

## The Two Body Problem, Contingent Positions, and Parenting on the Tenure Track

The focus of this paper is the so-called two-body problem, specifically when two academics in a long-term relationship seek employment at the same institution, how they might navigate various types of employment arrangements, and how parenting and academic work might be accommodated. I look at the two-body issue from the perspective of the 'second body'. In addition to the nitty-gritty of negotiation, there is another set of pragmatics to be considered. How, in the stressful conditions of applying for jobs, doing one's work, and communicating with one's partner, does one go about figuring out what one wants or is willing to live with? Further, once a dual position, or some such arrangement is made, how does one negotiate family life and the demands of two academic careers, with both partners presenting at conferences, fulfilling obligations on campus, and pursuing their own research projects? Finally, the paper provides an ideological framework for thinking about work-life balance issues in terms of socially just practices with significant implications for race and gender representation.