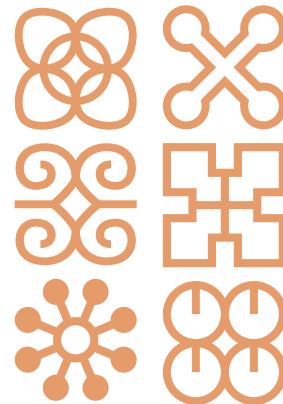


Black Feminist Sociology

An Interview with Patricia Hill Collins



Early Career:

Collins explains the **"outsider within"** identity as the "social locations or border spaces occupied by groups of unequal power". Writing specifically about Black women domestic workers, she emphasizes that outsider within identities are connected to continuing histories of social injustice (Collins, 1999, p. 2*).

Collins reports on experiences of **testimonial smothering** -- a form of silencing that is the result of self-censorship to avoid being ignored, shamed or dismissed. Testimonial smothering happens when we anticipate **testimonial quieting** (p. 21).

Opportunities & Obstacles:

Collins uses her intellectual activism to inform and motivate her academic work rather than depend on universities to provide a platform for scholar-activism. Being a Black feminist scholar is a lifelong responsibility that is not tied to being on a tenure track.

"Self-care starts with your own survival, but it need not end there. [Academically,] my sense of self-care has centered on using my intellectual work to **'write myself free'** as it were" (p. 29).



Dialogues are intentional conversations that are respectful and help us relate to one. They are intellectually and politically enriching and lead us to reconcile our differences.



Looking Forward:



"My legacy lies in all the ways that people have thus far received my ideas and how those ideas will travel into the future. **I want to be an active participant in shaping my own legacy**" (p. 24).

Collin's work responds to contemporary issues via intellectual resistance. She devotes her talents to the here and now but recognizes that good work takes time and effort to make a meaningful impact. Excellence is not easy; it will not be achieved when you take shortcuts. Taking shortcuts can lead you away from the people who you are working for and those who rely on you.

Citations: