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Surviving Tenure: The Plight of Black Faculty; A Panel Discussion

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This essay, delivered during the 2006 Annual Meeting in Boston, presents four tenured professors from three different universities who discuss the unique problems faced by Black faculty at predominantly White institutions as they attempt to earn tenure and promotion. Chair Kimberly Flint-Hamilton provides the introductory remarks.

Nearly every year we hear about a friend, maybe someone in the BCTS, who has been denied tenure and/or promotion. Some years, there's bad news about several colleagues. It devastates us. Those who have more intimate knowledge of the situation – work at the same institution, have an office down the hall, or talk regularly with our ill-fated friend – are always surprised.

The people I'm referring to do all the right things. They have excellent teaching evaluations. They publish in the top journals of their field. They get along with their colleagues. They serve on more than their fair share of university committees. But, unlike their White colleagues, none of it is enough.

This past year, I heard yet another story – a brilliant colleague had two books published by reputable university presses and a contract for a third book, his teaching evaluations were the best in his department, he served on several committees. He was denied tenure. That same year one of his White colleagues, who didn't have a book at all, whose teaching evaluations were somewhat spotty, and who had half the committee assignments of my friend, was tenured and promoted. When I talked with him about the decision, it became clear to me what had happened. He hadn't read the departmental, college, and university politics correctly. He seemed to have been misguided. He lacked an advocate in the upper ranks of the faculty and administration. He believed it when he was told that 'race would not be a factor' in his tenure decision. In short, he behaved as his White colleagues behaved, and expected to be treated the same way.

The time had come to address this matter directly. I decided to put together this panel, to invite successful senior colleagues to discuss strategies to help our junior members avoid the traps and pitfalls that so many fail to see. Racism, especially institutional racism, can be almost invisible – that is, until decisions are made that affect careers.

The first segment lays out an historical framework, focusing on recent trends in diversity hires on traditional White campuses. I also recommend ten practices that will enhance the Black junior faculty's chances for survival in a predominantly White institution. I present: *The Plight of Black Faculty: Recent Trends and A Plan for Survival*.

Diane Batts Morrow discusses her journey through graduate school and the challenges she faced when trying to publish her award-winning title, *Persons of Color and Religious at the Same Time: The Oblate Sisters of Providence, 1828-1860* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002). She presents: *My Scholarly Odyssey: A Cautionary Tale*.

John Morrow addresses the tenure process from the perspective of the chairperson and dean. He offers: *An Approach to Promotion and Tenure*, a list of recommendations for the junior faculty person to follow throughout the probationary period.

Jamie Phelps, OP, discusses the voyage beginning with the probationary period and continuing through appointment to full professor. Her presentation is entitled: *Seven Foci for a Successful Quest for Promotion to a tenured Full Professor – A Reflection*.

1) Kimberly Flint-Hamilton: *The Plight of Black Faculty. Recent Trends and A Plan for Survival*

The statistics are well-known. African Americans are dramatically underrepresented among full-time faculty across the nation. A study conducted in 2002 revealed that Blacks make up only about 5.2% of full-time faculty, and only 2.8% at public research institutions.¹ Furthermore, only

¹ Cathy A. Trower and Richard P. Chait, "Faculty Diversity: Too Little for Too Long," *Harvard Magazine* 104, number 4 (2002),

<http://www.harvardmagazine.com/print/030218.html> (accessed 6/2006).

3% of the tenured and tenure-track faculty at Ivy League institutions are Black.²

The dearth is by no means a new phenomenon. Many have attributed the problem to the pipeline – i.e., the undergraduate and graduate degree programs that ultimately produce PhDs. Trower and Chait, however, disagree. They state very emphatically that the pipeline is *not* the source of the problem. “The pipeline empties into territory women and faculty of color too often experience as uninviting, unaccommodating, and unappealing. For that reason, many otherwise qualified candidates forego graduate school altogether, others withdraw midstream, and still others – doctorate in hand – opt for alternative careers. In short, the pipeline leaks.³”

For most faculty of color on predominantly White institutions, particularly Black faculty, the experience of the academy is dramatically different from that of Whites, especially White men. The social isolation, even the hostility described by Trower and Chait can be chilling and unnerving. Add on the reality that, after six or seven years of junior faculty status, the chances of being awarded tenure can be slim, especially at the Ivy League institutions. One wonders about the motivation for giving nearly a decade of your career to an institution that may well harm or even destroy opportunities for advancement in your chosen profession.⁴

² Yolanda Pierce, “Hide and Seek: Diversity in the Ivy League,” *Black Issues in Higher Education* 22, Issue 4 (2005), <http://proxy.stetson.edu:EbscoHost> (accessed September 23, 2006).

³ Trower and Chait, paragraph 22.

⁴ Pierce, paragraph 3.

The problem of finding and retaining Black faculty has long been recognized. For decades, universities and colleges have dedicated resources to studying the phenomenon and positing solutions. A profound lack of commitment, however, permeates the culture of the academy.

A pervasive culture of devaluation of Blacks exists in the academy. Black research – the research done by Black professors as well as research about topics related to Black life – is often viewed as marginal, unimportant, less critical or less analytical, and non-canonical. It's as if everything we do, even our very persons, were tainted somehow by our blackness. Lena Williams discusses the view that blackness is a taint, a contaminant from which Whites recoil. Blacks are viewed as an infectious agent, and Whites flee to avoid it.⁵

The culture of the academy is rife with examples of this devaluation. Kendra Hamilton, in describing the 'dual dilemma' that Black faculty face while trying both to survive and to make the academy more welcoming for students and faculty alike, quotes John Derbyshire:

“Like most non-Blacks, I guess, I have, anyway, always thought that Afro-American Studies is a pseudo-discipline, invented by guilty White liberals as a way of keeping Black intellectuals out of trouble and giving them a shot at holding professorships at elite institutions without having to prove themselves in anything really difficult, like Math.”⁶

⁵ Lena Williams, *It's The Little Things. Everyday Interactions that Anger, Annoy, and Divide the Races* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 2000), 71.

⁶ Kendra Hamilton, “Dual Dilemma: Black Faculty Work to Ensure Access, While Making the Academy Hospitable to Minority Faculty, Students – Faculty Club,” *Black Issues in Higher Education* 19 (October 24, 2002),

Derbyshire is not alone in his attitudes. Many Blacks have to deal with colleagues who feel that what they do is somehow substandard by its very nature.

Hamilton also quotes Manning Marable, who describes an almost systematic exclusivity. “[T]here is a silent policy of exclusion and a kind of tracking of Black careers not unlike the tracking that occurs with children in public schools.” He goes on to describe the ways in which Black faculty are guided into administrative areas, like student affairs, athletics, and community affairs.⁷

The tracking Marable describes is effective in holding Black faculty back from advancement. It prevents them from earning recognition in scholarly areas and from gaining access to scholarly support structures. Worse, it exhausts their time and energies, focusing their efforts on activities and accomplishments that ultimately have little impact on their evaluation for tenure and promotion.

Cheryl Fields describes the problem as one of morale. In addition to their teaching and research responsibilities, African American faculty have the extra burden of being viewed as ‘affirmative action’ hires, further devaluing them. Black faculty often find themselves having to defend their credentials, even on occasion to their White students.⁸

These factors contribute to a qualitatively different environment for Blacks and Whites. Both groups, to be sure, have challenges. For Blacks, however, the environment carries a distinct obstacle-course quality. To make matters

http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0DXK/is_18_19/ai_94198506 (accessed September 10, 2006).

⁷ Hamilton, paragraph 22.

⁸ Cheryl D. Fields, “A Morale Dilemma,” *Black Issues in Higher Education* 13 (October 17, 1996), 22-28, <http://proxy.stetson.edu:ProQuest> (accessed October 3, 2006).

worse, isolation of Black faculty often results in exclusion from decision-making responsibilities regarding curriculum and grant opportunities. Their small numbers make it virtually impossible for them even to take part in decisions regarding tenure and promotion of their own Black colleagues, a problem that White faculty never have to face. The concept of a truly even playing field, and having one's credentials evaluated by peers, is nonexistent for most Blacks.

While many institutions have affirmed and re-affirmed a fundamental commitment to diversity, few have made substantial changes such that a 'critical mass' of Black faculty and students has been achieved. Add to that fact, the paucity of Black faculty in the 'behind the scenes' positions of power at major institutions that control hiring decisions. One wonders how sincere most of those commitments really are.

John Austin describes the situation at University of Texas at Austin. With a Black student enrollment of about 13%, it is surprising that the Black faculty, tenure-track and non-tenure-track combined, make up only 1.9% of the total. President James Spaniolo insists that his university's commitment to diversity is genuine. But "he stopped short of saying he'll support an administrator to focus on increasing black faculty numbers. 'We'll do what works for UT-Arlington,' he said." Yet sixteen years ago, in 1991, a study was conducted on campus to determine how best to increase diversity. The report was critical of the university's leadership in recruiting and retaining Black faculty, and recommended that a vice president be appointed to oversee diversity initiatives. Not surprisingly, some Black

professors at UT Arlington call the university's plans for diversification 'a joke'.⁹

Some institutions make commitments to diversity in the form of special positions, such as assistants to the president or provost, who are responsible for identifying minority candidates. Many, however, stop short of ensuring that the officer has real power. Consider the case of John Hardin, assistant to the provost at Western Kentucky University. It is Hardin's responsibility to identify prospective junior faculty who are Black. He ensures that their names are on the list of departmental recruiters, and he encourages these Black candidates to submit an application. But Hardin cannot make job offers, nor does he have any say in hiring. Departmental needs and politics determine to whom offers are ultimately made. "People are not hired because they are minorities," he says. "They're hired because they are the best fit." And Hardin has no quantitative guidelines – there is no set time line.¹⁰

The situation at Western Kentucky University is virtually identical to many across the nation. The result – little difference between the data generated on Black faculty in the early 1990s and today, more than sixteen years later.

Even when universities demonstrate a clear commitment to diversity, results can be ambiguous and

⁹ John Austin, "Black Faculty Shrinks at UTA" *University of Houston Star Telegram.com* (Tuesday May 23, 2006), <http://uh.edu/ednews/2006/fwst/200605/20060523utafaculty.html> (accessed September 29, 2006).

¹⁰ Joe Lord, "Hiring of Black Faculty Still Uphill Battle," *Western Kentucky University Herald* (February 25, 2003), <http://www.wkuherald.com/media/storage/paper603/news/2003/02/25/News/Hiring.Of.Black.Faculty.Still.Uphill.Battle-378208.shtml?norewrite200611031709&sourcedomain=www.wkuherald.com> (accessed August 28, 2006).

questionable. Duke University is an example. In 2002, provost Peter Lange announced that Duke had met its goal, announced in 1993, of doubling its Black faculty within one decade.¹¹ This was cause for celebration. They were a full year ahead of schedule. Yet, despite the good news, many of the new additions filled non-tenure-track ranks. “When the BFSI [Black Faculty Strategic Initiative] was started in 1993, Duke had 44 black faculty members (36 in the tenure track and eight in other ranks). In the current year, Duke has 88 faculty members (58 in the tenure track and 30 in other ranks).” Lange acknowledged the discrepancy between the ranks, calling for continued efforts.¹²

Unfortunately, however, in the shadow of the infamous lacrosse incident, in which a Black exotic dancer accused three White Duke students of rape, at least six Black faculty have resigned, indicating that the incident was mishandled by Duke administrators. Yet Lange does not appear concerned. “Lange said the departures this year have been driven by personal considerations. ... And he points out, there will be no net loss. Duke has hired 10 new black faculty members, giving the university an overall gain. ... [H]e recognizes that there’s a perception that the administration is not as attentive to the issue as it used to be.”¹³ Lange’s comment suggests that he’s more concerned

¹¹ Geoffrey Mock, “Duke’s Black Faculty Initiative Reaches Goal Early: Duke Has Doubled Number of Black Faculty Members in Nine Years,” *Duke University News and Communications*, Thursday November 21, 2002, <http://dukenews.duke.edu/2002/11/blackfaculty1102.html> (accessed September 25, 2006).

¹² Mock, paragraph 5.

¹³ Jane Stancill, “Axis Tilts for Black Faculty: Pressure on Duke to Build Diversity,” *Knights Ridder Tribune Business News, Washington*, June 5, 2006, pg. 1.

with the net gain than with the problem at hand – the Black faculty sense a problem in the culture of the institution. That problem is serious enough that a significant number have resigned. Lange does not, however, suggest that the problem is a deep one and that resources will be dedicated to resolving it. It's apparently all right if there is a revolving door, as long as the numbers remain favorable.

In fact, several Black faculty at Duke report feeling that, once the goal was met in 2002, attention to their needs was diverted to other matters. Political science professor Kerry Haynie had this to say: "Four years ago, Duke was headed to the top of the mountain in terms of black faculty and diverse faculty, but it seems like we're sliding back down the mountain before we've reached the top."¹⁴

Duke is not alone. For all its efforts, for all its success, Duke, like most predominantly White colleges and universities, is still weighed down by the ideology of the academy and the culture of racism.

The lack of commitment manifests itself in countless ways on campuses. I myself encountered a particularly virulent attitude toward Black faculty recently. During the summer of 2006, when I was soliciting panelists for this topic, I inadvertently misspelled a colleague's name and someone outside the BCTS received my invitation to participate on the panel. Here is his response:

<http://dukenews.duke.edu/2006/06/clips060506.html> (accessed October 1, 2006).

¹⁴ Stancill, paragraph 29.

“Hi Kimberly,

The problem is that Negroes are not as intelligent as white men so they have to use affirmative action to have any chance of being hired. Most are too lazy to work anyway so tenure really appeals to them. Most colored people are best suited to a life of crime and drug addiction.”

When I got over my initial shock, I realized *this* is the reason why we have a problem. If ‘****@juno.com’ can respond to an email from someone he doesn’t know in this manner, how many of our White colleagues, or their friends, mentors, families, were shaped by these very same attitudes?

Pat Washington’s tenure battle at San Diego State University has all the characteristics of being tainted by the problems described here. Responding to a question regarding the support she received in her department, she says, “[SDSU] is a very bad place if you speak out against disparate treatment of faculty and students of color, or have the audacity to question the ‘way we have always done it.’ In my experience the college and the university administration does little, if anything, to assist Black faculty who are encountering problems in their departments. They assume ‘you’ are the problem.”¹⁵

Washington describes a charged environment, one in which the bar for publications was raised regularly during her probationary period. The research she had published in

¹⁵ Pat Washington, “Crisis in the Retention of black Tenure and Tenure-Track Faculty at SDSU” Pat Washington Support Committee (2006), http://www.patwashington.org/crisis_retention.shtml (accessed October 10, 2006).

refereed journals was discounted as insignificant. In the end, she was denied tenure.¹⁶

What can Black faculty do to address this imbalance? There is no failsafe method, but below is a list of ten things you can do to arm yourself and bring to light problems that might later trip you up:

1. *Get a copy of the faculty handbook and understand it.*

Talk with your departmental chairperson to resolve any ambiguities. Make sure that you're doing everything indicated so that you have a strong application for tenure and promotion when the time comes.

2. *Make sure that you meet or exceed every standard for tenure and promotion.*

To do this, you'll have to enlist the help of one or more mentors. Our mentors, however, need not come exclusively from within our institutions. Since there are so few of us at predominantly White institutions, many will have to look outside our schools for guidance. Most will probably rely on several mentors – one to help fine-tune our research, another to assist in unraveling the intricacies of university politics, perhaps another to aid in teaching. Many Black faculty encounter student resistance so strong that their course evaluations are tainted by racist attitudes. A trusted senior colleague may be able to point this out in the tenure letter, or in discussions with colleagues on tenure-review committees in a way that you cannot.

¹⁶ Washington, question 5.

3. *Remember: Not all the advice you receive will be useful.*
There are a great many well-intentioned colleagues out there who give the best advice they can, but who simply do not understand, or believe, that there are two standards at work. Their advice is based on their own personal experiences. Remember too that most Whites have never experienced institutional racism themselves. They may not even believe it exists. Even if they do, they may not have the faintest idea how to deal with it. As much as they may want to help you, they may simply succeed in disarming you. Try to find a senior colleague who is not White, and who has successfully navigated the waters of tenure and promotion.

4. *Beware: Some people don't want you to succeed.*
Accept that a few of your colleagues want you to leave – that's why it's difficult for Black faculty to survive on White campuses – and some will do what they can to encourage it. It's important not to become paranoid, but at the same time you'll be better prepared to deal with 'landmines' if you anticipate them. Seek information about policies, procedures, and deadlines from multiple sources, at least when you first arrive on campus. Discover the sources of important, reliable information and frequent those offices and bulletin boards. And, if one of your colleagues gives you misinformation, even if it was an innocent mistake, don't give that person an opportunity to misguide you again. Don't burn bridges, don't behave unprofessionally, but don't place your trust in someone who's either malicious or incompetent.

5. *Pay attention to your colleagues.*
Learn your environment. Attend all departmental, college, divisional, and university meetings, and pay close attention to how your senior colleagues react when

issues of diversity are raised in university or college meetings. What points of view do they support? When are they vocal? When are they silent? Most people's true thoughts on these controversial issues reveal themselves eventually, even if they never utter a word publicly. Even silence is an affirmation of a particular point of view. In a few years you should have a good sense of where you can find pockets of support. You should also know how to 'read' the individual members of the tenure-review committees. If you do this well, you'll be in a good position to speak to their vision of the academy in your tenure narratives.

6. *Ask the following questions:*

- a. Does the dean/provost support faculty of color or is it just rhetoric? What is the evidence of that support?
- b. When there is a conflict between faculty of color and White faculty, how does my dean, chairperson, or provost decide what to do? Is he/she fair? Or is there a pattern of discrimination, or of blindness, to the problems encountered by Black faculty in White environments?
- c. Is my dean/chairperson/provost open to discussions about diversity or racism in the classroom or on campus, or does he/she get nervous and fidgety, perhaps try to change the subject, when these issues are raised?
- d. Has your dean/chairperson/provost tried to engage you in a discussion of the climate on your campus?
- e. If you have experienced overt racism and

complained to someone in a supervisory position, does your supervisor support you and attempt to get to the root of the problem, or does he/she just try to keep you quiet and deny that there is a problem?

If, after watching and interacting with your administrators for a period of time, you find that the answers to these questions are overwhelmingly negative, you may want to consider finding a better fit at another institution before the tenure decision.

7. *Keep accurate records.*

Make sure all your successes are well documented. Additionally, if a senior colleague attacks or criticizes your work publicly or without just cause, make a note of it, and don't be afraid to defend yourself. Keep track of anything said to or about you that smacks of racism. Accurate records may also be helpful if you find that someone inimical to your presence on campus, or to diversity in general, finds him/herself on one of the tenure committees. You can ask to have that person recused. Accurate records may be useful should you need to appeal a negative decision.

8. *Meet regularly with senior administrators who are in a position to evaluate your work, especially department chairpersons or deans.*

Most institutions require an annual report from every faculty member. Talk with your chair while you compile your report and insist on a written response. Make special note in your report of areas in which you have grown, goals you have met, or problems that you have resolved. Meet with your dean at least every two

years to evaluate your progress, and insist that he/she respond in writing.

9. *Meet regularly with other Black faculty.*

You're all in the same boat. Share observations and anecdotes. Talk about what works for you and what's failed. And remember that you're not alone. Sometimes isolation is the worst part of being Black on a predominantly White campus, but one or two colleagues meeting for coffee once a week can make the isolation easier to bear. You're also lending each other support.

10. *Keep your options open.*

Attend your professional conferences and give talks. Network. Talk with your colleagues across the nation. No matter how hard you work or how brilliant you may be, the tenure decision can still sometimes be arbitrary and you may find yourself on the market after six or seven years. Try to position yourself in such a way that you aren't panicked if the decision is negative. And remember, even if the decision is negative: (a) you can appeal the decision, and your careful record-keeping will help you build a strong case; (b) your professional behavior and accomplishments will serve you well if you decide to go on the job market; and (c) there's nothing wrong with you. It's the environment that's flawed.

2) Diane Batts Morrow: *My Scholarly Odyssey - A Cautionary Tale*

My doctoral dissertation focused on the Oblate Sisters of Providence. These women were an extraordinary force in

southern society before the Civil War. Organized in 1828, the Oblate Sisters dedicated themselves as “a Religious society of Coloured Women established in Baltimore with the [approval] of the Most Reverend Archbishop, [who] renounce the world to consecrate themselves to God, and to the Christian education of young girls of color.” The Oblate Sisters distinguished themselves as the first black women to pursue religious communal life in the Roman Catholic tradition.

My book emphasizes the centrality of race in the antebellum Oblate experience. The Oblate Sisters fulfilled religious vocations in a slave-holding society that denied the virtue of all black women--slave or free. From the early days of slavery, white public opinion considered black women sexually promiscuous Jezebels-- the opposite of women of virtue, the idealized social image of white middle class women. Negative stereotypes of black women remained so widespread in American culture, that long after the abolition of slavery in 1865 a white observer accurately represented public sentiment when she stated in 1904, “I cannot imagine such a creation as a virtuous black woman.” Only the equally dysfunctional slave stereotype of black women as Mammy, the caretaker devoted to the nurture of her white family to the neglect of her own, challenged the Jezebel image of black women in white public opinion.

Refusing to accept such social condemnation, the Oblate Sisters demonstrated self-empowerment instead, by defining themselves primarily in terms of their disciplined exercise of piety and virtue. As teachers, the Oblate Sisters effectively countered the Mammy stereotype’s neglect of her own offspring with their collective devotion to the intellectual, spiritual, and social nurture of black children. In addition to common school and domestic instruction, the Oblate teaching ministry required the sisters to instill in their pupils “certain principles of virtue....” Significantly,

the Oblate Sisters taught these values of respectability to black girls, in defiance of white American society's exclusion of black women from its social construction of gender.

Oblate insistence on "the respect which is due to the state we have embraced" for themselves and their teaching emphasis on respectability for their pupils conformed to what historian Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham has identified as the politics of respectability: "By claiming respectability through their manners and morals, poor black women boldly asserted the will and agency to define themselves outside the [restrictions] of prevailing racist [thought]."

Black female agency proved the hallmark of the antebellum Oblate experience. A community of women of faith, the Oblate Sisters adopted as their motto "Providence will provide." However, in their pursuit of spiritual perfection and in their vigorous execution of their teaching ministry, the Oblate Sisters acted on what could have served as the essential subtext of their motto: "God helps those who help themselves."

I had taught History and Social Studies in high schools and taught African American History at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville for 10 years before entering a Ph.D. program. When my husband accepted a position at The University of Georgia, I confronted two choices: earn a Ph.D. to continue teaching at the university level, or return to secondary school teaching. I chose the former!

Initially, my professors had difficulty taking me seriously as both a nontraditional, older student and the wife of a faculty colleague. They repeatedly overlooked me for student publications, awards, and conference participation. The only panel on which my advisor thought to include me, explicitly requested a black female graduate student, as I was the only one in the department!

While conducting research in Baltimore, I had the extreme good fortune to meet Dr. Christopher Kauffman at the Sulpician Archives. Over the years he has graciously acted as a mentor and a friend. If your dissertation advisor cannot or will not act as a reliable mentor, seize the initiative and find an established scholar in your discipline willing to assume that critical role. It is also essential to make numerous conference presentations to form your own support network. I completed my dissertation, “The Oblate Sisters of Providence: Issues of Black and Female Agency in their Antebellum Experience,” in June 1996.

What follows is a chronology of the steps I went through in order to publish my dissertation.

Press # 1

1. I revised my dissertation and submitted it to the first University Press in September, 1997.
2. The first reader rejected my major thesis about the centrality of race in the OSP experience and insisted on fundamental revisions to make my manuscript conform more to conventional histories of white sisterhoods.
3. A second reader [not customary at this press] proved more encouraging, but basically agreed with the first reader’s recommendations.
4. The editor remained aloof, inflexible, and unsympathetic to my situation.
5. I withdrew my manuscript from this Press in August, 1999.

Press # 2

1. I revised my manuscript during the summers of 1998 and 1999 to acknowledge the legitimate issues the first two readers had raised and submitted it to the University of North Carolina Press in August, 1999.

2. The editor still had not read the manuscript by November, but sent it to my first reader choice in December, 1999. This editor left UNC Press in January, 2000.
3. The first reader endorsed my work enthusiastically in the reader's report submitted in February, 2000.
4. I heard nothing from the Press until May, when I made an unprecedented personal visit on my way to Baltimore to conduct further research. When my husband and I spent the night in Durham, NC on our way to Baltimore, I cynically quipped that we should make the short trip to Chapel Hill to blow up UNC Press. He countered more constructively that we should visit the editor instead. The next morning, I had a long, productive conversation about my work with her.
5. The editor read my entire manuscript the next day and sent it to another reader immediately.
6. This reader recommended publication, but urged me to focus on Oblate spirituality and to de-emphasize race.
7. In their pursuit of the requisite two readers to provide unqualified approvals, the Press sent my manuscript to a third reader. This scholar rejected my treatment of the roles of color and class in the Oblate community, although all evidence supported my interpretation and this reader offered no evidence for her position.
8. In February 2001 my original choice for second reader, who had had to decline to take on the task the previous May, contacted me and offered to read the manuscript then. Although unusual, the Press consents to consult this fourth reader, who enthusiastically recommended my work for publication in April, 2001.
9. The Press issued me an advance contract, pending board approval in May 2001. The Press Board of Directors unanimously approved my manuscript for publication in July 2001.

10. The University of North Carolina Press published *Persons of Color and Religious at the Same Time: The Oblate Sisters of Providence, 1828-1860* on September 9, 2002. The Association of Black Women Historians awarded my book its Letitia Woods Brown Memorial Publication Prize for the Best Book on Black Women's History, 2002. The Conference on the History of Women Religious selected my book for its Distinguished Book Award in 2004.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Capriciousness of Process: What if the first editor had not left UNC Press in 2000? What if I had not gone to the Press in person in 2000? What if I had not told my editor of the belated availability of my # 2 choice reader? What if the #2 choice reader had been able to read the manuscript when first asked?
2. Make rejections, set-backs, and criticisms work for you. Acknowledge your anger, depression, and frustration and then get over them. See challenges and criticisms as opportunities to refine your arguments, hone your style, express yourself clearly, explain yourself fully, improve your work.
3. Crafting diplomatic, persuasive, cogent, explicit responses to the readers' reports proved more difficult than writing the original manuscript.
4. Having to defend your work gives you a clearer picture of its essence and significance.

3) John Morrow Jr.: *An Approach to Promotion and Tenure*

1. Upon appointment, inquire at first hand of the department and college leadership during interviews what the requirements are for promotion and tenure. Also inquire about the institution's resources (released time from teaching, junior faculty research grants, mentorship programs, travel support to conferences) and their availability.

When listening about research and publication, be especially alert for statements such as "in major journals in the discipline." Often, those major journals may have an abysmal track record for publishing in your specific field, and you need to know this and state it up front to see the administrators' response. If they show little or no inclination toward flexibility, and you have other offers from institutions that do, you know what to do.

If this is your only option, suggest that their attitude impedes their ability to attract the best (i.e., the most aware and informed) faculty and what avenues are available for open discussion and review of the policy. Do not let the matter ride. When you take the position, you will likely find other minority faculty in the same circumstances in their units, and if you can enlist the support of tenured faculty (or not), you need to pressure your unit and institution to become more enlightened.

In regard to teaching, ascertain the teaching load, be certain that yours conforms to other faculty at your level, and be certain that your courses include survey, which you will automatically get, and upper division and within a certain period of time graduate classes in your specialty. Your first year will certainly entail much preparation of new classes, but after that restrict your introduction of new classes annually to a judicious level so that you can devote

the time gained to research, the measurable part of the promotion equation. You should never be in a situation of constantly preparing new courses year after year.

2. Enlist the institution's resources where possible in your effort to meet the requirements for promotion and tenure. Act on the presumption that as they selected you for the position, they should want you to succeed. Use the institution's resources as seed or start-up grants to apply for outside support (e.g., Ford Foundation grants). Your immediate supervisor may not be aware of all opportunities, so make yourself aware of them, either through your institution's research office, reading appropriate literature (journal, bulletins, etc. in your field), and networking.

3. Keep your focus on your work, teaching and research in particular, as those are usually the two most essential components of any promotion and tenure dossier. Remember what the representatives of the institution told you about the requirements, and **meet or exceed** them. No room exists here for ifs, ands, or buts.

4. You should be clear about the standards and determined to meet them without fail. For example, if service plays little or no role in promotion or tenure in your unit, keep your service obligations at a level where they do not impede your efforts to meet crucial requirements. Minority faculty often feel obliged to commit themselves to higher levels of service than their colleagues at predominantly white institutions. The institution may actually attempt to impose upon your time and good graces to overload you with service because of a paucity of minority faculty. Resist the temptation and refuse, politely but firmly, reminding them and yourself you have essential obligations to fulfill to meet the standards of the institution for promotion and tenure. If

you fail to keep this in mind and come up short at P&T time, the responsibility is yours, as the institution's representatives will say, with all the regret they can muster, that you needed to take care of your primary obligations first and that they had no idea you were not.

5. Get the lay of the land in your home unit. Listen, observe, go to meetings, contribute to the life of the department where appropriate, and avoid being pulled into departmental politics where possible, unless you consider yourself a superb player. In your search for mentors, choose carefully. Let the unit administrator be your mentor the first year, unless you already know someone in the unit who will mentor you. Get to know the faculty most likely to be helpful and who themselves have been successful and therefore have some clout in the unit, and select from them. You may also encounter other faculty in your unit or outside it who are helpful and willing to offer sage advice; enlist them. Your aim is to prepare yourself as best you can for the P&T process.

6. Move beyond your unit both in the university and in your field. **Network, network, network.** This will be particularly important in your field, as you will likely need external references of your research and publication when you come up for tenure. So go to conferences, read papers, publish articles and essays, or, if your field requires a book, align your papers and articles toward completion of the book manuscript. Get to know the eminent scholars in your field, and be sure they know and appreciate your work. You will need them for references for grants and, ultimately, for promotion and tenure.

7. Find out well in advance of P&T not only what you must achieve, but also the nature of the process and what

you must submit--dossier, supporting materials, in particular, a list of outside references for your scholarly work beyond your dissertation adviser. Secure models of dossiers submitted by successful candidates in the past, and have your material ready to meet departmental and institutional deadlines.

8. Once the P&T process is under way, you should endeavor to concentrate on your work and go on your way. Should a request for further information come from committees, secure the information and submit it. Should the need for an appeal arise, secure a strong advocate, and even a lawyer if necessary.

Your bottom line here is that if you have done your work and met the standards, you can sue if they attempt to reject you for P&T. If you haven't, all the political maneuvering in the world may not save you.

4) Jamie T. Phelps, O.P. : *Seven Foci for a Successful Quest for Promotion to a Full Professor: A Reflection*

The newly minted doctoral graduate must plan strategically for their growth and development as scholars and members of the academy. The rules for rank and promotion are somewhat standard but interpreted differently in each academic institution. It's important that you know the rules for institution and work within the guidelines of the same. One cannot seek rank or promotion without the assistance and support of colleagues within the institution and in one's field of scholarship.

I offer seven foci that a new doctoral graduate embarking on their first academic appointment might want

to be conscious of as they seek employment and promotion in the academy:

First-Congruence: Identify whether the primary emphasis of the department, school or seminary is open to your disciplinary interest and consistent with your professional goals. Does the institution expect its faculty to place their primary interest on research alone, teaching alone or research and teaching? Inquire what provision is available for developing one's teaching skills and research opportunities.

Second-Criteria: Accept a tenure-track position and read the guidelines for promotion at your institution and follow them like a "play book." Usually the academy has a fourfold criterion for tenure and promotion. The new faculty are evaluated on the basis of their teaching, research, contribution to the community (university, ecclesial and civic community), and collegueship (collaboration with one's peers!).

Third-Teaching Load: Identify the normal teaching load at the institution of your choice. Does seminary, school, or university make provision for course load flexibility to allow one time to do research and service to the community? Some schools identify faculty as primarily teaching or research and teaching faculty and adjust the course load accordingly (usually 3 courses per semester for teaching only and a 3-2 load for research-teaching faculty).

Fourth-Mentor: Identify a faculty member and/or administrator to serve as your mentor and advocate. This person will assist you in identifying your "game plan" and your progress in seeking tenure and promotion. They can assist in helping you identify publishers and publication resources appropriate to your discipline.

Fifth-Discipline: Develop a regular routine or rhythm for your research and writing and if possible coordinate your

elective courses as venues to teach in the area of your research interests.

Sixth-Focus: Limit your academic and public lectures to those areas congruent with your primary research and teaching goals.

Seventh-Portfolio Development: Prepare your promotion portfolio in accord with the published criteria for promotion and have the chair of your department or a senior colleague, whom you trust, to review and discern whether you are ready to apply for promotion based on these criteria.

Once one has done all one should do according to the rules, it is up to one's colleague to judge the quality and worthiness of whether or not you deserve promotion.

Sometimes there is a lack of understanding, appreciation or openness to the subjects and themes your contextual lens identifies as subject for scholarly research. Perhaps your interdisciplinary approach will be misunderstood by those who use a more classical approach. Perhaps some of our peers are unable to recognize the originality or depth of analytical insight your work holds because they use a different language, employ other methods, and have a different cultural contextual lens. At least you will have the satisfaction that you have been faithful to your attempts to balance the four areas of academic responsibility.

With luck, there will be enough of your colleagues in your local institution and the broader academy who will appreciate your distinct *locus* in the academy; appreciate your teaching style, research interests and methods; as well as the themes, concepts or issues that become your focus for publication. If so, your hard work will not go unrewarded.