



From private struggle to parentscholar solidarity: collective organizing during a pandemic to humanize the academy

Mary Candace Raygoza¹

Saint Mary's College of California
Moraga, California, USA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0103-7118>

marycandaceraygoza@gmail.com

Michael J. Viola²

Saint Mary's College of California
Moraga, California, USA

viola.michael@gmail.com

Emily B. Klein³

Saint Mary's College of California
Moraga, California, USA

emilyklein3@gmail.com

Raina J. León⁴

Saint Mary's College of California
Moraga, California, USA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0458-1458>

raina.leon@gmail.com

URL : <https://www.unilim.fr/trahs/3122>

DOI : 10.25965/trahs.3122

Licence : CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 International

Abstract: This article details our pathway in forming an activist caregiver collective at our institution in response to the unsustainable conditions of concurrently working, parenting, and caregiving during a pandemic. Through a parentscholar collaborative autoethnography, we interrogate structures deeply embedded in higher education that perpetuate existing inequities and invisibilize the labor of

¹ Dr. Raygoza is Assistant Professor of Education. Her research explores education for a more just and humanizing world, particularly in secondary mathematics education.

² Dr. Viola is Associate Professor of Justice, Community & Leadership and an advisory board member of Ethnic Studies. He is a critical educational studies scholar working on a book manuscript centering Filipino/a American activism and anti-imperialist solidarities.

³ Dr. Klein is Associate Professor of English. She is a feminist theatre and performance scholar with a focus on popular 20th and 21st century political productions for the street, stage, and screen.

⁴ Dr. León is Full Professor of Education. She is a poet, writer, and scholar with a focus on critical pedagogy and humanizing educational practice.

caregiving faculty--structures which have been made more visible with the coronavirus pandemic. The narratives documented here were all written in the midst of a global health crisis and a global reckoning for a more just world, and have enabled us to process our personal relationships to the dominant business model of higher education, also referred to as the “neoliberal university.” As caregiving academics, educators, and activists, we believe it crucial to enunciate our stories of struggle and joy in dialogue with the important interventions and conceptual maneuvers of the “Decolonial Turn.” We write with the following intentions: (1) To center caregivers as agents of change in the interrelated projects to decolonize both schools and society; (2) To document our voices and experiences as living curriculums that others may draw upon, extend, or even recreate for their specific contexts; and (3) To identify how our lived experiences, shaped by larger social forces, have enabled us a particular way of seeing/being that recognizes the critical relationship between decolonizing and caregiving.

Keywords: caregiving, parentscholar, faculty activism, autoethnography, Neoliberal University

Resumen: Este artículo detalla nuestro camino para formar un colectivo de cuidadores activistas en nuestra institución en respuesta a las condiciones insostenibles de trabajar como cuidadores durante una pandemia global. A través de una autoetnografía colaborativa entre *parentscholar*, interrogamos a las estructuras profundamente arraigadas en la educación superior que perpetúan las desigualdades existentes e invisibilizan la labor de los profesores que brindan cuidados, estructuras que se han hecho más visibles con la pandemia del coronavirus. Las narrativas documentadas aquí fueron escritas en medio de una crisis de salud global y un ajuste de cuentas global para un mundo más justo, y nos han permitido procesar nuestras relaciones personales con el modelo empresarial dominante de la educación superior, también conocido como el modelo de "universidad neoliberal." Como académicos, educadores y activistas que brindan cuidados, creemos que es crucial enunciar nuestras historias de lucha y alegría en diálogo con las importantes intervenciones y maniobras conceptuales del “Giro Decolonial.” Escribimos con las siguientes intenciones: (1) Centrar a los cuidadores como agentes de cambio en los proyectos interrelacionados para descolonizar las escuelas y la sociedad; (2) Documentar nuestras voces y experiencias como currículos vivos que otros pueden aprovechar, ampliar o incluso recrear para sus contextos específicos; y (3) Identificar cómo nuestras experiencias vividas, moldeadas por fuerzas sociales más amplias, nos han permitido una forma particular de ver / ser que reconoce la relación crítica entre descolonizar y cuidar.

Palabras clave: cuidadores, *parentscholar*, activismo de la facultad, autoetnografía, Universidad Neoliberal

Résumé : Cet article expose en détail notre chemin dans la formation d'une coopérative des personnels soignants activistes à notre campus universitaire en juin 2020 quand les conditions insoutenables de travail des personnels soignants pendant la pandémie sont arrivées au point de crise pour beaucoup des travailleurs chez notre institution. À travers une autoethnographie *parentscholar* collaborative, nous interrogeons les structures fortement impliqué dans l'enseignement supérieur qui perpétuent les inégalités et qui rendent invisible le travail de la faculté de soins -- les structures rendues plus visibles par la pandémie de coronavirus. Les récits documentés ici ont tous été écrits au milieu d'une crise sanitaire mondiale et un appel global pour une monde plus juste, et ils nous ont permis de réfléchir sur nos relations personnelles avec le modèle économique de l'enseignement supérieur --

aussi appelé “l’université néo-libérale.” En tant qu’universitaires, éducateurs et activistes, nous croyons qu’il est crucial d’articuler nos histoires de lutte et de joie dans le dialogue avec les interventions importantes et les manœuvres conceptuelles du “tournant décolonial.” Nous écrivons avec les intentions suivantes: (1) centrer les soignants comme agents de changement dans les projets interdépendants visant à décoloniser les écoles et la société; (2) documenter nos expériences pour qu’ils puissent être des programmes vivants que d’autres peuvent s’inspirer, s’étendre ou même recréer pour leurs contextes spécifiques; et (3) identifier comment nos expériences vécues, influencées par des forces sociales plus larges, nous ont permis une manière particulière de voir / d’être qui reconnaît la relation cruciale entre décoloniser et soigner.

Mots clés : soignants, *parentscholar*, activisme de la faculté, autoethnographie, université néolibérale

Resumo: Neste artigo, descrevemos o nosso processo de criar um grupo coletivo e ativista de professorxs-pais no nosso campus universitário em junho de 2020 quando as condições insustentáveis de trabalhar como professorxs universitários, que cuidam de crianças em plena pandemia global, atingiram um ponto de crise. Por meio de uma autoetnografia colaborativa como acadêmics-genitorxs, interrogamos algumas estruturas profundamente enraizadas no sistema universitário que perpetuam as desigualdades atuais e invisibilizam o trabalho feito pel@s professorxs-genitorxs, que tornou-se mais visível no contexto da pandemia. Todas as nossas narrativas foram escritas durante a crise global de saúde e a autorreflexão global para criar um mundo mais justo, facilitando a reflexão sobre as nossas próprias relações com o modelo universitário empresarial, a chamada “universidade neoliberal.” Como acadêmics, educadorxs e ativistas que se ocupam de crianças, achamos essencial enunciar a relação entre as nossas histórias de luta e de alegria em diálogo com as importantes intervenções e manobras conceituais do “Giro Decolonial.” Escrevemos com os seguintes objetivos: (1) Centrar @s genitorxs como agentes de mudança nos projetos interligados de descolonizar tanto as escolas como a sociedade; (2) Documentar nossas vozes e nossas experiências como currículos vivos para outr@s acadêmics usarem, alargarem ou mesmo recriarem nos seus próprios contextos; e (3) Identificar como as nossas experiências vividas, moldadas por forças sociais, facilitaram um modo particular de ver/ser que reconhece a relação crítica entre descolonizar e cuidar.

Palavras chave: cuidadorxs, *parentscholar*, coletivo e ativista de professorxs, autoetnografia, universidade neoliberal

Introduction

In June 2020, the conditions of working as caregivers during a pandemic became unsustainable for many faculties on our campus. We had just wrapped up an unprecedented semester marked by the sudden transition to online teaching while K-12 schools and daycares shut their doors. While we taught and reformatted our courses, we cared for vulnerable family members, homeschooled our children, and attended to baby and toddler needs at the same time. As we attempted to look ahead and piece together arrangements for managing summer and fall workloads and childcare while we sheltered in place, many of us began asking questions about contingency plans for parents dealing with the ongoing crisis. But at a college with no parental leave policy, no childcare center, and a culture that has either individualized or ignored the concerns of employee caregivers, it was not a surprise when the responses we sought were passed up the chain of command or indefinitely delayed like so many of our other prior requests. We could no longer wait for long promised improvements. We began to organize in the spirit of alignment with our institution's mission and its proclamations of inclusivity, concern for economic and social injustice, and a commitment to the poor and marginalized.

Once our own emergent group of parentscholars⁵ started to find one another and share our private struggles, we soon realized that our individual experiences were not only being replicated across departments and schools, but they were also consistent with emerging research studies and news reports documenting the pandemic's effects on caregiving scholars without institutional accommodation (CohenMiller, 2020). As the title of one such article declared: "Faculty parents are once again being asked to perform a miracle" (Flaherty, 2020, Aug 11). As early as May, *The Guardian* was already reporting a sharp decline in women's academic research publication rates, while men's increased nearly 50%, a trend experts attributed to the disproportionate "burden of homeschooling falling on women" during the pandemic (Fazackerley, 2020, May 12). Dozens of articles and preliminary studies have shown that, statistically, parenting responsibilities during the pandemic dramatically and unevenly impact the lives of women-identified workers, and BIPOC women workers to an even greater extent (e.g. Fazackerley, 2020, May 12; Highwood, 2020, April 30; Kitchener, 2020, April 24; Perelman, 2020, July 2). These intersectionally gendered effects open up more opportunities for employers to (intentionally and unintentionally) discriminate against and penalize their employees, while ignoring their own role in reproducing the patriarchal, misogynistic, and racist workplace norms that already plagued academia long before the pandemic. The first response by many institutions, including ours, was to offer the option to stop the clock on tenure, a practice that delays job security and the financial gains that come with promotion, and has been shown to negatively impact women and BIPOC faculty in particular (Flaherty, 2020, June 25).

These inequities are also emblematic of the larger structure and logic of what has been called the neoliberal university (Giroux, 2019; Munshi & Willse, 2016;

5 We employ the term parentscholar in recognition of and as an extension (to parents of all genders) from Matias and Nishi's (2018) conceptualization of the term *motherscholar*, originally coined by Matias in a 2011 American Educational Research Association presentation. Matias and Nishi explain the lack of space or hyphen between mother and scholar is intentional, representing "the inseparable identities of being both mother and scholar; both-and and not, either-or" (p. 82). They argue that we cannot engage in scholarship without engaging our roles as parents, and we cannot engage in parenting without engaging our roles as scholars.

Chatterjee and Maira, 2014). The neoliberal university is a term that describes the incorporation and reproduction over the past few decades of so-called, free market ideals within higher education. The coronavirus pandemic has not only exposed but accelerated the precarious nature of this business model for higher education that has led to diminished possibilities for long-term stable jobs (e.g. tenure track positions); eroded faculty voice in shared governance; increased the number of high paying administrative positions; and escalated tuition costs imposing historic amounts of student debt upon an entire generation. Despite these pervasive inequities intensified in the time of the pandemic, academic workplaces still have the capacity to transform in becoming more equitable and inclusive for parentscholars. Inspired by various mobilizations around the country affirming the need for collective action to not simply intersect our identities, but more so our struggles, our group began to dialogue with one another in the hope of transforming our working conditions and exploring the ways higher education could be reimaged beyond further austerity measures.

Using old parent email lists that various faculty members had crowdsourced in the past for help with finding preschools and babysitters, we quickly assembled a working group and determined that our isolated experiences would inform our collective action. We started organizing weekly video meetings, either late at night after our children's bedtimes or during the day when babies and children made frequent appearances. Over cameras and across virtual platforms, we cooed at one member's newborn and laughed when an eavesdropping seven-year-old burst onscreen to ask if it was ok to use curse words to decry racism and patriarchy. Our check-ins and personal storytelling at the start of our meetings became a foundational source of connection, wholeness, and community. Our virtual meetings where we could get advice, express our frustrations, and most importantly, hear and see each other's loved ones served as constant reminders as to why we needed to struggle.

Over the course of the summer we surveyed our caregiver colleagues, analyzed the data, held multiple brainstorming sessions as a collective, and then wrote up a formal letter with ten demands for immediate policy and practice changes in response to COVID-19 and three demands for the long-term institutionalization of an inclusive family-centered work culture that we sent to campus leaders and the faculty listserv (See Appendix A for the caregiving collective letter and demands). With the pandemic disproportionately impacting communities of color in the U.S. and elsewhere, we wanted to be intentional in acknowledging that being a parentscholar during the pandemic is even more challenging for racialized scholars (scholars of color). Therefore, we opened our letter by expressing solidarity with Black faculty, staff, and students who had already shared formal Black Lives Matter and Black Student Union demands to transform the dehumanizing and anti-black conditions they face at [institution's name]; included in those dehumanizing conditions is the issue of invisibilized caregiving. We echoed our campus' Black Lives Matter Committee's demand for "radical change addressing the root causes of the systemic oppression," by asserting that we cannot shift the culture of our college without shifting the institution's treatment of faculty, staff, and students with caregiving roles. "Our work is grounded in the shared struggle that inspires our colleagues' and students' calls," our letter attests, "and we believe that positive institutional change will come when we honor and follow the leadership of those most impacted by structural violence, inequities, and silence."

Before delivering the letter and demands to administration, we circulated them amongst faculty and staff. Over 100 individuals at our small liberal arts college

(about half of our 200 or so ranked faculty) and 10 departments, committees, and campus groups signed the letter.

As we engaged in this work, our labor was increasingly grounded in the unplanned process of learning more about one another and gaining reverence for each other's lived experiences. Free of hierarchies, based on consensus, and attendant to the family demands and professional precarities of each of our constituents, our group was building the kind of decolonized professional space we hope our whole institution could one day become. We offer the stories that follow as examples not only of the personal struggles that drew us to this work, but also of the affirmation and hope that we gain from it. Although our campus agitation and activism is far from complete, we hope our ongoing practice can serve as a promise of possibility for other faculty facing similar predicaments and inspire others to imagine what a decolonized academy could be - one that is more just, humanizing, and sustaining than the one we currently occupy.

The struggle of our group is informed, in part, by decoloniality's oppositional framework. Decoloniality seeks to dismantle relations of power that "foment the reproduction of racial, gender, and geo-political hierarchies that came into being or found new and more powerful forms of expression in the modern/colonial world" (Maldando-Torres, 2016). The emergence of decoloniality as a conceptual term gained important traction during the first decade of the 21st century as a swarm of oppositional movements that include but are not limited to Occupy Wall Street, the Arab Spring, Idle No More, and #BlackLivesMatter galvanized into an eclectic and militant response to the demise of the neoliberal global project (Viola, 2019). Scholars within and beyond the academy would engage the collective resistances of aggrieved populations and advance new themes, methods, and questions as well as reflect upon the shortcomings of dominant theoretical paradigms circulating within higher education (Viola, Saranillio, Pegues, and Day, 2019; Viola and Klein, 2019). In doing so, theorists from a mosaic of different anti-colonial knowledge projects and critical disciplinary perspectives would extend their conceptual orientations.

As caregiving academics, educators, and activists we believe it crucial to enunciate our stories of struggle and joy during a global pandemic in dialogue with the important interventions and conceptual maneuvers of the "Decolonial Turn." We also see the decolonial turn as a theoretical approach equipped to foreground the structural racism that permeates all aspects of universities and academia. As such, we write with the following intentions: (1) To center caregivers as agents in the interrelated projects to decolonize both schools and society; (2) To document our voices and experiences as living curriculums that others may draw upon, extend, or even recreate for their specific conditions; and (3) To identify how our lived experiences, shaped by larger social forces, have enabled us a particular way of seeing that recognizes the peculiar relationship between decolonizing and caregiving.

Methods

Toward these goals, we have written a parentscholar collaborative autoethnography. Ellis and Bochner (2000) define autoethnography as "autobiographies that self-consciously explore the interplay of the introspective, personally engaged self with cultural descriptions mediated through language, history, and ethnographic explanation" (p. 742). Within *Composing Ethnography* (1996), Ellis admits that ethnography cannot be separated from language, that in the creation of texts, an ethnographer necessarily invents a particular reality influenced by that ethnographer's subjectivity. Rather than deny that fact, Ellis and Bochner seek ways

to provide a space for admission. There are obviously critiques, that the research will be lost to relativism and that facts will be supplanted by memory and imagination. Ellis (1996) responds: “The idea of blurring genres of inquiry may help obscure the boundaries between science and literature, but it doesn’t obliterate the responsibility to try to be faithful to our experiences in the field” (p. 21). As a collective of caregiving academics, we have committed to writing an evocative autoethnography, by which is meant that we do not ignore the emotional implications of actions; rather we seek, in our narrative revelations, to evoke a response and a connection to our struggle and advocacy work. We are informed by Sotirin’s (2010) conceptualization of evocative autoethnographic mother-writing specifically, which involves “introspective inquiry into the emotional depths of personal experience, resonances of significance moving from personal to cultural relations and back again” (p. 4).

In *The Ethnographic I: A Methodological Novel about Autoethnography*, Ellis (2004) writes that autoethnography “refers to the process as well as what is produced from the process” (p. 32). Within her autoethnographies, she focuses on the telling of the story, particularly those stories that are emotionally resonant for her: “In autoethnography, we’re usually writing about the epiphanies in our lives and by doing so, we open ourselves up for criticism about how we’ve lived” (pp. 33-34). In our work, we follow this pattern, laying bare the delights and devastations of caregiving while holding space for the learning of students and also negotiating ever shifting capitalistic demands of an academic institution.

We foresee a reckoning in this time of consciousness raising in that there will be a breaking point in regards to the separation between work and caregiving; in our narratives, we explicitly agitate towards a practice that centers the important work of nurturing our futures. Ethnography allows for the observation of a phenomenon as well as explorations of the self in the spirit of critique and questioning, particularly when using autoethnography. One might say that to understand the movements within our society, we must situate our individual experiences within collective and collaborative narratives confronting the ongoing legacies and structures of colonial oppression.

In our collaborative work, we additionally draw on the framing of Heewon Chang, Faith Ngunjiri, and Kathy-Ann C. Hernandez, *Collaborative autoethnography* (2016). Chang, et al successfully argue that collaborative autoethnography can elucidate an understanding of a particular subjectivity of the self through the catalyst mechanism of group study. We as a group share a particular social location as caregiving faculty members, and we live varied intersectional identities. Through our individual narratives, we reveal a collective struggle; through our collaborative autoethnographic work we reveal hidden, dehumanizing, and hegemonic structures. While recognizing our shared struggles and our convergence around them, we also bring *radical specificity* (Sotirin, 2010) to our writing, highlighting our unique lived experiences— from one another and all parentscholars. Our collaborative autoethnography serves as a writing practice of expression and resistance as well as a methodology of solidarity where one’s voice is cast upon systems of power and exclusion. Articulating our personal struggles as caregivers in a context of austerity, gentrification, and racial violence cannot be done without a critical orientation to larger collective predicaments of capitalist exploitation and systems of colonial domination. As a result, the narratives we offer in these pages are not limited to an individual subject overcoming harsh life circumstance, but rather evoke a collective polyphony of caregiving voices, circumstances that are actively critiquing our existing order of things, while at the same time preparing a future generation of

youth with the necessary skills to recreate schools, societies, and even themselves in beautiful new ways.

Parentscholar Autoethnographies

Penalty & Privilege: Navigating Motherhood and Visible Non-Masculinity in the Academy

Emily B. Klein

I was the first woman in my department to have a baby. It was 2013. My first job out of graduate school. Tenure track at a small liberal arts college. My first doctoral advisor had told me that I'd never get a job because my interest in feminist theory was passé, so it felt good knowing that the choice to drop him and find a female-identified mentor with kids⁶ had been the right way to go. She had advised me well, focused on pragmatic tips for professional navigation and survival, and now, here I was—living the dream!

But when I looked around the department meeting at my colleagues stuffed into those metal classroom chairs with the attached flip-up desks, I wondered how long my swelling pregnant abdomen would fit into that cramped space. And then it dawned on me that I was almost certainly the first person in the room to ever think that thought. Though I remembered feeling reassured during my initial campus visit when I noted that the little department of ten or so was pretty evenly split between men and women, that reassurance started to fade once I was hired. I soon realized that almost all the men in the department had children, but not a single woman did. When I broadened my view to the whole humanities building, I discovered that there were only two other tenure track women with children. I was about to become a member of a very small, unpopular club.

It started to seem fitting then, that the day my pregnancy test had turned blue was the same day that my inbox lit up with my first book contract emailed from the publisher. My double joy—two gifts I could hardly believe were mine—became my double panic; the thrill of gratitude twinned with the daunting fear that I was not up to this tandem challenge. I was used to the infantilizing pressures of academia's relentless cycles of evaluation and judgement, but now more than ever I felt I would have to produce research that evidenced my scholarly competence—and it would have to be enough to outweigh my new status as—that word for a non-professional woman—a mother. Unlike fatherhood, which seemingly has no effect on the status of men's identity in higher education, motherhood at this precarious stage of my career, I feared, would mark me as non-serious and perhaps, non-tenurable. The subtext, of course, is that pregnancy and motherhood would also mark me in a hyper-visible way as non-masculine—a dangerous thing to be in an institution and a field

6 Another grad student advisee and more work for her; less for him, and so the story goes... See Social Sciences Feminist Network Research Interest Group. "The Burden of Invisible Work in Academia: Social Inequalities and Time Use in Five University Departments." *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, vol. 39, 2017, pp. 228-245. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/90007882 and Joya Misra, Jennifer Hickey Lundquist, Elissa Holmes, and Stephanie Agiomavritis. "The Ivory Ceiling of Service Work" *American Association of University Professors*. January-February 2011. <https://www.aaup.org/article/ivory-ceiling-service-work#.X1KyrU17mqA>.

in which white masculinity in terms of style, affect, and persona is both the gold standard and the invisible norm.

Thus, by what I perceived as necessity, my maternity leave also became my research leave. Instead of sleeping when the baby sleeps like the cozy parenting manuals recommend, I outlined new chapters. On a summer trip to introduce the baby to friends and family back home, I wrote drafts at a stranger's kitchen table; kind neighbors of my parents generously gave us their house key while they were gone so that I could work there uninterrupted while my partner watched the baby. I wrote for my professional survival, and I wrote for my child. The book I was laboring into birth--"my second born," I joked-- was the currency on which I could trade up for a better job for me, and a better life for my child. It was a struggle, but it was such a good one to have, I kept reminding myself. I was privileged to have this struggle. A struggle borne of good fortune and good health and hard work and love? I had no choice but to embrace it all.

Yet, now, looking back on that embraced struggle at my old institution, I also see the structural problems that I helped to normalize. I knew that academia was built by and for people without family caregiving responsibilities, but I didn't want to seem ungrateful for my tenure track opportunity, so I kept quiet. Now, when aspiring graduate students at my current college ask me about balancing parenting and academia, I hate it that my answers make my voice drop an octave. I go from enthusiastic to furtive, strategic, survivalist. I reluctantly describe the invisible emotional labor of student support work, the myths around "stopping the tenure clock," the institutionalized exploitation of adjunct instructors. Why do I keep working in a field that has always reserved special subtle and not-so-subtle penalties not only for women, but for women of color and especially caregiving women of color most of all? I guess it's because of hope. I have hope that the more of us that stick around and find each other, the more change we can make together. I have hope that in the very programs and departments where we teach students to critically examine intersecting structures of power, systemic forms of built-in oppression, the effects of politics on their lived experience, and the value of reclaiming silenced and forgotten histories, we can also do the work to decolonize and decorporatize our own institutions.

This year, as the first sabbatical of my career was obliterated by COVID-19, I was reminded of the urgency of this collective work. At a time when I wanted nothing more than the solitude to finally glimpse that fantasy professor life—maybe not with the pipe and beard and elbow patches—but to focus on my research, burrow into archives, and observe the objects of my study, my time for scholarship evaporated. Homeschooling and various forms of parenting and caregiving rushed in to take its place. Navigating the crushing loss of research time while constantly soothing my lonely first grader bereft of friends and normalcy took me back to those first bleary months of motherhood when I was similarly scared and exhausted and torn between parenting and publishing. In this case, when I asked my campus administrators what I could do to convert, delay, or extend my thwarted leave I was met with silence.

My sabbatical had already been delayed by two years because of what a colleague called "the gender tax" when the administrator who hired me wouldn't count my previous years of academic work toward my entry status in the same way he had for previously hired men. Even though it was almost immediately obvious that my decade-long wait for a first sabbatical was all for naught and my research agenda was decimated, I struggled for weeks to talk myself out of the academic-lady internal monologue that I had rehearsed and learned so well: "Don't bother them; they're busy. Don't be selfish; we're in a pandemic. Your problems don't matter. Your

research doesn't matter. Moms don't matter." It took a group of other struggling academic caregivers to rouse me from the cycling scripts of self-defeat.

On our first mid-pandemic video call, there was immediate meaning and power just in the resistant act of finding each other. We realized that despite being siloed in our separate departments and committees, we all had the same language for what we had been through: "expected to go about business as usual," "unacknowledged," "forgotten," "ignored," and "invisibilized." bell hooks' famous reference to Catharine MacKinnon rang in my ears: "we know things with our lives and we live that knowledge, beyond what any theory has yet theorized" (hooks, 1994). We discussed not only the sad state of affairs on our campus before COVID-19 (no child care center, no parenting or family resources, and still after years of internal studies, task forces and negotiations, no parental or maternity leave policy), but we also theorized the ways that toxic elements of our institutional culture were playing out during intersecting global crises. This was our old-fashioned twenty-first century consciousness raising moment. Over the weeks, many of us marched with our children in support of the #BlackLivesMatter uprising by day only to come home to dinner and bedtime duty, followed by caregiver organizing sessions at night.

During the heightened strain of the pandemic and the global protests for racial justice, our needs as faculty caregivers sharpened into focus. The global health crisis became a kind of tipping point for moving us toward the collaborative work of decolonizing our campus culture. Though we were more physically isolated than ever, our endeavor was grounded in a shared source of growth and joy. During these endless quarantine days when our children saw all that we did--constant little witnesses to our work and play--I think we felt a greater sense of responsibility to model and be the world we wanted for them. We had each struggled for our families before. Now it was just a matter of turning that individual practice into collective action.

To Hold Close, We Plan and Fight

Raina J. León (written in the wee hours of the night while baby and toddler sleep)

To have children, my partner and I require significant medical interventions. My son was the result of nearly three years of tests, sole allocation of our collective savings, and nearly a thousand pages of medical records for me alone. I planned implantation day after having read the report of three colleagues on parental leave where they compared leaves at comparable universities and delineated case studies from faculty at the university where heinous disregard for their health and finances had occurred. They even created a calendar that noted how the week you had your baby could have very different effects on receiving a humane parental leave at our institution. I timed implantation, praying on success, and a full term baby to be born during one of the weeks demarcated in green. My partner and I would often leave the house at about 5am to be in two hours of traffic for ultrasounds after the implantation yielded a growing fetus, two to three times a week. After that, I would drive across the Bay Bridge again to start a day that would often include 12 hours of meetings and classes as a faculty person and director of my program.

What I learned as I grew into a new mother body was that I could not take parental leave and be on sabbatical, so my year-long sabbatical at half-pay, became 18 months of leave at about 70% of my yearly pay over two years. To be assured of a parental leave at all, I informed my university of my pregnancy only seven or eight weeks into it, which was already a significant risk considering how many interventions

were necessary to become pregnant. It took me months of negotiations and meetings to ultimately have a plan in place.

While on my parental leave/sabbatical, I recall thinking of my colleagues who had used their sabbaticals to just read or take up an instrument or rest. I never rested. I took on teaching gigs to make up the money I lost for the leave and took on a bevy of activities, creatively joyous and some purely functional, more and ever more, while also caretaking for my son until he went to daycare at 9 months.

In the weeks before my return to work at the university, I began to feel two pulls: dread at my return and a desire to welcome our second child.

“Why are you here so soon?” the fertility doctor asked. “You have all the time in the world.”

I thought that he must not work with many academics, or at least none at my university.

I was 38, up for promotion to full professor, with so many side gigs that I often lost (and lose) count. Returning to academia after a birth, parental leave, sabbatical, I knew applying for full professor might be sabotaged for at least 5 years if I was not successful in the first application. Getting pregnant again so soon might mean that, should I not be successful, there would be too much time between the last time that I taught to have viable teaching evaluations; at a college that emphasizes them, the stronger move would be to delay adding to my family yet again.

Still, I did not want my family planning to be undermined by career goals and an acceptance of patriarchal and racist systems that seek to control the body of the child-bearing and -rearing Black woman. Time and health were not on my side biologically for getting pregnant and carrying a baby to term. I had already had one miscarriage after my son’s birth.

Many of my peers returning from sabbatical spoke to feeling refreshed and ready to engage in the comradery of intellectual exchange in hallways and classrooms. I looked at it as a precipice: so much at stake at the edge. It was hard to remember the first bright days as a professor. In those early days, I did not associate the whiteness of the buildings with whiteness, nor the hallowed halls as held up by the exposed beams of patriarchy. Those days did not last long; my primary reprieve became the classroom, learning with my students, though even there, I was not safe. Still, I looked forward to supporting the work of teachers, because I believe in the liberatory power, shared and collective-rising, of education.

“I’m getting old,” I think I said to the doctor. I know he brushed it off, but what I meant was not just my age. It was my perception of a growing cementedness in what I feared about academia and the daily struggles within it as an Afro-Boricua woman. One of my great celebrations in becoming a mother is how much I must model myself on water: it moves ever onward, finding a way from no way. It has its own mission to fulfill, it’s own makings. It is shaped, but it is shapeless and so unable to be controlled. It changes with the seasons and remains ultimately water. It carries and teaches us to let go.

As with my son, I planned my daughter’s rooting, and I went on the job market again.

During my sabbatical, while my son was an infant and with a deep understanding of the financial cost of having another child without the sick days that parental leave relies on at my university, I applied for a job at another university. The job was truly perfect for me. I got a campus interview and flew from my sabbatical location of Italy at the time to attend it. I got the job. Ultimately, it wasn’t a fit for my family

– while there would be dynamic possibilities for me, my partner’s career would be deeply undermined – I was able to use my job offer to negotiate three course releases and a small salary increase for three years. I also secured the ability to use two course releases in a semester.

At our university, one needs three years of accumulated sick leave to be assured a parental leave for a semester and that comes with a minimum \$5,000 pay cut. By my calculations, I would have enough sick time accumulated for one course release and with the ability to take the two additional course releases, I would not have to suffer another pay cut. If I took leave without the benefit of those course releases, my income could be cut up to \$30,000. Considering that I was returning from having 2 years of income at a cumulative 70% of my salary, I knew I could not take an even more drastic pay cut for the same and often increasing work, because I choose to mother.

When I was negotiating, a hitch for a time was that I insisted on being able to use two course releases in a semester. I explained to the dean that this was what I needed for parental leave and was told that the provost had relayed to her that a parental leave policy would be instituted so this would not be necessary. Knowing that colleagues have fought for years for such a policy, I did not believe and held on to having my request honored. The college agreed, but it took months for me to receive my retention offer confirmation, months after I had already told the other university that I could not take the position. I discussed with my partner what might happen if they did not honor the agreement, that it was better to leave the university and be unemployed than to stay with no security of my parental leave being honored.

I have had to become resolved to leave in order to stay.

I went on the job market again before I returned and negotiated an additional year of the salary bonus to replace the 5k pay cut that I took with my son and the ability to use one of my course releases when I would return to campus as faculty and the director of my program, with new students, around 5 months pregnant and limited in my movement capacities, mothering a toddler while in a school that was in the midst of vast changes in faculty, staffing, student numbers ... and knowing I would have to go on leave three weeks before the semester would end.

I also negotiated a parental leave that was not dependent on using the course releases I had secured. I was again told that a parental leave policy would be in place making this assurance in my retention offer moot. That I insisted on this being stated in my retention offer is the only reason that I did not have to use course releases from my first retention offer to ensure that I would not suffer another pay cut.

That I have a parental leave now is the result of having planned my mothering journey over the last three years, having gone on the job market twice and developing a comfort with leaving a university where I was faculty, staff, and a student at one point so that I could be with my newborn daughter as long as possible.

My return to campus was not all happy days, though in the first weeks, I did find myself joyous at seeing old friends and being welcomed back by new faces who smiled often as they said, “I’ve heard so many good things about you. I am so glad to meet you.”

Beautiful affirmations for my work at the university were extended, and I found my fears supplanted by my emerging confidence in my leadership, capacity as an educator, and ability to hold space for the intersecting communities of which I am a part. I put the promotion decision at the back of my mind.

None of us could have imagined the pandemic, the limitations on movement and constant concern of illness, the vast changes to medical care. Additionally, I did not expect to also return to a sustained conflict with a colleague, infused with (micro)aggressions, who had power over my promotion as she had years ago when I went up for tenure. I did all the right things to shield myself, saw all the right people. Ultimately, as far as I know, nothing was ever done to protect me.

“If this is what I came back for, it would have been better to leave,” I said once to my mother, a former full professor herself. She said, “You can’t look back. You have to live with your decisions and look forward.” I listened and settled into gratitude for a job, for my child coming, for the parental leave to be with her. I had worked so hard just to be with her, tried to anticipate every barrier.

In the months since I started my leave, I was welcomed as a full professor, only the third Black person (all of us Black women) at my university and the first Afro-Latina. While I am not the first Latina, I may be the fifth and eighth full professor of Latinx descent of at least the last 20 years, but possibly the full 157-year history of the university. In all of who I am, in looking at numbers from the most recent National Center for Education Statistics study of the American professoriate, I represent less than 0.15% of the entire professoriate: full professor, femme-identified, person of 2 or more races (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). I received the news of my promotion in March, a deadline I had negotiated in my retention offer. I was asked by the dean why, and answered honestly: “If I am not promoted to full professor, then that gives me enough time to give the university notice and for you to run a search for my program; it also gives me time to determine next steps for going on the job market in the fall again.”

I had resolved to be with my children during a parental leave of at least three months, no matter the cost. I had chosen to leave and look for other opportunities for employment rather than work in an environment that sought to dehumanize me as if I was just a teaching automaton, a cog in the machine with my family as small grooves in the turning wheel.

My resolution around my children continues to be essential and impacted even in my birth story. I ultimately needed an emergency birth at a hospital and was placed in an isolation room while suspected of suffering from the novel coronavirus. Ultimately, it was determined that I did not have the novel coronavirus, but in the crisis, over and over again, I had to say, “You will not take my daughter. She’s staying right here with me.” Not to be resuscitated outside of a room; not for any testing; not to a NICU to isolate her out of an overabundance of caution; not to a nursery for warming or to be fed or to be changed; not for anything would I or will I allow my daughter (or children) to be taken. This is an resolution in ancestral alignment; it is also an important statement in this present moment.

Two days later, George Floyd was killed, and a mother who was already ancestor welcomed her son, a son who was taken from the world. This is all linked. The fight to stay close, to stay human, to have my humanity honored, the stake of my life and that of my children, the systems that seek to control and will kill you if they can’t, the extraordinary work that must be done in hope, rooted in love, with no guarantees of survival. As the caregiving faculty rose up to write our demands for a campus climate change, I joined them. How could I not? At stake is nothing less than our lives and that of our children, whether in pandemic or not.

In each meeting, while we shared our dreaming of health and wellness and thriving in an academic environment and fashioned those dreams into demands, we also cultivated a healing and centered community in which we celebrated our parenting

selves and commiserated in the struggles, too. My daughter has attended most of the meetings with me. My caregiving colleagues and friends have witnessed her transform in the magical way that babies do, seeming to grow exponentially before us. Oftentimes, I have bounced her while my son played in the background. My children, the youngest of our collective, seem to energize our work and me in our shared aim: an academic space in which we can be whole and human, teaching and engaging in scholarly practice, while also centering our beloved commitments as parents to raise whole and healthy human beings. I am in a constant state of becoming as mother, scholar, collaborative agitator, and organizer, and my children witness this becoming. This is the example I want to live, and I celebrate, that their paths, too, might be written towards community flourishing.

The Sweet Scent of Rose *Mary Candace Raygoza*

As a brand new (very excited, eager) high school teacher in my early 20s, I participated in a training on trauma-informed, restorative justice pedagogies and practices for teachers at the Echo Center in Los Angeles. We learned about how trauma manifests in the body, how to connect with young people through a trauma-informed lens, and how to challenge dominant paradigms of punishment that exacerbate the school-to-prison pipeline. We were introduced to a long list of human needs and emotions such as joy, connection, hope, solidarity, affection, and wonder; and were encouraged to understand how young people's behavior is a communication of their human needs, how we can strive to support those needs to be met as teachers.

It was a life-changing experience for me as a teacher and as a person. I came home from the training to my then-boyfriend and said: We have to go to Echo's classes for parents when we have our own children! Fast forward 7 years and there I was, waddling into Echo, super pregnant in my third trimester (again: very excited, eager), sitting next to my husband at Echo's parenting series. I wanted to (and had the privilege to) be in this space before becoming a parent. It was an educational experience for me, but more than that it was an act of resistance, of intervening on my own intergenerational childhood trauma, starting with when my baby was in the womb. I carried a baby, and I carried a deep sense of unwillingness to accept or perpetuate childhood trauma, as a mother and educator. Logistically, we also needed to take the class at Echo when I was still pregnant because we were about to move away from the area for my first academic job as a teacher education professor.

I became a mother exactly 5 days before I became a professor. Within the span of two weeks, I defended my dissertation (nothing like Braxton Hicks contractions at 38 weeks along to make you drive your dissertation findings home!), graduated with my PhD, birthed my first born, and started an academic job. At new faculty orientation, I pumped breastmilk behind the projector screen so I could still hear the session introducing us to the Rank and Tenure process. Navigating pumping breastmilk to succeed as a professor was not in the slideshow I could not see, but there I was, trying to listen diligently over the rhythm of the buzzing pump. Also, the first person on campus I asked about where to pump had suggested the bathroom, an all-too-common story across higher education and beyond, so there was that.

When I was initially offered the job, an academic mentor whom I turned to during my job search advised me not to ask for a later start date, that it could jeopardize the offer and that if my daughter was born at the end of June but classes did not start until August, I should be just fine, so I did not ask directly for a later start date—This was my dream job. I was terrified. And I told everyone I was expecting and what

my due date was, so I figured if starting later was possible, someone would have offered it, or at least mentioned it. In the last few years, it has since been communicated to me it would have been my responsibility to try to individually arrange a later start date. Years later, I am still grieving the lost time with my daughter in her infancy. I made every moment count as a mother, in the classroom, and in my scholarship. But I should not have had to extend myself as I did, to the detriment of my mental health and wellbeing.

I work at an institution presently without a parental leave policy. We are still fighting for that, so that leave does not consist of individual arrangements of sick time that amount to a version of leave. So, I need to consider this if I have another child. In an eerily parallel situation, when I was a 22 year-old high school teacher, an administrator told me not to take days off (referring to not using the 10 sick days teachers are allotted for a whole school year) because I should “bank” them for when I have a child—without knowing anything about my reproductive history or plans, and of course with no business to know those things or advise on that. I vividly remember, with fury in my body, saying to her: ‘That is not appropriate.’ Why was my 22 year-old untenured teacher self put in a position to have to tell her that? Why, as a professional who works with children and the teachers who teach them, do I not have parental leave or access to or support for childcare from my places of work for my own children? The message I have received as an educator, both in K-12 and higher education, is that having a child is not something to be normalized as part of a professional’s life trajectory or something to be accommodated for without question- as in, of course people have babies and of course we support you to bond with your babies.

This is why I organize for and with parentscholars. It is resistance as love— love for children and caregivers and families and for what our educational institutions can become. I organize to intervene on trauma, both the intergenerational childhood trauma I know viscerally at the personal level, and the systemic trauma against families intersecting with many forms of oppression— so much of which I do not know from my own lived experience. I am a white, middle-class, cisgender woman, and I now work at a Catholic institution with the name *Mary* to top it off. I walk the world with unearned privilege and seek to recognize how in most facets of my lived experience, from the healthcare system to the education system, I benefit. In the time of the pandemic, I know many caregiving faculties are faced with many more layers of oppression than myself, and I strive to do what I can to use my privilege to interrupt that.

Teaching, both in K-12 and higher education, and parenthood are deeply integrated parts of my identity. At the core of my philosophies of teaching and parenting is that our systems should be designed to support educators and parents to foster young people’s human needs – joy, connection, hope, solidarity, affection, wonder, and so much more – and to challenge all forms of oppression.⁷ I am driven by a deep sense of unwillingness to be complicit in a society that doesn’t do everything it can to love children and caregivers and families. Because how can we meet everyone’s human needs if we don’t? Where is our humanity if we don’t? We need caregiving-friendly policies in higher education, but this work is not inherently an issue of policy, it’s an issue of humanity.

7 See Raygoza, M.C., León, R., Lee, C., Junsay, C., Norris, A., & Niermann, G. (2020). Social justice in teacher education: It’s not just a course. In CTE SPAN 2020 Research Monograph (pp. 86-99). San Francisco, CA: California Council on Teacher Education.

I connected with my colleagues to organize after we were hit with a new reality of suddenly having childcare yanked from underneath us, now expected to simultaneously parent and work full-time as if this crisis of childcare had not happened. It seemed that K-12 and higher education institutions far and wide were not viewing this dilemma as *their* dilemma but rather one that individuals must quietly figure out. It was not surprising, but it was jarring. This time feels so very similar to my newborn mother phase of caring for my child and working around the clock all over again, again at the expense of my mental health and wellbeing.

I organize with my colleagues in the time of Covid because, as activist Grace Lee Boggs reminds us, “movements are born of critical connections rather than critical mass.” We share a deep connection as caregiving faculty, and we are driven in our work as part of larger social movement to decolonize education. I organize with my colleagues because our storytelling of our children’s joyous moments and the more challenging times seamlessly weave into our advocacy, our writing, our strategizing, and our persistence to somehow keep showing up to post-bedtime meetings exhausted; and that’s beautiful. Organizing with fellow caregiving faculty is healing. The tremendous outpour of campus support and solidarity since we sent out our letter and demands is uplifting. The swift, positive responses and actions from a number of College leaders is affirming and gives me hope for continued justice-driven work at our institution, one with social justice at the heart of its mission.

I organize because now during the pandemic at Zoom meetings and classes, with my 3 year-old daughter often on my lap, nestling up on my chest, I can smell the sweet scent of Rose (my daughter’s name), giving me life to keep on “teaching the big kids” (as she understands my job) and to advocate for my fellow caregivers. We are here to write another story for caregiving faculty at our institution and beyond.

Caregiving and Teaching Demand A Pedagogy of the Heart *Michael J. Viola*

There are moments in life when one understands what it means to serve as a bridge between a history not of our own choosing and a futurity we have a small role in creating. One of those moments occurred on March 15, 2020. I was walking home with my two children and their dearest friend from a trip to the nearby ice cream store in East Oakland when I received an email that I had been granted tenure at my institution. As I paused with immense gratitude, I soon realized that this news was received exactly 4 years to the day when my father, who had been struggling for many years with congestive heart failure had passed away in his sleep. I was transported to the early morning of March 15, 2016 when I was awakened to the news that my father’s heart had pumped its last beat. I was holding my youngest daughter, named in my father’s honor, who at the age of two would oftentimes crawl into bed with me at sunbreak. I brought my daughter closer in an embrace saddened with the realization that at her tender age, she would no longer create new memories with her grandfather. Rather, she would come to know him only through the stories that would be told of his life.

The world has transformed dramatically since the morning of my father’s passing. In fact, it is unrecognizable from that afternoon walk with my children when I received notice of my tenure. On March 16, 2020, six counties in the San Francisco Bay Area announced a “shelter in place” order that restricted all residents to their homes in response to the global coronavirus pandemic. In the months that followed we have: witnessed the United States comprising nearly a quarter of the world’s COVID-19 deaths despite having less than a 5% of the world’s population; experienced the accelerated effects of global climate change as wildfires consume

the entire West Coast resulting in plumes of smoke so large they obstructed the light of the sun for days on end; and confronted the deeply entrenched patterns of anti-blackness in our country with the unjust killings of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Rayshard Brooks. Such events have led my faculty colleagues as well as educators throughout the nation to question, to reflect upon, and to remember why we have dedicated our lives to the teaching profession.

The Latin American poet, Eduardo Galeano reminds us that the act of remembering, which in Spanish is “recordar,” comes from the Latin, re-cordis, and means: “to pass back through the heart” (Galeano, 1992). In this time between reaction and radicalism, caregiving educators must ask ourselves: what kind of world are we educating our students and our children to live in? This question is especially important in the courses that I teach to prepare future teachers. In my courses I understand that I’m contributing to the intellectual development of future educators so they can be equipped in grasping the interrelated relationships between schools and the larger systems of power. Yet, teaching is not just an act of the mind but of our hearts. As such, I do my best to expand our collective ability to feel more deeply with their hearts so that my students have a greater sense of urgency, anger, as well as hope to participate alongside their own future students in the calls for racial, economic and environmental justice. I teach my pre-service students with the imagination that they will have my two children in their future classrooms someday. For my daughters are part of a generation of youth, akin to the generations that have come before them, that must be positioned by the care of their parents, wider community, and their teachers to, in the words of James Baldwin, “use the tremendous potential and energy which [these children] represent. Because if our country’s schools and broader institutions do not “find a way to use that energy, it will be destroyed by that energy” (Baldwin, 1963).

During the duration of the coronavirus pandemic, I have seen glimpses of the kinds of destruction my own children can bring upon the structures my partner and I have tried to establish and co-create in our home. Such chaos has ensued not out of ill will, but because I have lacked the necessary time to channel our children’s abundance of potential and energy in creative and engaging ways as I carry on with the teaching, scholarship, and service required of my work. I cannot fathom how single mothers within the academy and beyond it are able to sustain this kind of life imbalance. In fact, I’m convinced it is untenable as I parent with my partner in addressing the everyday needs of our young daughters who spend each hour of their day under our supervision. The pandemic has exposed the ways in which the architecture of higher education and its hierarchical structures have not been created from the “locus of enunciation” that understands let alone embraces the lived experiences of caregivers.

As a father in the academy, I recognize that I am afforded many privileges that my women colleagues do not have. For instance, I can bring my children to campus with me and be viewed as a good parent as opposed to unprofessional or not committed to my work. I understand the immense research that has shown how being a father in the academy has not actually hindered my ability toward tenure but actually benefited me, especially considering the ways my own life partner has struggled to find secure employment as an academic as she carries so much of the gendered and emotional labor unjustly normalized as the work of mothering. We have been able to keep our heads afloat in these times because of the strength of our community both within the college and beyond. I do not have the space in these pages to talk about the radical families who contribute in the raising of my daughters. Yet, within the academy, I have the privilege of being a part of an academic program (with supportive faculty colleagues) grounded in the ideals of social justice and the

collective good. Toward those ends, we have co-created a culture of care and a recognition for the need of finding some semblance of balance.

Even before the coronavirus pandemic, our program collaborated on our teaching schedules to ensure that faculty members were accommodated. Such dialogues were essential in recognizing that faculty involvement in social justice struggles were not contained solely to the institution and that other aspects of our life required nourishment to bring us joy, fulfillment, and a greater sense of purpose. As I learned from other faculty colleagues across academic programs and departments, it was clear that my colleagues outside of my specific academic program were not treated with the same culture of dignity and respect. As such, the caregiving collective that emerged this summer would recognize that change can only occur with institutional policies and a broader campus culture led by those most impacted by long standing inequities. I participated with this collective recognizing that the efforts to pump new life into existing systems and dream into being the kind of larger institution that our hearts yearn for requires ongoing struggle and solidarity.

My understanding of struggle and solidarity has evolved over the years as I become more aware of the precariousness of life both as a parent and as a son who continues to mourn the loss of his father. Such experiences have enabled me to see the world in new, interconnected, and more complex ways. I believe that it will only be through struggle and solidarity with our students and fellow faculty colleagues (both tenure stream and adjunct faculty alike) that we will be able to move beyond the longstanding and unsustainable corporate trends embraced in higher education. Such struggle and solidarity has been represented in various social movements with the raised fist to indicate the power of individuals working collectively with the understanding that each of our individual struggles are bound together with others against common structures that perpetuate injustice and inequity. For my children, their fists are the same size as their hearts. Yet, for a typical adult, the heart grows to become the equivalent of two human fists. This is a fitting way to think about why caregivers offer an important curriculum in the decolonization of schools and society. Caregiving struggles are always motivated by the collective. In other words, caregivers are not merely the sum of individual efforts to transform who they are, but rather they struggle with their loved ones in mind so their children may inherit institutions that will enable them to direct their immense potential and energy for a better world. This is the link between teaching and caregiving, as both require a pedagogy that is not simply animated in critique but more so fueled by the radical love that resides deep within our hearts.

Discussion

The process of developing our collective autoethnography foregrounded several unexpected themes: the importance of being rooted in love to fuel our solidarity work; the detriment of individualism in addressing our needs as it undermines the possibility of real and consistent institutional change; the recognition that organizing is aligned with our pedagogical work and commitment to our familial and academic communities; the understanding that our narratives can serve as an agitation and even dismantling of untenable university structures for the good of all. Last but not least, a shared sense of healing emerged through our collaboration. Finding each other, sharing our stories, and organizing as a collective has turned out to be a process of healing we did not know we needed.

Vijay Prashad states, “If you listen to [...] social movements around the world, you will find that they have lessons to teach us about how the system should be reorganized during this crisis” (Prashad, 2020). Building upon Prashad’s insights,

our central premise is that caregiving educators can provide institutions crucial strategies for resisting the dehumanization of the neoliberal university. Such a reorganization would actively de-link from the toxicities of individualism, careerism, and profiteering toward an alternative logic of care, radical love, and healing that benefits students and employees alike. The narratives documented here were all written during a period of crisis and pandemic, enabling us to reflect aloud about our unhealthy relationship to the business of higher education. More voices must be cast upon these institutions that have devalued labor and invisibilized communities.

In this contemporary moment, race continues to constitute a dividing line that traverses various power relations including class, gender, and sexual identity (Grosfoguel, Oso & Chrisou, 2015). Drawing upon the work of Fanon, Grosfoguel, et al helps to explain how racialized bodies are marked differently within “zones of being” and “zones of non-being.” In “zones of non-being” or heterogenous spaces that are organized and informed by colonial projects and histories of appropriation and dehumanization, people are racialized in a manner that either erases their very humanity or views their existence with contempt and disdain. As such, racialized people in “zones of non-being” are viewed as sub or non-human and their calls for change are too often met with acts of physical and psychological violence. We do not write from such a space. As tenure track and tenured faculty residing within “a zone of being” in a North American college, we have access to particular norms, codes, and laws of political negotiation that protect our basic humanity. We know that our calls for change will not be received with physical violence or abuse.

Yet, organizing within such a zone does not mean that for particular bodies, especially Black ones, we are exempt from such moments where we may fear for our safety and the safety of our children. In what ways can future scholarship foreground the experiences and struggles of racialized bodies to create generative dialogues and coalitions within these two distinct zones? Such efforts are needed in a political moment where a global pandemic is expanding the “zones of non-being”, further threatening Black lives as well as undocumented immigrants along our border. In regards to the specific objectives of this manuscript, in what ways could the inclusion of voices of indigenous, queer, single parents; caregivers of children with special needs; and caregivers of elders offer new ways of thinking, learning, and working within the North American academy? More scholarship in this domain grounded in the experiences of caregiving activism and collective organizing is needed.

We recognize that what we have written here may come across as “complaining” or “ungrateful.” On the contrary, we view this collective activism as the most earnest form of campus service, emerging from a place of radical love to push our institution of higher learning to fully realize its promise of providing quality education that is inclusive and just.

Over the course of six months, we have been reminded that social distancing cannot mean we are to distance ourselves from one another’s struggles, hopes, and lived realities. Through a radical love that fuels our efforts to decolonize the institution, we have secured victories that range from ensuring faculty preference for teaching modality during this pandemic; protecting course releases for heavy-load committee work; having the ability to step away from elected service committees for the school year; including a COVID-19 statement that the Promotion and Tenure committee will review in its deliberations; securing future course release time for interrupted

sabbaticals, and observing humanizing meeting etiquette⁸ (including normalizing having children at virtual meetings and stepping away to attend to them).

While we are proud of these concrete victories for caregiving faculty at our institution, perhaps our greatest victory is modeling for our children activism birthed from our radical love - for them and for all children, families, and caregivers. As teachers, we know that our work often entails planting seeds we may not bear witness to the growth of immediately, and that the same is true of parenting. What seeds did post-bedtime pandemic parentscholar organizing plant? We will find out as our children, the next generation, (continue to) create their own paths of dreaming and realizing a more humanizing world.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the caregiving collective of faculty members who were drawn together because of our love and commitment to our families, children, and academic community. Of that larger collective we are especially grateful to Drs. Claire Williams, Aelah Soine, and Makiko Imamura for their vision and leadership. We also hold sacred the support of our children, our respective partners, and the allyship of well over 100 individual, program, and departmental signatories to our initial demand letter. In the process of sharing our stories, we learned that we are not alone, that there were more commonalities than there were divergences. Over the weeks of visioning and enacting change, we found healing and allyship that defeated our isolation, endemic to our experiences both before and after the start of the pandemic. Our collective meetings, though often at the ends of long days caring for our families and educating the change makers of today and tomorrow, often were spaces of solace and solidarity. So much has happened at our university over the span of a few short months because of all of us, working together and truly seeing one another for our full human selves.

Declaration of Interests Statement

The authors declare no competing interests.

References

- Baldwin, J. (1963). "A Talk to Teachers." *The Saturday Review*.
<https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/baldwin-talk-to-teachers>
- Chang, H., Ngunjiri, F., & Hernandez, K. A. C. (2016). *Collaborative autoethnography*. Routledge
- Chatterjee and Maira (2014) *The Imperial University: Academic Repression and Scholarly Dissent*. University of Minnesota Press.
- CohenMiller, A. (2020). "Promoting equity and inclusion for mothers in academe: What academic workplaces can do." *Inside Higher Ed*.
<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/university-venus/promoting-equity-and-inclusion-mothers-academe>

⁸ See: Raygoza, M.; León, R. J., Norris, A., Junsay, C., & Lee, C. (2020). Humanizing Online Meetings.
<https://digitalcommons.stmarys-ca.edu/school-education-faculty-works/1824>

- Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. (eds.) (1996). *Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writing*. AltaMira Press.
- Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. AltaMira Press.
- Fazackerley, A. (2020, May 12). "Women's research plummets during lockdown - but articles from men increase." *The Guardian*.
https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/may/12/womens-research-plummets-during-lockdown-but-articles-from-men-increase?fbclid=IwAR2GR_wEi2BWv8sumlLHyiHa5bCKdNR__eePlctauWs-y5anoHukShL7S3iA
- Flaherty, C. (2020, Aug 11). "Babar in the Room." *Inside Higher Ed*.
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/08/11/faculty-parents-are-once-again-being-asked-perform-miracle>
- Flaherty, C. (2020, June 25). "Gender, race, COVID-19 and the case against tenure-clock stoppages." *Inside Higher Ed*.
https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2020/06/25/gender-race-covid-19-and-case-against-tenure-clock-stoppages?fbclid=IwAR3ihviRTEQjs_6_PxCFjgh9byFsEfoAGb3gLHe2TzRCXQmL_f6VdL61l2c
- Galeano, E. (1992). *The Book of Embraces*. WW Norton & Co.
- Giroux, H. (2019). *Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education*. Haymarket Books.
- Grosfoguel, Ramon, Oso, Laura, & Christou, Anastasia. (2015). "Racism, Intersectionality and Migration Studies: Framing Some Theoretical Reflections." *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*. 22 (6).
- Highwood, E. (2020, April 30). "Why Covid-19 might lead to even greater gender inequality amongst professors, and how to avoid it." *Linkedin*.
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-covid-19-might-lead-even-greater-gender-amongst-how-highwood/>
- hooks, b. (1991) "Theory as Libertory Practice." *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism*. 4(1), 1-12.
- Kitchener, C. (2020, April 24). "Women academics seem to be submitting fewer papers during coronavirus." *The Lily*. https://www.thelily.com/women-academics-seem-to-be-submitting-fewer-papers-during-coronavirus-never-seen-anything-like-it-says-one-editor/?fbclid=IwAR2dFzSR1S2rZm-jQMzwEhYGM93PR23FgcGQ4gSybJ6bfZyeldpWP_a7Ukg
- Maldando-Torres, N, (2016). "Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality." http://caribbeanstudiesassociation.org/docs/Maldonado-Torres_Outline_Ten_Theses-10.23.16.pdf
- Matias, C. E., & Nishi, N. W. (2018). "ParentCrit epilog." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 31(1), 82-85.
- Munshi, Soniya & Willse, Craig, eds. (2016). "Navigating Neoliberalism in the Academy, Nonprofits, and Beyond." *The Scholar & Feminist Online*. 13(2).
- Perelman, D. (2020, July 2). "In the Covid-19 economy, you can have a kid or a job. You can't have both." *The New York Times*.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/02/business/covid-economy-parents-kids-career-homeschooling.htm>

- Prashad, V. (2020, May 14). "Hunger gnaws at the edges of the World" *The Tricontinental*. <https://www.thetricontinental.org/newsletterissue/20-2020-famine/>
- Raygoza, M.C., León, R., Lee, C., Junsay, C., Norris, A., & Niermann, G. (2020). Social justice in teacher education: It's not just a course. In CTE SPAN 2020 Research Monograph (pp. 86-99). San Francisco, CA: California Council on Teacher Education.
- Raygoza, M. C.; León, R. J., Norris, A., Junsay, C., & Lee, C. (2020). Humanizing Online Meetings. <https://digitalcommons.stmarys-ca.edu/school-education-faculty-works/1824>
- Scheiber, Noam. (2020, September 29). "Pandemic Imperils Promotions for Women in Academia." *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/business/economy/pandemic-women-tenure.html?fbclid=IwARog1H7YA_iqyiTE8sYp99uzOw2QIjo7TUYTX_QGvs8zzP2calps-hsibuM
- Sotirin, P. (2010). "Autoethnographic mother-writing: Advocating radical specificity." *Journal of Research Practice*, 6(1), M9
- Viola, M. (2019). "Decoloniality and Critical Pedagogy, A Reflective-Theoretical Dialogue." *Teaching Critical Pedagogy: Encyclopedia of Teacher Education*. Springer, Singapore.
- Viola, M. & Klein, E. (2019). "To Ethnic Studies – Love Hard, Fight Beautifully: Boots Riley in Dialogue with Michael Viola and Emily Klein." *Critical Ethnic Studies*. 5(1-2).
- Viola, M., Saranillio, D., Pegues, J., & Day, I. (2019). "Introduction to Solidarities of Nonalignment: Abolition, Decolonization, and Anticapitalism." *Critical Ethnic Studies*. 5(1-2).

Annexes

Appendix A: Caregiving Collective Letter and Demands

The below letter, including demands, Appendix A1, and endnotes is what we sent verbatim to our campus leaders and faculty listserv.

July 15, 2020

Dear [Campus Leaders]:

We write to you as faculty who are caregivers and community allies. To start, we want to express our solidarity with Black faculty, staff, and students who have made concrete demands to transform the dehumanizing and anti-black conditions they face at [institution's name] and society at large; included in those dehumanizing conditions is the issue of invisibilized caregiving.⁹ Our work is grounded in the shared struggle that inspires our colleagues' and students' calls and we believe that

⁹ Specifically, Black Lives Matter co-founder, Alicia Garza explains: "The problem is that care work is often hidden, and as a result of it being hidden, it's not valued, it's not respected, and it's not dignified in the way that it should be." See: *Institute for Policy Studies: A Care for All Town Hall*. (2020, April 27). <https://ips-dc.org/domestic-workers-care-for-all-town-hall/>

positive institutional change will come when we honor and follow the leadership of those most impacted by structural violence, inequities, and silence. In keeping with item 8 on childcare in the [institution's name] Black Lives Matter Committee's statement, we echo the demand for "radical change addressing the root causes of the systemic oppression," as our work asserts that we cannot shift the culture of this college without shifting the institution's treatment of faculty, staff, and students with families.¹⁰

Background: Institutional History and New Practices in the Wake of Covid-19

Historically, [institution's name] has not recognized or responded to the inequitable and discriminatory College-wide practices that impact caregiving employees, whether we are raising young children and homeschooling, or caring for elderly, sick, or medically vulnerable family members. This intersectional issue affects the entire College campus in large and small ways, but it unevenly disadvantages junior, female-identified, and BIPOC employees. Though these problems have been brought to the attention of College administrators by the Faculty Women's Group, the Faculty Welfare Committee, the Black Lives Matter Committee, applicants to the Academic Growth and Innovation Fund, the campus chapter of the American Association of University Professors, and other committees, the College has continued to ignore it. As caregiving faculty and community allies, we can no longer accept that our Catholic, Lasallian institution, grounded in the values of inclusiveness and social justice, has not structurally adapted to meet the needs of 21st century families. The College undermines its own core values of respect for all persons and honoring the dignity of all individuals when it ignores the needs of families and the work of employee-caregivers.

Most recently, since the outbreak of Covid-19, the College has not acknowledged that its caregiving employees all lost access to childcare in early March; instead, it was simply assumed that employees would continue business as usual (albeit from remote locations). On April 21, we finally heard from the Provost about the interim academic policy for tenure-track faculty that includes an option to stop the tenure clock, a practice that has been shown to negatively impact women and people of color in particular.¹¹ Then, after a long silence, on June 5, Human Resources sponsored a workshop titled, "Work & Life Management During Shelter in Place as a Parent," which reproduced the myths of meritocracy focused on effective multitasking approaches. Caregiving employees do not need workshops on how to become better multi-taskers. Despite the concerns about institutional practice raised during this workshop, no meaningful insights have been offered as to how the College administration is attempting to create better systems and a more inclusive culture grounded in an equitable approach to supporting caregiving employees. Finally, on June 22, Provost [Name] informed pre-tenure faculty that they could

10 As included in the list of demands from the past and present co-chairs of the Black Lives Matter sub-committee of the College Committee on Inclusive Excellence: Develop "on-campus childcare, potentially using space in the recreation center as it was originally earmarked, open to use by faculty, staff, and undergraduate and graduate students with families. (Recruitment Enhancement, Student/Faculty/Staff Retention)." See "BLM Committee Statement & Policy Platform | THE UPRISING FOR BLACK LIVES" sent by [name], Ph.D. to the [institution's name] faculty email list on June 11, 2020.

11 Flaherty, C. (2020, June 25). Gender, race, COVID-19 and the case against tenure-clock stoppages. *Inside Higher Ed*.
https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2020/06/25/gender-race-covid-19-and-case-against-tenure-clock-stoppages?fbclid=IwAR3ihvIRTEQjs_6_PxCFjgh9byFsEfoAGb3gLHe2TzRCXQmL_f6VdL61l2c

access the College's Temporary Reduced Services (TReS) Program in response to the likelihood that [institution's name] employees will have their children at home (often without external care) while attending to work and teaching responsibilities in the coming academic year. It is neither equitable nor reasonable for the College to invite us to sacrifice our incomes as the institutional response to our struggles.

Ultimately, it appears that the functioning of the College continues to rely upon the imagined invisible labor of a work-at-home or high-earning spouse, which does not reflect principles of equity or reality in the year 2020. Moreover, the institution's choice to ignore the untenable demands of caregiving while working from home is also a choice to invisibilize women. Dozens of articles and preliminary studies published in the wake of Covid-19 have shown that statistically, parenting responsibilities during the pandemic dramatically and unevenly impact the lives of female-identified workers, and BIPOC female workers to an even greater extent.¹² These intersectionally gendered effects open up more opportunities for employers to (intentionally and unintentionally) discriminate against and penalize their female employees, while turning a blind eye to their own role in reproducing the patriarchal and misogynistic workplace norms that already plagued academia long before Covid-19.

Institutional Structures of Power that Require Radical Change

12 Helen Lewis reports in *The Atlantic*, A pandemic magnifies all existing inequalities [...] But one of the most striking effects of the coronavirus will be to send many couples back to the 1950s. Across the world, women's independence will be a silent victim of the pandemic. [...] For too long, politicians have assumed that child care and elderly care can be "soaked up" by private citizens—mostly women—effectively providing a huge subsidy to the paid economy. This pandemic should remind us of the true scale of that distortion. (Lewis, H. [2020, March 19]. The coronavirus is a disaster for feminism. *The Atlantic*.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2020/03/feminism-womens-rights-coronavirus-covid19/608302/>).

See the following articles for further analyses of the gendered effects of Covid-19 on parent-workers in the academy and beyond: Perelman, D. (2020, July 2). In the Covid-19 economy, you can have a kid or a job. You can't have both. *New York Times*.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/02/business/covid-economy-parents-kids-career-homeschooling.htm>; Kitchener, C. (2020, May 22). 'I had to choose being a mother': With no child care or summer camps, women are being edged out of the workforce. *The Lily*. https://www.thelily.com/i-had-to-choose-being-a-mother-with-no-child-care-or-summer-camps-women-are-being-edged-out-of-the-workforce/?fbclid=IwAROLwwixPfasxvQVJVR2i6DGDHcT7PMU-6JLJsZaeZPEoh38o4_aqO2MibQ;

Fazackerley, A. (2020, May 12). Women's research plummets during lockdown - but articles from men increase. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/may/12/womens-research-plummets-during-lockdown-but-articles-from-men-increase?fbclid=IwAR2GR_wEi2BWv8umlLHyiHa5bCKdNR__eePlctauWs-y5anoHukShL7S3iA;

Ferguson, D. (2020, May 3). 'I feel like a 1950s housewife': How lockdown has exposed the gender divide. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/03/i-feel-like-a-1950s-housewife-how-lockdown-has-exposed-the-gender-divide>;

Highwood, E. (2020, April 30). Why Covid-19 might lead to even greater gender inequality amongst professors, and how to avoid it. *Linkedin*. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-covid-19-might-lead-even-greater-gender-amongst-how-highwood/>;

Kitchener, C. (2020, April 24). Women academics seem to be submitting fewer papers during coronavirus. *The Lily*. https://www.thelily.com/women-academics-seem-to-be-submitting-fewer-papers-during-coronavirus-never-seen-anything-like-it-says-one-editor/?fbclid=IwAR2dFzSR1S2rZm-jQMzwEhYGM93PR23FgcGQ4gSybJ6bfZyeldpWP_a7Ukg

The current Covid-19 crisis has laid bare the ways in which these academic structures and culture do not recognize the daily lived realities of employees who have families and caregiving responsibilities. [Institution's name] employees include caregivers in two-working parent families, single-income families, single-parent families, under-employed families, multi-generational families, families with children with special needs, and/or families without childcare. We are experiencing physical and emotional fatigue, professional uncertainty, and frustration. Some of us also fear mentioning workload and caregiving challenges to administrators and supervisors. We are overtasked and need systemic and cultural changes from the administration, not just temporarily in the time of Covid-19, but also permanently so that [institution's name] can attract and retain caregiving employees as full and equal members of an inclusive and humane workplace.¹³

Specifically, we have identified three structures of power at [institution's name], which continue to challenge parenting faculty and staff: 1) the lack of a clear and equitable parental leave policy, 2) inequalities and oversights within the R&T process, and 3) a College culture that lacks respectful and reasonable work-life flexibility and boundaries.

1) Parental Leave Policy: We are reminded now more than ever that babies and sickness do not wait for policy changes. New parents at the College continue to be denied adequate parental leave benefits as Provost [name] and Associate Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer [name]s promised policy completion date was postponed from January 1, 2020 to April 15, 2020, and then passed by without comment. We call upon Provost [name] and Associate Vice President [name] to instate an inclusive Parental Leave Policy.

2) R&T: Our current R&T process reflects outmoded evaluative practices that are built on the faulty assumption that faculty's teaching effectiveness, scholarship productivity, and service contribution are achieved externally to and independently from our personal lives. While we appreciate the empathetic intentions in the Provost's April 2020 Covid-related adjustments to this year's R&T process, we find them insufficient in light of well-documented best practices in higher education.¹⁴ Peer reviewed research shows that "stopping the clock" exacerbates gender and other social inequities of rank and salary.¹⁵ ¹⁶In addition, the temporary suspension

13 The California State University system's Temporary Paid Administrative Leave (CPAL) policy is one example of a proactive institutional response to the challenges presently facing caregiving employees. See, for example, San José State University. (April 6, 2020): Temporary Paid Administrative Leave Update (CPAL). <https://www.sjsu.edu/healthadvisories/campus-messages/040620-paid-administrative-leave/index.php>.

14 The guidance to faculty from the Provost (April 21, 2020) and the Rank & Tenure Committee (April 24, 2020), both highlighted three primary strategies aimed at helping ranked faculty to overcome the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic: 1) an option to "stop the clock," 2) temporary suspension of required documentation of teaching effectiveness (course evaluations, peer and chair observations), and 3) an assurance of "flexibility and compassion" and an opportunity to explain how the pandemic has affected their work. These strategies are inadequate in some cases and dangerous in others; most of all, they are not consistent with the institutional best practices laid out in the studies listed in endnote 11.

15 Jaschik, S. (2016, June 27). Unintended help for male professors. *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/06/27/stopping-tenure-clock-may-help-male-professors-more-female-study-finds>; <https://www-chronicle-com.stmarys-ca.idm.oclc.org/article/Is-It-Time-to-Stop-Stopping/237391>

16 Malisch, J. L. et al. (2020, June 17). Opinion: In the wake of COVID-19, academia needs new solutions to ensure gender equity. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the

of required documentation for teaching effectiveness does not change the evaluation process itself, but it puts the responsibility on faculty R&T candidates to somehow demonstrate teaching effectiveness in other ways since this category remains as a criterion. We need to do better to support our pre-tenure colleagues.¹⁷ Similarly, post-tenure caregiving faculty on disrupted research sabbaticals and faculty working toward promotion to Full Professor have also been negatively impacted by Covid-19 and the College's insufficient response. When the College ignores the scholarship and professional development needs of caregiving faculty it deepens and affirms structural inequities. We call upon the Provost to work with the R&T Taskforce to implement the specific changes to the R&T process and the Faculty Handbook laid out in our demands below.

3) Culture of Respect and Care for Families: Working remotely poses significant challenges of time, space, and resources. Our Bay Area homes are not big enough to provide adequate office and school work spaces for all the members of our families; children do not recognize abstract boundaries between parent work time and availability; instructors' identity code switching or integration is mentally taxing; but most of all, there are just not enough hours in the day to be a full-time (now online) teacher, productive scholar, effective advisor and committee administrator, responsive community member, homeschool facilitator, and ever-present parent. Having a family is not a "deficiency" and offering workshops on multi-tasking and time management is not a solution; it is a continued effort at devaluing and silencing the labor stay-at-home parents and paid caregivers have always done. As we look toward returning to campus in the fall, while our children will largely still be schooling from home, this situation is going to get worse, not better. We call upon the Provost, deans, and department chairs to institutionalize, enforce, and practice the new workplace norms related to meeting and course scheduling and workload flexibility laid out here.

Demands

Guiding Principles: Given the double burden faced by employee-caregivers during the Covid-19 pandemic,

- We are called upon to reject the false organizational meritocracy of "doing it all;" to resist the need to apologize for or justify workday disruptions and distractions due to caregiving demands; and to assert the right to decline or postpone non-essential work duties.
- Our [institution's name] community is called upon to recognize and normalize the dual roles of colleagues and caregivers and to change institutional expectations and culture accordingly.

Immediate Policy and Culture Shift in Response to Covid-19

United States of America.

<https://www.pnas.org/content/early/2020/06/16/2010636117?fbclid=IwAR35UVoUQBb8ExTDtGpwwW4IDHUNAL5d26iYpxAfenlOp4XXdN54hh-I-vQ>

17 Mala Htun suggests, "Now is the time to develop strategies to mitigate the inequitable effects of the quarantine": a) review of up to the 6 best years of candidate's record, not the 6 last years, b) a required Covid-19 impact statement that explains what teaching, research, and service plans were able and unable to be done, and c) emphasis on holistic and qualitative assessments in addition to quantitative evaluation standards. Htun, M. (2020, June 5). Tenure and promotion after the pandemic. *Science*, 368(6495), 1075. <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/368/6495/1075>

1. Protect faculty choice of course modality in the fall 2020 semester and allow all online or by-appointment only office hour options for faculty teaching in any modality.
2. Protect planned course releases for time intensive administrative labor.
3. Renew the spring Covid R&T accommodations for the fall including optional submission of student feedback forms, and suspending required teaching observations.
4. Recognize participating in and/or leading online planning sessions, workshops, trainings, and experiments with new teaching technologies and pedagogies as evidence of teaching effectiveness in R&T reviews.
5. Give faculty significantly impacted by Covid-19 the option to request a one year service exemption, reduction, or postponement facilitated by school deans and the Senate Committee on Committees, and the choice to remove themselves from the ballot for high workload committee election without consequence to salary or rank and tenure considerations.
6. Observe new meeting etiquette: default to online meetings, follow a clear agenda and adhere to a time frame that is shared in advance, utilize asynchronous correspondence, and expect and accept disruptions and absences.¹⁸ Privilege the availability of employees with caregiving responsibilities when determining meeting times and scheduling events.
7. Permit faculty on research sabbaticals disrupted or voided by the pandemic to reapply for leaves to be taken during academic year 21-22.
8. Establish clear and fair benchmarks for scholarly productivity in light of challenges such as travel restrictions, lab and archive closures, conference and performance cancellations, the 75% cut to faculty development funds, closure of research and art production venues, inability or limited ability to conduct human subjects research, publication delays, and systemic closures of schools/childcare. Publicly-engaged scholarship responding to and supporting impacted people in society should be evaluated through alternative metrics than peer-review.
9. Include a formal prompt in the Form A template asking all candidates to reflect on the ways in which the Covid-19 pandemic impacted (or did not impact) their work.
10. Recruit former members of the R&T committee to mentor candidates on decisions about promotion, stopping-the-clock, or writing Form As.

Institutionalization of an Inclusive Family-Centered Work Culture

1. Implement an equitable parental leave policy.
2. Establish a child care center and school break camps on-campus.¹⁹
3. Integrate caregiving realities into the [institution's name] community, its culture, and decision-making (see Appendix A1).

¹⁸ See Raygoza, M.; León, R. J., Norris, A., Junsay, C., & Lee, C. (2020). Humanizing Online Meetings.

<https://digitalcommons.stmarys-ca.edu/school-education-faculty-works/1824>

¹⁹ See, for example, two child care-related Academic Growth and Innovation Fund applications

While this petition centers the experiences and needs of caregiving ranked faculty at [institution's name], it is our hope that this petition, as an act of solidarity, also leads to broader support of caregiving staff, contingent faculty, and students. Given the timely and urgent nature of these concerns, we request the following of the Academic Senate: 1) endorse the philosophy of this letter (p. 1-3); 2) accept our demands as a starting point for immediate discussion and action; 3) form a taskforce to work on the institutionalization of an inclusive family-centered work culture.

We call on campus leadership included in this letter to act and respond to the areas under their purview.

Appendix A1: Recommendations for Institutional Best Practices²⁰

1. The Rank & Tenure Taskforce, in partnership with the VP of Faculty Affairs and Senior Diversity Officer, must implement established best practices in supporting parents and caregivers on the tenure track, and propose Faculty Handbook language on the rights and accommodations of caregiving faculty, including but not limited to how to present a gap in teaching, research, or service due to the birth or adoption of a child or unusual need to become a full-time caregiver.
2. The College must investigate and implement new course scheduling practices that allow for more humane and flexible hours for caregivers. Two-day and one-day per week class meeting times must replace [institution's name]'s outdated model of relying predominantly on 3-day per week classes. Caregivers must not be required to teach courses that meet three days a week, a practice that is both pedagogically unsound for many disciplines, but also increases commuting hours and costs as well as childcare needs for faculty and students alike. Caregivers with young children who teach in graduate programs cannot be required to have an evening-only teaching schedule; they must be permitted to teach some of their classes during daytime hours.²¹
3. Training must be instituted for department chairs and program directors, staff supervisors, school deans, and the Rank & Tenure committee. Training by an external expert should include legal requirements and institutional best practices

20 For best practices guidelines of how institutions must immediately address inequities in the wake of Covid-19 see Gonzales, L.D., & Griffin, K.A. (2020). Supporting Faculty During & After COVID-19: Don't let go of equity. Washington, DC: *Aspire Alliance*. <https://www.mtu.edu/advance/resources/articles-books/supporting-faculty-during-and-after-covid.pdf>; and Malisch, J. L. et al. (2020, June 17). Opinion: In the wake of COVID-19, academia needs new solutions to ensure gender equity. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America. <https://www.pnas.org/content/early/2020/06/16/2010636117?fbclid=IwAR35UVoUQBb8ExTDtGpwwW4IDHUNAL5d26iYpxAfenlOp4XXdN54hh-I-vQ>

21 Former [institution's name] professor, [name] spoke to this in her outgoing email to the College. She wrote: "Family Leave- At [institution's name] I was given one semester off from teaching with a 6-unit course release. That meant that I would return to teach 12 units over Jan term and Spring. In my program that could be 4-6 courses mostly taught in the evenings (sometimes until 10 pm). I was unwilling to leave my newborn 3-4 nights a week from January to May. So I left [institution's name] at 8 months pregnant and started another position where I was given a fair maternity leave and ample time to bond with my newborn." See [name] "Exiting [institution's name]" email sent to the all faculty email list on July 1, 2019.

for equity and inclusion (including recognition and accommodation of caregiving faculty and staff) within and beyond the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

4. The College must conduct assessments of campus leaders with faculty and staff supervisory responsibilities to assess how they support caregiving employees. This could be demonstrated, for example, in a publicly reported performance review in which supervising administrators receive feedback on and must account for this dimension of their work.