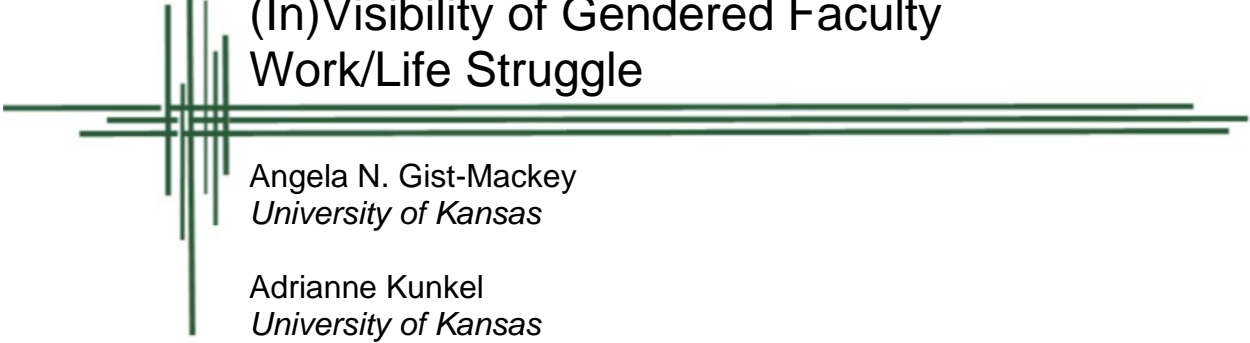


Surviving Communicative Labor: A Theoretical Exploration of the (In)Visibility of Gendered Faculty Work/Life Struggle



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Abstract

The work experiences of faculty in higher education often entail being overworked and stressed, and this is particularly true for women faculty and faculty of color. This essay is situated at the intersection of gender, race, axiological, epistemological, and occupational identities. In this metatheoretical argument, we propose a new concept *communicative labor* by exploring how existing scholarly frameworks regarding workplace emotion, compassionate communication, and gendered work intersect to inform the experiences of critical women scholars and the ways their labor is communicatively manifested across research, teaching, and service. More specifically, we argue that communication itself (i.e., literally listening, speaking, and writing) becomes emotionally-laden work amid the research, teaching, and service performed by critical women scholars. We aim, through our articulation of communication labor, to disrupt dominant narratives of what faculty work lives *should* be, and we call for a paradigm shift in the way faculty labor is socially constructed so that we can improve critical women faculty's success and well-being.

Faculty work lives in higher education are often filled with experiences of being overcommitted, overextended, and stressed (Mullainathan and Shafir 1). In fact, scholars have explored scarcity of time in faculty life and how being overcommitted, overextended, and stressed becomes the “new normal,” producing harmful outcomes related to work satisfaction, decision making, and well-being (Mullainathan and Shafir 2). Unfortunately, the time-consuming work done by faculty in institutions of higher education is inequitably distributed and some, namely women faculty and faculty of color, are systematically overburdened, inhibiting their success and well-being (Portillo; Shuler 278).

We aim to explore how existing scholarly frameworks (i.e., workplace emotion, compassionate communication, and gendered work) intersect to better explain the experiences of critical women scholars, and how their labor is communicatively manifested across research, teaching, and service. We propose a new concept of “communicative labor” to better explain how critical women scholars who participate in a combination of engaged scholarship and critical pedagogy negotiate social interaction in their work lives. Specifically, we articulate how communication (i.e., literally listening, speaking, writing, etc.) becomes emotionally-laden work amid research, teaching, and service in ways that threaten healthy work/life norms. Personal narratives have been incorporated throughout the article as vignettes to illustrate our collective experiences with

communicative labor. This metatheoretical argument begins with a series of personal narratives explaining how we feel about our work, followed by an overview of scholarly frameworks for workplace emotion and compassionate communication. Next, we review gendered work/life experiences using personal narrative and propose a notion of communicative labor applying it to three domains of faculty work: research, teaching, and service. Finally, we address theoretical and practical implications of this work.

Intersectional Positionality

This essay emerged out of a series of conversations between the authors that revealed common experiences with work. In the spirit of transparency, we share our positionalities. We are women faculty who have worked in research-intensive public universities. We represent various points along the academic labor hierarchy in regard to faculty life. Angela Gist-Mackey is a tenure-track assistant professor. Jennifer Guthrie is a former tenured associate professor who is no longer working in academia. Adrienne Kunkel is a tenured, full professor. We are all critical, qualitative scholars conducting engaged scholarship in our respective local, home, and academic communities. Angela identifies with a historically marginalized racial identity and Adrienne and Jennifer as members of the racial majority in the United States of America.

We recognize our positionality as faculty at research-intensive (R1) public universities implicates our perspectives on research, teaching, and service. It is not our intention to privilege the R1 experience, nor to marginalize two-year, private, liberal arts, community colleges, or teaching-intensive institutions, or the valuable roles of staff, adjuncts, lecturers, non-tenure-track faculty, and students. We realize that the performance of work in higher education contexts other than our own is both similar and different in many ways. As critical scholars, we own the potential for implicit biases that may emerge in our argument and invite those from the wide diversity of positions to join us in this conversation. All experiences are important, and we aim to further nuance the discussion regarding labor in higher education.

Our lived experiences throughout the promotion and tenure trajectory highlight emotional and psychological aspects of doing this work. We would like to be transparent about how we are feeling about our work.

Working through Workplace Emotion

We invite you into our stories about our experiences with academic labor, as we explore the question: how do you feel about your work? We explore a range of positive, negative, and ugly emotions that are tied to our communicative labor.

Angela Gist-Mackey

If I am honest, I have mixed feelings ranging from despair to hope. The longer I am in this career path the more I feel the exploitation of my labor. It feels as if there will never be an end to this exploitation, especially for critical women scholars. It is even more challenging knowing how patriarchal and White our profession's structures and systems are. It feels like I am toiling to no end, but there are moments of hope. I'll share a story to illustrate one powerful moment that continues to encourage me. In 2018, I taught an undergraduate class in our organizational communication track for communication majors about workplace relationships. The curriculum I designed takes an in-depth approach to issues of diversity, identity, and equity. On the first day of class I had a student, a graduating senior, who told me publicly during his class introduction that he hated it when professors pushed their agendas on him. I did not quite know how to take that. I proceeded with the curriculum I believed in and to which I am committed. This curriculum is for upper-division students and challenges them to think critically about their own identities (privilege and marginality), as well as how their communication influences others in the organizations in which they participate. It requires students to hone a level of ethical sensitivity in regard to their organizational behavior and illustrates the need for inclusive organizations, as well as how to use culturally sensitive communication.

As a class, we grappled with issues related to gender, race, ethnicity, social class, sexuality, age, and (dis)ability. We learned about bias, prejudice, and discrimination. I remember talking with that same student after class about social class inequity, which is a topic related to my research. He had experienced class discrimination having grown up in rural America near poverty. Later that semester, this student's group project hosted an insightful panel discussion about issues of diversity in the workforce.

On the last day of class that same student, who began the class resisting the curriculum, told me he believed he changed for the better because of my class. Within the past year, I submitted a letter of recommendation for his graduate school application. He is applying to a master's program in education and teaching. There are no words for the deep sense of joy and hope I have when I am part of the change needed in the world. Now this student will touch the lives of other students, and I was a positive part of that journey.

Adrienne Kunkel

I love the work that I do, but I am not a fan of the intense politics and the patriarchal nature of academia. Early in my career, I did not really "see" the politics at work, despite the warnings from my father, who spent over thirty years as a professor and seventeen years as a department chair. But now, as a more advanced scholar, I find the politics to be tedious, time-consuming, disempowering, and sometimes soul crushing. With the

newfound freedom I felt post-tenure, I thought my life would become freer, with more opportunities to do what I wanted. To an extent, my expectations were correct. However, I seem to be sought out more and more by graduate students looking for an advisor. And I would say this is the case for many critical women scholars. It is an implicit piece of our job description. For the most part, I am okay with these new tasks, especially the mentoring of graduate students, which I truly love. However, that said, the advising load for critical women scholars is heavily imbalanced. We tend to do twice as much mentoring as our male colleagues, which means we have less time for our own research.

Slowly and surely, I have also come to understand that academia, much like most institutions in our society, is extremely patriarchal and White. Sadly, it seems that faculty are like cogs in the machine. No one really seems to care all that much about the work/research we are doing, as long as we are doing it and being “productive.” The people with the most power to make decisions at work and who seem to control most of the information (i.e., the administration), with some exceptions, are predominantly White men. My feminist background, and the critical focus of my research, naturally bump up against and work to disrupt academia’s patriarchal nature. Unfortunately, the harder I push, the harder I get pushed back. It is an unfortunate and frustrating cycle. The one thing that keeps me revved up and excited, though, is my teaching and the mentoring of graduate students. They are the shining lights in my career.

Jennifer Guthrie

I had nightmares about tenure denial. I was terrified when it was my time to go up. I knew how incredibly lucky I was to have a tenure-track job. I finally heard the news that I had been “granted tenure and promotion.” Many people gave me congratulations with the reminder, “Next is full!” I then read a post by Sh*t Academics Say that read, “The tenure-track: A pie-eating contest where the prize is more pie.” I looked around and thought, “This is it?” With more responsibilities, I had less and less time to do the things that made me happy about the job in the first place: teaching and doing community-based research. Throw in a toxic work environment, and I was stretched way too thin. I realized I was a barely-functioning workaholic, and I wanted to *have* a life instead of my job being my life. I called my advisor and dear friend, Adrienne Kunkel, sobbing that I felt I was failing out of academia. (Thanks for the communicative labor and social support, Adrienne!) And then it dawned on me: It’s not that I can’t hack it; it’s that I don’t want to anymore.

After dedicating twelve years of my life to academia, I decided to walk away. I had to grieve leaving academia, and a dear friend who also left academia said, “Academia is one of the most abusive employers.” With my positionality and privilege, I have it incredibly easier than many other folks. I know I was lucky and privileged to have a tenure-track job. I have listened to well-meaning folks try to convince me how selfish, fool-

hearty, and ungrateful walking away might be. I told Angela and Adrienne: “With this job, I gave and gave and gave, and it was never enough, and it just made me feel like sh*t about myself.” And with that, I knew it was a form of self-care for me to leave.

Summary

Our disclosure represents the wide range of emotions we feel about our work. We will continue to explore our emotional experiences with work throughout this essay, as we have experienced authentic emotion as part of our work, the necessity to control our emotional displays for our work, and the way workplace relationships infuse our work with meaning. In order to frame our argument, we first present the terrain of workplace emotion (Miller et al. 232).

The Terrain of Workplace Emotion

Work can be the source of a range of positive (i.e., Lutgen-Sandvik et al. 3) and negative (i.e., Waldron 9) feelings. The exploration of work as an emotional experience is well-documented in organizational studies (i.e., Hochschild 5; Kramer and Hess 67; Miller et al. 231; Waldron 9). In particular, there are a variety of emotions experienced in the helping professions, which include higher education faculty. We begin by reviewing the “terrain of emotion” in the workplace (Miller et al. 232) before exploring emotionally-laden communication as constitutive of the labor faculty do: research, teaching, and service. Katherine Miller et al. (232-233) identified five types of workplace emotion: (a) emotional labor (Hochschild 7), (b) emotion work, (c) emotion with work, (d) emotion at work, and (d) emotion toward work. Each type of workplace emotion is reviewed below; however, we recognize these categories are not exclusive of one another.

Emotional Labor

Performances of emotional labor are frequently prescribed by management/supervisors as the way that work should be executed (Wharton 335). Emotional labor occurs when employees control displays of their emotions in inauthentic ways that benefit the organization and is achieved through two communication behaviors: surface and deep acting (Hochschild 33). Surface acting involves superficial changes in emotional displays to serve organizational objectives. It often includes “disguising what we feel” and “pretending to feel what we do not” (Hochschild 33). For instance, customer service employees are told to smile to boost customer satisfaction. In higher education, a controversial rhetoric referring to students as customers implies emotional labor is part of faculty work. Deep acting, like surface acting, commodifies emotion, but to a higher degree because it requires a sense of inner denial. When deep acting, employees persuade themselves, as well as customers, that they are feeling emotions that benefit organizations. For example, service industry

employees may convince themselves it is pleasurable to serve unreasonably difficult patrons.

Emotion Work

In contrast to the inauthenticity and prescribed nature of emotional labor, emotion work occurs when one's labor requires authentic displays of emotion (Miller et al. 234). Extant research regarding emotion work has focused on service-oriented, helping professions (i.e., healthcare, social services, education, and ministry), which often include emotionally-charged workplaces. Emotion work may be embodied in a wide range of feelings, from positive to negative (Miller et al. 235). For instance, higher education faculty may sincerely feel genuine pride for student success or sorrow for student failure.

Emotion with Work

Relationships are central to work lives (Sias 2) and are the impetus for emotion with work (Miller et al. 236). Emotion is bound to emerge as employees begin, maintain, and negotiate workplace relationships. Faculty develop relationships within and beyond a variety of bureaucratic structures, including relationships with students (undergraduate/graduate), staff, co-authors and collaborators, faculty colleagues, supervisors (i.e., department heads/chairs), and administrators (i.e., deans). When employees feel like they are respected in workplace relationships, satisfaction, happiness, and senses of dignity and belongingness are often experienced; when employees are treated poorly, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and overall well-being are threatened (Lucas 622).

Emotion toward Work

Both the joys and frustrations of careers are accounted for by emotion toward work, which is emotion targeted toward one's work or job (Miller et al. 238). Preliminary scholarship designed to study emotion toward work examined job satisfaction, while contemporary research explores stress and burnout in connection to work (Tracy 167). Workaholism is a phenomenon related to emotion toward work that has been associated with workload and anxiety (Shifron and Reysen 136). Other experiences that may prompt intense emotion toward work are role conflict, ambiguity, and person-to-job fit (Miller et al. 238). Faculty experiences of emotion toward work may accompany breakthroughs in the classroom, during research, while publishing, or with pressures to perform extra role service work.

Emotion at Work

Emotion at work encompasses emotional spillover from personal to work life, emerging when emotions borne outside the scope of work affect workplace roles, experiences, performances, and/or relationships (Miller et al. 237). Emotional responses to life events (e.g., death, marriage, and diagnoses) can motivate, distract, and produce/reduce effectiveness in, and

availability for, workplace responsibilities. All employees negotiate complex lives. For instance, the tenure-track timeline often coincides with women faculty's biological clocks. Work-life negotiation must often be managed intrapersonally and communicatively with others. Ideally, compassion is needed, called upon, and displayed in such encounters and interactions.

Compassionate Communication

Individuals working in helping professions, such as academic faculty, often express and experience compassionate communication as part of employment. Acts of compassion in the workplace reside under the umbrella of emotion work, or engagement with authentic emotion as part of work (Miller et al. 235). Miller adapted a tripartite process of expressing compassion in the workplace (originally articulated by Kanov et al. 812): (a) noticing, (b) connecting, and (c) responding (223). These three processual phases connect to specific communication skills.

During the first phase, helping professionals notice a need for compassion through attentiveness (e.g., observation, asking questions). After a need is noticed, helping professionals engage in cognitive-affective processes to connect, which includes perspective-taking and emotional empathy (Stiff et al. 210). The ability to connect facilitates socially-supportive, verbal and nonverbal communication in the final phase of responding (MacGeorge et al. 317).

Miller (236) notes connecting and responding are relational in nature, concluding that helping professionals could effectively navigate the dialectic of connection and autonomy (Baxter 70) by employing "detached concern" (Miller 226). This allows helping professionals the ability to negotiate boundary work between self-care and the care of others whom they serve.

Gendered Work

Historically, divisions between public and private domains of work have been heavily gendered and sex segregated (Allen 44, 51). Women have traditionally carried the load of private domestic unpaid labor, which has often been rendered invisible and socially constructed outside the domain of "real" work, albeit problematically. Even in contemporary times, women professionals shoulder disproportionate loads of domestic unpaid labor (Sandberg 110). Conversely, men have traditionally engaged in public, visible domains of paid labor. The inequity between visible and invisible labor has manifested in gender pay gaps (World Economic Forum 8), voids of female representation in leadership roles (Parker et al. 8; Rauhaus and Schuchs Carr 31), and sexist/patriarchal norms (e.g., sexual harassment, male-dominated industries) evident in society (e.g., Keyton et al. 665; Manjoo).

Organizational scholars who explore the nature of work typically identify American workplaces as implicitly gendered in masculine,

patriarchal ways (Acker 140). Despite the reality that women in many fields are obtaining educational and professional expertise in rates that surpass men, there is still a “masculinist vision” (Davies 669) of many professions (Wallace and Kay 390). This vision assumes gendered performances of work, including extensive work hours and long-term, upwardly mobile, uninterrupted careers.

Troubling the Boundaries of (In)Visible Labor

Critical women scholars often blur the lines between public-private labor as we work. Disruption of these boundaries occurs in two ways: (a) engaging in private invisible labor as part of our public professions and (b) violating work-life balance due to high levels of empathic emotion required for the work we do.

From one vantage point, the work critical women faculty do is public: teaching classes (e.g., sage on the stage; Singhal 7), presenting at conferences, and conducting research in the community. However, there are many private aspects of this job, such as mentoring students, conducting research interviews behind closed doors about traumatizing experiences, reading and critiquing dissertation chapters at home, and writing revisions of manuscripts in private offices.

We argue that the private aspects of faculty labor are exacerbated for critical women faculty because we are more often sought out to serve as mentors, counselors, coaches, and/or friends. The labor of critical women scholars often exceeds the professional boundaries that are explicitly articulated in institutional contracts. Institutional policy, such as employment contracts, are written in language perceived to be neutral and rational (Dougherty and Goldstein Hode 1730). However, the ontological experience of being a critical woman scholar is directed by not only who critical teacher-scholars are, but also by gendered embodiment (i.e., Ellingson 34; Martin 353). Women have been stereotyped as emotional, nurturing, and caregiving (Cuddy et al. 703; Fiske et al. 879), and such connotations are discursively constructed into occupations, despite the obvious masculine overtones of the profession.

Many critical scholars take axiological ownership of the emancipatory goals of critical traditions, which are connected to social justice efforts, both inside and outside the academy. However, such commitments lead to particular experiences of gendered faculty work in ways that are likely unbalanced, unhealthy, and disproportionate. The results of gendered faculty labor exist at the nexus of institutional inequity (both systemic and structural) and personal responsibility.

Summary

The work lives of critical women faculty are gendered, as women have been historically and socially constructed as emotional beings and nurturers (Cuddy et al. 703; Fiske et al. 879); the five types of workplace emotion (emotional labor, emotion work, emotion with work, emotion at

work, and emotion toward work) are implicated in the roles of women faculty. However, critical women scholars who promote equity are at risk for being overburdened as their workloads may be largely performed backstage in non-public settings and thus, rendered invisible. For example, we tend to be sought out frequently as academic advisors by graduate students, or when the department needs an assessment related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, it is often our voices and bodies that fill the space. Also, heightened instances of workplace emotion experienced within a continual work-life boundary struggle both call for, and result from, the provision of heightened compassionate communication. Next, we present a metatheoretical approach that connects the concepts of workplace emotion, compassionate communication, and gendered (in)visible work, proposing a new concept we have labeled communicative labor.

Metatheoretical Proposal: Communicative Labor

For this metatheoretical analysis, the focus is explicitly on communication skills since we theorize about the work of faculty who primarily execute knowledge work through discourse. We contribute to a conversation about the professoriate by articulating often obscured experiences embedded in academic work. Faculty enact work by employing communicative skills such as: listening, speaking, responding, disclosing, writing, reading, and presenting. Also, communicatively professing knowledge is perceived as inherent to faculty occupations (Singhal 7). We are faculty in the discipline of communication. Our discipline engages metacommunication because *what* we teach/research, communication, is also the *way* we teach/research: by communicating (Lindlof and Taylor 172). Faculty in general are continually engaged in communicative labor.

We offer a working definition of “communicative labor” as the ongoing, interconnected tasks requiring the use of communicative and literate skill sets (i.e., listening, speaking, responding, disclosing, writing, reading, negotiating, and analyzing) to execute work in a way that is undergirded by workplace emotion (i.e., emotional labor, emotion work, emotion with work, emotion at work, and emotion toward work) and compassionate communication. The notion of communicative labor is not exclusive to academic professions generally or critical women scholars specifically. Instead, we argue that the work of communicative labor becomes greater for critical women scholars in regard to research, teaching, and service because of the emotion-laden experiences infused into these facets of these particular occupations.

The concept of communicative labor exists at the intersections of workplace emotion, compassionate communication, and gendered occupational experiences. Communicative labor accounts for the way that explicit communication skills/competencies (i.e., listening, speaking, disclosure, negotiating, writing, reading, and giving feedback) emerge holistically in our occupation in ways that require emotionality *and* rationality. Next, we address the communicative labor in relation to

research, teaching, and service. Each author has shared a personal narrative in order to illustrate the application of this concept to faculty work life.

Communicative Labor in Research

In this section, we name aspects of research that are often omitted from publications. This section addresses the communicative labor inherent to research for critical women scholars. Our research includes three core components: engaged community-based scholarship, critical emancipatory approaches, and qualitative methodology. Collectively, we have partnered with unemployment agencies; workforce programs; domestic violence shelters; addiction treatment centers; non-profits; and anti-poverty organizations. The nature of our research entails heightened experiences of communicative labor because it is highly emotional, intellectually demanding, and requires extensive communicative skills. We address the communicative labor inherent to: (a) the negotiation of access to community-based sites, (b) co-designing research with community partners, (c) qualitative data collection, (d) qualitative data analysis, and (e) presentation and publication of critically-engaged scholarship. To illustrate the communicative labor inherent to engaged community-based research, a narrative vignette is shared to show what is involved for women scholars who are committed to critical epistemology and axiology.

Adrienne's Personal Vignette

In the summer of 2009, I met a new colleague, and we excitedly shared our passion for engaged community-based research to help survivors of abuse and domestic violence. We decided to collaboratively design a multiple-method longitudinal case study that would ultimately become an ethnography of a domestic violence organization.

There were several steps we took to negotiate our access to the research site. In the fall of 2009, we decided one way to demonstrate our passion, credibility, and to literally “get our feet in the door” of the organization, was to complete the 40-hour training to become volunteer advocates (step one). I found this training gripping, powerful, and moving. With each session, I could feel my advocacy wings growing.

In early spring of 2010, upon completion of our training, we drafted a formal letter to the leadership inquiring about developing a research project regarding the organization (step two). In this letter, we argued why we thought our research could benefit the organization and potentially affect positive change in the lives of domestic violence survivors. We also championed our training experiences and disclosed our previous work on gender justice and community activism. We offered to co-design our project with organizational members. In certain ways, within the letter, we felt like we were engaged in high levels of careful self-presentation. We wanted them to like us, trust us, and feel like we

were the right people to be involved with regarding research. Along with our letter, we sent in our résumés, a tentative research plan, and names of colleagues that could attest to our research experience.

Within the month, the Executive Director reached out to us, and we were able to set up a meeting. (Whew, step three completed!) With anticipation and great nervousness, we shared handouts describing the purpose and timeline of our project, as well as the possible methods we could employ in our research (of course noting that everything was negotiable given their desires/needs). In our meeting, we assured our potential research partners that: (a) all data would be kept confidential, (b) participation in different phases of the research would be voluntary, and (c) no identifying information would be used when presenting or writing our research. Additionally, we informed them we would develop a presentation of our findings for the entire staff and Executive Board overseeing the organization (which we did; it was one of the most nerve-racking experiences of my career). Further, we argued our research could potentially aid in the generation of survey and narrative data to secure future funding for the organization.

The leadership was impressed with our plan and gave us approval to move forward (step four!). From start to finish, including our training, planning, and negotiation, it took eight months to gain access, and 10 months before data collection commenced. Thus, we were successful in launching our multi-year, engaged community-based scholarship with the organization, and this ongoing research has continued to evolve with several different angles/researchers.

Negotiation of Access

The rigor of conducting engaged community-based scholarship is communicatively and emotionally taxing and begins with negotiating access. Successful negotiation requires competencies in rapport-building, asserting scholarly needs (written/verbal), and listening to community partners. These processes require emotional labor and emotion work. Approaching an organizational site with either a “cold call” or a “warm lead” requires a controlled, confident display of affect to promote one’s expertise, play up institutional prestige, and persuade gatekeepers. This display of emotion can be beneficial to one’s department and institution. These displays of emotion constitute emotional labor because research complications are typically masked via emotional labor, since the goal is to gain access. Concerns are disclosed and negotiated generally after access is gained, which is a strategic and ethically complicated matter.

Emotion work is also present because sites of research are often connected to one’s critical axiological commitments, which are engaged with an ethic of care (Deetz 101). Authentic emotional disclosure is often part of the negotiation of access. Some organizational sites are skeptical of academics wanting to study vulnerable populations. This

communicative labor requires persuasion, incorporating ethos, pathos, and logos via emotion work.

In negotiation, it is critical to assert one's scholarly needs and listen to the needs of the community partner. As tenure-track/tenured scholars, we are up front with our need to publish in order to sustain our careers, which are tied to the inherently exploitative nature of research. Disclosing this reality requires communicative labor through careful and ethical framing, so that it does not heighten pre-existing concerns of community partners.

Additionally, listening to the needs of one's community partner is paramount to successful engaged scholarship. Laura Johnson explains that designing research without community stakeholders' input would be inauthentic and would likely fail to address the key issues salient to the community (65). Listening fosters mutual understanding about research strengths (i.e., support existing programs, clients/patrons, and community health) and limitations (i.e., intrusive and/or exploitative).

Co-Designing Research

Collaboratively designing engaged research is a strategic and relational process. Explaining not only the importance of, but the rationale behind, ethical (e.g., IRB approval, protection for human subjects, and compensation practices for participants), well-designed (e.g., carefully constructed rationale, protocol, and procedures) research is important and requires emotion with work because scholars should avoid patronizing "ivory tower" stances. Instead, Maria Dixon and Debbie Dougherty recommended scholars who interact with research partners take a collaborative tone in order to build and maintain research partnerships (16).

Data Collection

Collecting data for critical, qualitative, engaged scholarship incorporates communicative skill in regard to emotion work, emotion with work, and emotion toward work. As critically engaged scholars, we embody the instrument of data collection. In our collective case, scholarly observation and interviews have put us in the field alongside participants who are experiencing oppression, violence, and suffering. Documenting such observations is a written form of communicative labor, while talking with and listening to interview respondents are verbal and nonverbal forms of communicative labor. The communication with participants during various facets of data collection includes relationship building, disclosure, and privacy management competencies, among others. Much of this work is invisible (Corey and George 30). Authentic emotion work is inherent to this process as is emotion toward work. We have felt frustrated, sad, angry, shocked, happy, grateful, satisfied, fulfilled, relieved, surprised, frightened, and deeply moved (among other emotions) during data

collection. Feeling and authentically communicating that emotion is the communicative labor related to data collection.

Data Analysis

Analyzing critically engaged qualitative data requires emotion toward work and, at times, emotion at work. As data are transcribed/reconciled, the audio tapes are listened to again. Revisiting participants' words can be emotional, prompting emotion toward work, which has also been a result of comparing/contrasting the experiences of participants across a data set. Emotion at work is prompted by self-reflexive processes of reflecting on one's own lived experiences during analysis. We personally analyze communication of participants in ways that blend emotionality and rationality. Also, we believe in the notion of writing as a method of inquiry, which requires emotion toward work, especially as we listen to traumatic stories.

Presentation and Publication

Every time we present findings, it requires emotion with work, emotion toward work, and, at times, emotional labor. Presenting research prompts emotion toward work via communicative labor because we audibly speak the words of participants, temporarily embodying their stories. As we write, we aim to uphold the integrity of our participants, which requires an element of contextualized emotion with work since our relationships with participants live through the manuscripts. Continually revisiting data facilitates emotional reactions, which are manifest in a combination of (in)authentic emotional displays depending on the audience. For instance, job talks require confident emotional displays, while community presentations can be emotionally authentic. Sharing stories with audience members verbally and in written format creates a chain of emotional reactions whenever our scholarship is revisited. Finally, publishing requires communicative labor via emotion with work because publishing includes relationships with collaborators, editors, reviewers, and audiences.

Communicative Labor in Teaching

Communicative labor also plays out in our pedagogy. As critical teachers and mentors, we strive to embody the values that are central to us as scholars. When we teach, we aim to foster and nourish critical thinking skills and awareness of the social world through student-centered learning and engagement. We try to construct learning environments that are interactive, dialogical (Burbules 21), and brave (Arao and Clemens 141) spaces that allow for the free expression of student voices, but also for their exposure to, and acceptance of, perspectives that vary from their own (MacDermid et al. 32; Schniedewind 26). We try to make the unteachable teachable and the uncomfortable comfortable (hooks 183), while attempting to meet students where they are in their learning (Dunn

40). We approach teaching with great emotional investment and caring, relational effort, patience and accessibility, and by modeling social awareness, advocacy, and activism. Thus, communicative labor is manifest in our teaching in: (a) curriculum development, (b) teaching or professing, (c) giving and/or receiving feedback, and (d) showing compassionate concern. To illustrate the experience of critical teaching and mentoring, a vignette is provided showing the communicative labor involved in critical pedagogy.

Jenny's Personal Vignette

I have had five, typically full office hours weekly and have been told I spend “too much time” with students. Because of the nature of my research and classes, a common scene often unfolds: “I haven’t told anyone this... You said we can discuss resources? Can I close the door?”

I stay in my lane. I am not a counselor. But I am trained in how to respond to disclosures. And I catch a lot of disclosures. My campus has an online form you can submit if you are concerned about a student. I let students know that we can fill it out together, so they have control of their narrative. The folks who receive those forms and “triage resources” know me well.

One day, my office hours started with a “Can I close the door?” from a current student. My heart pounded the entire hour that we talked as it eventually became apparent the student was experiencing suicidal ideation. I was relieved they were willing to fill out the form because I did not want to have to report it—even though I knew I had to as a mandated reporter—without the student’s consent. Within minutes, someone was at my door to take the student to Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). My heart broke. My hands were shaking. I was so worried about this student but also about how I handled the situation. As I was trying to collect myself, another knock. Repeat scene, but this time a past student disclosed that they had been sexually assaulted, blamed themselves, and had not told anyone. We filled out the form. I went through the scripts from all my training/research. My phone rang. The student preferred that I walk them to CAPS, and I glanced at the clock. I had to start my graduate seminar in 15 minutes. I apologized that I needed to send a text (giving my students a task) and that I could be a bit late, but I needed to start class. They said they understood, but I felt horrible rushing us on our way. At CAPS I asked, “Are you a hugger?” Tears streamed down their face as they nodded and reached out their arms. We hugged, and they walked inside.

I put on sunglasses to hide my immediate tears. I stopped in a parking lot and hid behind a dumpster while I took deep breaths between sobs, checked my makeup, and tried to flip a “mental switch.” After a few beats, I put on a fake smile and breezed into the seminar room. I said, “Thanks for your patience! Let’s dive in.”

Curriculum Development

Developing and designing the content and structure of classes requires both emotional labor and emotion toward work. The literal act of writing syllabi, assignment descriptions, and grading rubrics are communicatively laborious. But the communicative labor runs more deeply than these tasks. As critical women scholars make decisions about what content to include in classes, it involves emotional labor because the sometimes-controversial content taught might affect students' emotions positively and/or negatively (MacDermid et al. 33). Students might feel empowered by the material, yet they might also have dissenting perspectives. When students are resistant or have negative reactions to the content, we may have to put our own biases and perspectives aside (thus engaging in emotional labor) to negotiate different learning styles and to navigate students' emotions. Emotion towards work is present in developing the structure of classes and classrooms. What we care about and view as pedagogically salient may not match students' views or expectations about the curriculum. Communicative labor is involved in developing our courses because we are constantly self-reflective and open to revising previous practices. Hence, our communication is adaptive and responsive to the needs of students.

Teaching or Professing

The process of communicatively constructing, delivering, and sharing the content for classes requires emotion toward work, emotion work, and emotional labor. As critical women scholars, we often teach (i.e., profess/speak/dialogue) about topics that we care about immensely. Undoubtedly, some students embrace these topics, while some are resistant. In these instances, emotional labor may be used to "disguise" true feelings towards a topic so as not to exclude or marginalize any voices. Classrooms can often be intense spaces (hooks 205) where thoughts and feelings about particular topics are literally "on the line." Sometimes students are open and willing to engage with material and, at other times, they simply do not know *what* to say (or *how* to say it), which is part of their communicative labor. Thus, teaching is an attempt to balance everyone's perspectives, while remaining open, fair, and simultaneously critical. The ultimate goal is to teach students that it may be difficult when they encounter issues and ideas different from their preexisting beliefs, attitudes, and values (and that it is okay). We want students to be open and forthcoming; however, we also want to encourage them to carefully (and critically) consider course material and the audience of co-learners.

Additionally, when teaching, we sometimes use personal examples or stories to illustrate concepts. Personal disclosure is another form of communicative labor inherent to our pedagogy, which sometimes puts us in vulnerable positions. Personal disclosure requires emotion toward work and emotion work. Clearly, as critical women scholars, when

we share our own experiences to help students make sense of a concept, we do so with the utmost care and authenticity. We are personally invested in how the use of our own experiences affect classroom dynamics and student engagement. If it goes well, we feel empowered; if it does not, we feel deflated. Oftentimes, students' emotional labor means we may not truly know what is (in)effective because they are masking their reactions. We embrace emotion as part of learning.

Giving and/or Receiving Feedback

We place great emphasis on how and when we communicate feedback to students, which involves emotion work and emotion with work. Emotion work is involved when giving feedback because we can celebrate when students perform well, yet we often feel a sense of deep regret when students perform poorly. For example, giving a failing grade may indicate the student performed poorly on an assignment, but from our vantage point, it could also mean we failed in our explanation of what was required to accomplish the assignment or our mentoring of how to achieve the learning objectives. Emotion with work is involved when providing feedback because we prioritize relational work as we aim to establish connections with each student and to develop and maintain a classroom culture where everyone is on an equal footing as possible. However, when students simply get something incorrect, we feel obligated to communicate that fact, which invokes a hierarchy of knowledge. That hierarchy of knowledge often violates our axiological commitments to equity.

Similarly, as critical women scholars, we take the feedback we are given to heart, which involves emotion work, emotion toward work, and emotion with work. When receiving positive comments about our teaching, we are encouraged or energized. Yet, when receiving negative feedback, we feel sorrow or sadness. Likewise, when students meet milestones in their learning, we feel joyous. However, if a student fails to meet a milestone, we may feel remorse.

Showing Compassionate Concern

As critical women scholars, we also tend to care a great deal about the overall well-being of our students. Showing concern for students involves emotion work, emotion toward work, and emotion with work. Emotion work is involved in showing concern because if students encounter harmful life experiences, we feel a great sense of empathy and desire to appropriately intervene in the course of events. Here, compassionate communication (Miller 226) is relevant because throughout our careers we are noticing, connecting, and responding (Miller 230). Emotion toward work emerges when the boundaries between our lives and our students' lives are so porous that emotional contagion can occur (Miller 226). Often, as critical women scholars, we are often perceived as "friends" to our students. However, emotion with work is invoked when that connection is taken for granted and our expertise is not respected. The constant

negotiation between professional and personal boundaries are often blurred, which incorporates both benefits (i.e., heightened levels of honesty, authenticity, and learning) and costs (i.e., work/life struggle and/or questioned credibility).

Communicative Labor in Service

Communicative labor is also inherent in the public and private service work we do. Our community-based scholarship and social justice-oriented work often entail conducting service in communities and with research partners (i.e., becoming a volunteer as part of ethnographic work and ensuring the sites also benefit from the research). Moreover, our pedagogy often entails showing concern and compassion for students, which has a tendency to lead to student advocacy and support during office hours and beyond. Thus, the lines between our research, teaching, and service are often hazy—especially considering the amount of service required to enact these duties with an ethic of care (Deetz 101). Our service is often invisible in terms of curriculum vitae lines or what is “counted” for promotion and tenure. Accordingly, communicative labor is apparent in public-private service regarding: (a) recruitment of prospective students, (b) appointed and implied service, and (c) graduate student mentoring. To illustrate the communicative labor involved in academic service, a vignette is provided to show the level of involvement that is tied to critical axiological commitments.

Angela’s Personal Vignette

In the Fall 2015 semester, our department experienced a racial incident that led to my involvement in an investigation about a faculty member’s conduct, facilitation of a departmental town hall meeting regarding our departmental climate, aiding the department in organizing a series of trainers to facilitate diversity and inclusion workshops (one of which I personally facilitated), countless hours of graduate student mentoring about how to address issues of diversity in the classroom, and the eventual request to conduct recruitment trips that would diversify our prospective graduate student pipeline. In the interest of space, I focus on the recruitment trips below.

For three consecutive years, I strategically planned, managed, and executed recruitment trips to a series of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Each year the trips grew in scope. Two of these trips took place during research leave. On these trips I met with prospective graduate students, faculty, and administrators from a variety of departments at three different HBCUs. These trips were wrought with a range of positive and negative emotion. From a positive perspective, it did me good to be on a campus full of students who looked like me. It was inspiring to them to meet me, a third generation Ph.D. in a Black American family. I knew I was engaging in a highly complicated task but had yet to realize just how complex.

Asking students to come to a predominantly White university in the Midwest from their predominantly Black urban campuses in the South was a challenge. I did my best to cultivate an honest and realistic preview of our institution. I disclosed what we could offer in terms of funding and graduate education. At times, I often questioned how transparent I should be about the racial incidents that had unfolded in our department and on campus leading to the very recruitment trips I was taking. At this early period in my tenure-track career (second to fourth years), I was unable to assess whether these students would actually thrive in our academic program until we admitted a student, Jordan (pseudonym), who moved to Kansas and began one of our graduate degrees.

Jordan struggled, at best, despite my, the department's, and the graduate school's efforts to advocate on their behalf. Jordan left the program after one semester. As Jordan's advisor and the person who directly recruited this student to our program, I felt wholly responsible for their negative experience and took ownership over the negativity this student experienced. Words cannot fully express the emotional distress, regret, pain, and disappointment I feel for having participated in a system that fostered a negative experience in the life of a student. I continually engage in reflection over this and other service opportunities I have participated in, no matter how willingly or reticently I engaged in them. I cannot always anticipate the outcomes, but at times the outcomes have been at the expense of those I wish to serve most.

Recruitment of Prospective Students

Recruiting prospective students into our graduate programs is a form of communicative labor that entails emotional labor, emotion with work, and potentially emotion toward work as professors communicate with recruits. Although departments have unique recruitment goals (i.e., growing programs and/or publicizing a new track), the overarching objective of such service is to attract the "best and brightest" students, while assessing the "fit" between prospective students and our programs. We realize such aims are problematic. Yet, in these activities, faculty often assume roles that resemble sales or marketing in that they are encouraged to directly reach out to prospective students and/or to brainstorm ways to advertise programs (e.g., reaching out to colleagues at other universities, developing ad placements for conference booklets, and sitting at graduate fairs). These activities entail emotional labor vis-à-vis the customer service aspects of recruitment duties: making sure to be pleasant and prompt in communication with prospective students, so that the impression of the department is warm, friendly, and encouraging. Providing a positive impression with potential recruits may also involve masking any negative affect. The recruitment and application process also involves emotion work: students often experience a range of emotions while applying, and this can affect faculty members. For example, faculty may experience disappointment if application processes do not go smoothly, anger if a

recruit is not accepted to the program, or excitement if a recruit chooses their program. Finally, the recruitment process may entail emotion toward work because faculty inherently communicate beliefs about the work they do while communicating with prospective students. Moreover, faculty may experience emotion toward work regarding recruitment and selection processes. For example, faculty may feel dissonance between recruiting “top” students and selecting students based on fit, or they may experience emotions regarding admission criteria (e.g., are GRE scores a fair way to rank order applicants?).

Appointed and Implied Service

Service activities such as committee work, reviewing manuscripts, or providing training involve emotional labor (e.g., being a “team-player”), emotion with work (e.g., experiencing the ups and downs of working in groups), and emotion toward work (e.g., feeling satisfaction from being “good” departmental citizens). As critical women scholars navigate the political landscape of completing required service activities, a double bind can exist when scholars are expected to do the “right” amount and type of service (i.e., to uphold a formula of 40% research, 40% teaching, and 20% service). However, as previously mentioned, the lines between research, teaching, and service are often blurred for critical women scholars, and peripheral service involved in teaching and research do not “count” as service in terms of vitae lines (e.g., writing recommendation letters for students, providing career coaching, or listening and empathizing with stakeholders). Moreover, tensions exist between service activities that are appointed, implied, and chosen. For example, critical women scholars may feel emotion toward work regarding the push-pull between desired versus expected service. They may easily become overburdened by service activities required to fulfill their critical pedagogical and research commitments, while maintaining expected departmental, university, and disciplinary service loads. Additionally, critical women scholars—and especially women of color—are often appointed for service as “token” experts (Kanter 219) or “spokespersons” (Nadal et al. 157) but nonetheless paradoxically face judgment for taking on too much service. In these cases, service stemming from the burden of expertise (along with potential accompanying microaggressions experienced in the process) inherently involves emotional labor, emotion with work, and emotion toward work.

Graduate Mentoring

Critical women scholars’ mentoring of graduate students further involves listening, talking, reading, and writing, which are all emotionally-laden tasks. Listening and determining the best response to graduate students’ ideas, concerns, performance, and feedback, while gently guiding them, involves emotional labor, emotion with work, emotion toward work [e.g., providing informational, tangible, and/or emotional support (Cutrona 4) or using Socratic questioning to guide project design], and emotion toward

work (e.g., encouraging students to reframe negative perceptions of academic life). Reading students' work—often multiple times—involves emotion with work and emotion work as faculty navigate various emotions from frustration or disappointment when students appear to be struggling, to triumph when they succeed. Additionally, because social justice-oriented students seek out critical scholars as advisors, mentors may also experience emotional contagion from the emotion work involved in reading the sometimes heart-breaking accounts of participants. Providing critical feedback regarding these important topics is another form of emotion work and emotion with work, as mentors must navigate giving rigorous, yet supportive feedback on sometimes emotionally-laden topics. In addition to written and verbal feedback given directly to the student, critical women scholars may spend a large amount of time writing recommendation letters. As previously mentioned, critical women scholars—and particularly women of color—are often “tapped” for additional service because of their expertise or compassionate care. This can result in writing more than their fair share of recommendation letters, which involves emotional labor and emotion work (e.g., tensions between portraying the student in the best light while being fair and honest) and emotion with work (e.g., having to say “yes” or “no” to requests).

Finally, critical commitments to mentorship involve showing compassionate concern with graduate students' professional and personal well-being. This implied service can even be a lifelong commitment as mentors are available throughout their mentees' postgraduate careers. While this mentorship relationship can be incredibly rewarding, it may nonetheless contribute to work/life spillover, especially considering virtual accessibility. Faculty may struggle with the tension of being a supportive and available mentor, while also trying to maintain boundaries and bracket personal time. When considering that critical women scholars may be tapped for additional mentorship, these rewarding relationships can also involve emotional labor, emotion work, and emotion toward work as the number of mentees grows throughout the lifespan of one's career.

Summary

Communicative labor is a common thread running through the various facets of faculty work in research, teaching, and service. We close this manuscript by providing theoretical and practical implications for managing the complex, experiential reality of communicative labor as well as suggestions for surviving disproportionate burdens of communicative labor.

Discussion

We offer theoretical and practical implications for surviving communicative labor in a spirit of encouraging a more equitable higher education system. Theoretically, the notion of communication labor contributes to scholarship regarding the ideal self (Wielend 511),

paradigmatic narratives (Linde 620), and workaholism (Shifron and Reysen 136). We call for a paradigm shift in the way faculty labor is socially constructed. Practically, we provide suggestions to mitigate the systemic inequities in the burden of intense communicative labor at the macro-, mezzo-, and micro-levels of higher education.

Theoretical Implications

We present the notion of communicative labor, which we define as the ongoing, interconnected tasks requiring the use of communicative and literate skill sets (e.g., listening, speaking, responding, disclosing, writing, reading, negotiation, analyzing, and giving feedback) to execute work in a way that is undergirded by workplace emotion (i.e., emotional labor, emotion work, emotion with work, emotion at work, and emotion toward work) and compassionate communication. This concept is an effort at theoretically articulating the way communication is constitutive of the labor in which faculty engage. When we make invisible labor explicit, we can foster positive change (Corey and George 45). Our aim in articulating communicative labor is to disrupt the dominant narratives about what faculty work lives *should* be, which is tied to the notion of a paradigmatic narrative (Linde 620).

In institutions, such as higher education, with historically-situated bureaucracies, there is an omnipresent paradigmatic narrative that tells a story of the ideal trajectory (Linde 621). For instance, Charlotte Linde defines paradigmatic narratives as “a representation of the ideal life course within an institution, including its stages, preferred time for attaining each stage, preferred age at beginning and end, possible options, and so forth” (621). Specifically, Linde goes on to provide the paradigmatic narrative of an academic: “[T]he move from graduate student to tenure-track position to promotion and tenure, and status within a department...However, the pattern is clear, even if individual instantiations differ...For the professoriate, this career is institutionally reified, with each stage achieved through institutional decision” (621). Our engagement in communicative labor resists this linear trajectory because it often requires us to go beyond the contractual divisions of a 40/40/20 percent divide in our time devoted to research, teaching, and service, respectively. The nature of communicative labor blurs boundaries in ways that are directly connected to gendered and occupational identities and axiological commitments. Unfortunately, all work is not valued equally.

We resist the notion of an “ideal self” as part of our work and disrupt this dominant narrative with authentic representations of our work via communicative labor. Stacey Wieland identified the way workers perform ideal personas as employees who were both highly productive and practiced healthy work-life balance (523). However, Wieland’s participants were using the persona to mask the work-life struggle they experienced in order to meet high levels of productivity (520). Indeed, they endured heavy workloads and consistently delivered high quality work

within short periods of time by rendering the bulk of their work invisible. Wieland's participants concealed their work/life struggle by under-reporting the number of hours worked each week and overdelivering in their productivity (520). In this sense, their productivity was rendered highly visible, while their sacrifice remained invisible in order to uphold an ideal. We encourage scholars to resist this by using the concept of communicative labor as a way to talk about our (in)visible work.

Our discussion of communicative labor is an attempt at discursively naming the often obscured aspects of our work that are arduous, burdensome, and rewarding. The goal is to enhance visibility for aspects of the job that do not neatly fit into a forty-hour work week or a 40/40/20 division of time, but rather require our whole selves 100% of the time in discursive and material ways. The acts of communication (e.g., listening, speaking, responding, disclosing, writing, reading, negotiation, and analyzing) are discursive in nature and the corresponding emotion is embodied.

Practical Implications

Disproportionate communicative labor is the result of a combination of systemic inequities in higher education and gendered work/life spillover. There are a range of practical implications. We present our recommendations beginning at the macro-level, scaling to mezzo- and micro-levels of organizing. Following suit, we present a three-tiered call-to-action in order to help mitigate some of the negative outcomes of disproportionate communicative labor.

Macro-Level Call-to-Action

Institutions of higher education are moving toward capitalistic models of education being driven by for-profit models of organizing. This is negatively affecting employees across hierarchies of higher education, even at non-profit institutions. Economic pressures to increase enrollment, secure seven-figure donors, and boost operational budgets challenge the virtues of education in problematic ways. This is evident in the recent admission scandals across the nation (Medina et al.). Arguably, the brunt of this capitalistic force is on faculty and, more specifically, on critical women scholars who are interpellated into academic labor disproportionately. Those who engage communicative labor from a critical standpoint are likely being systematically pushed to perform in ways that exceed individual capacity yet are not rewarded or supported institutionally for the communicative labor that is rendered invisible. Thus, at the institutional level, it is necessary to enact policies, procedures, and programs to support the well-being of faculty whose invisible labor is often exploited.

If a critical mass of institutions agreed to recognize, value, and compensate faculty for invisible aspects of communicative labor, all higher education professionals would benefit from a more authentic

representation of the work being done. If faculty were collectively committed to sharing the invisible communicative labor, our discipline would benefit from a more equitable distribution of work, and the evaluations of our labor might better account for the holistic range of work we do rather than simply rewarding productivity (e.g., numbers of publications and/or numbers of credit hours enrolled) over people (e.g., relational dynamics of our work). At its core, this would require a paradigm shift that would reimagine aspects of our profession, including tenure requirements, hierarchical rank ordering of institutions (e.g., R1, R2, Liberal Arts, etc.) and personnel (e.g., administration, faculty, staff, and students), value and compensation for service work, more equitable compensation, and a restructuring of admissions and hiring practices.

Mezzo-Level Call-to-Action

At the mid-level, we call on departments and colleges to think about employee well-being as central to their mission and strategic plans in ways that are actionable and construct tangible material differences. Colleges and departmental units should be held accountable for the overall well-being of their employees. Promotion of policies that genuinely and authentically foster self-care would be beneficial. This would require leaders to hold disengaged parties accountable so that they are sharing the load of communicative labor. Shannon Portillo explains that too often the onus of disproportionate service is put on underrepresented faculty to decline requests for service. However, there is another facet of this equation that could help to remedy the imbalance, specifically “a call for white men to do more service” (Portillo). This would require mezzo-level leaders to hold such faculty accountable for sharing in the communicative labor and for systems and structures to be put into place that will ensure that expectations for an equitable division of labor are enforced. Exploitation of underrepresented faculty is simply an unacceptable status quo that perpetuates existing systems of privilege.

Micro-Level Call-to-Action

At the micro-level, we urge critical women scholars to engage in self-care and to vigilantly be self-protective (Scott 57). “Self-care” is a common buzzword in contemporary rhetoric. We do not mean that women should engage in superficial activities that will not make a substantive difference in the quality of their personal and professional lives (e.g., like taking an extra bubble bath). The type of long-term, emotionally-laden communicative labor we have disclosed could easily reach a tipping point and cross over into trauma.

Communicative labor can often lead to trauma stewardship (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 11). If trauma stewardship is not carefully and thoughtfully considered, it can lead to workaholism (Shifron and Reysen 136), stress (Ray and Miller 357), and burnout (Tracy 166), which can collectively lead to negative mental and physical health outcomes

threatening one's literal survival. When critical women scholars engage in their research, teaching, and service, they are at risk for second-hand trauma that could start as emotional contagion transferred from our research participants, students, and occupational burden.

As critical women scholars, we need to be cognizant of some of the ways second-hand trauma can manifest: (a) feeling helpless and hopeless (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 48), (b) sensing one can never do enough (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 59), (c) feeling chronically exhausted (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 81), and/or (d) experiencing feelings of guilt (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 95-98), fear (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 99-101), and/or anger and cynicism (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 101-104). When these feelings arise, it is time to take action! Taking action can be difficult because employees in higher education have reported their belief that it is problematic for their careers to admit reaching burnout when compared to other employment sectors (Zaluska et al. 32). We must resist this belief and advocate for ourselves.

Self-care includes, but is not limited to, the pursuit of healthy lifestyle choices (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 121), seeking and receiving social support (Sarason and Sarason 116), patience (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 123), and mindfulness (van Dernoot Lipsky and Burk 217). According to Karla Scott, engaging in self-care requires "strategies to support physical, emotional, and spiritual wellness needed for strength, survival, and success" (57). It is important to engage in these self-care processes, which could incorporate better time management, withdrawing from commitments, unplugging, and striving to thrive. We call the colleagues of critical women scholars to surround them with social support in informational, emotional, and instrumental ways. When we are cared for, we can best care for others.

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