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Shadows of COVID-19*

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## Silence.

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**Silence.**

*Mychelle H. Smith*  
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Time to teach.  
Mute. Unmute. Mute. Un-  
“Can you hear me?”  
Camera on, camera off. Students make the  
choice.  
Without physical presence, educators must  
amplify their voice.

Meetings upon meetings.  
“The committee cannot hear you.”  
Unmute. “Sorry about that.”  
“Let us know how we can help.”  
Silence.  
Many offers seemingly fall flat.

Time to... teach?  
“Is anyone there?”  
Black squares fill the screen.

Smile, nice shirt, fix your hair  
Why try so hard when students do not care?

Silence.  
Don’t care, no energy to care, family  
members dying.  
Safety, jobs, money: Life and death on the  
line. To say this  
can be a normal semester would be lying.

“Can you hear me?”  
“Let us know how we can help?”

“Is anyone there?”  
“We cannot hear you.”

...

Silence.