential, but under the structures that we have, under the individuals who are the [provosts] and the presidents right now, it's, it's really the numbers. That's the bottom line. It's the numbers [on the teaching evaluations]. And the enrollment. So it's a big popularity contest. (Ana, Interview 1)

Ana echoes Lisa’s comments regarding class enrollments as a popularity contest. She also highlights the role of the teaching evaluations, and “the numbers” in general. Her experience on the FTPC confirmed to her that “we, you know, the tenure committee sits

there with the [provost] and crunches these numbers. And that's all the students do. So the only thing that is between you and getting a job [promotion] here at Serena are these numbers" (Ana, Interview 1). Ana is particularly concerned because she does not think students realize the role their student evaluations are playing in the evaluation of faculty work. She cites her work as part of a campus review team that studied the evaluations, and found that students spent less than five minutes completing them.

Despite the seeming importance of these evaluations at Serena, there is reluctance at some level at the college to admit that the numbers play the important role they do in tenure evaluations.

> Their evaluation of our teaching, it's primarily these numerical [student evaluations of teaching]. . . You know people on this like the [Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee] or whatever, they always are like, "Oh no, no, no, it's not 80% fours and fives." It's like I don't know if you [Jessica, the interviewer] heard people talk about 80% (laughs) fours and fives. This idea that you know, "Oh no, no we don't do that." But they do it, you know. I've had, I've had my department where they have like figured it out. . . And it depends on who's chairing, but like figure it out, "Oh, does, does, Lisa had 79. 5%. 4s and 5s in weighted average." (Lisa, Interview 2)

Lisa expresses clearly the double-talk that occurs at the institution around the role of student teaching evaluations. The public discourse is that it is not this technical requirement, yet Lisa cites very specific numbers (80% of the ratings being scored at 4 or 5 on a 5-point Likert scale). These numbers, and the phrase "80% fours and fives," came up in most of my conversations with faculty about teaching evaluation, and are

specifically mentioned in most of their personal statements for tenure, as demonstrated below.

Faculty reference the student evaluations, called Course Evaluation Questionnaires (CEQs) at Serena, in their personal statements for tenure in different ways. Some describe how the CEQ scores guided faculty revisions to courses, including the syllabi, classroom activities and assessments. Ruth describes her efforts to improve her teaching in one course through several tactics, including the evaluations.

> Here I focus deliberately on [Course] 203 because it lays the groundwork for all my other classes; it is the class I have taught most and, therefore, can use to demonstrate the clearest growth I have experienced as an instructor. I have used the CEQs on this course, my students' written feedback, and one-on-one sessions the Director of the Learning and Teaching Center, as well as my own need to improve, as guideposts for changing the course. Because of these four factors, the character of 203 is much different than when I first taught it more than five years ago. (Ruth, Personal Statement for Tenure)

Describing the CEQs as one of many "guideposts" for improving her teaching, Ruth paired these numerical evaluations with students' written feedback (not used in the tenure review process) and meetings with the teaching and learning center staff to boost her teaching.

Ana felt the need to acknowledge variation in her scores that did not reflect a purely upward trajectory of improvement. Opening her discussion of her scores with details about personal difficulties that challenged her focus on teaching, she also enumerated the life changes she made that could allow her to engage more as a teacher. She goes on to

describe the reflection and feedback collection processes she engaged in to address her poor scores, including consulting with several other faculty and the Teaching and Learning Center. She is able to describe an improvement as a result of these efforts.

> In order to address some of the inconsistency in my first five years of CEQs at Serena, I took a hard look at my tendency to reinvent the wheel with each course I taught…. The final result of this self-assessment was that both my CEQs and my written evaluations for three courses in fall of 2007 demonstrated a marked improvement. I have continued to receive 80% 4s and 5s ever since. Receiving these high evaluations has been a major success for me and has given me a new sense of confidence as a teacher. (Ana, Personal Statement for Tenure)

Ana chooses to identify a particular trait of her teaching approach (reinventing courses regularly) that may have contributed to her challenges in consistently receiving high scores. She then describes how she modified that tendency, resulting in consistently high teaching evaluations. She also expresses a personal benefit to these efforts as well.

Describing her efforts to improve her teaching through active learning activities, Nora highlighted the role of student written feedback. Incorporating more examples and opportunities for structured discussion, Nora learned how to shift from mostly lecturing to providing more engaging classroom experiences.

> The activities also address specific comments I received in the written student evaluations.…Students now more frequently write that they found class fun and enjoyable, despite working hard. (Nora, Personal Statement for Tenure)

Nora follows these comments about the written feedback improving with a detailed accounting of how her CEQs improved over time in response to these efforts, enumerating her improvements in particular areas of evaluation categories.

Karen's personal statement provides an excellent example of a more technocratic approach to demonstrating improvement. While Karen does not elaborate on how the CEQs helped her to improve, she is able to demonstrate improvement in her scores over time.

> My CEQ scores have improved overall in my [Intro Class] and [Advanced Class] classes especially in categories such as "Objectives as stated by instructor", "Effectiveness of lecture or presentation", "Ability to illuminate difficult material", and "Overall effectiveness of instructor". For example, in [Intro Class], I received 60-83% favorable ratings (4's and 5's) in Fall 2007 and improved to 88-97% favorable ratings in Spring and Fall 2008 and to 91-100% in Fall 2010. These scores demonstrate that I effectively teach these fundamental courses in the [discipline] curriculum. (Karen, Personal Statement for Tenure)

This listing of the scores occurs in several participants' narratives, where they lay out specific score dynamics and the things they did to improve those scores to meet the benchmarks in "favorable ratings," effectively placing them in the category of "80% fours and fives."

Deborah, who has a background as a K-12 teacher, also included a reference to her CEQ scores in her personal statement. She clearly listed out the other pedagogical strategies she used to improve her teaching, but centers them as affirming CEQ feedback.

> Finally, my CEQs are strong. I generally receive high ratings (fours and fives) in areas one through eleven, meeting the expectation that 80% of my rating be in this range. The feedback from my students has been invaluable and oftentimes my own reflections about the course are in keeping with their suggestions. I expect my students to be reflective… and I model this practice. I ask my students for feedback halfway through the semester and I occasionally audio record my own teaching to reflect on the effectiveness of my pedagogy. After these events, I discuss with the class what I learned from listening to myself teach and what I learned from them. (Deborah, Personal Statement for Tenure)

It was a little surprising to me that Deborah, who in her interviews spent little time discussing the course evaluations, describes her teaching in these ways. After years of teaching in the K-12 setting, she would naturally have a toolkit of activities available for monitoring and improving her own teaching. She justified these self-reflective approaches within the context of her high teaching evaluations. She even pointedly remarked on the "expectation," which no other faculty member in this study did.

While the faculty all included references to the CEQs in their personal statements, they had differing perspectives on how well the CEQs reflected teaching. Several scoffed at the idea that there was a way to game the CEQs that would not require intensive amounts of work. For example, Nora says:

> And I think that's some of the discussion about CEQs, but they only seem to come from people who are getting bad CEQs. They never come from people who are getting good CEQs, who also the students talk about as very popular

> professors.…And it's like, the students aren't dumb…I mean, they actually want to learn something, particularly here. (Nora, Interview 2)

Nora felt that people who complain about the role of student evaluations are peers who do not want to do the work required to get those high scores. She referenced the students' awareness and desire to learn. Phoebe made similar comments, saying:

> You could give all A's and still get bad evaluations because you suck as a teacher…. And I know at least one person who that would be true of, um that they're never gonna be a good teacher because they don't care. And I mean good teacher for Serena. I know people talk about gaming the CEQs and they think it's good grades, or they think. . it may be also be coddling students. …But I think what the students consider [is] the privilege of being at a small liberal arts college where you actually do get to know your teachers and they get to know you by name and you guys have a relationship. (Phoebe, Interview 1)

Phoebe recognized that the kinds of learning experiences students expect to have at Serena are driven by the context of the college. She and Nora emphasize that the critique of the CEQs is driven by individuals unwilling to work hard on their teaching, or who view the students' expectations of teaching as indulgent, soft, or coddling.

Lisa did not speak negatively about the course evaluation process specifically, but expressed a general concern about the one-dimensionality of student evaluations for assessing teaching. She seemed frustrated that the college would ask for a portfolio to be submitted, and then only consider its contents minimally. Part of her concern stemmed from feeling like her personality and approach to student interactions might hinder

students from feeling the kind of connection to her that other faculty members might engender.

For Ana, there was a feeling that she was compromising herself in some ways to do the kind of teaching that was rewarded in student evaluations.

> There's always going to be this, unfortunately, this rebel person in me. That I'll get it right, and then there's just something that just has to go against the grain. And part of it is because I don't always agree that the kind of teaching, when I've gotten those really excellent numbers, I'm not always sure that I'm doing the best kind of teaching. You know? I don't believe that I am. I think some of the things improve when I get the better numbers, but other things [don't]. (Ana, Interview 1)

Viewing herself as a rebel who cannot just follow the rules, Ana clearly learned how to do the kind of teaching that made her successful in tenure. However, she does not set a lot of stock in the importance of those scores to truly demonstrate that she's created an effective learning environment. Returning to her comments above regarding how she effectively turned her teaching around in response to concerns over her low scores, Ana seems to have decided to articulate a narrative she thinks the college wants to hear — rather than ideals that she holds deeply.

Nora and Phoebe's perspectives indicate an important viewpoint on the rigorous nature of teaching at Serena. The college offers a high touch learning environment for its students, which demands a particular kind of instruction that should be centered in its tenure evaluations. There are a variety of ways to evaluate teaching beyond course evaluations, and these methods, including portfolios, are only nominally used by the

college. The evaluations are not just used heavily. The college applies a definition of excellence, “80% 4s and 5s,” that is not publicly shared with pre-tenure faculty. Instead, department chairs or senior colleagues have to verbally pass on this information. This is incredibly problematic, especially for faculty like Phoebe who do not feel they were adequately mentored during the tenure process. Ana sums these concerns regarding the weighting of the CEQs and the college’s transparency around their use:

> We weren't being transparent about [the student role], and then we're not being transparent to our faculty. We don't say anywhere in the faculty handbook, nowhere in our governance does it state that 80% fours and fives is what you have to get on your CEQs. It has this bullshit, and I'm just gonna say it in French, bullshit line about how the teaching portfolio is also part of the teaching evaluation. I mean, that is such a crock…. If you go through and let's say your CEQs are glorious, and your teaching portfolio is kind of eh-eh-eh, well they're gonna chide you, they're gonna give you a slap on the hand. Right? But um, let's say your CEQs are really shaky and you have a great teaching portfolio. I really don't think that that teaching portfolio is gonna bump you up to high quality. (Ana, Interview 1)

Scholarship. While teaching is the primary currency at Serena, the faculty are also expected to have high quality scholarship, including artistic pursuits. While there appears to be commonalities in the way teaching was written about in the statements, their writing about scholarship varied. The variations in how they talked about their research appeared somewhat driven by the disciplinary associations. To highlight these distinctions, my discussion of their approach to research in their faculty lives and their discussion of that

scholarship in their personal statements are organized by their loose disciplinary groupings.[5]

Some faculty tied their research to their teaching and the involvement of students in their research. Both Lisa and Karen elaborated on the role of students in contributing to their research activities. Karen's introductory paragraph to the research section of her personal statement demonstrates this approach.

> Since coming to Serena, I have published several papers in peer-reviewed journals, five of which have had Serena undergraduates as co-authors. I have co-authored more than 40 posters that were presented by my research students or me at local, regional, and national scientific meetings….Below I relate the lines of research that I have pursued while at Serena. The student researchers involved in and the external funding for each project is given. The resulting publications (*denotes Serena College undergraduate co-authors) and my effort on each is also noted. To demonstrate the progress my research group has made toward the specific aims of my [Funding Agency] grant, three papers likely to be submitted by the end of 2013 are summarized. Other publications, one in the pedagogy field and from collaborations with other [people in my field], are also discussed. (Karen, Personal Statement for Tenure)

Following this guide for reading her research program, Karen details the role students played in producing the scholarship, as well as her own role in advancing the scholarship. Both scientists, Karen and Lisa had to adapt their research styles to accommodate a liberal arts college environment, which requires involving undergraduate research assistants in the development of projects. For Lisa, centering student interests into her

[5] Participant personal statements about their research were difficult to anonymize and retain legibility.

research is not just a posture she takes for her tenure review statement, but is a goal she has for creating a vibrant research laboratory and effective teaching practice.

Deborah wrote about her overall approach to developing and maintaining her research agenda, following a pattern typical of social scientists in generating a pipeline of research projects.

> My approach to conducting research is to continuously gather data, analyze, and write about different research projects at the same time. While I write about one data set, I gather data for the next research project. This keeps my research agenda constantly moving forward. (Deborah, Personal Statement for Tenure)

In our interviews, Deborah explains that she learned this approach in graduate school from her "mentor who was the major advisor for [her] dissertation [who] taught [her] that you want to continually have like a cycle of research" (Deborah, Interview 2). Deborah describes the products of her research activities, and the roles that others in the campus community (students and other faculty) played in producing that research.

Nora had a different kind of story to tell. While most of the other participants had been adequately moving their scholarly agendas forward during their pre-tenure years, Nora received a "scary fourth year review letter". This letter clearly told her she needed to increase her scholarly production if she wanted to receive tenure. As she describes in her personal statement, she was slow to find the right balance.

> Finally, I have been able to advance as a scholar at Serena and am now pursuing an active research agenda. Finding the balance between teaching and research was a challenge, and I had a slow start in terms of getting the latter off the ground. Over the past three, however, the trajectory has changed dramatically. Since my

> fourth year review I have gone from zero publications, to six published or accepted papers, one paper with revisions requested by a journal, and one more paper under review. I also have several on-going projects that will lead to new papers this year. Finally, I am more active in the research community, participating in more conferences, organizing more sessions, and serving as a referee for more journals. I am pleased with this change in productivity, and given my excitement over on-going and new projects, plan to maintain it going forward. (Nora, Personal Statement for Tenure)

Nora turned her scholarly profile around significantly during her fifth and sixth years at Serena. She has increased her productivity in her social science field, producing many articles and identifying new research collaborations to drive future scholarship.

Ana describes her scholarly progress since her fourth year review in her personal statement. Ana's accomplishments related to a completed book manuscript allowed her to meet a common goal at Serena for tenure in the humanities.

> My research, which has progressed significantly since my last review (2006), shows in its entirety a completed book manuscript, several other publications, and a number of invited talks. (Ana, PS for Tenure)

In describing her scholarly activities in our interviews, Ana describes the challenges she faced in completing her book manuscript following a divorce, having a baby, a challenging break-up, and a move to the town where Serena is located. For Ana, the pressure to produce high quality scholarship in a variety of lines of research was driven by the mentoring she received

> This woman who was kind of my prime mentor in the department…in her thinking, she was doing the right thing, you know? She was really trying to help me as much as possible and she - I took her advice, you know?. . . She was telling me, “be on the safe side. Produce as much scholarship as you can." You know, and that's what she had to do…. And that's what a lot of women have had to do. They've had to go above and beyond in ways that, I'll just say it, I don't think that my male colleagues have always had to do. (Ana, Interview 1)

Ana, who received feedback regarding improving her teaching quality in her fourth year review letter, also was encouraged informally by a mentor to focus mostly on her scholarship during her early years at Serena. She is still learning to manage that internalized expectation.

Phoebe, who did not provide her personal statement, discusses her approach to research throughout her career as being central to her conception of being a professional academic.

> One of my graduate school advisors said not to me, but to my best friend, "Being professional means having a CV and in a, in a state that you could go out on the market at any point in time”…I tried to build a career based on that advice, which is really hard at a place like Serena, I mean, because of the teaching load. (Phoebe, Interview 2)

Phoebe has thought about her scholarship as a form of mobility, as career building, and as producing a reputation outside of Serena. Phoebe was the least knowledgeable about the demands of a liberal arts college entering her role at Serena, and it took her a long time to weigh teaching as equally as scholarship in her attention and focus.

For Ruth, scholarship looks different from many of her colleagues. As she described in our interview, “For me it's perform or perish. Because, I'm not writing books. That's not what I was hired for. I'm a practical scholar” (Ruth, Interview 1). Finding opportunities to perform while also maintaining her teaching and program management responsibilities at Serena was not always easy for Ruth.

> Fortunately, while here at Serena I have been able to continue my career as a practitioner/scholar…. I continue to pursue work for my own artistic satisfaction--and as an example to my students on how to maneuver through the fickle [artistic world]. …My department chair has assured me that, because I continue to work so diligently, my scholarship is in line with the Department’s expectations. (Ruth, PS for Tenure)

Ruth emphasizes her students observations of her as a working artist. While she also has her own artistic desires to fulfill, she is able to model the artist’s lifestyle, dedication, and continual growth for her students.

Many faculty had to create conditions for themselves to succeed through prioritization and saying no to commitments that would not advance their goals. In particular, several faculty participants mentioned the impact of national speaker and director of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, Kerry Ann Rockquemore, who gave a lecture on campus. Some, like Deborah, followed the lecture by requesting funds to attend a week-long workshop offered by the Center. Deborah describes some of the lessons she learned from Rockquemore.

> She's got, like, a very specific framework for how to manage, you know, your life, your work, um, and, you know, the things that you love to do, you know, outside

> of your family, and kind of giving time to everything. And that, for me, was super helpful because when I first got here…I overcompensated on my teaching…. and then if there was a break, I just wrote. You know, head down, and just wrote…so now, with her help, I really had, I really learned, like, "okay, if I just write a little bit every day, things continue to move along." I don't need to overcompensate on my teaching, because that's just procrastination. (Deborah, Interview 1)

For Deborah, being able to set priorities in terms of meaningful activities in her life, as well as building a more structured writing practice into her day-to-day faculty life allowed her to achieve her goals and feel confident in saying “no” to activities that did not help her advance her goals.

Others, like Nora and Ana, found groups of other faculty who were interested in implementing the recommendations from Rockquemore’s campus lecture into their practice. Norah specifically references the impact of Rockquemore in her tenure personal statement, saying, “in particular, the visit by Kerry Ann Rockquemore in 2011 and the research accountability groups set up afterwards have been instrumental in finding ways to keep research going [while] maintain[ing] high level teaching." These writing groups helped Nora and Ana achieve their pre-tenure goals. They continue to help them build and maintain scholarly productivity in their post-tenure years.

Coherence and Identity for Serena Faculty

One of the reasons Serena was appealing as a site for the study was the size and nature of the college. A residential campus located within driving distance of several major metropolitan areas, it seemed a likely place for faculty lives to be strongly embedded in the physical space of the campus. All of the faculty participants lived in or

near the town where the college was located, with many having lived in campus owned-housing at some point in their careers. Three of the seven faculty—Ruth, Ana, and Phoebe—had served as faculty-in-residence in a campus residence hall. Another, Lisa, plays in a campus band comprised of faculty, staff, and students. Karen leads services on occasion for the campus Christian fellowship. Deborah is constantly involved in helping Serena students get involved in the surrounding community. This kind of engagement seems to be expected at a place like Serena. However, engagement that is expected is not always reciprocated with open acceptance or equal engagement.

For Nora, engaging students outside the classroom or colleagues outside the formal opportunities of meetings and department on-campus events is an expectation that exceeds her comfort zone. She found hat she was expected far too often to attend faculty social events within her department.

> So this is very like community-oriented place, which for a lot of folks is great, but it should not be a requirement for working here or for any liberal arts college. Um, and so I think that's the point where I've had some, some conflicts of kind of expectations on weekend time, expectations on evening time, which stems from this community, or part of the community. So why can't we have this whatever gathering on a Saturday? I was like, "Well, I think because of the community aspect people don't realize you're asking me to work on a Saturday. Yeah, it's a fun, it's a barbecue, but it's a work barbecue." (Nora, Interview 1)

Nora is invested in students and teaching, but that does not equate to her being deeply invested in the lives of students or her colleagues. She believes it can be hard for faculty

to draw those lines at Serena, due to the residential setting of the college and the general community-oriented culture of the campus.

Lisa, who plays in a campus band with her husband who also works at the college, struggles with her engagement with students in informal settings. Like Nora, she does not desire to have personal, non-mentoring relationships with students. However, unlike Nora, she places a high regard on the friendships and community she has developed with other faculty and staff at Serena.

> I'm a musician, I like to play violin, and then also sing, so I'm in a band that is Serena, and what ends up happening, I guess, is my life really does revolve around Serena quite a bit because like I said, my husband also works here so I do a lot of things with, with my colleagues. I feel like I'm, I'm good friends with a lot of, a lot of, uh, my colleagues….[But with the] band, they started out about the year that I came here, which was really cool, and it always has had students in it. And that has always been somewhat I mean kind of cool, but depending on the student, it's kind of weird too, because I feel like sometimes I don't know. Just like the students, I think, would feel too, in terms, I can't feel like I can be myself. (Lisa, Interviews 1 & 2)

Here, Lisa expresses having a life that revolves around Serena and her friendships with colleagues, while simultaneously experiencing discomfort with the kinds of interactions she has with students through her engagement with the campus band. She just does not feel comfortable having those personal relationships with students, especially when they are her in her classrooms or labs.

While Nora and Lisa have struggled with expectations to engage outside the formal confines of their work, Karen has received some mixed messages regarding her open identification with her faith. While she finds that many students come to her seeking advice and counseling, she has also received messages from others that being someone who openly identifies as Christian might be a problem on Serena's campus. For her, showing who she is in her entirety allows her to connect more fully with her students and show that she is more than just a teacher.

> So with my office for example, I have pictures of my family up, I have my cross hanging on my little altar, my students feel that, like, I have a Christian understanding to all we do, and I have my little race bands from the runs, the triathlons and stuff that I do, hanging on my cork board. So they come in here and its like, I want them to feel a little bit of dissonance about who it is that they are talking to. (Karen, Interview 1)

For Karen, being able to share her full self with students has worked in her favor. Despite hearing from a colleague's wife that she was "brave" for wearing a cross at a faculty event, Karen has been undeterred from being who she is. However, she has had to combat misconceptions about Christians both on campus and off, She has tried to model a positive version of Christianity through discussions of faith and science, and through standing in protest to a radical Christian right group who protested the campus. She has also personally counseled students.

Deborah's struggle with fit comes from her investments in doing community-based research and outreach activities. Despite the president's stated commitments to investing in the surrounding community and improving the town-gown relationship, Deborah

found that the administration's execution of such efforts was curtailed by the recession and other concerns. Instead, she wanted to do her part to implement more ethical engagement with the community.

> I think the students really were feeling like uh, some of the outreach work was more about maybe pathologizing the community and doing more, you know, doing, not really getting their input in terms of what kind of relationship they would like to build. It was more like, "Oh we do good because we go into the schools and tutor." (Deborah, Interview 2).

Deborah has helped to shape several service-learning courses to meet her students' needs and accomplish her goal of creating fruitful partnerships driven by the community. The institution's commitment to these programs is unclear, especially as the college continues to discuss its resource challenges.

Ana and Ruth shared a distinctive experience as single mothers during their time at Serena. They each spoke extensively about the challenges and rewards of single motherhood in the pre-tenure period. Ana identifies her primary sources of support on campus as other single mothers who helped each other.

> But um, [Ruth] moved in [to the campus residence hall] with her son and we would just tag team. That's what we did that next year. We tag teamed. And uh, so we basically raised our kids together. We, she's a, she was a single mom, and uh, her son was a couple years older than mine, and we just really leaned on each other all the time… And then there were a couple other people, um, single moms as well. And uh, it's almost like, it was the single moms, you know, that we pulled each other through. The people who had the least time were the ones that gave me

> the most time. That is really a fact. And uh, um, yeah, I mean, I made it through [tenure] because of them. (Ana, Interview 1)

The support Ana received from other single mothers was instrumental in her success for tenure. This took the form of nanny-sharing and co-parenting with Ruth and other faculty on campus. Ruth also referenced how instrumental Ana was to her success moving through the tenure review process.

> Ana has been, you know, majorly helpful with the care, so it's really something. And something you don't put in your, your fourth year review or your second year review or your tenure package. You don't say anything about that. That's a thing as a woman. You don't say, that is not supposed to be part of the conversation. But it's a huge part of, you know, getting your, your focus. (Ruth, Interview 1)

Ruth shares that there is no place to adequately address the challenge of single parenting while a professor. It was not considered appropriate to identify these challenges as part of the personal statements she produced for her reviews, yet these challenges significantly shaped her ability to engage as a teacher and scholar.

Ruth and Phoebe both faced challenges specific to being Black women on campus. Ruth shared an incident that occurred at the campus fitness center. Her son was attending a class, and she was using the fitness facilities, when the manager of the site, a campus employee, approached her to remind her that the facilities were for Serena campus members. She responded:

> "Okay, well thank you for letting us know that. Um. I'll make sure anybody who comes in knows that". (Laughter). And I said, "I teach in the drama department". He goes, "Oh! Hi! How are you?" So I wrote to the president, the [chief student

> affairs officer], cc'd [the manager], and my chair to say “this is what racism looks like." (Ruth, Interview 1)

This experience repeated itself multiple times as she sought to bring other Black guests to the center, or was there on her own. Despite being one of a small handful of Black faculty and staff on campus, some campus staff did not recognize her as faculty because of her race.

Phoebe described a variety of racially-driven indignities she experienced at Serena. She was told in varying forms that her scholarship and self would not be acceptable to the majority of White faculty in her department, first as a word of advice from an older Black female colleague, and then through acts of repeated erasure from her department’s meeting minutes. Later, when she served as a senior campus administrator, she quickly grew frustrated with other senior leaders’ tepid responses to the repeated racial profiling of students, faculty, and staff by campus security and fitness facility staff.

> And, part of that ceiling, and I wrote about that, but was a kind of callousness on the part of other administrators in kind of addressing squarely issues that matter to me, and have mattered to me, in my entire career, regarding race and gender, and sexuality, and access. A variety of what I think are social justice concerns. And so, you know, a kind of turning away from those [concerns] by people who had more power than me, right? (Phoebe, Interview 2)

Phoebe, who thought she could be part of making change on the campus around the issues that mattered to her, instead saw resistance among her peers and senior colleagues for addressing longstanding issues of social justice on campus. She wrote publicly about her choice to step down from this administration role in the face of this indifference.

Despite its surface appearance as an idyllic campus setting, Serena has strong community norms that create challenges to fit for its faculty members. Whether driven by the all-encompassing nature of campus life at Serena, preconceptions about who belongs in terms of religious identity, the isolation and lack of structural support for single parents, or the lively and ongoing demonstrations of racial injustice, the faculty in this study have had to navigate struggles within the community to find acceptance and a place. Their success in this measure has been varied.

Summary

In summary, the implications of the 2008 recession continue to be felt by the college. Programs that had been put in place to bring in large cohorts of faculty, including increasing faculty of color, were halted. Faculty hiring in general has drawn down to a trickle. The significant increase in the number of students majoring in the sciences and harder social sciences have prompted a deeper conversation about a vision for the college, including its definition of the liberal arts, and how to appropriately distribute resources. In an era of changing student interests, with increasing desire among Serena students to have majors that are seen as valuable in the job market, uncertainty and disagreement about how to execute a liberal arts education has increased. Visiting or adjunct faculty are no longer hired, requiring faculty members to teach larger class sizes and, in some cases, restrict the students allowed to take their courses. The discourse of financial constraint has required faculty to find more robust ways to justify their work or even the existence of their departments. Finally, the discourse of financial restraint has resurrected critiques of the move to need-blind admissions which has increased diversity at the campus and netted Serena positive press for its efforts. These critiques, alongside

changes in leadership at the college, are causing some to fear a threat to the increased diversity in the Serena student body.

The narrative about change at Serena seems to indicate that many think change is difficult to effect. Many people, according to my participants, are resistant to change, and there are competing visions and priorities both among the faculty and between the faculty, administrators, and trustees. What is remarkable about Serena, though, is that most people are invested in these decisions. Faculty meetings are attended by most faculty, and those who do not attend often still follow the conversations and controversy. The intensity with which my participants spoke about their visions for the college or what they thought should be the priorities of the college demonstrated the investment they've made in this local space. Although some of them have burnt out on that investment at points in their careers, and are perhaps taking a step back, most of them care deeply about these activities. This is a key element of the culture, even if they do not all feel empowered to bring the changes they would like to see into reality.

As a liberal arts college, teaching was clearly identified as the most essential activity for Serena faculty. Despite asking faculty for a variety of evidence regarding their teaching excellence— a portfolio, statements about their teaching in their personal statement for tenure, student evaluations of teaching — only one seemed to matter. The college's undocumented emphasis on the scores from student evaluations of teaching and enrollment numbers raises concerns among many faculty. Teaching evaluations by students are not considered the most reliable evidence of teaching quality, and the use of these scores cannot account for other important dynamics shaping student experience in the classroom.

The faculty participants in this study come from different disciplines, and approach their scholarship from those perspectives. These disciplinary perspectives also are shaped by how their departments supported their efforts to achieve scholarly their goals. In their personal statements, faculty connected their scholarship to their work with students, showed improvement over time, and showed how they have mastered an approach to scholarship that enables them to continue to be productive. Fitting for the institutional type, in our conversations, and their personal statements, scholarship was not as central as teaching.

Serena faculty are expected to enhance the college's national reputation through their scholarship. What is less clear is how those expectations for cosmopolitan stature have changed over time for Serena faculty, and what has prompted those changes. Phoebe's earlier comments regarding the increasingly diverse faculty at Serena accompanying an increase in expectations indicate one trend. The talk by Kerry Ann Rockquemore, and subsequent adoption of her prioritization, time protection, and accountability strategies, may have helped many of the faculty in this generation survive the heightened Serena expectations.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

With this study, I examined how fit has functioned for seven women associate professors at a private, highly selective liberal arts college. The concept of "fit" features largely in colloquial discussion of careers in higher education (Manger, 2008a, 2008b; Simmons, 2011). Critics of this discourse express concern that fit serves as a coded and unconscious screening mechanism against difference (Kamnik, 2007). For faculty who are not White and male, difference is read as a liability for fit, reducing access to opportunities across academia.

Both the scholarly and colloquial approaches to "fit" have predominantly focused on a single evaluation point, missing the ongoing changes and adjustments made by faculty and their institutions over time. This view ignores the reality of a fickle and highly selective market for academic positions that reduces candidates' ability to be choosy about the positions they accept. Since it is not uncommon for faculty to find themselves in the job that is available, not necessarily the "best fit," turning attention to faculty members' ongoing navigation of the relationship with their institution is essential. Institutions' failure to foster good fit decreases faculty retention, productivity, satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Blackburn & Bentley, 1993; Lindholm, 2003; Olsen et al., 1995; Ryan et al., 2012). There are financial and opportunity costs for institutions associated with this failure related to the costs of new faculty searches and initial investment in faculty (Betts & Sikorski, 2008). The findings in this study suggest

that fit is best considered as an ongoing process, rather than a single-point-in-time determination.

Background

In order to examine how fit might function for those "different" from the norm, this study focused on women. The literature about women in the professoriate suggests that while they have made great gains in accessing academia at the assistant professor or contingent faculty level, they do not advance to associate or full professor nor transition from contingent to tenure-track roles at the same rate as men (Allan, 2011; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006; Wolfinger et al., 2009). They experience greater barriers to their advancement than men (Bornholt et al., 2005; Gardner, 2012; Rosser, 2005; Sabharwal & Corley, 2009). Women faculty also experience more stress (Griffin et al., 2011; Hart & Cress, 2008; Thompson & Dey, 1998), lower levels of satisfaction (August & Waltman, 2004; Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Callister, 2006; Hagedorn, 1996; Olsen et al., 1995; Rosser, 2004; Sax et al., 2002; Seifert & Umbach, 2008; Toutkoushian & Bellas, 2003), and engage in more teaching and service work than men despite having equal interest in research (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999; Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2011; Olsen et al., 1995; O'Meara et al., 2017; Xie & Shauman, 1998). Women of color experience even greater barriers to success and satisfaction in the academy, often being asked to carry heavier burdens of service and care-taking work, and experiencing more intense scrutiny of their teaching and scholarly work than White women or men of color peers (Gregory, 2001; Griffin et al., 2013; Harley, 2007; Kelly & Fetridge, 2012).

Women faculty have achieved the most parity in representation at liberal arts colleges (Curtis, 2014; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006), making the liberal arts college an appealing

place to study how fit operates for women faculty. Liberal arts colleges offer cohesive cultures due to their small size, sharpened focus on teaching, and often residential setting (Baker et al., 2012); this cohesive culture lends itself to exploring fit as grounded within a specific organizational context. Liberal arts college faculty are expected to spend considerable time investing in the campus community, due to the small size of the faculty and the mission-focused nature of service demands (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012). Faculty at elite liberal arts colleges are also expected to perform high quality scholarship while translating that scholarship into teaching and research opportunities for their undergraduate students (Ruscio, 1987). At liberal arts colleges striving to become elite, the pressure to both produce scholarship and engage students can detract from faculty investment in the institution, and may result in faculty hires who do not place as much value on the community-oriented values of the institution (O'Meara & Bloomgarden, 2011).

Despite a large body of literature on the experiences of faculty generally, very little research has focused on their fit. The few studies of faculty fit have relied on a colloquial, non-theoretical definition of fit (Bogen, 1978; i. e. Burns & Kinkade, 2008; Olsen et al., 1995; Shanafelt et al., 2009) and do not consider how organizational activities or institutional type create conditions that enhance or detract from fit (Blackburn & Bentley, 1993; Lindholm, 2003; Ryan et al., 2012). The current literature on fit for faculty reinforces the assumption that fit can be assessed by singular dimensions (such as interest in teaching or research, or at a particular level such as person-job fit) or at a single point in time, and the majority of these studies were focused on fit as producing an outcome of interest (i. e. Satisfaction, intention to leave, vitality). This study fills a niche by focusing

on fit as the concept of interest, as the process of faculty sensemaking of their collegial interactions, institutional changes, work expectations, and tenure requirements over time.

Theoretical Framework

Rather than examining fit from the perspective of the institution at a single point in time, this study centers the point of view of the faculty throughout their early career period. Employing a view of fit as narrative, this study accounts for participants' experiences *in medias res*, or in the middle of things, and takes into account the past, the present, and the future (Shipp & Jansen, 2011). Fit for faculty is conceptualized as their sense making about themselves (Weick et al., 2005), their organizations, and their salient experiences in the organization (Shipp & Jansen, 2011). These experiences are assumed to be shaped by who these faculty are (motivations and worldview) and the importance of their experiences (Shipp & Jansen, 2011).

This study expanded Jansen and Shipp's theory (2011) to account for ways women faculty's choices might be constrained by organizational processes and cultures. The culture of the institution at which faculty work affects fit, driven by the operational organizational culture, disciplinary culture of their departments, and liberal arts institutional culture (Austin, 1990). Rejecting the often unstated idea that organizational cultures in academia are neutral, this study started from the assumption that organizations reflect their surrounding societies (Acker, 2006; Alvesson, 2002). Organizations perpetuate inequality regimes by structuring the possibilities available to their members. These inequality regimes are processes that determine how work activities are structured, how power is distributed across work hierarchies; race, gender, and class preferences that influence recruitment and hiring activities; compensation; and informal interactions with

colleagues while working (Acker, 2006). Inequality regimes may have different levels of visibility, legitimacy, and control and compliance mechanisms, which mean many of these processes feel normal to organizational participants (Acker, 2006). This normality is what Alvesson (2002) calls "world closing," or the blinding of organizational participants to possible alternatives of organizational operation.

Finally, this study's framework also accounted for individuals' intersectional identities as shaping their fit experiences through their standpoints in organizational interstices of power and privilege (Acker, 2012; Crenshaw, 1991; Haraway, 1988; Smith, 2005). Organizational members' experiences and responses to those experiences are affected by who they are, how they are perceived, the inequality regimes within the organization and the range of discourses available to them as result of those regimes (Acker, 2006; McNay, 1999; Smith, 2005). However, choices are still available in response to organizational power, and individuals can enhance their fit through their responses (Johnson et al., 2013); faculty make sense of their experiences and organizational discourses to enact agency in their faculty lives (O'Meara & Campbell, 2011).

Methods

Utilizing narrative research approaches, this study explored how tenured women faculty members at a liberal arts institution crafted their institutional, departmental, and disciplinary experiences into a narrative of "fitting." In order to situate the study within a distinct organizational culture that might expose differentiated levels of "fit" from participants, I focused on the early career experiences of seven tenured faculty women within a single residential liberal arts college. I examined how women faculty

accommodate, resist, and create their own ways of "fitting" in the academy. The research questions were:

1. What are women faculty's narratives of fitting and mis-fitting?

2. How do women construct these narratives in relation to their disciplinary, institutional, and departmental experiences in an organization with gendered and racialized inequality regimes?

3. What disciplinary, institutional, and departmental discourses are reflected in these narratives?

4. In what ways do women's narratives reflect choices and pursuit of action or inaction that develops or maintains a sense of fit?

To understand how the women faculty made sense of their experiences, I combined in-depth narrative interviewing with the seven participants, observations of many of those participants in varied work settings, document analysis of participants' tenure dossier personal statements, and communications from and about the institution (Kim, 2016b). The cultural elements of the organization were explored using methods drawn from institutional ethnography, a feminist perspective and method that examines how the practices of organizations shape the experience of people's everyday lives through the enactment of ruling relations (Smith, 2005). A narrative was composed for each participant. Cross-case analyses were conducted to identify commonalities and connections between individuals' narratives and their institutional experiences.

Findings

The participants' time at Serena has been marked by significant changes. As members of large cohorts hired by the college in the early and mid-2000s, they were just beginning

to find their way at the college when a major external crisis fundamentally changed the college. The Great Recession forced the entire campus to reckon with its priorities. The participants' narratives revealed common salient points in their fit process at Serena: their entry to the college, their tenure review process, and their post-tenure period.

The faculty entered their roles at Serena with different levels of investment in the mission and mechanics of faculty life at a liberal arts college. These entry positions set a trajectory for the participants' fit journeys at the college. Some sought the liberal arts context and entered their roles with a vision of what that would mean. They had to make small adjustments to their faculty lives, but generally were able to embrace and thrive in the teaching demands of the college. Others found their way to Serena through visiting appointments, and then made a commitment to a tenure track position. Their love of teaching made adjusting to faculty life relatively smooth. Some were less clear about investment in teaching, but Serena's prestige and the opportunities for scholarship and financial support were appealing.

The Great Recession of 2008 created new operating conditions for Serena. In response, the college changed its staffing strategies, slowed the incorporation of a more diverse faculty into its ranks, and reduced its overall reliance on contingent faculty to meet teaching demands. Alongside changes to the staffing resource mix at the college, the new financial restrictions led to a sense of precariousness and competition among departments that sought to remain resourced at pre-recession levels.

As junior faculty, the women in this study observed their senior colleagues as they navigated difficult decision making in the wake of the recession, and as the college sought to find its identity in an area of tightened resources. Serena's leadership made the

bold choice to retain and grow its new, high-cost need-blind admission and financial aid program, despite financial incentives to end the program. The emergence of financial concerns required the Board of Trustees to make robust interventions into college activities, shifting the board-faculty relationship to a more adversarial dynamic. The tightened resources also led to significant differences of opinion regarding the college's priorities, and how those priorities should be funded in the future. Anticipated changes in the future leadership of the college brought these tensions into sharp relief during the period data for this study were collected.

The faculty in this study were preparing for tenure review in the midst of these changes, with the first receiving tenure in 2010. They had to make sense of the expectations articulated by their colleagues and the college at large was easy for some faculty and difficult for others. Although a small place, the departments at Serena have wildly different cultures, leading to variation in how the faculty were prepared for tenure review by their colleagues. As they navigated the process with varying levels of departmental support, they bumped up against instances when they needed to change their priorities regarding research, reflect on their pedagogies, manage their time differently, and create different kinds of relationships with colleagues and students.

Their disciplinary and departmental norms determined the standards for their scholarship, with scholars in the humanities producing book manuscripts in preparation for tenure and those in the social sciences and sciences producing peer-reviewed journal articles. Some faculty had clear conversations early with their department chairs to help them set goals to meet tenure expectations or relied upon feedback delivered in their annual review letters to shape their activities. A few received little information or

conflicting messaging from their colleagues about their success in meeting pre-tenure goals. Despite variations, a common standard emerged that both defined the college's core commitment to teaching and translated that commitment to teaching into one primary metric: scores on teaching evaluations. They all tried to make sense of feedback on their teaching from course evaluations. Each participant articulated their success, evolution, or growth as teachers in their personal statement for tenures in terms of their evaluations, even if they held internal skepticism regarding student evaluations.

Some faculty through training, experience, and attitude were a "natural" fit at Serena. While they may have encountered doubts or challenges along their journey, fundamentally they had the right amount of passion and skill at teaching and scholarship to attain success. The confidence with which they approached tenure was high, in part because they received significant guidance from their departments early in their careers to aid them.

For others, becoming a Serena kind-of-professor took more intentionality. Having passion for teaching was not enough at Serena; the college also expected accomplishment in scholarly and artistic activities. Those who held deep commitments to scholarship found they had to adapt to the teaching focus of the college. This required learning a new balance of work or a new approach to engaging students. Their process required more adjustments in their activities, orientations, or attitudes.

Each faculty member was tenured; they found ways to make faculty life at Serena work. They may not consider their fit to be perfect, but through critical examination of themselves and the institution they found ways to create spaces for themselves in the academic, social, or community dimension of Serena and its local community. Not

surprisingly, the post-tenure period emerged as a time when they saw themselves as having more freedom to make different choices about their work, make changes to the institution or their relationship to it, or reevaluate the criteria through which they judged their own success. This shift in perspective and agency in this period is clearly driven by the relief of the pressure of tenure review. While some expressed concern regarding the upcoming review of full professor, they mostly expressed a confidence driven by understanding better what the college wants.

There are not many formal opportunities for faculty to identify how the college has created barriers to fit or success. Intense demands for engagement with their departments outside of normal work hours, the challenges of single parenting while a professor, being warned against being openly Christian as a professor, a lack of deep support for community engagement activities, or regular occurrences of racial profiling and microagressions did not have a place in the stories of fit that faculty create for the institution. Instead, these experiences simmer below the surface, acting as icebergs that demonstrate deep, fundamental injustices in the operation of the college, or skim along the surface, creating ripples in an otherwise idyllic experience. Ripples or icebergs, Serena has not always made fitting easy.

Discussion of Fit

Fit is not simple for faculty. It is interpersonal, scholarly, pedagogical, and tied to the vocational nature of academic training. In the language of global theories of fit, faculty show a strong person-vocational fit. The long years of training and intensive socialization processes of graduate education lead many doctorate holders to a single destination: the faculty job market (Antony & Taylor, 2004; Austin, 2010). Narratives about success and

failure tend to hinge on which students are placed in faculty roles in the academic job market, the prestige of the appointing institution, and the candidate-turned-faculty member's subsequent success in the tenure and promotion process (Adler & Adler, 2005; Baker, Pifer, & Lunsford, 2016; Cassuto, 2017; Gardner, 2009). The pre-tenure period extends to six or seven years, during which faculty attempt to make sense of the requirements of tenure via feedback from teaching evaluations and annual review or reappointment letters (Baker et al., 2016). With these pressures built into the narrative of success in academia, it is not surprising that most faculty find a way to fit enough to get through tenure review.

The faculty in this study all entered their first tenure track roles at Serena, and stayed through tenure and into their mid-career. However, their individual narratives, along with the analysis of institutional dynamics that were shaping their experiences during the pre-tenure period, indicate that despite having arrived at a common destination, their paths were distinctive to who they were, their worldview, their values, the sub-cultures of their departments, and their willingness to shape their behaviors to fill the mold.

This study developed a framework for faculty fit as a process, informed by the theory of narrative fit proposed by Jansen and Shipp (2011). Fit is experienced over time with feedback loops shaping an individual's ongoing sensemaking about their salient past, present, and anticipated future experiences. Extending Jansen and Shipp's work, I examined the role of the organization and its embedded inequality regimes for shaping the parameters of fit for faculty. Working to advance an interpretive view of fit driven by organizational members' experiences (Kristof-Brown & Billsberry, 2013a), I incorporated findings driven by the unique positionality of the participants due to their

locations (standpoints) within intersecting power relations both within and without the academy (Acker, 2012; Crenshaw, 1991; Haraway, 1988; Smith, 2005). A guiding premise was that fit does not happen to faculty; rather, they have and enact agency in making sense of responding to the narratives offered to them by their organizational contexts (McNay, 1999; O'Meara, 2015; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011). Faculty can enact agentic choices to accept the situation, change their expectations or perspectives, attempt to change the institution, or leave (Johnson et al., 2013; O'Meara, 2015; O'Meara & Campbell, 2011).

The following diagram represents the fit process as captured in this study. At the heart of the model is the interactive dynamic between Sensemaking about Experiences and Agentic Choices, nested within Institution and Societal Context, against a backdrop of Time. Sensemaking about Experiences (a process) informs the Agentic Choices (perspectives and actions) that faculty make in their fit process. These elements are shown as contributing to each other, acting in synthesis as an Individual makes sense of their experiences and engages in an response. Sensemaking and Agentic Choices are primarily situated within the Individual and their Institutional Context, but will informed by elements inside and outside the institution, shown by the overlap into the Societal Context. Sensemaking about Experiences is directly informed by inputs from Inequality Regimes and the Standpoint, mediated by the Individual. Inequality Regimes and Standpoints are informed by both the Institutional and Societal Contexts, and as such are shown overlapping both contexts, anchored in the Individual's position (Acker, 2006; Smith, 2005). Time is shown as multi-directional to represent how fit processes are affected by the past, the present, and the future state of society, institutions, and the

individual (Shipp & Jansen, 2011). Societal Context, Institutional Context, and Time are shown to have permeable boundaries, as these open systems influence each other and the individual's experiences (Birnbaum, 1998; Peterson, 1985).

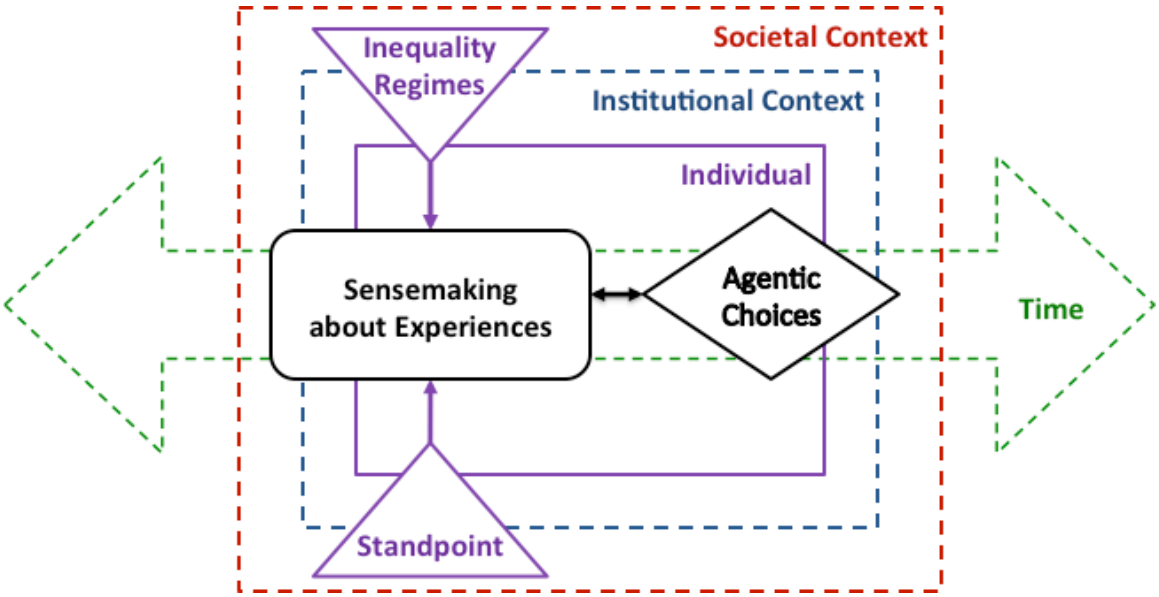

Figure 7.1. Process of Fit Model

The following discussion focuses on insights driven by the process as identified above. First, I address how time played a factor in the participants' fit narratives, particularly as it affected them and the institution. Second, I explore how the inequality regimes of a gendered and racialized organization interacted with faculty standpoints, shaping their experiences and producing particular ways of being at Serena. Finally, I show how the faculty participants enacted agentic choices as a result of these dynamics. I conclude the discussion with suggestions for institutional practices at liberal arts colleges and other institutional types and future directions for research.

Time in the Faculty Role and Institutional Lives

Essential to this narrative study of fit is the sense of time. This sense of time drives individuals' experiences of their lives, their sensemaking of their institutional

experiences, and the agentic choices they make in response to that sensemaking. Time also passed for Serena College, creating new external and internal operating conditions that shifted participants' experiences, shaped the discourse at the college, and presented undefined but real possible futures. I was able to chart the participants' journey across various points of their early and mid-career periods, and to show how time affected their experiences. I was also able to document the changes that have occurred at the college over time as a result of external societal dynamics and the college's response to those dynamics. The institutional changes produced a distinct context for the early career period, and the effect of that context on the faculty is noted.

Faculty Shifting from Early- to Mid-Career. The faculty in this study went through phases of growth and adjustment throughout their early career experiences. Some of this change was the natural result of entering a tenure-track role for the first time. Translating a vision of faculty life into reality is a challenge common to most first year faculty, and few faculty find a sustainable balance in their first year between their teaching and scholarly commitments (Boice, 1991b; Remmik, Karm, Haamer, & Lepp, 2011). For most of the faculty in this study, their first year at Serena was their first teaching experience at a highly-selective private liberal arts college, and experienced the common struggle of balancing their workload in relation to the college's expectations (Baker et al., 2016). For some who had envisioned a faculty life more driven by research, it was a challenge to put in the appropriate amount of time to prepare their teaching (Gaff & Lambert, 1996).

Consistent with Baker et al. (2016), faculty were concerned with identifying the requirements for tenure, shaping their behaviors accordingly. As they gathered new

information about their progress, they were pushed to change. As O'Meara, Terosky, and Neumann (2008) suggest, faculty growth is a continual process, shaped by the environment in which a faculty member works and the wants and needs of the faculty member herself. Some of these environmental pushes came via formal feedback mechanisms: student evaluations of teaching and annual review letters. Many participants wrote or spoke about using student teaching evaluations to guide their course preparation process; poor or uneven evaluations encouraged a handful to seek out assistance from the teaching and learning center on campus. Others were given guidance in their review letters to improve their research productivity or teaching activities. While external motivators may have mostly sparked the changes, they became core to most participants' approaches to their work, and signified their professional growth.

The post tenure period often prompts new goals and priorities for faculty. All of the faculty were mindful that review for full professor was based on different criteria than tenure, but most seemed comfortable with defining for themselves which activities they would engage and when. As Baker, Pifer, and Lunsford (2016) identified, liberal arts faculty at the associate level are concerned with their professional aspirations and maintaining scholarly vitality in the face of increased service expectations. My findings were consistent with previous studies showing that most faculty experience increased levels of service in the mid-career period (Neumann & Terosky, 2007); however, the research suggests that women faculty are tapped more often to engage in service activities (O'Meara et al., 2017), and spend more time on them than faculty men (Misra et al., 2013). Women faculty at liberal arts colleges find that service expectations are harder to avoid than at other institutional types, due to the small faculty size and the view of

service as tied to the institutional mission (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012). Increases in service activities at mid-career have been found to stall or slow women's advancement to full professor (Shaw, 2007; Terosky, OMeara, & Campbell, 2014). The women in this study appeared aware of these challenges as they looked toward promotion to full professor, but also seemed to have different ideas about what would make them successful in pursuit of promotion; their knowledge of the review process for full seemed shaped by what they knew of the careers of those who had been promoted in the past.

Serena Becoming A 21st Century College. While the faculty were charting their journey along the faculty life course, the institution was changing with the times as well. Once a well-resourced academic enclave for elite students and faculty, the early years of the twenty-first century brought significant changes to Serena College. First, a significant demographic shift orchestrated by the former provost in the mid-2000's increased the number of junior faculty (approximately 50 hires over 5 years) at the college as well as almost doubling the number of faculty of color on campus. All of the faculty in this study were hired under this former provost's initiative. The timing of their entry at the college significantly shaped whether they are seen as "bloat" or as assets, and potentially affected how they were mentored and evaluated for tenure. Phoebe suggests that being one of the first of these new hires made her experience more difficult than that of faculty who came after her. Lisa, who was among the last, benefited the most from lessons learned by her department in how to support early career faculty.

In addition to adjusting to large cohorts of junior faculty, the college was also adjusting to a significant increase in diversity in its faculty ranks. Some scholars have suggested that as a faculty becomes more diverse, the standards applied to professional

advancement increase as a way to maintain White and male supremacy (Aguirre, Jr., 2000; Bradley et al., 2017). Narratives of meritocracy are deployed, yet, the standards of merit are biased towards both White and male norms (Bradley et al., 2017; Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002). A few of the faculty in this study felt that the tenure standards they were evaluated against seemed higher than their White and/or male peers, with intense expectations for teaching and scholarship, echoing the experiences of faculty of color and women in other literature (Griffin et al., 2013). While this study cannot account for the departmental or college-level tenure decision processes for these participants, Delgado Bernal and Villalpando (2002), using Critical Race Theory, show how "meritocratic" standards may be applied to a woman of color's tenure dossier, resulting in questions regarding the quality of her work, the publication strategies deployed, and her effectiveness as a woman instructor of color teaching topics related to race, ethnicity, and gender.

The faculty also experienced changes in terms of the institution's response to the Great Recession. Unlike many of its peers, Serena decreased reliance on contingent faculty as a response to the recession (Kezar & Gehrke, 2014). While scholarship suggests that academic outcomes are better for students when taught by full-time faculty in tenure-track or tenured positions (Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Jaeger & Eagan, 2009, 2010), little research has identified the impact of shrinking the contingent workforce at a small private liberal arts college. The faculty at Serena experienced larger class sizes and less flexibility in the courses they could teach in response to the college's new hiring constraints. For those who expected or experienced the version of Serena with a sizable

contingent workforce, this change meant readjusting their expectations regarding their classes and the curriculum.

Serena also responded to the recession by leaning into student demands for majors in the sciences and hard social sciences. Catering to student demands as a response to the recession was not an uncommon practice among more elite private liberal arts colleges (Hilbun & Mamiseishvili, 2015). The increased investment in the sciences, including the construction of a new science building, was seen as necessary by faculty and students attached to those departments. Previous research has found that shifts in liberal arts college activities, especially to embrace or manage rising vocationalism among students, often raise questions about purpose (Baker & Baldwin, 2015), and a similar phenomenon occurred among Serena faculty. The campus is engaging in ongoing conversations about the purposes of the liberal arts college, how resources are used at the college, and whether the college should cater to students' vocationalism. Pending changes in leadership have only intensified these concerns, and they remain open questions.

Inequality Regimes and Standpoints at Work

Going into the research process, I had assumed that faculty narratives of fit would illuminate existing gendered or racialized inequality regimes. These dynamics certainly affected the women in this study, but they were more subtle and, at times, insidious, than I had previously imagined. Inequality regimes became apparent in how work activities were structured and evaluated, how power was distributed across hierarchies; race, gender, and class preferences that influenced promotion activities; and informal interactions with colleagues (Acker, 2006). Affirming previous research, faculty experiences with these inequality regimes varied with their gendered, racialized, marital,

and other intersectional standpoints (Gardner, 2012, 2013; Griffin et al., 2011, 2013; Morphew, 2016; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012; Wolfinger et al., 2008). One participant, Phoebe, articulated most clearly in her narrative the effects of inequality regimes, in part because of her standpoint as a single Black woman; her experiences, in particular, are highlighted throughout this discussion.

Structure of Work. I identified two major deployments of inequality regimes based in the structure of work activities. First was the demand on women faculty to engage in caretaking or emotional labor. Second was how faculty work in a high touch environment created challenges for single parents.

Several women in this study experienced frustration with student expectations that they serve as caretakers in their faculty role and actively resisted these expectations. Their interactions with students in and out of the classroom indicated a high expectation for more emotional or personal care work. Women faculty are often expected to bear a larger share of the burden of the emotional and care work in the faculty (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996; England, 2005; Johnsrud & Des Jarlais, 1994; Park, 1996; Reybold & Corda, 2011). Phoebe, a Black woman, felt that her White women students had high expectations for personal, friendly relationships; this experience has been documented extensively for women of color (Gregory, 2001; Griffin, 2013; Griffin et al., 2013; Harley, 2007). Women and people of color are often called upon to engage in service and other activities (Baez, 2000; Griffin et al., 2013; Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011; O'Meara et al., 2017). Answering the call for increased engagement with students increases stress for women faculty, and reduces their time available to spend on other activities even more valued by the college (Griffin et al., 2011; Hart & Cress, 2008). For women faculty at

liberal arts college, narratives of family and community place even more pressure on women faculty to engage in caretaking roles, as those expectations are tied to the mission and educational promise of the institution to students (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012). Liberal arts faculty might feel uncomfortable rejecting these norms due to institutional pressure to contribute to a family or home environment for students.

Distribution of work roles also emerged in the challenges associated with single parenting as a faculty member. While partnered mothers acknowledged some of the difficulties in juggling work and parenting as captured in previous studies (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012), motherhood did not shape their fit narratives like it did for the single mothers. They experienced substantial challenges meeting institutional expectations for teaching and research work while also adequately caring for their children. They were able to support each other in this process, sharing responsibilities and caregiving expenses through nanny-shares and by living near each other. Ward and Wolf-Wendel's (2012) comprehensive study of academic motherhood acknowledges that women academics are more likely to be single than men, yet their comments on motherhood in academia focused mostly on partnered mothers and their academic work. They do not capture this intersection in faculty experience, and the challenges of single motherhood in the academy have not been addressed substantially elsewhere. In her autoethnography on navigating the academy as a single mother, Schlehofer (2012) describes the conflicting, traditional views of both academia (working competitively and at high amounts to produce scholarship and teach) and motherhood (undivided attention, devotion, and patience for her child) she held that resulted in an untenable set of expectations for herself to be successful in both domains. She goes on to describe competing impulses to

reveal and hide her experience as a single mother academic; revealing her status could help to change views of single motherhood and parenting in academia, hiding her status could protect her from unfair assumptions regarding her lack of seriousness as an academic. These dynamics were echoed in comments by the single mothers in this study, who felt they needed to account for their productivity as affected by their single parenthood, but also that there was no appropriate place to bring up these challenges.

The academy does little to acknowledge that not all faculty have partners to help share in parenting, and a high-touch, high-involvement campus culture such as Serena's adds to the difficulty of negotiating these competing demands. While academic mothers already face increased risk of stigma through assumptions they will become less serious in their careers (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012), academic motherhood for single women is even more fraught. The single mothers in this study had to compromise in their scholarship, their teaching, and their parenting in order to attain tenure, leaving them dissatisfied with all three. Their experiences are echoed by Schlehofer (2012), who describes feeling additional pressure to prove herself as an academic because of her status as a single mother, yet, at the same time, feeling frustrated with the constraints her role as a professor placed on her availability as a parent. Being so far from the "ideal worker" by not having a partner at home to help pick up the slack of parenting (Acker, 1990), the single mothers in this study had to piece together facsimiles of partner support through a network of nannies, extended family, and each other. These challenges have been mitigated post-tenure, but not alleviated.

Power Hierarchies. In terms of power hierarchies, three primary dynamics emerged. The first was related to departmental dynamics. The second regarded how decision

making occurred at the college. The third illuminated how changing demands for majors at the college have shifted internal power among departments.

Senior faculty members at Serena exert considerable influence over the departmental experiences of junior faculty. Departmental interpersonal culture is highly influential in the pre-tenure period, creating additional support for faculty who prefer the interpersonal culture of their department, and changes or departure for faculty who do not find a compatible culture (Reynolds, 1992). Faculty in this study were left to make sense of a variety of cultures in their departments. These cultures resulted in experiences included misdirected mentoring, warnings about needing to stay on the market during the pre-tenure period, having only one senior colleague, and senior faculty's refusal to review the scholarly activities of junior faculty. In addition, previous work documented that women faculty satisfaction in the pre-tenure period is highly driven by mentorship from senior colleagues (August & Waltman, 2004), and the mentoring experiences of the women in this study varied widely. Mentoring often takes place at the department level, yet other studies have found that a portion of liberal arts college faculty report their departments do not have mentoring cultures, and that they rarely relied on their colleagues for support pre-tenure (Pifer, Baker, & Lunsford, 2015). The faculty in this study who expressed trouble relying on senior colleagues for support identified either a stated unwillingness to get too involved in mentoring junior scholars (in Phoebe's case) or that the advice given to them regarding success in the pre-tenure period did not align with the expectations of the broader department (in Ana's case). Senior colleagues are key gatekeepers of institutional knowledge, and, whether by design or happenstance, their failure to engage their junior colleagues productively can be detrimental.

Another power dynamic hinging on the divide between tenured and tenure-track faculty was the decision making processes at the college. Serena, like many small colleges, holds widely attended monthly faculty meetings. The faculty reported that the dynamics of these meetings required learning how and when to contribute, with most of this cohort waiting until post-tenure to speak up. Junior faculty were having to learn the political context and consequences associated with contributing to campus dialogues. As scholars and teachers knowledgeable in their disciplines and pedagogies, learning the art of campus politics required a new set of tools (Birnbaum, 1998; Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Despite the cultural expectation that faculty at Serena be involved in campus concerns, the structure of decision making privileges those with tenure. While this is a common dynamic at universities and colleges, it also allows abuses of power to be perpetuated (Schoorman & Acker-Hocevar, 2010), slows institutions' ability to change with shifting external and internal dynamics (Masson, 2011), and reifies sociohistorical power dynamics due to the higher proportion of White male faculty at the full and associate professor levels (Minor, 2014; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Faculty in this study expressed concern over the hesitation of the college to change, citing that resistance as slowing the college's ability to support students. Kezar and Lester (2009) argue that institutions need to engage in a matrix of formal and informal activities to support grassroots leadership and engagement among faculty in order to ensure that faculty expertise regarding the core functions of higher educational institutions are consulted and capitalized upon. They cite intractable resistance to change as a key dysfunctional hindrance to grassroots leadership at the department level (Kezar & Lester, 2009), and I would argue the same applies at the institutional level in this case.

Small colleges, like Serena, that rely heavily on tuition and endowments for their operating budgets especially felt the effects of the recession and adopted a variety of strategies to remain financially viable (Chabotar, 2010; Hilbun & Mamiseishvili, 2015). Given that all of the faculty in this study experienced Serena's response to the Great Recession of 2008 and the subsequent changes to how the college approached its operations, it is perhaps not surprising that resources have also emerged as a source of hierarchical power at the institution. Once in a position to spend lavishly, the recession refocused priorities at Serena, especially as it sought to diversify the student body through need-blind admission and financial aid policies. Although the economy has recovered significantly in recent years, the narrative of resource constraint has remained. Writing about the economic future of liberal arts colleges suggest that Serena is not alone in needing to adopt a new approach to improving productivity and lowering costs, especially as concerns regarding the cost of college tuition increase and efforts to diversify student populations gain more traction (Chopp et al., 2014).

Humanities departments used to dominate institutional decision-making and culture at Serena. Now, increased demand for majors in the sciences and hard social sciences has redistributed power. Students' interest in majors viewed as more marketable in a fickle and challenging job market is understandable. Class sizes have continued to grow post-recession in high-demand departments, prompting faculty in these areas to suggest they are subsidizing other, less popular departments. Faculty participants who were tenured in science and hard social science departments at the college expressed skepticism regarding the college's current use of resources, and were the most vocal about the college needing to make tough choices in future about its priorities. The humanities faculty expressed

skepticism, critiquing the board of trustees and college leadership for prioritizing financial considerations at the cost of other "Serena values." This internal shift in power is unsettling to faculty in parts of the college once considered essential to liberal arts education, and has empowered faculty in other areas of campus to be more vocal about the direction of the college. Since Serena is unlikely to shift to distributing funds based on the most popular majors (a model closer to responsiblity-centered management, Ehrenberg, 2000), this tension is likely to remain in place or to grow.

Preferences in Tenure and Promotion. Gender, race, and class preferences emerged in the tenure and promotion process for all participants. The most prominent was the reliance on student evaluations of teaching as the primary proxy for teaching effectiveness at the college. The emphasis placed on student evaluations of teaching perhaps set up women faculty and faculty of color for heightened levels of scrutiny. In previous studies, these faculty have had lower scores on their evaluations due to students' expectations that women and faculty of color engage in more care-taking and emotional labor in the classroom, that they be accessible and open to students at all times, and that they must do more to prove their knowledge about disciplinary topics (Chesler & Young Jr, 2007; Ford, 2011; Pittman, 2010; Smith & Johnson-Bailey, 2012). Many of the faculty reported experiences of being challenged in the classroom by White male and female students, the latter challenging women of color, which suggests that race and gender may have played role in students' reactions to the faculty. The women of color also expressed a desire to base their teaching in intersectionality and challenging students on issues of justice and equity, and may have been penalized by students for doing such work (Ford, 2011; Sulé, 2011). Phoebe, for example, was concerned that her colleagues would not

understand the complexities of teaching these issues as a woman of color, and that they might not account for that challenge in reviewing her teaching evaluations.

Some faculty also received distinct messaging that connected their identities to pressure on their scholarship. These experiences included mentoring from senior women to focus on scholarship for tenure, witnessing racial disparities in departmental tenure processes, and being only one of a few people of color in her field. These experiences provided the faculty subtle clues that they would be evaluated on different terms than their peers. The combination of increased expectations for women faculty of color and skepticism regarding their scholarship has been documented previously (Griffin et al., 2013; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2011; Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011). The women faculty in this study faced a bind in the tenure review process; they were expected to be excellent, but excellence had particular definitions (high quality teaching, and high quality scholarship evaluated by the right people), especially for the women of color (Agathangelou & Ling, 2002).

Another dynamic that emerged in the faculty members' post-tenure experiences were how they experienced being tapped for leadership roles. Most faculty described their departments' rotating chair appointments; some had already rotated into the role, others delayed their turn to be able to focus on scholarship, and others were about to enter the chairship of their departments. While chair appointments seemed to follow a similar pattern across campus, shaped by the size and composition of the department faculty, other leadership roles on campus were invitational. Blackmore (2014) argues that women's advancement into the leadership ranks of colleges and universities has been hindered by the increasing emphasis on academic capitalism, entrepreneurialism, and

lack of risk-taking. She suggests that because women often hold different investments regarding their careers and goals in engaging campuses as leaders, only those who are clearly aligned with those emphases will become leaders. Being recognized as having particular traits, and then being invited into and succeeding in leadership roles appeared to be another sorting mechanism in place at the college. Both Karen and Phoebe had been "tapped." Phoebe quickly burned out in her roles, as she attempted to keep up a rigorous teaching load and sought to change the institution to be more equitable and just, a goal Blackmore (2014) suggests is out line with college and universities goals. Karen, who aligned herself with the college's discourse of financial constraint and learned to speak the campus's "diversity talk," thrived in her first campus-wide role, and was poised to step into a larger role. Karen seems more clearly aligned with discourses of advancing popular majors, cutting "unnecessary" programs, and using the rhetoric of diversity to advance those aims (Ahmed, 2012; Blackmore, 2014). While the campus may allow wider variation in what slips through the fit filter at tenure, advancement into the administrative ranks is dependent on being identified as "fitting" with particular values, lenses, and willingness to deploy power on behalf of select issues and priorities.

Informal Interactions. The final dimension of inequality regimes that emerged for the faculty in this study was the nature of informal interactions with their colleagues. The previously discussed inequality regimes were often embedded in how the college has chosen to structure its activities and business. Informal interactions reinforced these hierarchies and divisions of work, signaling to faculty when they were and were not valued. Phoebe and Ruth described experiencing gendered and racialized microaggressions at Serena, including exclusions from meeting minutes, being called

"bloat," and being racially profiled by campus staff. The college's minimal response to these incidents undermined Serena's claims to be a safe space for all community members. These kinds of exclusions and microaggressions are not uncommon on college campuses or in faculty meetings or classrooms (Gregory, 2001; Harley, 2007; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2011; Oliva et al., 2013), yet the faculty were still disillusioned by the failure by leadership to respond constructively to these concerns.

The other faculty also described significant negative informal interactions related to their identities. Karen has encountered both support and skepticism in response to her openness about her Christian faith. As a single woman, Ana was viewed skeptically by the wives of her male colleagues; some even openly expressed relief when she eventually got married, as if she was a threat to their marriages. Lisa and Nora received pushback on their scholarly knowledge from students in their classrooms. While the significance of these events vary, they also point to the various ways that the culture at Serena has reminded the faculty in this study of the ways they do and do not belong.

Overall, the mechanisms through which inequality regimes function at Serena vary in their legitimacy and visibility (Acker, 2006). They manifest with low legitimacy and visibility in everyday, informal interactions in the professional workplace. They are embedded in the processes through which faculty are evaluated for promotion and tenure, highly legitimized but not highly visible. They are strictly reinforced with high legitimacy and visibility in the norms around decision making and internal departmental cultures that delimit junior faculty engagement and enactment. Since this study does not compare women's experiences to men's, it is likely additional gendered inequality

regimes have remained invisible, considered normal and legitimate by the women faculty participants in this study.

How inequality regimes affected the faculty varied with their standpoints in the college. The White participants benefitted from racialized inequality regimes, such as White faculty who enjoyed and excelled at teaching in the terms Serena expected and who did not experience racial microaggressions in the workplace. Married mothers who had a partner to share in childcare and household responsibilities benefitted from the inequality regimes that expect workers to be partnered. The faculty in the science and hard social science departments felt secure in their critiques of how the college uses its resources, because they do not bear the same level risk as those in the humanities. While Alvesson (2002) is concerned that organizational culture serves as world-closer, each of the faculty participants in this study has imagined an alternative Serena that does things differently and has values more aligned with their own.

Agentic Choices

While exposing the institutional arrangements that reinforce and sustain power dynamics within Serena, this study also was designed to center faculty participants' sense of agency in the fit process. Faculty in this study began their experiences at Serena from different starting points, and responded to the inequality regimes they encountered in distinctive ways. These choices were driven by their sense of efficacy in effecting change in themselves and the organization (O'Meara & Campbell, 2011; O'Meara et al., 2008).

The faculty engaged in sensemaking about their experiences, and as a result, deployed agentic responses to their environment to enhance their fit in several dimensions. The literature suggests that faculty can enact their agency in two ways: through actions and

through perspective taking (Campbell, 2014; O'Meara, 2015). In alignment with the view of agency as perspectives and actions, Johnson and colleagues (2013) suggest individuals regulate their fit through changing their organizations, changing their behaviors, or changing their expectations and perspectives. These fit regulation activities (changing the organization, changing behaviors, and changing expectations and perspectives) can be considered a set of strategies that faculty may engage to manage their fit and to negotiate the demands of institutional and organizational power.

Changing the Organization. Faculty members' agentic action towards the college manifested as a result of their organizational commitment. Faculty satisfaction has been found to be predictive of levels of organizational commitment (Lawrence et al., 2012). Faculty organizational commitment led to agentic choices, reflecting differences in both levels (high, medium, low) and sites of commitment (institutional or departmental). Some were deeply committed to the institution, and found ways to engage more deeply with or on behalf of the college, taking action with significant service, administrator, or campus activist roles. These activities were in service of improving experiences for students, engaging the community, advocating for better working conditions for faculty and staff, or holding the campus more accountable to its narratives of equity and justice.

Changing Behaviors. Faculty engaged in agentic behaviors to align with the college's demands. This included changing their approach to teaching to enhance their evaluation scores, increase their scholarly productivity, or restrict their informal student interactions to allow more time on rewarded activities. These efforts were aided by an external intervention. Many of the faculty referenced the timely on-campus lecture by KerryAnn Rockquemore of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity

(NCFDD). NCFDD advice focuses predominantly on prioritization of activities, accountability groups, and the strategic use of "no." Serena's endorsement of NCFDD's approach to the early career facilitated a common culture of accountability and boundary-setting that could be seen as beneficial to its junior faculty.

The strategic prioritization of activities was particularly useful as faculty sought to meet the scholarly expectations of the college. Most referenced being a part of a writing accountability group, even if they did not specifically mention Dr. Rockquemore or the NCFDD. These strategies aligned well with extant research about the needs of faculty at liberal arts institutions to find ways to protect their time due to multiple demands (Pifer et al., 2015; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012). These strategies' widespread adoption may have also increased pressures on the faculty to produce particular valued goods for the institution (Gonzales, Martinez, & Ordu, 2013), such as publications or certain kinds of teaching, at the expense of activities that faculty might have placed more value upon like projects aimed at transforming the experience of the academy for vulnerable populations of students and staff.

Many of the faculty changed their behaviors to respond to feedback provided by the college en route to tenure review. This inevitably raises questions regarding the amount of agency faculty have when responding to directed feedback. For many faculty, the pressures associated with tenure review reduce any feelings of choice or freedom (Acker & Webber, 2016). These changes, instead, are seen as necessary to survive the binary tenure decision of "yes" or "no." Other faculty may find that they changes demanded of them are untenable or unacceptable, and enact a choice to not change. This may result in them not being awarded tenure. Others may leave the institution altogether to find a site

better aligned with their values (O'Meara et al., 2016). While the faculty interviewed here were all tenured and remained at the institution, some set limits on how much they would change their behaviors to appease the college, and others have remained open to leaving for the right new context.

Changing Expectations and Perspectives. Despite operating within a single institutional context, the faculty members took different agentic perspectives on the various dimensions of their careers at Serena related to their interests, talents, and capacity. Their interests changed over time, and those evolving interests helped to differentiate their approach to the faculty role at Serena and marked their growth (Baldwin, 1990; O'Meara et al., 2008). These differences were driven by their own preferences and personalities, and the structures and values embedded within the organization. Each faculty member elaborated her own perspective on what success meant within the college's expectations, how closely she aligned to the college's values, and how she found ways to translate those perspectives into action related to teaching, research, and service. Different faculty perspectives resulted in different actions. This variation in how they approached their work brings to life the concept of autonomy in academia (Austin, 1990; Henkel, 2005; O'Meara, 2004), and the importance that autonomy plays in creating professional growth and vitality (Baldwin, 1990; O'Meara et al., 2008).

Faculty perspectives sometimes changed as result of their experiences enacting agency. One faculty member reduced her organizational commitment to a low level as a result of her own thwarted efforts to change the college. Baez (2000) has suggested that faculty of color engage in critical agency in order to foment change, enact resistance to

unfair campus practices, and potentially redefine social structures on campus. Others suggest that faculty should not give their energy to institutions that sustain and perpetuate systems of oppression, and that rejecting organizational commitment is the only source of agency within the academy (Moten & Harney, 2004). For this faculty member, her agentic perspective was similar to other faculty of color — one of double consciousness or division of self into personal and professional identities (Levin et al., 2013). She recognized the limits of how the institution would value her, and thus protecting herself by intentionally limiting how much of herself she would give to the institution to her commitment, echoing literature documenting the experiences of faculty members of color in the pre-tenure period (Diggs et al., 2009).

Faculty in the study made agentic choices in response to institutional demands and their own needs and desires. Their choices, both perspectives and actions, helped them to chart individualized paths. They made choices within the matrix of institutional constraints driven by changing environmental conditions such as the recession; the demands of the pre-tenure period; and inequality regimes related to gendered work expectations, power dynamics within departments and college governance, unwritten rules for tenure and promotion, and informal interactions that signaled whether they belonged or not. As they grew in their roles, their preferences and priorities shifted, and their organizational commitment waxed or waned.

Faculty standpoint within the institution shaped the strategies that felt available to faculty for deployment in making change in themselves and others. For example, prioritization, boundary setting, and its resultant productivity was not guaranteed to be rewarded, recognized, or respected equally for all faculty. Literature suggests that faculty

of color, faculty from low-income backgrounds, LGBTQ faculty, and scholars with disabilities, to name a few categories, may never be rewarded for the same behaviors in the same ways White, middle-class, able men and cis/hetero women are (Ahmed, 2012; Griffin et al., 2014). Agency is a factor for faculty response to their sensemaking, but the parameters and efficacy of that agency takes different shapes for different faculty.

Implications for Research and Practice

While this study has created new insights into how fit might work for faculty, it is only the opening foray into developing a better understanding of fit as a process, and for allowing that understanding to inform the practice of higher education institutions. Below are suggestions for future research that could expand upon knowledge gained in this study about fit, inequality regimes, and sites of agency. Following, implications for practice are suggested, focused on enhancing faculty fit generally, and reducing the mechanics of inequality regimes.

Future Directions for Research

The directions for future research can be grouped into six significant categories. The first category focuses on expanding which faculty standpoints and experiences are centered in the research. The second category expands the institutional environments at which fit is examined. The third category is concerned with extending the points in the faculty lifecourse at which fit is studied. The fourth category is research that provides more detail to the perspectives of individuals informing institutional decisions about faculty fit. The fifth category explores other work roles within higher education institutions to identify commonalities across the academic work sector. The final category

focuses on the methodological contributions of this study and its significance for higher education research.

Expanding Standpoints and Experiences. Gendered inequality regimes were a central defining heuristic for this study, because this study focused on the experiences of women. Also focusing on the experiences of people who do not identify as women could produce useful insights into how inequality regimes function for those most identified with the norms of the ideal worker (White men), while also exploring the impact of these regimes on faculty who do not identify with the gender binary. While the recruitment of participants put no restrictions on the women faculty being cisgendered, no participants featured in this study self-identified as transgendered, nonbinary, or genderqueer. In addition, the faculty in this study were overwhelmingly North American, White, middle class, able heterosexual/straight women. More research needs to be done that centers a variety of intersectional standpoints, and is able to expose the other forms of inequality regimes at work for faculty.

Institutional Settings. This research was situated at an elite small, private, independent, highly selective liberal arts college. Serena is a rarefied environment even among institutions that share the label “liberal arts college." While this rarefied space allowed the institutional dynamics and culture to become more clear, it may be difficult to translate some of these findings to a research university or a community college. Research is needed to explore whether this model of fit is sustained within other contexts and to identify which inequality regimes emerge at other institutional types. In addition, this study featured seven faculty each in distinct disciplines, which blurred the lines between departmental and disciplinary cultures and their attendant inequality regimes. A

cross-institutional study that focused on a single discipline should amplify the inequality regimes and practices that are discipline-specific. Bradley et al. ’s (Bradley et al., 2017) institutional ethnography of the tenure process for Canadian music faculty and Wolf-Wendel and Ward’s (Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2014) analysis of disciplinary commonalities for academic motherhood are good recent examples of the kind of deep dive into disciplinary practices across institutions and types that may be needed.

Faculty Lifecourse. By focusing on faculty who had been evaluated for tenure, this study had a sharpened attention on the period just before and after tenure review. While faculty were asked to discuss their earlier career experiences, the intervening years made deep insights into their sensemaking at the time difficult to ascertain. Future studies of fit should engage faculty at varying points in their career. Shifting the entry into fit narratives along different points in faculty members’ incumbency should reveal differences in their view of earlier career phases or their anticipations of future phases. The faculty in this study were all deemed to fit by their institutions; future research must also engage those who are evaluated as not fitting, by studying those whose contracts are not renewed in the early career, who do not receive tenure, or do not receive promotion to full. Engaging these faculty might allow additional inequality regimes to emerge, or further validate those already identified.

Fit Evaluators. While this study focused on the ways the institution and its practices affected faculty prior to and after the tenure decision, the divide between an institution and its faculty is an artificial distinction. Faculty review other faculty at multiple points: hiring for a job, review for tenure, and review for full professor . The majority of senior administrators in higher education institutions are also former faculty, despite often being

cast as on the "dark side" (Esterberg & Wooding, 2013). Understanding more about how these faculty make fit determinations about others would reveal how inequality regimes become embedded through shared and adopted values, practices, and norms. The faculty in this study also expressed opinions about what made "someone" fit, even while they may have chafed against some of the expectations placed on them.

Other Higher Education Work Roles. The discourse about "fit" in higher education is not limited to the faculty workforce. Student affairs, academic affairs, research and sponsored programs, and institutional research are all increasingly professionalized fields of work that are tailored to the kinds of institution at which that work is embedded. A preliminary study of fit for student affairs professionals has revealed that fit also matters for this work, and is informed by similar institutional narratives and inequality regimes as that of the faculty (Bennett et al., in press). Myths of meritocracy and exceptionalism about the higher education workplace abound, creating unique practices, norms, and values that structure campus work (Gonzales, 2014a; Gonzales & Murakami, 2013; Griffin et al., 2013). More insight is needed to understand how these function, and the differences for varying professional roles. Understanding how institutions of higher education deploy the ideal worker as a metric against which all staff are evaluated should illuminate challenges to create equitable work environments.

Narrative Research and Institutional Ethnography. This study highlighted the power of narrative research to inform faculty careers research and the higher education literature more broadly (Kim, 2016b). Humans are story-oriented; we make sense of ourselves and the experiences of others through narrative, through lived experience in time (Bruner, 2004). Future studies of faculty would benefit from a narrative perspective

which focuses simultaneously on meaning making and change over time. In addition, this study borrowed some methods from institutional ethnography, which is able to unpack how institutional processes dictate the practices of their members (Smith, 2005). A handful of higher education researchers have used institutional ethnography recently to track various dimensions of faculty careers (Bradley et al., 2017; Jones, Beddoes, Banerjee, & Pawley, 2014; Lund, 2012). Given that faculty work is governed by institutional norms as elaborated in their departments, organizations, and disciplines, institutional ethnography is positioned well to reveal the power dynamics in that which seems normal about academe.

Implications for Institutional Policy and Practice

This study revealed the ongoing dynamic interchange between faculty and their institutions. Interactions between the two shape the fit process for faculty. This study also revealed that bias and power within institutions are often deployed in subtle ways; institutions and those wishing to effect change at them will have to be savvy to these deployments of power. Recommendations for changes fall in five areas: departmental support for early career faculty; tenure and promotion review; governance structures; institutional change management; and, diversity programs.

Faculty Early Career. This study affirmed that faculty want to be successful in their roles, but are often confused by the messages they receive early in their careers from senior faculty, department chairs, and others in leadership. Participants who received clear guidance from a mentor or department chair were better able to meet departmental and institutional goals. Faculty in departments where discussion of progress towards tenure was verboten had more uncertainty during their pre-tenure period. In addition, the

unwritten rules in terms of the benchmarks expected for teaching and research, as well as the kinds of service activities that are most rewarded, should be shared as explicitly as possible. This is not a new recommendation regarding the early career period (Austin & Rice, 1998); faculty in liberal arts colleges face uncertainty regarding tenure and rely on their departments for mentoring and development (Baker et al., 2016; Pifer et al., 2015).

However, given the tightened resource constraints that all higher education institutions are operating within, withholding information that could help an early career scholar be successful is detrimental to both institutions and their faculty. Faculty are left to find another appointment, which is greatly affected by their research productivity, quality of the institution they are leaving, and the status of their recommenders (List, 2001). Institutions incur costs for recruitment, application, and interview processes; orientation, training, and start-up packages; severance and benefits; and indirect costs to productivity, morale, and student retention (Betts & Sikorski, 2008).

Along these lines, department chairs and other campus leaders can have significant influence over the pre-tenure period, through early career reviews and the departmental tenure review process (Bensimon, 2000; Sorcinelli, 2000). Department chairs need to receive good training and informed advice about how to appropriately provide feedback to junior faculty both writing and in person (Hecht, 2004). Afraid of saying too much or being too discouraging in review letters, department chairs often fail their junior faculty by not identifying productive areas of improvement. Review letters often tend to obscure criticisms of faculty, making it difficult for junior faculty to identify areas for improvement (Hyon, 2011). In addition, trainings offered to chairs and other leaders can highlight the challenges that women and faculty of color face, policy options for building

flexibility into the pre-tenure period, and "research findings on evaluation bias" to better prepare them to support pre-tenure faculty (Morrissey & Schmidt, 2008, p. 1401).

Chairs should also be helping to ensure that they are given opportunities for growth by ensuring that junior faculty are not shouldering too much of the departments' service burden, are given "stretch" opportunities with their teaching, and are being allotted enough time in their work schedule for scholarship. In their study of departmental contexts at liberal arts colleges, Pifer, Baker, and Lunsford (2015) suggest that department chairs could be instrumental in helping to provide time and opportunity to faculty to engage in professional development activities, and should receive training to achieve those goals. Faculty should be encouraged to thoughtfully approach their networking activities, especially within their departments, and to consider political, functional, impression management, and symbolic inclusion strategies (Pifer & Baker, 2013).

Faculty in this study also found the use of strategies proposed by the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD) useful for helping them to prioritize their varied work roles. Chairs, at minimum, could share articles from Inside Higher Ed written by the NCFDD, endorsing these behaviors and providing strategies for new hires to approach their work. In general, junior faculty rely on the chair and other senior faculty to signal the appropriate behaviors for the department; modeling boundary setting, prioritization, and accountability are key behaviors to highlight. Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2012) found that boundary setting is particularly important for early-career faculty at liberal arts colleges, where expectations to be an active member of the campus community can make it difficult for faculty not to overcommit to service and student-

focused activities. In addition, faculty at elite liberal arts institutions like Serena are also under pressure to produce high quality scholarship, placing even more pressure on their limited time (Ruscio, 1987). Therefore, departments should be mindful of the time commitments placed on junior faculty, and help them set priorities towards their tenure goals.

Tenure Review. As mentioned above, there is a lot of uncertainty regarding the tenure review process. Institutions should be wary of permitting unwritten rules of success to permeate the culture around tenure and promotion. The faculty at Serena were skeptical of campus leaders who denied the "80% 4s and 5s" metric for student evaluations of teaching. If most people on a campus, in a college or school, or in a system are citing a similar metric repeatedly, it should prompt a conversation by leadership to determine if that metric truly represents institutional standards, its pervasiveness among review evaluations, and whether it should be formalized or counteracted. Such standards should either be made visible and transparent, endorsed by the institution, or they should not be applied. Leaving these standards ambiguous invites bias and uneven application and understanding of requirements.

Since most campuses use formal student evaluations of teaching to some degree in the tenure review process, these numbers can be difficult to use appropriately. Some institutions may place extreme weight on them; others may only place weight on teaching evaluations when other elements of the tenure dossier raise questions. Whatever the weight placed on teaching evaluations, their use alone in determining teaching effectiveness is one of the most substantial inequality regimes identified in this study. Student evaluations of teaching can be highly influenced by the conscious and

unconscious biases of student evaluators, and their gendered and racialized (at minimum) expectations of faculty (Bavishi, Madera, & Hebl, 2010; Laube, Massoni, Sprague, & Ferber, 2007; Reid, 2010). Faculty who teach topics that are personally challenging for students, such as diversity, intersectionality, and critical studies, may be penalized by students in their evaluations. Institutions that value teaching highly should consider multiple forms of assessment that are weighted equally, including teaching portfolios, peer observations, and trained student teaching evaluators (Johnson & Ryan, 2000).

Governance. Institutions committed to shared or collective faculty governance should be mindful of how their governance structures enhance or detract from engaged, grassroots leadership and decision-making. While most campuses might assume increasing levels of engagement along the faculty lifecourse, ensuring governance is enacted with openness to democratic procedures and avenues for marginalized faculty voices to be heard is key to transforming higher education institutions. Providing educational sessions to the faculty at large about how they engage in governance (without necessarily having to serve in a senate or hold a formal role) allows institutions to capitalize on the diversity of viewpoints among the faculty and to identify systematic disparities in experience across the institution. Fostering stewards of the institution is necessary for even the largest of institutions, and early career faculty who are turned away from engaging the institution may not be in an informed position to engage in stewardship at the mid- or late-career (Kezar & Lester, 2009).

Change Management. As the faculty experience of changes at Serena College in this study have shown, institutional leaders should explore how they manage change, especially when changes are not driven through the faculty governance structure. In

organizations with strong cultures and overall high levels of fit among employees, efforts to drive change often fail if they are not aligned with the values and practices embedded in the culture (Caldwell, 2013). Since change raises uncertainty about the future, organizational members look for signals from any source possible about what the future will hold. Effective change managers provide clear signals and messages, and acknowledge the uncertainty that may arise; how change managers communicate has a strong impact on organizational members' sense of fit in a time of change (Caldwell, 2013). Leaders who want to excel at change management, especially those who come from the outside at small colleges like Serena, should put in time to understand the culture of the place they want to change, solicit perspectives from a variety of faculty and staff, and find champions among the faculty to effectively promote changes from within (Kezar, 2001; Kezar & Eckel, 2002). While the changes discussed in this study were mostly institutional, department chairs should also be mindful of the kinds of changes they might enact as part of their tenure, and reflect on how to effectively communicate those changes to their constituent faculty. No leader can make everyone happy, but faculty members who feel engaged and informed about decisions being made are better able to envision the future and make decisions for themselves how to respond. Faculty agency is the least effective when faculty members have bad information or assumptions, and they can effectively sink, swim, cope or innovate in response to changes based on the information they have, the discourses of response available to them, and their sense of alignment with the changes proposed (Trowler, 1998).

Diversity Programs. The faculty in this study had suspicions about when their gender or race may have played a role in shaping their experiences, but few had concrete

evidence of those experiences. Most of the women in this study expressed an awareness of potential challenges for navigating their careers, including avoiding heavy service after promotion to associate, the challenges of finding external reviewers who could speak to the context- or identity-bound nature of their scholarship, and the demand for mothering from undergraduate students. The most clear experience of bias was Ruth's story of racial profiling, and Phoebe's affirmation of the regularity with which Black faculty at Serena were profiled by campus security and other staff.

Institutions' relatively stable staff compositions, alongside a completely changing student body, present real challenges to institutional efforts to create change in these areas. Institutional power dynamics, which often center faculty at the apex of power, make it difficult to hold accountable other members of the community who make faculty feel unsafe or discriminated against. This includes staff who racially profile Black professors or students who disrespect women professors in the classroom. However, the increasing visibility of racial, gendered, classist, and ableist incidents on campus across the country demand that institutions take action to address when and where inequality regimes emerge. Institutions must increase representational diversity in their academic and non-academic staff, evaluate their review and promotion systems for patterns of inequity and the enforcement of unwritten biased rules, and create robust and protected programs for faculty to report and seek redress for harms incurred by inequality regimes. These efforts should increase the visibility of inequality regimes while reducing their legitimacy. Efforts to change institutions' biased practices rarely are designed to become embedded into the daily life of college actors, and are stifled by traditions of academic freedom and independent action (Minor, 2014). Change efforts should focus on building

the capacity and shifting the vision of institutions, through practices that open possibilities and reject established inequality regimes (Schlombs, Howard, DeLong, & Lieberman, 2015).

Conclusion

Fit is not a binary state; it is an ongoing process of sensemaking by faculty. The participants in this study engaged in an ongoing fit process to attain tenure and promotion, but their journeys were not identical. Each found a way to make the demands at Serena College fit them. This included changing themselves, changing their agentic perspectives, or taking agentic action to change the College. Capturing these changes through narrative provided an alternative path into understanding faculty careers and their experience of fit.

The process of fit explored through the faculty narratives revealed how inequality regimes shape faculty experiences based on their standpoints. These regimes shaped their approach to navigating challenges, prioritizing their work, managing relationships, and engaging in campus life. The anticipation of tenure review served to shape the pre-tenure period, encouraging faculty to adopt behaviors and self-narratives that would enhance their fit. Following tenure, faculty were able to deepen commitments to the aspects of faculty life that they found most rewarding. The identification of those commitments was shaped by institutional pressures as well as their own desires and interests. Their fit processes were still ongoing as they looked to promotion to full.

In sum, this study expanded understanding of fit for faculty. By focusing on the fit narratives of seven tenured women professors at a small, private, highly selective liberal arts college, this study makes contributions to knowledge about faculty fit as a

sensemaking process, how inequality regimes are enacted through institutional processes and norms, and how faculty make sense of their institutional environments to craft their own careers.

Appendix A

Participant Academic Life History Background Information

Contact Information

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Preferred Pseudonym:

General Background

Age:

Race/Ethnicity:

Gender Identity:

Hometown:

Years of full time work experience (including non faculty roles or work experience prior to the PhD):

Sexual Orientation:

Current Marital Status:

Children (How many, Gender, Age):

Educational Experiences

Undergraduate Institution:

Master's Institution and Program (if applicable):

Doctoral Institution and Program (if applicable):

Faculty Positions and Institutions in Reverse Chronological Order (most recent to oldest):

Family Education History

Guardian 1 Relationship:

Highest Education Completed by Guardian 1:

Guardian 2 Relationship:

Highest Education Completed by Guardian 2:

Do any (other) family members have graduate degrees? If so, who and what degree?

Appendix B

Informed Consent

University of Maryland College Park

Page 1 of 3 *Initials _____ Date _____*

Project Title	**Narratives of Fit: Understanding Women Faculty Stories of Making Sense and Finding Place in Gendered Organizations**
Purpose of the Study	*This research is being conducted by **Jessica Bennett** at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you meet the qualifications of the study as a female faculty member who has submitted materials for tenure review at a liberal arts college. The purpose of this research project is to identify how academic organizations shape the experiences of women faculty in determining their sense of fit.*
Procedures	*The procedures will include a combination of interviews, observations and document analysis. All interviews and observations will take place on your campus, in settings that you have identified. Please select the phases of data collection you are comfortable participating in:* ☐ ***Interview 1*** *-- Academic Life History (between 90 and 120 minutes); Includes questions about how you came to be at the institution, your choice of discipline, and how you've come to understand the community at the College.* ☐ ***Interview 2*** *-- Experiences with the Institution (between 60 and 90 minutes); Digs more deeply into your interactions with the College, and the kinds of information you've received to help you understand yourself and your experiences at the College.* ☐ ***Observation 1*** *with students (approximately 60 minutes); In a teaching, advising, or casual setting* ☐ ***Observation 2*** *with colleagues (approximately 60 minutes); In a meeting or casual setting* ☐ *Document Analysis:* ***Curriculum Vita*** ☐ *Document Analysis:* ***Application Materials*** ☐ *Document Analysis:* ***Tenure and Promotion materials*** ☐ *Document Analysis:* ***Mid-term Review 1*** *(i.e. year 2 materials and evaluation)* ☐ *Document Analysis:* ***Mid-term Review 2*** *(i.e. year 4 materials and evaluation)* ☐ *Document Analysis:* ***Feedback*** *from institutional entities, chairs, or colleagues* ☐ *Document Analysis:* ***Guidance*** *provided to you by your department or institution on these processes* ☐ *Document Analysis:* ***Other items identified****, similar to those listed above, in consultation with Researcher* ☐ *Document Analysis:* ***Written Response*** *to a letter from the Researcher about initial impressions from data*
Potential Risks and Discomforts	*There may be some risks from participating in this research study. These include reflection on difficult moments in your career or personal history. You may take a break if these reflections are too difficult. The researcher also has the information for your Employee Assistance*

University of Maryland College Park

Initials _____ Date _____

	Program and Ombudsperson in the instance that you wish either continued support after the interview, or wish to seek institutional support. There may also be a small risk of being identifiable to those who read this research. All identifying information will be redacted and/or anonymized from interview transcripts, observation notes, and provided documents, Pseudonyms for both participants and the institution will be used to protect your identity.
Potential Benefits	*There are no direct benefits from participating in this research. However, possible benefits include an increased understanding of yourself and the work place that might help you better navigate your experiences in the future. In the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of the faculty work lives of women, and particular women faculty at liberal arts colleges; as well as a better grasp of what matters for "fit."*
Confidentiality	*Any potential loss of confidentiality will be minimized by redacting any identifying information, keeping all data in password protected files on a password protected computer, and using secure electronic communication media. The primary investigator and the dissertation chairs will be the only ones with access to any data collected in the study.* *If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your institutional affiliation will be not included in any reports of the research. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.*
Compensation	*There is no compensation for participating in this study.*
Right to Withdraw and Questions	*Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.* *Your responses to this study will not be shared with colleagues, supervisors, or other individuals at your institution.* *If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the investigator:* **Jessica Bennett** **0221 Stamp Union, College Park MD, 20742** **845.559.8652;** **bennettj@umd.edu**

University of Maryland College Park

Initials _____ *Date* _____

	Dissertation Chairs: Kimberly Griffin 3232 Benjamin, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742 *301.405.2871* *kgriff29@gmail.com* KerryAnn O'Meara 3112C Benjamin, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742 301.405.5579 komeara@umd.edu
Participant Rights	*If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact:* **University of Maryland College Park** **Institutional Review Board Office** **1204 Marie Mount Hall** **College Park, Maryland, 20742** **E-mail: irb@umd.edu** **Telephone: 301-405-0678** *This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.*
Statement of Consent	*Selecting "I Consent" below indicates that you are at least 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. You will receive a copy of this consent form via email to print for your records.* If you agree to participate, please select "I Consent". If you do not agree to participate, please select "I Do Not Consent". If you have questions, please select, "I Have Questions", and provide a means of contact. If you select "I Consent", you will be asked to provide some additional information including contact information, demographic background information, and your curriculum vita. If you would prefer to submit these items in a different format, please contact the researcher at bennettj@umd.edu. ☐ I Consent ☐ I Do Not Consent ☐ I Have Questions, Please Contact Me at _____

Appendix C

Protocol: Interview 1

Thank you for agreeing to talk with me. As we've already discussed, this is the first of two interviews for a study focused on the experiences of women faculty at a liberal arts college. The purpose of our conversation today is for me to learn more about you and your experiences here at [Institution Name]. I am most interested in hearing about what has been important to you; I have several conversation prompts prepared, but I'm hoping we can more just have a conversation about your experiences here. You may choose to not answer any questions posed. I will do my best in presenting your information to preserve your confidentiality and mask your identity. If, after this interview is over, you would like to ask that any portion of the interview be redacted from consideration in my analysis or representation of your story, please feel free to do so.

I would like to confirm your consent for participation. This consent may be withdrawn at any time, at which point the interview will end. I would also like to confirm that you are comfortable with me digitally recording our interview for the purposes of best capturing your story in your own words. We can stop the recording at any time. If you choose not to be recorded, I will take extensive notes on our conversation. Once we begin the recording, I will ask that you confirm your consent for participation in the interview and your consent for the recording of the interview on tape.

<<Begin Recording>>
This is interview [Interview ID] on [Date] at [Time].
To confirm, do you agree to participate in this interview?
And you consent to have this interview recorded?

I am most interested in your stories about your experiences here at the college – stories of your interactions with your colleagues, with your students, with your peers at other institutions.

So, to start, please tell me about your experiences at [Institution Name]. What has it been like for you here? If you were to pitch a movie about your academic life up until this point, what would be the major plot points?

Graduate School and Faculty Transitions

1. Please share with me the story of how you became an academic, and how you ended up here at [Institution Name]?
2. Tell me about what it was like to transition from being a graduate student to the faculty role.

Initial Impressions/Getting Started

1. What stood out the most to you during your early years in this job?
2. Please tell me about an experience early in your time here where you felt like you "got it."
3. Please tell me about an experience early in your time here when you felt like you were failing, sinking, or struggling.
4. What were your initial impressions of the faculty in your department/program

a. Can you share a specific situation that gave you those impressions?

b. Has anything occurred to make you change your view of the faculty?

Student Interactions

1. What is it like working with the students here? (Please try to share a specific instance)
2. Can you share an example of a time you felt connected with students at [Institution Name].
3. Can you tell me about an "aha moment" you had in the classroom?
4. Please describe a time when you felt frustrated with students or teaching.
5. Can you give an example of a time the students here disappointed you or did not match your initial impressions of what students at [Institution Name] would or should be like?

Collegial Interactions

1. Tell me about your colleagues. What have been some of your experiences working with them?
2. Can you tell me about the guidance you've received for attaining tenure?
a. What meetings or conversations have you had?
b. How did you feel during those?
3. What stories have you heard on campus about others' successes or failures on the tenure-track?
4. Please tell me about a time when your colleagues helped you with a challenge.
5. Can you share a time your colleagues were not helpful?
6. What is your typical experience with faculty meetings (both institution-wide and departmental)?

Identity Concerns

1. Would you mind sharing an experience where you felt your gender or other identities played a role in how others were responding to or treating you?
2. Do you remember any instances in which other aspects of your identity may have shaped how others treated or responded to you? What happened? How did you feel about that?

Coherence

1. Can you describe a time when you had to manage an on-campus work obligation and an off-campus/personal obligation? What was going on? What happened?
2. Tell me about a time when others in your life did not understand the expectations you or your colleagues had of you.
3. What have you done to build community outside of work?

Affirming Experiences

1. Do you remember a time when you felt the most "you" during your time here at [Institution Name]?

2. Do you remember the time you first felt like an expert in your discipline? Can you share the story of that experience with me?
3. Tell me about a time that you knew you loved being a faculty member.
4. What is your favorite thing about this campus? Why?

Disconfirming Experiences

1. Can you describe an experience you've had when you felt out of place here?
2. Can you share an example of an experience where you felt others here at [Institution Name] did not respect or value you?
3. Please share a time you walked away from an interaction with students or colleagues and thought they did not "get" you?
4. What has been the most challenging situation you've faced? Tell me about how that was driven home for you.
5. Can you share with me a time when you purposely chose to go against the grain or tide at [Institution Name]?

Explicit Fit

1. Tell me about a time when you felt you did or did not "fit" here at [Institution Name].
2. Before you arrived, what made you think would "fit" here?
3. How has your understanding of your "fit" changed over time? Please try to think of specific experiences that made you change your understanding.

The purpose of in-depth narrative interviewing is to allow participants to tell the stories that are meaningful to them. These prompts are to support the interviewer in eliciting narrative, but do not all have to be used. This is not a formal protocol, but helps shape the intent of the interviewer's hopes for conversation with the participants.

Appendix D

Protocol: Interview 2

Thank you for agreeing to talk with me, again. This is the second of two interviews for a study focused on the experiences of women faculty at a liberal arts college. The purpose of this interview is to learn more about how you've navigated your time here so far, the decisions that you've made, and how you've made yourself become a member of this campus community. I am most interested in hearing about what has been important to you. You may choose to not answer any questions posed. I will do my best in presenting your information to preserve your confidentiality and mask your identity. If, after this interview is over, you would like to ask that any portion of the interview be redacted from consideration in my analysis or representation of your story, please feel free to do so.

I would like to review your consent for participation. This consent may be withdrawn at any time, at which point the interview will end. I would also like to confirm that you are comfortable with me digitally recording our interview for the purposes of best capturing your story in your own words. We can stop the recording at any time. If you choose not to be recorded, I will take extensive notes on our conversation. . Once we begin the recording, I will ask that you confirm your consent for participation in the interview and your consent for the recording of the interview on tape.

<<Begin Recording>>
This is interview [Interview ID] on [Date] at [Time].
To confirm, do you agree to participate in this interview?
And you consent to have this interview recorded?

1. In the last interview, we talked about your path through academia. Can you tell me more about your choice to work here at [Institution Name]?

2. I could see in your application materials that you considered _____ to make this a good place for you to work. Tell me more about that statement.

3. Has that factor remained true for you? Tell me about when that was affirmed/discomfirmed for you?

4. What else made working at [Institution Name] appealing to you? This could include things you wouldn't write in a letter of interest for a posting.

5. Now that you've been here for ___ years, do you think your initial perceptions were accurate? Tell me about a time those perceptions were challenged/affirmed?

6. I see from your CV that you've done _____ (published x papers, traveled for research, presented at conferences etc) to engage in the disciplinary community. How did you know this was something you should or could do? How did your colleagues respond to this choice?

7. I saw in your teaching statement that you _____ (had to become more engaged in the classroom, were doing an excellent job teaching from the beginning and are just getting better, etc). What information did you get and use to help you achieve that? What are you still working in terms of teaching?

8. I know from working here that committees are an important part of college governance. What has been your experience with committees? What messages have you gotten about that kind of engagement in college governance?

9. What other kinds of service have you engaged in? What is your guide for figuring how what service to do?

10. Have you ever felt like you do too much? Can you describe a specific experience in which you felt "maxed out"?

11. Has anyone ever made you feel you weren't doing enough? What happened to make you feel that way?

12. What do you think of the students here at [Institution Name]? How do they compare to other students you've worked with?

13. Your pre-review period was _____ years. Do you think that's typical here at [Institution Name]? Why? Why not?

14. While you were preparing your files for review, what was your process? Who did you consult? How did you decide when your materials were "ready"?

15. From the way you wrote about yourself as an academic in the materials you supplied me, it seems that _____ is very important to you. How did that come to feature so centrally in your identity as an academic?

16. Do you think the [element of your profile] that we just discussed is in line with the values of [Institution Name]? How do you know?

17. Was there a point at which you felt safe/positive in your bid for tenure? What made you feel that way?

18. Does [Institution Name]'s history as a women's college play a role in how you work with faculty and peers?

19. What other commitments (non-academic/job) have you also been managing alongside tenure? This can include family, personal health, relationships, volunteering, or a side-hustle as a balloon artist.

20. From my experience, the students and faculty at [Institution Name] consider themselves to be very progressive as a whole. What has been your experiences with this? How do you see different bodies on this campus dealing with issues of social justice, equity, equality, and diversity?

21. What advice would you give to entering women faculty at [Institution Name]? What would you warn them about? Encourage them to do?

22. Would you be willing to share with me any forms of feedback you received through your process — such as second and fourth year review letters, comments from other faculty on your promotion/tenure materials, or advice from colleagues? Also, what documents, handbooks, or written guidance have you consulted to guide your decisions, documents, or progress?

Appendix E

Observation Protocol

Date:

Time:

Location:

Participant:

Other Individuals Present:

General Notes:

Type of Interaction	Moment Cues
Tension	
Supportive Responses/Actions	
Checking or not-supportive Responses/Actions	
Institutional Stories	

Type of Small Stories	Moment Cues
“Breaking News” talk	
“Projected, Near Future” talk	
“Shared events” talk	
“Refusal/deferral to tell”	

Appendix F

Participant Communications

Invitation to Participate. The following message was sent inviting faculty to participate in the study.

Dear Professor X:

I am reaching out to you in the hopes that you'd be willing to participate in a research study for my dissertation focused on the faculty lives of women at liberal arts colleges.

I am hoping to work with women faculty who have submitted materials for tenure review (even if the decision has not been made). From your online scholarly presence, it appears that you meet the criteria for my study, and could contribute some great perspectives.

To learn more about the study, and what participation might entail, I encourage you to visit the study webpage at:
http://www.jessicachalkbennett.wordpress.com/narratives-of-fit

If you wish to participate, please complete the online informed consent form, which also includes a brief demographic questionnaire and place to upload your curriculum vita. After you have completed the online informed consent, I will be in touch with you to set a time for our first interview.

If you would prefer to talk to me directly about the study prior to completing the informed consent process, please let me know and we can arrange a phone, Skype, or Google Hangout meeting to discuss the study.

Thank you,
Jessica Bennett
Ph.D. Candidate in Higher Education | College of Education | University of Maryland
bennettj@umd.edu
845.559.8652

Classroom Observation Notice. The following message was sent via email to each faculty member who agreed to a classroom observation, in order to allow students the opportunity to express any concerns about having an outside observer in the classroom per an agreement with the study site Institutional Review Board. This was sent to faculty in the week prior to our planned observation so they had ample time to forward to students. I do not know if the faculty altered my message or if they added any notes of their own. No observations were rescheduled in response.

Hi! My name is Jess Bennett, and I'm a doctoral student at the University of Maryland. My dissertation is a study about the lives of women faculty at liberal arts colleges. I am hoping to observe your class so that I can see what your professor is like as a teacher. While I might make a note about the general nature of comments or questions you ask, my observation is going to be focused on your professor, and how she approaches working with you as an instructor. If you feel uncomfortable at all with the idea of someone observing you in class, please let your professor know, and we'll make different arrangements. If you want to learn more about my study, you can go to my study website at: https://jessicachalkbennett.wordpress. com/narratives-of-fit/ You can also contact me directly at bennettj@umd.edu.

Appendix G

Quick Thematic Code Map

Identity Experiences
- Gender
- Ability
- Race
- Sexuality
- Class
- Faith
- First Generation
- Age
- Appearance

Values
- Respect
- Reputation
- Purpose of Education
- Notions of Equity
- Upward Mobility

Goal
- WorkLife Balance
    - Partner
    - Children
- Upward Mobility
- Learning

Needs
- Autonomy (Need)
- Achievement (need)
- Academic Freedom (need)
- Intellectual Honesty and Fairness (need)
- Collegiality (need)
- Competition (need)
- Service to Society (need)
- Financial Stability (need)

Standpoint
- Upgroup
- Downgroup

Outcomes
- Satisfaction
- Intent to Leave
- Productivity

- Stress

Discipline
- Scholarship
- Teaching
- Service
- Job Search Norms
- Curriculum Development
- Chairship/PDship

Academic Profession
- Autonomy (norm)
- Academic Freedom (norm)
- Intellectual Honesty and Fairness (norm)
- Collegiality (norm)
- Competition (norm)
- Service to Society (norm)
- Knowledge of Academic Careers
- Mentoring
- Generations of Scholars
- Non Academia Work

Institutional Type
- Teaching Expectations
- Emphasis on Career Preparation
- Scholarly Expectations
- Need-blind/Access Policies
- Students
- Student Engagement Outside Class
- Personal Development of Students
- Scholarly Isolation
- SC as Liberal
- External Perceptions of SC
- Prestige
- Institutional Loyalty
- Resistance to Change
- Distinctiveness
- Town-Gown
- Resources
- Multidisciplinary Programs
- Governance

Acad. As Org.
- Rising Managerialism
- Decreasing Governance
- Diverse Revenue Streams

- Contingency
- Financial Crisis
- Assessment
- CEQs
- Department
- Diversity
- Tenure Process
- Workplace
- Leadership
- Institutionalization of Practices
- Promotion to Full

Inequality Regimes
- Requirements of Work Organization
- Division of Labor
- Recruitment Practices
- Hiring Practices
- Wage Setting Practices
- Informal Interactions
- Symbols and Images
- Available Identity Story
- Legitimacy of IR
- Visibility of IR

Worldview
- Positive Affect
- Negative Affect
- Optimism
- Resilience
- Future-focused
- Past-focused
- Present-focused
- Pragmatic
- Agency
- Cosmopolitan-orientation
- Local-orientation

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