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The Divided Self: The Double Consciousness of Faculty of Color in Community Colleges

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Abstract

Through qualitative field methods research addressing faculty of color in four California community colleges, this investigation examines and explains faculty experiences and professional sense making. By combining critical race theory with social identity theory, our perspective underlines the potential social and ethnic identity conflicts inherent in the daily lives of faculty of color. The professional and social identities of faculty of color are not necessarily compatible, leading to a condition of "double consciousness," or what we refer to as "the divided self."

Faculty of Color in Community Colleges

The long line of scholarly research addresses many aspects of the professional role and work of community college faculty (Grubb et al., 1999; Kempner, 1990; Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2011; McGrath & Spear, 1991; Outcault, 2002; Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1997; E. Seidman, 1985; Twombly & Townsend, 2008), but often omits consideration of social identity—an individual's self-image derived from the social categories to which the individual perceives himself or herself as belonging (Tafjel & Turner, 1985). Research that specifically addresses race in community colleges (London, 1978; Weis, 1985) eschews discussions on faculty social identity in spite of the numerous scholarly claims that race and ethnic identity are significant in higher

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education contexts (Diggs, Garrison-Wade, Estrada, & Galindo, 2009; Fenelon, 2003; Harper & Hurtado, 2011; Stanley, 2006; C. S. Turner, 2003). An investigation of the social identity in relationship to the professional identity of faculty of color at community colleges can contribute to the scholarly literature of a faculty group that is already understudied in higher education.

Only recently has scholarship stressed the importance of faculty of color in the academic community and the resultant quality of education offered at colleges and universities. Faculty of color[1] have perspectives or utilize techniques that raise new questions and alternate solutions that challenge traditional epistemologies and explore new frontiers in research and in the classroom (Bernal & Villalpando, 2002). In an analysis of faculty surveys, Umbach (2006) found that faculty of color were more likely than White faculty to use active and collaborative teaching techniques; African American and Native American faculty interacted with students more often; with the exception of Native American faculty, faculty of color engaged students in higher order cognitive activities, and, with the exception of Asian Pacific American faculty, faculty of color engaged students in more diversity-related activities than White faculty. Exposure to diverse educational experiences and activities benefits all students, not just those with diverse backgrounds. White students gain familiarity with new ways of thinking and cultures, and students of color receive education that legitimates their presence in higher education.

Research on the community college offers similar findings regarding the value of diversity in the faculty. Hagedorn, Chi, Cepeda, and McLain (2007) found that a "critical mass" of Latino faculty increased Latino student retention (Robertson & Frier, 1994). Hagedorn et al. argue that a greater representation of Latinos among community college faculty increases "the availability of role models for students and foster a sense of belonging and social integration among students" (p. 89). This sense of belonging, in turn, increases student academic achievement and educational aspirations. In addition to fostering increased connectivity between underrepresented minority students and community colleges, faculty of color play crucial roles in developing community college environments that value diversity (Harvey, 1994). The assumption is that faculty of color can be powerful advocates for institutional change and pivotal figures in a community college's commitment to diversity.

In spite of the significance of faculty of color, there is little in the literature to describe or explain the experiences of faculty in the community college or to ascertain why they are underrepresented in institutions that are predominately "minority serving" (Malcom, 2013). Full-time contracted or tenured community college faculty constitute only 12% of the community college instructional and counseling workforce ("Colleges' Reliance on Part-Time," 2011), excluding full-time faculty without long-term or "permanent" employment status. Of this 12%, more than 80% are White, non-Hispanic and approximately 52% are above 50 years old (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). The establishment of a professional identity as a faculty member at a community college is arguably complicated by the minority status of faculty.

The dual perspectives that faculty of color are challenged with on a daily basis at their campuses can be described as "double consciousness" (Bruce, 1992; Du Bois,

1897), a condition that may be under constant negotiation. Faculty of color have to deal with both how they view themselves and how the institution and its constituents view them, affecting self-definitions and understandings of personal and professional identities. The absence of discussion of racial and ethnic identity in the context of professional identity and work of community college faculty is puzzling (Levin, 2013), and the silence of voices of faculty of color in characterizing and defining their faculty work suggests that present understandings of faculty work are limited. In this vein, this study examines the ways in which faculty of color construct their professional social identities within the contexts of their institution. Appropriate theoretical perspectives to understand and explain the experiences of faculty of color with respect to their professional and social identities are critical race theory (CRT) and social identity theory (SIT).

Theoretical Frameworks

CRT provides a lens to identify and explain the influence of institutional norms and policies on the work and identity of faculty of color. CRT research on faculty of color uses stories and personal accounts from faculty of color to demonstrate the effects of norms, policies, and values on those who experience racial/ethnic inequalities (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). CRT argues that racism persists in everyday interactions, but as it is ingrained in the dominant culture, it is not recognized or acknowledged by those of the dominant culture (Diggs et al., 2009). CRT suggests that community colleges are not neutral institutions, specifically with regard to social identity preferences, including race and ethnicity. Racism is embedded within institutions—their historical foundations, institutional policies, and practices (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Diggs et al., 2009; Fenelon, 2003; Yosso, 2005). Several studies advance knowledge of how racism within institutions affects faculty beliefs, behaviors, and identities. Yosso's (2005) concept of "community cultural wealth" suggests that community college faculty of color develop and mobilize their aspirations, family and cultural resources, and social networks to navigate their institutional settings. Brayboy's (2003) concept of a "double bind" points to a conflict between assimilation and separation for faculty of color, suggesting that faculty experience a cultural identity conflict. C. S. V. Turner, Myers, and Creswell (1999) noted that through work activities, such as experiencing token representation on committees, and as a result of conditions of isolation, faculty of color in higher education possess a devalued professional identity.

The notion of a devalued identity emerged in the term "double consciousness," popularized by W.E.B. Du Bois in the late-19th and early-20th century and used to describe the "tragedy of racism particularly for the self-conscious individual, as well his [*sic*] perceptions of being black in America" (Bruce, 1992, p. 307). Faculty of color experience "double consciousness" when they choose groups for personal identification. On one hand, faculty of color are socialized into their group-based identities—members of a department or program, members of the institution, and members of subgroups (e.g., committees). On the other hand, faculty can go through a process of acculturation where they "adapt their socialized world views to function in a culture

different than their primary one" (Sadao, 1995, p. 31). These two consciousnesses can create conflict in identities and thus constrain faculty of color in the execution of their professional duties.

To complement and contextualize CRT, this investigation relies on SIT. SIT carries four major assumptions: individuals seek to achieve a positive self-concept; individual identification with social groups is a part of an individual's overall identity; individuals seek groups that will increase their self-concept and support self-esteem; and group distinctiveness, an important characteristic of social identity, is maintained through articulation of in-group similarities and out-group differences (Tafjel, 1978). SIT posits that in interactions, individuals pursue a positive self-concept and that individuals seek groups that will increase their self-concept. Individuals' identification with social groups is a part of individual identity (Tafjel, 1978; Tafjel & Turner, 1985). Yet, there are multiple claims on individual identity which may cause an internal conflict for an individual based on the inherent tensions between the values and expectations of the different identity claims, for example, between professional norms and personal behavioral orientations. In the case faculty of color, this may pertain to their interactions with students of color and the more personal approach taken by these faculty. Ashforth and Mael (1989) suggested that individuals order or rank their identities, separate their identities completely, or find ways to buffer their identities. In more extreme cases, individuals may "depersonalize" their identities—separate the personal from the professional—when working in an organizational setting to alleviate otherwise intense identity conflicts.

To avoid identity conflicts, an individual will seek and prioritize identities that are positively supported by individuals or groups within the organization to maximize his or her self-esteem (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). In this regard, individuals behave in ways that maximize their esteem based on the context and culture of the specific group. However, complexities within a group may inhibit individuals in their behaviors and prevent them from expressing specific identities that lead to higher self-esteem. For example, faculty members of color on a hiring committee may experience internal pressure or conflict because they are simultaneously members of an institutional culture that values professionalism (in the form of advanced academic credentials or other academic expertise) and a subgroup of faculty that may value understanding of the "community college student" over academic knowledge. In this instance, when it is not possible to satisfy the membership expectations of both groups, the faculty will prioritize one expectation over another to be part of the contextual "in-group" and consequently deprioritize and marginalize the other.

Through socialization and acculturation, faculty of color can adopt several identities (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Levin, 2013). Socialization and assimilation bring with them identity problems or conflicts. Assimilation according to Sadao (1995) occurs when an individual sacrifices his or her cultural beliefs in favor of the dominant culture. Separation, according to Sadao, occurs when an individual retains his or her original cultural beliefs and remains an outsider. Sadao uses the term "marginalization" to refer to a condition where an individual is torn between his or her ethnic identity and the dominant social identity of the workplace. For example, faculty can view

themselves as aligned with the institution as a whole or with their department, or both. They may preserve their ethnic or cultural identity, and may attempt to assimilate aspects of their cultural identity with their identity as a community college faculty member or a departmental (e.g., History) member. Thus faculty of color may experience identity conflict through their membership in multiple groups, including the negotiation of several identities (e.g., professional identity and social identity) and the interactions that take place between the different groups and subgroups within their community college.

Study Purpose and Research Questions

By combining CRT with SIT, our perspective underlines the potential social and ethnic identity conflicts inherent in the daily lives of faculty of color, thereby illuminating the notion of "double consciousness." To capture double consciousness, and what we refer to as "the divided self," and to explain the professional identity of faculty of color in community colleges, we rely on the experiences communicated by faculty of color and the sense making (Weick, 1995) of faculty of color. Four research questions guide our investigation.

> **Research Question 1:** What are the narratives of community college faculty of color that both describe and explain their experiences in and understandings of their institution as faculty of color?
>
> **Research Question 2:** In what ways do faculty of color articulate "double consciousness"?
>
> **Research Question 3:** What evidence is there in the narratives of faculty of color of depersonalization or a condition of a divided self?
>
> **Research Question 4:** What do these narratives tell us about the social and professional identities of faculty of color?

Method

Following research using CRT, we selected narratives or stories from faculty of color in community colleges to parallel what in CRT-based research is referred to as counter-storytelling, or counter-narratives (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). We combined field method research (Burgess, 1984) for the gathering and analysis of data with CRT as well as SIT to understand the professional and social identities of faculty of color. These methods include the interactions of researchers with site participants, researchers' observations of the site itself, interviews in the form of conversations (I. Seidman, 2006), and reflection on the data collection process and the data both during and after site visits by the researchers. Because of the sensitive nature of this investigation and consistent with the institutional review board protocol, we used pseudonyms for both

institutions and individuals. Primary data—interviews and observations—were collected between October 2010 and April 2011. Additional data on individual colleges, such as demographic information, were collected both immediately before October 2010 and after the April 2011 period. Data analysis involved a multistep process, including interview and observation notes' transcription, data reduction through a software program (ATLAS.ti), the application of concept mapping, and the generation of meaning based on our analytical frameworks.

Data Collection

We used field research methods to collect data (Burgess, 1984; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Mason, 2002; Maxwell, 2005; I. Seidman, 2006) to investigate if and to what extent specific contexts—individual colleges, departments, and committees—worked to shape behaviors that in turn influenced identities (Maxwell, 2005). By meeting with faculty of color on campus (or their preferred meeting site), in the field, we were able to acquire data from narratives of personal experience. Through a data collection approach that included probing questions about the experiences of faculty of color, researchers interacted with the participants to understand their conditions and perceptions. These then could be matched to theory (i.e., CRT and SIT; Mintzberg, 1979). Furthermore, we wanted to explain the formation or development of professional identity in institutions where there is a predominately White faculty population. To do so, we sought out firsthand experiences from members of the various institutions. More specifically, we inquired about the perceptions of faculty of color to obtain what Erickson (1986) termed "emic data"—the words and perspectives of participants from the field (not the researchers', or "etic," data).

Research sites were selected based on data obtained from the California Community College Chancellor's Office regarding numbers of full- or part-time faculty of color currently teaching in a credit program. Four research sites were selected, including three institutions with relatively high numbers and one with low numbers of faculty of color. These four research sites enabled us to interview faculty of color from a cross section of campuses that have varying degrees of faculty diversity. Cosmopolitan City College, with an extremely diverse student population of more than 25,000, is located in Los Angeles County. North Point Community College has a mix of students with a population of just less than 25,000 and is located in the northern section of California. It is one campus in a three-campus district. Water's Edge Community College, with 23,000 students and a relatively large number of African American and Latino/a students, is located in Southern California. This college is one of three campuses within its district. Finally, Oasis Community College, with a student enrollment of approximately 10,000, and a high proportion of Latino/a students, is located in a rural location in Southern California. Oasis Community College is the institution with relatively low numbers of faculty of color.

At each institution we interviewed 8 to 10 faculty members for a total of 36 participants. Faculty came from various program areas, such as counseling, history, psychology, chemistry, and English (see Table 1). While several states do not follow this

Table 1. Participant Characteristics.

College	No. of participants	Instructional or counseling faculty	Race/ethnicity	Full-time or part-time
Cosmopolitan City College	10	8 Instructional faculty	4 Latino/a	9 Full-time
		2 Counseling faculty	5 African American	1 Part-time
			1 Asian/Pacific Islander	
North Point Community College	8	4 Instructional faculty	3 Latino/a	All full-time
		4 Counseling faculty	4 African American	
			1 Asian/Pacific Islander	
Water's Edge Community College	11	9 Instructional faculty	4 Latino/a	7 Full-time
		2 Counseling faculty	3 African American	
			3 Asian/Pacific Islander	4 Part-time
Oasis Community College	7	4 Instructional faculty	4 Latino/a	All full-time
		3 Counseling faculty	2 African American	
			1 Native American	

pattern, counselors in California community colleges are designated faculty, have the same rights and responsibilities as other faculty, and do teach. Given that counselors in California are faculty, we included this group in our participant group. Furthermore, they constitute a large proportion of faculty of color in the state.

Faculty participants were identified through a liaison at each site, and emails were sent to all faculty of color to invite them to participate in the study. Data collected for this study consisted primarily of one-on-one, semistructured interviews, lasting approximately 1 hr. Interview data included faculty members' educational preparation, prior community college experience, and level of satisfaction as a community college faculty member, as well as factors that influenced their decision to become community college faculty. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. For reporting, participants are identified by a pseudonym, gender, program area, contract type (full-time or part-time), as well as racial or ethnic affiliations.

Data Analysis

Interview data were analyzed using ATLAS.ti, a qualitative data analysis program. The research team took part in a 3-day training from an international expert on the

capabilities of the ATLAS.ti software. In addition to using ATLAS.ti, the training also included a primer on concept mapping. The concept maps were used to analyze data with respect to each of the theories (Novak, 1990). CRT and SIT were used as the analytical frameworks for provisional coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For example, initial codes included themes and concepts from the Social Identity literature (evidence of institutional and program or discipline identity, evidence of peer group identity, evidence of cultural identities) and CRT (evidence of a dominant organizational culture, evidence of White privilege, evidence of discrimination based on race or ethnicity). Following the advice of Miles and Huberman (1994), we also utilized secondary coding combined with conceptualizations to reduce the large data set and created coding forms for each participant's interview transcript. Thus, we used both thematic and theoretical coding. We relied on several techniques to generate findings. These techniques included clustering, making comparisons and contrasts, making metaphors, locating intervening variables, and finally making conceptual coherence (Miles & Huberman, 1994). We synthesized our observations of individual participant interview transcripts to lead us to findings about the group as a whole.

Institutional Narratives

From the perspective of faculty of color, the narratives suggest a dominant and monolithic organizational or corporate culture, wherein rules, norms, values, and resultant behaviors are guided by the majority White faculty and administrative population. One narrative concerns the racial and ethnic identity of faculty, which is predominantly White, depicted through faculty hiring practices. The second narrative pertains to administrators at the campuses, exhibited through the ethnic composition of this population. The third narrative addresses leadership within the colleges, explained through status differentials. The counter-narratives—explanations and stories that do not conform to the dominant or principal story or explanation of the main discourse of the institution—provided by faculty of color illustrate the presence of the dominant institutional narrative, which reflects both taken for granted assumptions (Colyvas & Powell, 2006) embedded in institutional practices and a highly static organization.

Hiring practices for faculty are viewed as inflexible and based on efforts to maintain existing practices (e.g., minimal efforts to diversify faculty pools or hiring committees); hiring practices and policies have gatekeeper functions. Frida, a full-time Latina counseling faculty member at Oasis Community College, offers a counter-position to existing practices: "I would prefer to have only minorities on hiring committees because I think that's the only way you really can change [the faculty make-up]." Yet, at the same time, she describes a practice that cannot change: "We won't be able to do that, because if you, again, look at the composition of the faculty, most programs you will not have that." That is, the counter-narrative is a projection of what should be—minority faculty only on hiring committees. Furthermore, Dara, a full-time Asian American Nursing faculty member at Water's Edge Community College, agreed that hiring committees should be more diverse: "I think that could be a vehicle in reaching out to communities out there to tell them that we need faculty of diverse backgrounds."

Yet the counter-narrative explicates the prevailing condition—there are not enough minority faculty. With White faculty as either the majority of members of the committee or the only members of the committee, the outcome is predetermined, according to William, a full-time African American Humanities faculty member at Cosmopolitan City College: "You have colleagues who will look to replicate what they think is important and that is folks who look like them, think like them, who share their values and beliefs."

The counter-narrative is one that is a projected future, a prescription of what needs to take place if the dominant narrative is to be altered. In the case of hiring faculty, the starting point is in the composition of the hiring committee according to a Ruben, a full-time Latino counselor at North Point Community College:

> [W]hat this district needs to change in order to increase the number of diverse faculty is the composition of those hiring committees. There has to be some clear guidelines as to the diversity, not only diversity in language, but ethnicity; socioeconomic just obviously doesn't affect us because most of us are the same socioeconomic level now. But just bringing in—I don't know if they can even—they might be against the law, but saying, "Hey, we need ethnic diversity in this hiring committee" . . . that means [in] my [Math] department, [where] there's no divers[ity], that means you're bringing in a faculty member from another department to start to balance it out because [people of color] come in with [different] perspectives.

The second narrative addresses campus administrators, and the counter-narrative prescribes alteration to this population's racial and ethnic identity. A full-time, African American Business faculty member at Water's Edge Community College, Louis, noted the paucity of administrators of color on campus:

> [T]here's not very many administrators of color and I think that's another issue too [because] I think if you have administrators of color and women that could affect . . . the institutional culture also and how it relates to people of color.

At Oasis Community College, a full-time, African American Social Science faculty member, Ruby, expressed the need or hope for alteration to the racial or ethnic composition of the administration: "I think this is definitely the time on this campus for diversifying [the] administration." The dominant institutional narrative of the community college—that it is an open access institution, that it serves a democratizing function, and that it is community based and oriented (Levin, 2001)—is challenged by a counter-narrative that highlights the lack of diversity among the faculty and administrative ranks.

Consistent with the second narrative on diversity of administrators, the third narrative pertains to campus leadership, including all formal positions of academic management. The counter-narrative states that as soon as racial and ethnic diversity in administration is institutionalized, then significant changes and improvements are at hand:

I think that the leadership positions at the college, particularly the chair positions—like at the department level and at the division levels, and at the levels—are mostly held by White people . . . [S]ometimes those circles are closed in a kind of covert sort of way to Chicanos and African Americans. I think that those barriers need to come down . . . I think it starts with the leadership first of all at the top . . . and then the division deans, and then the department chairs . . . [T]here's this little closed circle around some of our White faculty . . . It's almost like "We're the elite, and you're not knowledgeable enough. You can't do this. We can." But then at the same time, I think they know we can, but it's like they're guarding their position. They're guarding their status. And I think that needs to be worked on . . . before we can hire more people of color." (Leticia, full-time, Latina, Social Science faculty member, North Point Community College)

The institutional narrative is viewed by Leticia as racist: "We're the elite, and you're not knowledgeable enough. You can't do this. We can." It is a form of superiority. The counter-narrative is that barriers that separate one class of people from another must dissolve, and this can be accomplished through the replacement of White leaders with people of color.

Double Consciousness

Faculty of color must negotiate their professional and social identity and these identities are often in conflict. This "double consciousness" was communicated as a challenge for some faculty of color. An African American, full-time counseling faculty member from North Point Community College, Gloria, describes this challenge of residing in two worlds or states of mind:

Well I think it's difficult to be a person of color . . . [Y]ou always notice the black dot on the white paper. No one notices the white, just the black dot on the paper. And I believe there's always a fear . . . I think it's . . . like that for President Obama. I think any place you are, you can't have the appearance that you are really trying to advance a cause where people of color are concerned . . . [Y]ou have to have the appearance of neutrality.

Depending on what was deemed socially appropriate and legitimized by the majority of faculty and those in positions of power at the specific community college, these social identities of faculty of color were either operating in the background of or in direct confrontation with more general aspects of a college's articulated and overt culture (e.g., claims of institutional diversity, student centered, nurturing personal growth, or promoting a culturally dynamic learning environment). Marlena, a full-time, Latina counseling faculty member at Water's Edge Community College—a college that promotes itself as a diversity-focused institution—described how she and fellow Latino/a faculty members tried to establish a Latino organization for students and how their efforts were received by an administrator. This obstructionist approach by a White administrator constructs the efforts of Latino faculty as confrontational and oppositional to the college's accepted practices:

> I saw him in the cafeteria one time. He says, "You know . . . I heard from some faculty that you guys have been meeting." I go, "Yes." He goes, "Well I want it to stop." And I go, "Why is that?" He says, "I don't like divisiveness. I don't like an African-American thing, a Latino thing, a this and that." I said, "Oh no, this is very important." I go, "There are always things that are needed . . . most importantly our students." I go, "[I]t's better to come from an association than one person." And he says, "Well I don't like it."

These administrative behaviors of crude obstructionism at one college are reenacted at another college. Cesar, a full-time Latino Career/Technical faculty member at Cosmopolitan Community College, explains these conflicts as cultural disruptions: "Sometimes it even has to do with their culture. And I think that's when the problems are created." For faculty of color, the imperative is for them to be aware of the dominant culture on their campuses; yet, this awareness and the practices that follow do not coincide with their social identities. The condition of difference based on "color" applies to Dara, an Asian American, full-time, Nursing faculty member at Water's Edge Community College:

> For full-time, I'm the only Asian . . . I think there's twenty-five full-time [faculty]. I'm the only Asian; no African American; probably [there are faculty with] Hispanic background . . . [The faculty are] mostly White.

The Divided Self

In response to the "double consciousness" that faculty of color experience, faculty search for ways to adopt and project a professional identify as a community college faculty member. In so doing, they commonly resort to depersonalization of their identities. Ashforth and Mael (1989) suggested that depersonalization of identity occurs in extreme cases of identity conflict when less drastic measures, such as ranking or buffering identities, are not enough for an individual to find a positive sense of self. For the faculty in this investigation, depersonalization occurs when they embrace their roles as professionals and, often consciously, limit more personal issues—such as aspects of their racial or ethnic identities—from affecting their work lives.

An illustrative example of a faculty member engaged in this "depersonalization" process is Harriet, an African American part-time Business faculty member at Cosmopolitan Community College. In responding to questions about her interactions and relationships with faculty across campus, she makes several explicit references to the contrast between the professional and the personal and the importance of "leaving the personal at the door":

> If you know how to handle yourself professionally, so I think that's key too. Keep your personal, personal and the business, business. You can't let the two cross or think that because you have personal relationships that [these are] going to be able to completely influence anything professionally. That's what I've found here. . . . Interpersonal relationships are one thing; professional views are another. I don't blur lines. My professional relationships

[are] with who they should be with professionally. That's what they are. And I don't want it to be perceived any other way because then you give people too much to think about. So I don't go there.

Indeed, Harriet has internalized the separation of personal and professional. Negative interactions within the institution are expressed as "personal"; positive interactions are expressed as "professional":

Things happen all the time that are not necessarily personally the greatest, but when they get into a group or conference room or in front . . . the professional is there and that's what's important . . . I have never encountered an environment with another professional staff here that in the group hasn't been anything but professional. Have they done things personally? Yes, but that's personal. (Harriet)

Her portrayal of her experiences suggests a clear "depersonalization" process. By focusing on her professional identity—an identity supported by her identity as an academic expert and teacher, and reinforced by the campus-wide norms of professionalism—this faculty is able to retain esteem as a member of the institution. In conditions such as these, faculty of color consciously separate or marginalize the more personal aspects of their identity to maintain or negotiate a positive sense of self in relation to their institutions or in their relationships with other faculty.

Depersonalization can be viewed as a defense against both minority status and explicit forms of racism. White faculty may be not only unaware of the conditions of but also insensitive to the feelings of faculty of color, as minority populations. An African American, full-time Humanities faculty member at North Point Community College, Jesse, expressed emotional hostility over his White colleagues' claim of understanding minority status:

I went to a meeting where . . . I got sort of frustrated with the idea that there were very few Black people on campus, very few Black faculty on campus, and so when these [White] colleagues . . . said things like, "Well this conference allowed me to see myself as White."I sort of popped off and kind of got upset because I was thinking, "Well that's no revelation. I've seen this all along. I have to deal with it all the time, whereas you don't really have to."

In this case, Jesse can detach himself from personalizing the comments and simply accept the exchange as not aimed at him. To do so, he must separate himself from his social identity group. In the context of his professional identity, he can maintain in-group similarities with his colleagues, and his professional identity will be undisturbed. That is, he must depersonalize aspects of his identity. Leticia, a Latina colleague of Jesse's at North Point Community College, also describes her experiences of depersonalization:

[This campus] is welcoming and friendly [towards faculty] until you show your color, I think. I think until you show your true color, until you show who you are. For me, as a Latina, until my Latina-ness comes out, then they get uncomfortable with that. As long as

> I'm nice and [compliant] and . . . friendly, they're nice and kind and friendly. The subject of race doesn't come up.

Leticia's experience exemplifies the challenges faculty of color face as one of the few, if not the only, person from underrepresented backgrounds in their respective departments/disciplines.

Social and Professional Identities

Our research reveals important information about the construction of professional identities of faculty of color at community colleges. We found in our investigation that social identities shaped professional identities. Leticia, a full-time, Social Science faculty member at North Point Community College, describes how majority faculty members project an image of her campus that does not accurately depict the professional identity of faculty of color:

> Well campus wide, the illusion seems to be to me that everybody gets along, and I've heard people say that, "Everybody gets along here. I just love working here. Everybody loves working here, and everybody's nice to each other, but it's kind of superficial. It's the top layer where everyone's nice to each other. It doesn't go much deeper than that unless you happen to make friends with one of your colleagues or something, which I have. I have a couple of colleague friends, where we've gone a little bit deeper.

This claim is supported by one of our findings that social identity based on race, in particular, shaped faculty interactions. For example, Phillis, a full-time, African American female Social Sciences faculty member in counseling at Cosmopolitan College, explains the ways in which race connects faculty:

> Over-time you start to . . . see things . . . in racial terms. Maybe they'll [faculty of color] see me and say, "Oh hey, who's that?" or "Hey, I teach in physical education" or "I teach over here." So I have had lots of faculty of color, specifically African American, maybe introduce themselves to me or try to keep an eye out and we'll sort of say "Hi," and I think it's only because of that.

In spite of institutional efforts and articulations about diversity—race-based professional organizations, diversity statements, promotional material depicting diversity— faculty of color acknowledge "race" or "color" as important and suggest that stratification, and thus inequality (Massey, 2007), of faculty by race, color, or ethnicity is part of their experience. A long-term, full-time, African American Business faculty member at Water's Edge Community College, Louis, observes a history of racial and ethnic separation of community college faculty:

> I think there still seems to exist, I'm just going to be real with you, there still seems to be a mentality, and this is my experience with all the ethnicities on the campus, so whether they are White, Black, Brown, or Yellow, there still is a lot of separation based on ethnicity.

Which you would think as an institution of higher education that would not exist because you're dealing with intelligent people, right? You would think but it's just the opposite. People are still separated by their ethnicity and there's a feeling of mistrust that exists between them.

Louis' professional identity as a community college faculty member is inseparable from his experiences as a person of color: "When I first started, that first day someone called me the 'n' word, and what a way to start your first day at any institution." The pattern continued: "[My first 4 years] . . . were very, very challenging dealing with the animosity that existed." Even though overt racism subsided over time at his campus, for Louis, the faculty body did not constitute a community:

> My expectations were that it would be a community of scholars who live the idea of learning community . . . but once I got into it I realized that wasn't the case . . . People do things by themselves, for their own benefit, and it's not team oriented.

What started out for Louis as separation from colleagues on the basis of race developed into a separation from colleagues on the basis of personal identity and self-interest. Louis continues, "So that was a real challenge for me to change my perspective and expectations of others, thinking that others would be willing to assist, cause they weren't." The conflation of professional and social identities—African American Business faculty, African American Humanities faculty, Latina Social Sciences faculty—is problematical and confounds the personal/social and the professional, possibly a method of separating rather than uniting professional groups.

Conclusion

We have highlighted four main findings in our research. First, we identify counter-narratives of institutional life from faculty of color. These counter-narratives are primarily in the form of prescriptions and hopes for institutional change. In each case, faculty of color hold these aspirations for their respective campuses, but understand the low probability for change. Consistent with CRT (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), race and racism, whether overt or covert, shape behaviors between social groups and within social groups. This applies to professional groups as well, including faculty. One function of CRT is to identify these influences and these behaviors in the counter-narratives of faculty of color. CRT sounds an alarm to community colleges, challenging their principles, based not on privilege or meritocracy but on equal access and the development of individual potential (Levin & Kater, 2013). Second, "double consciousness" is present in the experiences of faculty of color and, in extreme cases, the intensity of the double consciousness for these faculty results in the "depersonalization" of their identities. Depersonalization leads to a divided self. When faculty of color see no other alternatives for seeking a positive identity related to their work, they will embrace their professional identity and "leave the personal at the door." Finally, our research indicates that social identity and professional identity for faculty of color are complex and interrelated.

We conclude that the professional identity of faculty of color is problematical, in part because of institutionalized norms, practices, and assumptions, as well as what constitutes legitimacy within the community college (Colyvas & Powell, 2006). Institutionalization can conflict with social identity, and, in the case of faculty of color, social identity becomes a choice of either a latent or overt characteristic. If latent, then faculty of color bury or hide those aspects of social identity—race and ethnicity—that are incompatible with institutional norms, practices, and assumptions. If overt, then faculty of color are placed within a conflictive context where they are at odds with their White colleagues.

Either way, faculty of color are not unfettered in their institutional actions, and certainly view themselves as more constrained than their White colleagues. Their professional work is compromised. They are divided on one hand in that their social identities are removed from their professional work and on the other hand in that their social identities conflict with their professional work. Consistent with Ashforth and Mael (1989) and Tafjel and Turner (1985), our conclusion about divided selves for faculty of color in the context of social identities points to the imperatives of social identity whereby individuals strive to achieve a positive self-concept and strengthen that self-concept through affiliation with a group based on similarities of individuals.

Institutional theory can describe the ways institutions facilitate the construction of professional identities of faculty of color (Scott, 2001). Institutions not only influence information dissemination but also may manipulate actors' identities and preferences (Hall & Taylor, 1996). A cultural focus of institutional theory leads us to understand that institutions have a set of norms that derive from "symbols, scripts, and routines, which provide the filters for interpretation, of both the situation and oneself, out of which a course of action is constructed" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 939). Therefore, institutions are thought to operate under a set of rational procedures (Scott, 2001). Within the context of this investigation, faculty of color gain an understanding of their professional role and how that role fits into the larger context of a community college campus. Often this status can be defined by norms of "legitimacy" or "social appropriateness" dictated by the majority faculty (Hall & Taylor, 1996).

Implications

With a growing student population and one constituted by ever-increasing numbers of underrepresented minority students, faculty of color have an increasingly significant role. In California, underrepresented students are the majority—more than 50% are classified as underrepresented minorities and less than 30% of students are classified as White, non-Hispanic (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2012). Given the emphasis placed on community colleges nationally to train the workforce and to provide access to baccalaureate degree programs, the progress and academic development of students are imperative (Pusser & Levin, 2009). Furthermore, with growing evidence on the importance of faculty and instruction in the outcomes for community college students, there is a considerable need for an effective professional labor force (Grubb et al., 1999; Levin et al., 2011). A faculty body that is not coherent,

and where there are two or more social classes, does not bode well for an effective professional labor force. When one part of the faculty—faculty of color—is constrained personally, from enacting the social values, then there is inefficient use of labor and limits on the self-actualization and self-efficacy of individual faculty.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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Note

1. We use the term "faculty of color," as do other higher education scholars (e.g., C. S. V. Turner, Myers, & Creswell, 1999), to include not just those who are formally designated underrepresented minorities (i.e., African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders) but also those who are potentially subject to minority status or discrimination based on their phenotype similarities (i.e., similar visual characteristics) to underrepresented populations (e.g., Filipino, Asian, biracial, and multiracial Americans). This use is consistent with the scholarly literature and conforms to the ambiguous use of the term "color" (Stanley, 2006). Furthermore, the term, "faculty of color" aligns with the tenets of critical race theory (CRT), which we use for analysis in this investigation.

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