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EXPLORING BLACK WOMEN, WHITE WOMEN, AND WHITE GENDERQUEER FACULTY EXPERIENCES OF CRITICAL INCIDENTS OF WHITENESS IN THE WORKPLACE: A CRITICAL - CONSTRUCTIVIST NARRATIVE INQUIRY

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GENDERQUEER FACULTY EXPERIENCES OF CRITICAL INCIDENTS OF
WHITENESS IN THE WORKPLACE:
A CRITICAL - CONSTRUCTIVIST NARRATIVE INQUIRY**

by

Gabrielle McAllaster

Dissertation

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Abstract

Gabrielle McAllaster
EXPLORING BLACK WOMEN, WHITE WOMEN, AND WHITE GENDERQUEER
FACULTY EXPERIENCES OF CRITICAL INCIDENTS OF
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2022 - 2023
Raquel Wright-Mair, Ph.D. and Monica Reid Kerrigan, Ed.D.
Doctor of Philosophy

The cross-racial collaborations of Black women and white individuals in the academy are fraught and complex, as their livelihoods are connected to larger socio-political structures and intersecting systems of oppression, namely race and gender (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990). In this study, I engaged in the research alongside three Black women, two white women, and one white genderqueer faculty to uncover their experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace at Historically White Colleges and Universities (HWCUs). I relied on three critical theoretical frameworks, Intersectionality, Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS), and Critical Human Development Resource Development Theory (CHRD), to comprehensively examine Black women, white women, and white genderqueer reflexivity on their cross-racial collaborations to further explore workplace dynamics in higher education. I employed a critical-constructivist narrative inquiry methodology using three methods: narrative interviews, the critical incident technique (CIT), and timeline drawings. I constructed four themes across the counternarratives of Black women and four themes across the narratives of white women and genderqueer faculty. From the study, I offer considerations for white institutional leaders and faculty to move forward in antiracist and intersectional work in the academy, which includes: (1) Be Bold, Be Humble, (2) Be Intersectionally-Minded: Critical Reflexivity and Action for Change.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Dr. Ruth Frankenberg, a white[1] woman scholar, embarked on an antiracist

feminist journey by learning from Black[2] feminists' critiques of white women's activism

and scholarship (Frankenberg, 1993). In *White Women, Race Matters: The Social*

Construction of Whiteness, Dr. Frankenberg shared her journey of gaining awareness of

herself as a racialized being and as a white woman, and critically examined her white

feminism. Her lifelong quest to understand both her and other white women's

complacency in racism began with reading and engaging in the critical work of The

Combahee River Collective (1977/1982). The socio-political activism of The Combahee

River Collective (1977/1982) intellectualized how multiple systems of oppression such as

racism, sexism, and homophobia, were interlocking, and shaped the everyday experiences

of Black women, in particular, as Black women lesbians. As a collective of Black

feminists, they held white women accountable for their failure to combat racism,

particularly in white women's feminist movements, which contributed to the exclusion

and oppression of Black women and Women of Color (Combahee River Collective,

1977/1982).

Distinctly, Black women, both inside and outside of the academy, critiqued white

feminism (i.e., singular focus on gender) and antiracist movements (i.e., singular focus on

race), which often failed to acknowledge Black women's simultaneous encounters at the

crisscrossing of both race and gender (Collins, 1986, 1996, 2002; Combahee River

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[1] I intentionally lowercase '*white'* throughout this dissertation, challenging whiteness, and white supremacy by recognizing those who have been historically and systematically granted superiority.
[2] I intentionally capitalize '*Black'* throughout this dissertation, as a challenge to whiteness and white supremacy, by centering those who have been historically, systemically, and institutionally oppressed.

Collective, 1977/1982; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; hooks, 1989, 1994, 1982/2015). Black women feminist groups, particularly The Combahee River Collective (1977/1982), clearly stated that eliminating racism was the sole responsibility of white women, not the onus of Black and Women of Color.

At first, while engaging in the critical scholarship of Black women, Frankenberg (1993) was shocked—how could she, a well-intentioned social feminist and academic, perpetuate racism? She thought the so-called racist label was reserved for extremists and institutional structures that upheld racism, not her, an innocent white woman academic. By continuously engaging in racial reflexivity and actively learning from the activism and scholarship of Black feminists, Dr. Frankenberg, along with some other white women she knew, began to walk a tightrope to understand their complacency in racism. Were white women feminists a part of the problem? If so, how could they remedy their racism, and how could they do better? (Frankenberg, 1993). The group of white women began to gain awareness of the predominantly white spaces which they occupied, including their academic workplaces, classrooms, and organizations, and sought to engage in difficult dialogues about race and racism. While some racial conversations were happening at the surface level with her white women colleagues, Frankenberg (1993) was able to gain a greater awareness of the complexity of multidimensional forms of oppression by listening to working-class Black women and Women of Color's experiences and perspectives. In particular, a friend of Frankenberg (1993), who was a woman of Color, made it her business to share her experiences to educate Frankenberg on the daily lived realities of experiencing both racism and sexism.

As a result of the activism, labor, and education provided by Black women and

women of Color, Dr. Frankenberg gained a critical understanding of how individuals were uniquely positioned in terms of race, gender, and class in relation to multiple, overlapping systems of oppression. She witnessed the mistreatment and exclusion that Black women and racially minoritized women experienced at the convergence of race and gender and knew that well-meaning white women academics and feminists, like her, were a part of the problem (Frankenberg, 1993). She stated:

> As a white feminist, I knew that I had not previously known I was being a racist and that I never set out to be racist. I also knew that these desires and tensions had had little effect on outcomes. I, as a coauthor, in however modest of a way, of feminist agendas and discourse, was, at best, failing to challenge racism and, at worst, aiding and abetting it. How had feminism, a movement that, to my knowledge, intended to support and benefit all women, turned out not to be doing so? (p. 3)

Through continuous interrogation of her white domination, Frankenberg (1993) realized the social construction of whiteness—the historical, social, political, and culturally produced systems of privilege and advantages afforded to white individuals—shaped the everyday livelihoods of white individuals. She also recognized that white individuals were responsible for combating racial systems of white superiority, particularly the white feminist with whom she was in community. Dr. Frankenberg's openness to learning and listening to Black feminists facilitated her understanding and critiques of her own role in perpetuating racism. She then dedicated her scholarly work to naming and eradicating the ugly effects of multiple systems of oppression by acknowledging and understanding white women's complacency in white supremacy (Frankenberg, 1993).

Historically, Black women activists and scholars have held white women academics liable, such as Dr. Ruth Frankenberg, to interrogate white womanhood to counteract the ongoing racialized harm that Black women suffer from white women. However, despite the ongoing calls to action for white women to engage in racial reflexivity and critical action, white women's racial wrongdoings persist. Specifically, within historically white colleges and universities (HWCUs), white faculty frequently tend to overlook, ignore, and weaponize whiteness to perpetuate racially hostile campus climates and workplaces within multifaceted systems of oppression (Accapadi, 2007; alexander, 2022; Bhattacharya et al., 2019; Daniel, 2019; Earick, 2018; Haynes, 2017; Matias et al., 2022; Wing Sue et al., 2009). Overt and covert racialized (inter)actions perpetrated by some white individuals, and specifically white women, in the academy include: relying on tears and emotions to avoid discussions on race and racism (Accapadi, 2007; Matias, et al., 2022), perpetuating racialized beliefs and discourses (Haynes, 2017; Yoon, 2012, 2022), and sustaining discursive racialized violence and behaviors (alexander, 2022; Bhattacharya et al., 2019)—all of which sustain hostile work environments for Black women faculty in predominantly white educational spaces. The overarching and ongoing complacency of white women in preserving racialized dynamics in academia creates a challenging environment where it is often deemed '*unlikely*' (Dace, 2012) for them to actively support racial justice alongside Black women and women of Color.

In *Unlikely Allies in the Academy: Women of Color and White Women in Conversation,* women academics shared their narratives of the discomfort, pain, and resentment that often emerges in their cross-racial collaborations in the academy (Dace,

2012). In the book, women of Color, including Chicanas, Indigenous, Asian American, and Black women, narrated their experiences alongside white women to reveal complicated conversations surrounding race and racism to uncover the often-unspoken tensions surrounding cross-racial workplace relationships in the academy. In particular, Black women and white women have complex histories and current realities that shape their everyday interactions which create and maintain racialized tensions and conflicts among them in the academic workplace (Breines, 2006; Carby, 1982; Caraway, 1991; Dace, 2012; Frankenberg, 1993; hooks, 1982/2015, 1994). To be clear, the racialized harm produced via Black women and white women's cross-racial collaborations is a consequence of white women refusing to acknowledge and disrupt our[3] complacency in white supremacy (alexander, 2022; Carby, 1982; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Dace, 2012; Frankenberg, 1993; hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994). Within the academy, white women often use racialized power to advance our academic careers, oftentimes leaving Black women and women of Color behind and harmed in the process (alexander, 2022; Alexander-Floyd, 2012; Bilge, 2013, 2014; Carby, 1982; Collins & Bilge, 2020; Dace, 2012; Frankenberg, 1993; Hoerl, 2021; hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994; Tomlinson, 2019). While the troublesome nature of white women perpetuating racism towards Black women exists beyond the racial dichotomy of Black and white issues and beyond gender binaries, Black women and white women have a distinct history that underscores their current realities, experiences, and relations (Breines, 2006; Carby, 1982; Caraway, 1991;

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[3] Given my positionality as a critical-constructivist white women researcher, I use "we," "us," and "our" in relation to my salient identities as a white woman. By using first-person to discuss white womanhood, I am deliberate to remind myself as the researcher and to those who may read this research that I, too, contribute to and benefit from the power dynamics of whiteness in the academy. By writing in this way, I was able to be continuously reflexive of my identities and social positionings throughout the research and beyond.

Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019; Frankenberg, 1993; hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994; Smith & Nkomo, 2003).

Black women and women of Color have long promoted multidimensional activism to counteract interconnected systems of oppression and have held white women accountable to engage in antiracist feminism alongside them (Anzaldúa, 2009; Carby, 1982; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994; Lorde, 1981, 1984). Now, there remains a critical charge for white women to advance antiracist and Intersectional work to foster mutuality, solidarity, and support with Black women and women of Color to challenge multiple systems of oppression in the academy (Bell et al., 2021; Dace, 2012; Davis & Linder, 2017; Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019). In the same breath, to engage in Intersectional and antiracist work, it is imperative to center and honor the voices, intellect, and activism of Black women who experience multiple, overlapping forms of oppression (Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019; Patton & Haynes, 2018; Smith et al., 2021). Therefore, while it is undoubtedly white individuals' responsibility to address and deconstruct our whiteness (Carby, 1982; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019; Frankenberg, 1993; Patton & Haynes, 2020), it is simultaneously important to center the voices, perspectives, and counternarratives of Black women in the academy (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Patton & Haynes, 2018). While there are many challenges to effectively engaging in work that considers the multiple truths of Black women and white women, there remains a call to action for difficult cross-racial dialogues toward building stronger alliances to disrupt racism, patriarchy, and other forms of oppression in the academy (Accapadi, 2007; Bell et al., 2003; Dace, 2012; Davis & Linder, 2017; Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019). As Davis & Linder (2017)

note, "White women and women of Color share an obligation to dismantle perpetuations of oppression; further, we share a responsibility to countless women of Color to continue to engage in difficult collaborations that bring light to *our hurt, our stories, and our hope.*" (p. 50).

In this critical-constructivist narrative inquiry, I explored critical incidents of whiteness at HWCUs, as narrated by tenure-track Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty members. By engaging in the research alongside Black and white faculty members, I sought to recognize the multiple truths across race and gender to uncover counternarratives and narratives of whiteness in the workplace to challenge interpersonal and systemic oppression in the academy. As a critical-constructivist white women researcher, I aimed to amplify the counternarratives and individual voices of Black women faculty and encourage narratives of racial reflexivity alongside white women and white genderqueer faculty. Throughout the research, I employed three critical theoretical frameworks to inform the study's research design, implementation, results, and implications. The first theoretical framework, Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990), is a critical analytical sensibility to examine and critique multifaceted, overlapping, and complex forms of oppression at the individual micro-level and at the macro-level towards transformational social justice (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Harris & Patton, 2019). Secondly, I rely on Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) as a lens to name and challenge the normativity of whiteness and white domination discourses toward understanding the harmful impacts of white supremacy on communities of Color in the academy (Matias, 2022; Matias & Boucher, 2021). Thirdly, I depend on the Critical Human Resource Development (CHRD) Theory as a critical lens to unveil systemic

oppression in the workplace to promote pathways to advance justice at the individual and organizational levels (Bierema & Callahan, 2014; Bohonos, 2019; Fenwick, 2004, 2005).

Altogether, I implemented the three critical theoretical frameworks to explore: (1) the experiences of Black women and white faculty members at the crisscrossing of race and gender, (2) the occurrences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace, and (3) the layered aspect of HWCUs organizational workplace environments. In alignment with the three theoretical frameworks, I relied on narrative inquiry methodology (Clandinin, 2006, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Kim, 2015), using three data collection methods: narrative interviews (Chadwick, 2017), the critical incident technique (Butterfield et al., 2005) and timeline drawings (Leitch, 2006).

Researcher Transparency

As a white cisgender woman who is a critical-constructivist researcher, I have deeply reflected and interrogated my engagement in the research alongside Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty participants. I realize that a white woman conducting research with Black women is situated in a problematic and oppressive past, as white women researchers, both in the past and in the present, have generalized, victimized, and dehumanized the experiences of Black women in research (Alexander-Floyd, 2012; Bilge, 2013, 2014; Carby, 1982; Edwards, 1990; hooks, 1992; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Tomlinson, 2019; Turner & González, 2011). While I cannot claim to know or understand the experiences of Black women fully, I believe it is important to leverage my racial privileges to discuss how white women, including myself, contribute to, and are complicit in racially hostile workplace atmospheres for

Black women. To be transparent, I initially planned to conduct research with white women to address the racialized dynamics that I have witnessed and also have questioned my complacency within higher education workplaces that impact Black women colleagues. In further reflection and discussions about the research design, I came to the realization that solely centering white women's reflections on racialized workplace dynamics would be flawed, as this research approach would overlook the perspectives of those who experience racialized harm in the academic workplace, particularly Black women.

Through further engagement in the existing literature, I understood that exposing the issues resulting from incidents of whiteness and racism in the workplace had to adopt a multifold approach in the research. First, white women and white genderqueer educators, and other racially privileged identities, must take full responsibility and accountability for learning about and taking action to counteract racism and white supremacy in systems of education and in the wider society (Accapadi, 2007; Cabrera, 2022; Cabrera, et al., 2017; Earick, 2018; Frankenberg, 1993; Patton & Haynes, 2020; schneider, 2022). By engaging in racial reflexivity on whiteness in the workplace, white women and white genderqueer individuals can seek to interrogate how our (in)actions cause racialized harm in the academic workplace and then seek to counteract our daily racialized tendencies. Furthermore, it is impossible to disrupt racism and sexism without also centering the perspectives of those who experience the multidimensionality of oppression, particularly Black women (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Collins, 1986, 1996, 2002; Collins & Bilge, 2020; Patton & Haynes, 2018). Since the white women and white genderqueer faculty members and I in this study are profoundly ingrained in and benefit

from systems of white supremacy, we cannot fully acknowledge how our complacency in whiteness impacts Black women and others in the academy (Collins, 2002). Therefore, the counternarratives provided by Black women in this study are essential to examine the racialized impacts and consequences of whiteness through a more comprehensive and critical lens in higher education. To put it another way, to challenge whiteness in higher education, it is imperative to examine white individuals' involvement in racism (i.e., the *cause*) and to critically discuss the racialized harm imposed on racially minoritized communities (i.e., the *effect)* (Cabrera, 2022).

In considering my positionality, which I later describe in detail in Chapter Three, I believe it is crucial for white individuals, such as myself, to listen and learn from the counternarratives of Black women as a vital component to enacting social justice, action, and antiracism within and outside the academy. As a white woman researcher, I do not wish to speak on behalf of Black women, nor do I intend to tokenize Black women. Instead, I intend to amplify Black women's voices, perspectives, and experiences. To do so, I consciously centered Black women throughout the research by deeply reading and engaging in Black women's scholarship, in alignment with the *Cite Black Women Movement* (Smith et al., 2021). Further, I aim to continuously acknowledge Black women's ideas, intellect, and contributions to the field by citing Black women's work in this research and throughout my career. Admittedly, I did not arrive at understanding whiteness on my own, rather, the scholarship, activism, and labor of Black women and women of Color have prompted my reflexivity and growth. I am deeply grateful to Drs. Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989, 1990); Janet Helms (1990, 1995); Chayla Haynes Davison (2017); bell hooks (1982/2015, 1989, 1992, 1994); Gloria Ladson-Billings (1998, 2014);

Cheryl Matias (2022); Lori D. Patton (2016); Beverly Tatum (2017, 2019); Raquel Wright-Mair (2017, 2020); and Irene Yoon (2012, 2022) who have meaningfully and courageously published scholarship that has challenged me to be introspective of white womanhood and my roles in antiracism in education. It is also important to acknowledge that as a white woman who immensely benefits from the normativity of whiteness, those within the academy may value my research more so than the critical work put forth by Black women and other racially minoritized scholars in the academy.

Further, I do not wish to situate myself as 'better than' other white individuals. I acknowledge that I continue to make numerous mistakes in engaging in racial and social justice work and have been extended grace and afforded opportunities to grow by my professors, colleagues, and peers in the academy. I believe the narratives from white women and genderqueer faculty in this research can open avenues for other white individuals to continue to engage in critical racial reflexivity and action to disrupt whiteness in higher education. For instance, white women scholars who have been transparent about racism and their white womanhood (i.e., Earick, 2018; Frankenberg, 1993; Galman et al., 2010) have contributed to my understanding of my identities, roles, and action steps to advance racial justice in systems of higher education. In recognizing the power dynamics between Black women and white women and my positionality as a researcher, I reflected on a few central tensions throughout the research. Some of the research dilemmas include: ways to resist contributing to Black and white racial dichotomies, how to challenge fixed notions of race and gender, and approaches to decenter whiteness while also seeking to name and understand whiteness. I considered each of these dynamics throughout the research process, including the literature review,

research design, analysis, results, and recommendations. Overall, it was critically important to capture the counternarratives of Black women and the narratives of white women and white genderqueer academics in this research to explore the nuances of critical incidents of whiteness to challenge interpersonal and institutional power in the academy.

Background of the Problem

In the 2020-2021 academic year, Black women comprised less than 4% of full-time faculty, whereas white women represented 35% of the 1.5 million faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES] (2022). The national data also includes specific academic rankings to encompass: Full Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, Instructors, and Lecturers in full-time teaching positions. Regarding tenure-track positions, the statistics indicate that Black women are systematically excluded and are not represented in Full professor, Associate, or Assistant Professor positions. The comparisons by ranking indicate that Black women hold: 2% of Full Professor positions, 2% of Associate Professor positions, and 3% of Assistant Professor positions, whereas white women hold: 28% of Full Professor positions, 35% of Associate Professor positions, and 38% of Assistant Professor positions (NCES, 2022). The national statistics of faculty by race, gender, and ranking indicate and quantify the severe systemic exclusion of Black women faculty in the academy, which is grounded in several historical, multifaceted, structural, and interpersonal positions of power and oppression at all levels of education (Ferguson et al., 2021).

Relative to their white women counterparts, Black women in academia experience

unique challenges due to their multiply minoritized identities and the effects of interpersonal and institutionalized racism, sexism, and other systems of oppression, specifically at HWCUs (Ferguson et al., 2021; Fries-Britt & Kelly, 2005; Grant & Ghee, 2015; Griffin, 2019; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; hooks, 1994; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Settles et al., 2019; Stanley, 2009; Turner, 2002; Turner & González, 2011). In the racialized and gendered environments of higher education, Black women faculty experience a severe lack of representation in the professoriate (Griffin, 2019; Nzinga, 2020) which systemically contributes to experiences of isolation (Fries-Britt, & Kelly, 2005); tokenism and cultural taxation (Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Settles et al., 2019); microaggressions and microinvalidations (Carroll, 2017; Luna et al., 2010; Pittman, 2012), and hostility and bullying (Hollis, 2018, 2021)—all of which impact the daily livelihoods, educational pursuits, and career progressions of Black women faculty and leaders in the academy (Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020; Ferguson et al., 2021; Fries-Britt et al., 2011; Fries-Britt & Kelly, 2005; hooks, 1994; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Lanier et al., 2022; Stanley, 2009).

Intersectionality

Through an Intersectional lens (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990), it can be critically recognized that compounding systems of power and oppression impact the experiences of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty in very distinct, complex, and nuanced ways. Intersectionality examines how multiple systems of inequity operate and are reinforced for multiply-minoritized identities, especially for Black women and women of Color (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Harris & Patton, 2019). Prior to Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989, 1990) formally introducing Intersectionality in

academic scholarship, Black feminist thinkers, activists, and scholars including Bambara

(1970), Collins (1986, 1996, 2002), Combahee River Collective (1977/1982), Cooper

(1988), Davis (1981), hooks (1982/2015, 1989, 1994), (Lorde, 1981, 1984), and Walker

(1992) have distinctly intellectualized the multidimensionality of oppression and

advocated for Black women and women of Color who experience interconnected forms

of systemic and interpersonal violence and discrimination (Collin & Bilge, 2020). To put

it differently, Black women and women of Color have historically championed a

multidimensional approach to racial and social justice, prior to the theory being formally

named 'Intersectionality in academia (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Harris & Patton, 2019).

Today, many scholars and activists rely on Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989,

1990) as a critical lens to critique how systems of oppression operate in complex and

interconnected ways rather than in additive ways, specifically for individuals at the

Intersections (Collin & Bilge, 2020; Harris & Patton, 2019). Specifically,

Intersectionality examines multifaceted systems of oppression at the micro-level (i.e., the

crisscrossing of identities across race, gender, and class) and the impact of the collisions

of systemic oppressions at the macro-level (i.e., simultaneous systemic effects of racism,

sexism, and classism) (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990). In academic scholarship, Intersectionality

is often employed to center the counternarratives of racially minoritized individuals who

simultaneously experience a multitude of other forms of systemic oppression (Berry &

Cook, 2018; Chadwick, 2017; Collins & Bilge, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Harris &

Patton, 2019).

While some scholars argue that Intersectionality should be used explicitly by and

for Black women (Alexander-Floyd, 2012), others assert that Intersectionality is a

powerful tool for examining the multilayered effects of power and privilege across identities and socio-political positionings (Carbado, 2013; Harris & Patton, 2019). In higher education, critical scholars often use Intersectionality in the latter form to explore the impact of co-existing systems of oppression for faculty who hold multiple identities across nationality and immigration status (Delgado & Sun, 2022; Ghosh & Barber, 2021; Hernandez et al., 2015), gender (Beeman, 2021; Griffin & Reddick, 2011); sexual orientation (Nadal, 2019; Scharrón-Del Río, 2018; Wright-Mair & Marine, 2021); dis/ability (Ramirez, 2020), first-generation status (Vue, 2021), and socioeconomic status (Gray & Chapple, 2017). In the same manner, I rely on Intersectionality in this research to explore how Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty are differently situated socially, politically, and economically, given their respective identities at the convergence of race and gender, at the personal and organizational levels.

To illustrate, Intersectional scholars have argued that national policies geared toward counteracting inequity in education and employment, such as Title IX and Affirmative Action, have been most beneficial for cisgender white women, meanwhile excluding Black women and women of Color (Crenshaw, 2006; Harris & Linder, 2017; Harris et al., 2020; Simmons, 2021; Wise, 1998). For instance, in the current federally mandated implementation of Title IX, sexual assault is addressed through a singular-axes approach (i.e., gender) while disregarding other forms of oppression (i.e., disparities across racial and sexual identities) that coincide with sexual assault (Simmons, 2021). In practice, a singular approach to a multidimensional systemic and violent issue leads to the erasure of Black women and women of Color's within the policy and compliance processes of Title IX (Harris & Linder, 2017; Simmons, 2021).

Similarly, national and state labor data indicate that white women have been the largest beneficiaries of Affirmative Action, a national policy initially centered on anti-discrimination in terms of race, creed, color, or national origin, which later included anti-discrimination based on sex (Crenshaw, 2006; Wise, 1998). Counter to the narrative that only racially minoritized groups qualify under Affirmative Action, white women have directly and disproportionately benefited from the policies, practices, and educational outcomes (Crenshaw, 2006; Wise, 1998). An examination of national policies through an Intersectional lens demonstrates that white women are often more centered and respected due to our proximity to whiteness in terms of our political and social positions. As such, white women's concerns are more likely to be considered and implemented into law and institutional praxes, directly prioritizing, and privileging white women in terms of both education and employment (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990, 2006; Harris & Linder, 2017; Harris et al., 2020; hooks, 1989, 1994; Sandoval, 2000; Simmons, 2021; Wise, 1998).

By relying on the critical tool of Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990), it is clear that Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty have distinct and separate experiences within historical and current systems of white supremacy and patriarchy in society and education. As such, Intersectional scholars acknowledge that Black women faculty experience the double-compounding and simultaneous effects of racism and sexism at the systemic and interpersonal levels (Carroll, 2017; Griffin, 2019; Nzinga, 2020; Patton & Haynes, 2018; Pittman, 2010; Porter et al., 2022; Stanley, 2009). On the other hand, while white women faculty experience the ill effects of sexism (Kelly et al., 2018), and genderqueer faculty experience heterosexism (Dirks, 2016; Dozier, 2015), white individuals simultaneously benefit from white domination in education and

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society, directly impacting and advancing our educational aspirations and career

trajectories (Accapadi, 2007; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990, 2006; hooks 1994; Sandoval, 2000;

Sholock, 2012; Simmons, 2021; Wise, 1998).

The foregrounding work and labor of Black feminists and Intersectional scholars

provides a critical analytical lens to recognize and validate the diametrical socio-political

positionings of Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty in the academy.

Thus, it can be acknowledged that Black women and white faculty cross-racial workplace

environments and collaborations are complex, as their multiple identities are tied to larger

historical and current socio-political structures in society and education (Beeman, 2021;

Bell et al., 2003; Bell et al., 2021; Blackshear & Hollis, 2021; Breines, 2006; Caraway,

1991; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990, 2006; Dace, 2012; Davis & Linder, 2017; Erskine &

Bilimoria, 2019; Frankenberg, 1993; hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994; Sandoval, 2000;

Smith & Nkomo, 2003; Wise, 1998). Through the utilization of an Intersectional lens in

this research, my objective is to highlight the multiplicity of truths that exist among

Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty with the intention of

uncovering critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. By doing so, I aim to

critically examine the interconnected systems of racism and sexism in academia.

Critical Incidents of Whiteness

In this study, I define critical incidents of whiteness as problematic racialized

events, as narrated by six tenure-track Black and white faculty participants employed at

HWCUs. The conceptualization of critical incidents of whiteness derives from the critical

incident technique (CIT) method. The CIT is a qualitative research method that aims to

cultivate employees' agency to be critically reflexive to share significant events within a

workplace organization (Butterfield et al., 2005; Flanagan, 1954). Within the CIT, participants are asked to discuss events that positively or negatively impacted them in the workplace by describing the key informants involved, their decision-making processes, behaviors, roles, and responsibilities throughout the incident (Butterfield et al., 2005; Flanagan, 1954). As later detailed in Chapter Three, I relied upon the CIT as a method, in conjunction with narrative interviews and timeline drawings, to capture the counternarratives of tenure-track Black women and the narratives of white faculty in the academy. In this study, three tenure-track Black women faculty were asked to reflect on critical incidents of whiteness they experienced with white women colleagues, including other faculty members, deans, or administrators. Similarly, two white women and a white genderqueer faculty member were asked to be reflexive of their roles in critical incidents of whiteness that impacted a Black women colleague, including other faculty members, deans, or administrators. By shedding light on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace, I seek to amplify the experiences of Black women faculty and encourage racial reflexivity with white women and genderqueer faculty. It is important to recognize that racial hostility in the workplace is not an isolated incident, rather the perpetuation of whiteness and patriarchy continues to be a commonplace experience, often daily, for Black women leaders and faculty in higher education (Bell et al., 2021; Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020; Ferguson et al., 2021; Hollis, 2021; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Pittman, 2012; Porter, et al., 2022; Stanley, 2009; Turner, 2002; Turner & González, 2011). Overall, in this critical-constructivist narrative inquiry, I offer new insights into the perpetuation of whiteness in the workplace. I accomplish this by exploring the perspectives of both racially minoritized identities, Black women, and racially privileged

identities, white women, and genderqueer faculty. Through this approach, I aim to identify and deconstruct central tensions within their cross-racial collaborations at HWCUs.

Statement of the Problem

Black women have consistently issued multiple calls to action for white women academics— who benefit and contribute to racialized hierarchies and oppression— to acknowledge, understand, interrogate, and dismantle white domination in society and education through an intersectional lens (Bell et al., 2021; Carby, 1982; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Erskine, & Bilimoria, 2019; hooks 1989, 1994; Patton & Haynes, 2020). Despite the critical calls to enact antiracism, white women often tend to fail in this work, as scholarship documents that white individuals often ignore complacency in whiteness and tend to rely on racial advantages to impede or eliminate important racial and intersectional justice work in the academy (Accapadi, 2007; alexander, 2022; Bilge, 2013, 2014; Bhattacharya et al., 2019; Dace, 2012; Daniel, 2019; Earick, 2018). Undeniably, the institutional environments and cross-racial collaborations of Black women and white individuals are multifaceted, as their livelihoods intertwine with power and privilege, predominantly within whiteness and patriarchy, which act as the default perspective in the academy (Bell et al., 2003; Dace, 2012; Davis & Linder, 2017; Hoerl, 2021).

In this research, I employed a critical-constructivist narrative inquiry to explore critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace to illuminate the multiple truths and perspectives of tenure-track Black and white faculty members. To do so, I engaged in the research alongside three tenure-track Black women, two tenure-track white women, and

one white genderqueer individual who are employed at HWCUs. While this research certainly centered whiteness—the exact oppressive racialized system that needs to be interrogated and dismantled— scholarship on whiteness is vital to recognize how white privilege, dominance, and entitlement are created and maintained at the individual and systemic levels (Crenshaw et al., 2019). This research is important, as Black women's experiences are too often negatively impacted by their daily interactions with white women in the academy (Accapadi, 2007; alexander, 2022; Bhattacharya et al., 2019; Dace, 2012; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012). Further, by incorporating narratives of the racial reflexivity of white faculty in the study, other white individuals can be encouraged to understand, engage, and promote antiracism in the workplace. In practice, this research provides momentum forward to inform white faculty and administrators in higher education on how to improve the racial and gender workplace climate for Black women faculty. To be more specific, Intersectional work positions institutional leaders and faculty members to recognize, examine, and challenge hegemonic policies and practices that have historically excluded Black women at the intersections of race and gender. Further, the narratives from this research can assist and encourage white leaders and faculty to be reflexive of their contributions to critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace that impact Black women colleagues.

Definition of Terms

I define the following terms which are grounded in the literature to explain the prominent terms used throughout the research.

Critical incidents of whiteness: I define a critical incident of whiteness in this study as a problematic racialized event within HWCU workplace environments, as

identified by the tenure-track Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty.

Gender: As informed by feminist theorists (Carby, 1982; Collins & Bilge, 2020; hooks, 1989, Sandoval, 2000), gender describes a socially constructed identity informed by social and cultural cues, which is not contingent on biology. I use the term women to encompass all expressions and identification of gender. The study included three Black women participants, two white women participants, and a white genderqueer faculty member. Genderqueer refers to a person whose gender identity is outside the gender binary and who identifies with neither, both, or a blend of the social constructions of the binaries of men and women.

Historically white colleges and universities (HWCUs): As defined by Bonilla-Silva & Peoples (2022), HWCUs are higher education institutions historically shaped by white racial power, which embodies and contributes to white supremacy and whiteness. The key elements of HWCUs include the normalization of whiteness in the values, traditions, symbols, statues, climate, and curriculum (Bonilla-Silva & Peoples, 2022). In the United States, most higher education institutions are classified as HWCUs (Bonilla-Silva & Peoples, 2022). While issues of whiteness and patriarchy also exist at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (Blackshear & Hollis, 2021), the focus of this research is HWCU workplace environments.

Microaggressions, Microinsults, Microinvalidations: As defined by Sue et al., (2007), racial microaggressions are subtle, everyday derogatory acts of discrimination or marginalization, whether intentional or unintentional, directed towards racially and ethnically minoritized groups. There are two forms of microaggressions: *microinsults*

(i.e., behavioral/verbal comments that demean an individual's racial identity or culture or target a person's intelligence, competency, or capabilities) and *microinvalidations* (i.e., behavioral/verbal comments that deny, exclude, or negate a minoritized individual's thoughts, feeling, or realities, especially surrounding race, and other forms of oppression) (Sue et al., 2007).

Misogynoir: As coined and defined by Bailey & Trudy (2018), misogynoir describes the specific ways that anti-Blackness converges with misogyny for Black women.

Race: As defined by Black feminists and Critical Race Theory scholars, race describes a socially constructed identity and reality based on historical, social, political, economic, and cultural forces based on perceived physical traits that have maintained a system of classification in U.S. society, which benefits white individuals and systemically oppresses all other racial communities, such as those who are Asian, Pacific Islander, Indigenous, Black, and Latinx (Bell, 1992; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Crenshaw 1989,1990; Crenshaw et al., 1995; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2014; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Patton, 2016).

Tenure-track: The tenure-track describes a professor's pathway to tenure and promotion from an assistant professor to a tenured associate professor (Matthew, 2016).

Whiteness: As first defined and conceptualized by Black scholars, including James Baldwin (1984/1998), W.E.B. Du Bois (1903/1998), Toni Morrison (1994), Ida Wells (1970), and more contemporary scholars such as Cabrera (2022), Frankenberg (1993), Leonardo (2008, 2009, 2013), Matias (2022), Matias & Boucher (2021), and

Whitehead, (2021), whiteness is the social construction of white identity, white culture, and the systems of privilege and advantages afforded to white individuals, which systemically and individually harm and exclude racially minoritized identities.

White supremacy: As defined by Critical Race Theory scholars (Bell, 1992; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2014; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Patton, 2016), white supremacy is a complex system that procreates racial hierarchies that place white people, white culture, and whiteness as superior to Asian, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Pacific Islander people and cultures.

Scholarly Contributions and Purpose of the Study

This study examined the perspectives of tenure-track Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty to uncover the realities of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. While there is existing literature that documents Black women faculty's racialized experiences with white women (i.e., alexander, 2022; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012), and some literature on white faculty and whiteness in the workplace (i.e., Earick, 2018; Murray & Brooks-Immel, 2019), there is limited literature that explores Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty reflections on their racialized dynamics at work. From the existing literature, Bell et al. (2003), a collaborative group of Black and white women researchers, reflected on the racialized and gendered tensions that existed in their researcher relationships and analytical interpretations of their research. In addition, while Davis & Linder (2017) discuss the complexities of women's cross-racial relationships in the academy, their focus was on race and research, and not specifically on Black women and white women faculty's workplace dynamics.

Thus, this study will: (1) contribute to the growing literature on the counternarratives of Black women faculty, (2) extend literature to explore critical incidents of whiteness in the academic workplace, and (3) provide new insights into the workplace dynamics of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty in the academy. As such, my research aims to name and disrupt white supremacy and patriarchy in the academy by exposing critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. The overarching purpose of the research is to amplify tenure-track Black women faculty's counternarratives of critical incidents of whiteness, and to encourage racial reflexivity among white women and genderqueer faculty. The following research questions guide the study:

Research Questions

The central research question that guides the study is: What are tenure-track Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the academic workplace at HWCUs? The following sub-questions support this central question:

1. How do Black women faculty characterize and navigate critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace at the intersections of race and gender?

2. What are Black women faculty's experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace that involve white women colleagues?

3. How do white women and genderqueer faculty reflect, describe, and critique their complacency in whiteness in the workplace?

4. How do white women and genderqueer faculty engage in racial reflexivity to recognize the impact of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace on Black women?

Overview of the Chapters

In Chapter Two, I provide an extensive literature review to outline three areas related to Black and white women in the academy: (1) the historical and current systems of oppression related to Black women and white women's advocacy efforts, (2) the racialized, gendered, and neoliberal organizational contexts of the professoriate, and (3) whiteness in the academic workplace. Following the literature review, I outline the conceptual framework, which includes three critical theoretical frameworks, Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD, that guide the research design and analysis. In Chapter Three, I explain the usefulness of critical-constructivist narrative inquiry, my researcher positionality, and describe all aspects of the research design. I also outline how I ensure research rigor through trustworthiness, authenticity, and confidentiality. In Chapter Four, I present a (re)construction of the personal counternarratives of the Black women and the narratives of white women and genderqueer faculty participants to (re)tell their stories. In Chapter Five, I outline the construction of eight themes from the research. Finally, in Chapter Six, I discuss the findings and offer implications for white institutional leaders and faculty members to consider in promoting antiracist, Intersectional workplace organizations and interpersonal cross-racial collaborations. In Chapter Six, I conclude by detailing the limitations of the study, offering perspectives for future research, and detailing my final reflections as the researcher of this study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, I provide a comprehensive literature review to conceptualize the complexity of tenure-track Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty's cross-racial collaborations at the historical, organizational, interpersonal, and individual levels. The literature review is organized into three sections: (1) Black women and white women have history, (2) the professoriate in Black and white, and (3) whiteness in the workplace. In the first section, I provide a historical context of the legacies of white supremacy and patriarchy in the academy and the conflicts between Black women and white feminisms. In the second section, I review the literature on the organizational level to explore how the academy, as it functions today, preserves the compounding effects of racism and patriarchy that shape the workloads and expectations of tenure-track Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty. I also conceptualize how neoliberal paradigms contribute to multifaceted inequities, despite diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) organizational efforts. In the third section, I review literature on whiteness in the workplace to describe how Black women faculty persist within and against systems of whiteness and how white women and genderqueer faculty contribute to and counter whiteness. I also describe the limited literature that is available on cross-racial collaborations of Black women and white women faculty. In the final part of the chapter, I outline the conceptual framework of this research, which includes three critical theoretical lenses - Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD.

Black Women and White Women Have History

Within the United States, higher education systems have played a significant and active role in sustaining and (re)producing white supremacy through laws, ideologies, and systems to maintain white dominance (Cabrera, 2020; Patton, 2016; Wilder, 2013). White supremacy is a complex system used to constitute racial hierarchies by placing white people, white culture, and whiteness as racially dominant while simultaneously oppressing racially and ethnically minoritized groups, such as Asian, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Pacific Islander people, cultures, and communities (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2014; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Patton, 2016). The historical political ties of white supremacy in higher education are often whitewashed to systematically exclude the reality of the violent impact on Black and Indigenous Peoples. Wilder's (2013) paramount historical research and archival investigations unveiled and documented how white leaders at the nation's first colleges were not mere bystanders to racialized assimilation, violence, and oppression. Instead, the leaders and institutions they operated benefited from, and aided in, the dehumanization, exploitation, and extermination of Black and Indigenous Peoples (Wilder, 2013). The first colonial colleges, namely Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Codrington, and the College of New Jersey (*now known as Princeton*), were built and funded by legacies of the trans-Atlantic African slave trade, Indigenous land theft, and Christian imperialism. As Wilder (2013) states, "the academy never stood apart from American slavery—in fact, it stood beside church and state as the third pillar of a civilization built on bondage" (p. 12).

The historical racialized violence and oppression perpetuated by early leaders of systems of higher education included: the colonization of Indigenous lands and the

removal and extermination of Indigenous Peoples (Akee, 2021), the promotion of

racialized pseudoscience to justify colonialism, slavery, and white superiority (Patton,

2016), and the sanctioned exploitation of enslaved peoples to build campus buildings and

serve wealthy white faculty and students (Wilder, 2013). Regarding anti-Black violence,

white university leaders brutally beat enslaved people who refused to comply with white

students' demands, sold enslaved people for profit, and killed those who resisted

racialized oppression on campus (Wilder, 2013). Wilder's (2013) historical truth-telling

reveals that early leaders of institutions of higher education used slavery and colonization

for financial gain, contributing to the horrific oppression of enslaved Africans and

Indigenous populations. Today, several early colonists are celebrated at colleges and

universities, whose buildings and statues bear their names and colonial legacies (Patton,

2016; Stein, 2016). In the past ten years, higher education leaders have begun to

recognize the historical and current impacts of white supremacy on their campuses (Stein,

2016). However, the underlying roots of systemic racialized oppression have not been

abolished, rather, white supremacy and whiteness have been modified and maintained

(Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Gusa, 2010; Mustaffa, 2017; Patton, 2016; Stein, 2016, 2019). As

Gusa (2010) explains, white individuals do not have to be explicitly racist to (re)construct

racially hostile environments within higher education institutions. Rather, the ideologies

of whiteness are embedded and embodied into the everyday functions of the academy

that often go unexamined—creating a white social norm in which racially minoritized

groups are deemed inferior (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Gusa, 2010; Patton, 2016; Ray, 2019).

Ultimately, white supremacy is so deeply integrated in the everyday functions of

most colleges and universities (Patton, 2016), that many systems of higher education

remain predominantly white (Bonilla-Silva & Peoples, 2022), are built on the stolen lands of Indigenous Peoples and the backs of Black enslaved peoples (Wilder, 2013), and uphold historical and current structures of white supremacy at multiple levels (Cabrera 2020; Mustaffa, 2017; Patton, 2016; Ray, 2019). Historical and current systems of oppression have led to complex tensions among Black women and white women, as their advocacy efforts to challenge systems of power have been historically conflicting and separate. Below, I highlight literature on Black and white feminism. Then, I outline white feminists' epistemological standpoints, which have historically and currently excluded and diminished the experiences of Black women and women of Color. Finally, I discuss the current (mis)employment of Intersectionality, sometimes by white women academics, which further contributes to the erasure of Black women within the academic realm.

Black and White Feminisms

Historically, Black women and white women have experienced distinct and separate access to social, economic, educational, and political autonomy and rights based on systems of oppression at the intersections of both racism and sexism (Breines, 2006; Caraway, 1991; Carby, 1982; Collins, 1996, 1996, 2002; Collins & Bilge, 2020; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994). The social positions and disconnected advocacy efforts of Black women and white women are especially significant within prominent civil and social movements, as the disparate antiracist and white feminist movements clarified that gender does not ensure interracial solidarity among Black women and white women (Breines, 2006; Caraway, 1991; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; hooks, 1994). At the time, Black women were actively leading and organizing within Black Power Movements (i.e., Civil Rights

movements, Black Nationalism, and the Black Panthers) to counteract racial oppression

and uplift Black empowerment and liberation (Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982).

Within the Black movements, Black women aspired to achieve mutual solidarity with

Black men. However, Black women were met with a sexist, patriarchal culture from

Black men, who often expected Black women to adhere to traditional gender roles and

subordination to compensate for the racist maltreatment that they, as Black men, endured

in America (hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994). As such, while the Black Power Movements

were aimed at racial justice, Black women were left hurt, disappointed, and traumatized

by the oppressive patriarchy within the movements (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Combahee

River Collective, 1977/1982, Collins, 1986, 1996, 2002; Davis, 1981; hooks, 1982/2015;

Lorde, 1981, 1984). Meanwhile, Black women also experienced abuse and exclusion

from white women's feminist movements who sought to maintain racism to sustain and

preserve dominance over Black women within the white supremacist patriarchy (hooks,

1989, 1994).

During this time, white women placed their efforts on the anti–Vietnam War

movement and began to form feminist groups that focused on cis-gender politics,

including issues surrounding abortion, sexuality, domestic household duties, and

dominance by men (Breines, 2006; Caraway, 1991; hooks, 1994). Since white women's

efforts solely focused on gender, they prioritized their personal experiences of sexism

over issues surrounding racism and classism at the expense of Black and women of

Color. As such, white women's feminism took a one-dimensional stance, forming a

racially oppressive, for-white-women-only ideology and political movement (Carby,

1982; Collins, 1986, 1996, 2002; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Crenshaw,

1989, 1990; Davis, 1981; Frankenberg, 1993; hooks, 1989, 1994). While there were some white women, such as members of the Bread and Roses, who aimed to foster antiracist politics toward interracial solidarity with Black women, they neglected to center and include the voices and perspectives of Black women and women of Color (Breines, 2006). Specifically, white women both in the past and in the present, failed to recognize, subvert, and dismantle their racialized and classist positions and contributions to interpersonal, institutional, and systemic forms of oppression (Breines, 2006; Bhattacharya et al., 2019; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Dace, 2012; Frankenberg, 1993; hooks, 1989, 1994).

Amid a Black movement that was sexist and a women's movement that was racist, Black women were left rejected and excluded from both the Black movements and white feminist movements (Breines, 2006; Collins, 1986, 1996, 2002; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994). In critical opposition, Black feminists socially and politically advocated for an antiracist, antisexist, anticolonial, anticapitalist, and anti-homophobic movement to promote a comprehensive, multidimensional, socially just agenda—now known as Black Feminism and Intersectionality (Bambara, 1970; Carby, 1982; Collins, 1986, 1996, 2022; Collins & Bilge, 2020; Cooper, 1988; Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Davis, 1981; Harris & Patton, 2019; hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994; Lorde, 1981, 1984; Walker, 1992).

White Feminist Epistemologies

Both then and now, Black feminist and intersectional scholars have emphasized that white feminist practices, theory, and research, which foreground gender inequities

without addressing racism, aid in the oppression of Black women and women of Color (Combahee River Collective, 1982/1982; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; hooks, 1982/2015, 1989, 1994; Moon & Holling, 2020). Despite the longstanding criticisms by Black women, the epistemological perspectives of white feminism, which are frequently promoted as an ideology and political movement aimed at liberating all women, continue to persist (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Moon & Holling, 2020; Tomlinson, 2019). To illustrate, previous academic research that sought to explore women's faculty experiences in the academy has primarily focused on gender, meanwhile excluding issues of race altogether or placing race on the back burner, contributing to the exclusion of the experiences of Black women and women of Color (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Turner & González, 2011).

Many qualitative scholars who conducted research with women faculty primarily interviewed white women faculty, and if Black women and women of Color were included, their racial and ethnic identities were either merely mentioned or were not distinguished in relation to their experiences (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Turner & González, 2011). Accordingly, white feminist praxes paints a picture of the patriarchy only as it relates to white women, which continues to reject the realities of mutually reinforcing oppressions across race and gender for Black women and women of Color (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; hooks, 1982/ 2015; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Turner & González, 2011). As hooks (1982/2015) states:

> The force that allows white feminist authors to make no reference to racial
> identity in their books about 'women' that are in actuality about white women is

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the same one that would compel any writer writing exclusively on Black women to refer explicitly to their racial identity. That force is racism. (p. 138).

White feminist positionalities continue to aid in the (re)production of whiteness, aiding in the erasure of Black women and women of Color at the structural, political, and representational levels of society and education (Bilge, 2013, 2014; Collins & Bilge, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Harris & Linder, 2017; Harris et al., 2020; Sholock, 2012; Simmons, 2021; Tomlinson, 2019; Wise, 1998). While white women have neglected to address racism in both the past and within many current forms of feminism, white scholars can engage in the art of failure to be critically reflexive towards engaging in better approaches in advocacy efforts. The art of failure is a reflexive practice to acknowledge that scholarship through the lens of gender is always partial, incomplete, and biased (Robbins, 2019). Therefore, by engaging in the art of failure, or and reflecting failures throughout the past, white women can acknowledge that past forms of feminist research and advocacy sought to empower white women, not Black women and women of Color. Then, white women scholars and educators have the opportunity to actively engage in reflexivity and take meaningful action to contribute to the creation of alliances and coalitions across antiracist and feminist movements (Sandoval, 2000).

To express it differently, while past and current forms of white women's movements have been racialized and problematic, white women can embrace the lessons learned from past failures to advance true progression, equity, and liberation for all (Sandoval, 2000). To actively oppose feminism that centers white women and move towards antisexist and antiracist praxes that critically consider the experiences of Black women and women of Color, scholars have encouraged the reliance on Intersectionality

as an analytical sensibility to examine policies, practices, and pedagogies toward racial and social equity and justice (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Harris & Patton, 2019; Patton & Haynes 2018). However, while the use of Intersectionality has been increasingly utilized in higher education research and practice, Intersectionality is often misused and exploited, which further contributes to the harm and erasure of Black women (Harris & Patton, 2019).

The Embezzlement of Intersectionality

In many current applications, Intersectionality is frequently employed in a manner that oversimplifies and decontextualizes the movement, diluting its political significance and erasing its racial dimensions (Bilge, 2013, 2014). This is prevalent especially in higher education literature, as the historical origins and early political positionings of Intersectionality by Black feminists and activists are often not acknowledged and recognized by scholars (Harris & Patton, 2019). In a critical analysis of higher education literature, Harris & Patton (2019) found that some scholars who mentioned Intersectionality in their scholarship often tended to misuse and misappropriate Intersectionality by simplifying the definition and application to merely describe the multiple identities of individuals, without tying in a connection to larger, interconnected socio-political structures of oppression. Moreover, in some research, scholars have solely cited white women in reference to Intersectionality, which devalues the historical work of Black women and women of Color and erases the foundations of Black feminism in opposition to the racism apparent in white feminism (Bilge, 2013, 2014; Harris & Patton, 2019; Tomlinson, 2019). The embezzlement of Intersectionality in higher education, often by white scholars, leads to the whitewashed and depoliticization of

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Intersectionality, which erases the critical work put forth by Black women and women of Color's historical and current contributions to scholarship and political activism (Alexander-Floyd, 2012; Bilge, 2013, 2014; Harris & Patton, 2019). This (mis)utilization of Intersectionality, particularly by white women in the academy, demonstrates ongoing situations where white women leverage whiteness to wrongfully claim ownership of the intellectual contributions of Black women, further contributing to their exploitation, and advancing the careers of white women (Alexander-Floyd, 2012; Bilge, 2013, 2014).

Given the historical contexts of white supremacy and sexism and the perpetuation of "isms" within historical and current social movements, it is evident that Black women and white women have a troubled and difficult history that shapes present-day experiences of resentment, pain, and hesitancy in their cross-racial collaborations in the academy (Dace, 2012; Davis & Linder, 2017; hooks, 1994). In consideration of compounding historical legacies of oppression, there are nuanced, complex, and individualized experiences among tenure-track Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty in the professoriate which shape their everyday experiences and interactions. To further delve into the distinct experiences of Black women and white faculty in the academy today, I next outline the racialized and gendered organizational practices that impact tenure-track Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty's unique positions and realities in the professoriate.

The Professoriate in Black and White

Much of the historical, political, and cultural hegemony of racial and gendered inequity in society is reflected and (re)produced in organizational practices, policies, and systems of informal and formal reward for workers (Acker, 2006, 2011; Ray, 2019). By

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exposing hidden assumptions of race and gender, among other oppressions, as sites of

control at the organizational level, it can be identified how compounding inequities are

embedded in the daily functions, activities, and the coordination of work for women,

LGBTQ+, and racially minoritized faculty (Davis et al., 2020; Guarino & Borden, 2017;

Kelly et al., 2018; Matthew, 2016)—doubly or triply compounding for faculty at the

intersections (Carter & Craig, 2022; Delgado & Sun, 2022; Ferguson et al., 2021; Ghosh

& Barber, 2021; Griffin & Reddick, 2011; Hernandez et al., 2015; Nadal, 2019; Porter et

al., 2022; Ramirez, 2020; Scharrón-Del Río, 2018; Vue, 2021; Wright-Mair & Marine,

2021). Below, I highlight literature on racialized and gendered organizations, then, I

examine racialized and gendered organizational practices in the three core areas of work

for faculty—teaching, service, and research. I further discuss present-day neoliberal DEI

organizational efforts that often further contribute to workplace environments that

preserve racial and gendered inequities.

Racialized and Gendered Organizations

At the organizational level, Acker (2006) utilizes an Intersectional viewpoint to

describe the concept of inequality regimes in the workplace. To be specific, inequality

regimes refer to the mutual (re)production of racialized, gendered, and class bonds within

organizational rules, assumptions, operations, and expectations of work and the actions

and interactions of workers (Acker, 2006, 2011). While the specific contexts of inequality

regimes vary across organizations, all institutions preserve Intersectional power dynamics

and systematic disparities across: power and control over outcomes, resources and

decisions, job security, opportunities for promotion and benefits, pay and monetary

rewards, and respect and satisfaction in both work and working relations (Acker, 2006,

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2011). Through an Intersectional perspective, Acker (2006, 2011) demonstrates that organizations are complex systems rooted in power relations that contribute to racial and gendered evaluations of performance, competence, and organizational dynamics at work.

Building upon Acker's (2006, 2011) inequality regimes, Ray (2019) theorized racialized organizations to expose how institutions maintain and operate as racial structures, which restrict agency for racially minoritized individuals and enhance agency for racially dominant individuals and groups. Ray (2019) identifies that organizations reinforce a racial hierarchy by sustaining inequitable access to resources, credentialing whiteness, and preserving racial decoupling of formal rules and organizational practices—all inhibiting agency for racially minoritized individuals. Some examples of organizational practices that perpetuate the racialized hierarchy include: hiring processes, supervisory practices, exploitation, and social closure (i.e., dominant groups maintaining their resources by excluding others)—all of which perpetuate organizational racial stratification (Ray, 2019). As racialized and gendered spaces, organizational ideologies, practices, policies, and languages can serve to (re)formulate inequities across race, gender, and class for those employed within the institution (Acker, 2006, 2011; Ray, 2019). In practice, the racialized and gendered organizational hierarchies often render white, Christian, heterosexual men as the most powerful while also privileging white, Christian, heterosexual women due to their proximity to whiteness (Acker 2006, 2011; hooks, 1994; Ray, 2019).

In higher education, organizational structures and academic departments reinforce racism, patriarchy, and heterosexism across inequitable divisions of labor and preferential organizational expectations in research, teaching, and service loads for faculty (Davis et

al., 2020; Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020; Ferguson et al., 2021; Ghosh & Barber, 2021; Joseph & Hirshfield, 2015; Kelly et al., 2018; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Matthew, 2016). Relying on CHRD theory, Davis et al., (2020) suggest that all aspects of faculty life, including aspects of evaluation, promotion, tenure, and mentorship, continue to replicate straight, white cis-men ideals, power, and prestige. In other words, faculty who hold minoritized identities across race, gender, and sexuality navigate organizational systems that often do not reflect their social and cultural identities and experiences, which often lead to varying experiences of exploitation and tokenization in the academy, contributing to continual social stratification (Davis et al., 2020; Ghosh & Barber, 2021; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Joseph & Hirshfield, 2015; Matthew, 2016; Padilla, 1994; Settles et al., 2019, Settles et al., 2021).

Traditionally, the work of tenured faculty encompasses three key core areas of evaluation: teaching, service, and research (Matthew, 2016). Each of the core areas is allocated and assessed based on organizational racialized and gendered judgments, assumptions, and expectations—all of which impact the success of racially minoritized faculty, in particular, to achieve tenure status and promotion (Davis et al., 2020; Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020; Ferguson et al., 2021; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Matthew, 2016; Stanley, 2006; Settles et al., 2019; Settles et al., 2021). To illustrate, Matthew (2016) explains that Faculty of Color often experience racialized assumptions that control the tenure process, including the rules made explicit and the rules made implicit. The written, explicit rules of the tenure game include institutional and departmental guidelines to achieving tenure such as policies across faculty contracts, orientations, and handbooks. Whereas the unwritten, implicit rules for Faculty of Color include the expectation to

diversify institutions, serve as mentors for racially minoritized students, and meet demanding labor-intensive workloads, rules that do not exist for white faculty counterparts (Matthew, 2016).

In particular, Faculty of Color have documented organizational practices of cultural taxation in the academy. Cultural taxation refers to the expectation of racially and ethnically minoritized individuals to be good stewards of the academy by exhibiting expertise in areas of multiculturalism, race, and ethnicity as institutionalized forms of labor (Padilla, 1994). To put it differently, racially and ethnically minoritized individuals, particularly Black women, are often overstretched and overburdened to fix systemic racial and ethnic inequities in education (Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Padilla, 1994; Stanley, 2006; Turner, 2002). In terms of service loads for faculty, such as mentoring, advising, and committees, work is disproportionately placed on women (Hanasono et al., 2019) and Faculty of Color (Matthew, 2016)—with doubly compounding effects for Black women and women of Color (Beeman, 2021; Ferguson et al., 2021; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Porter et al., 2022). The academy's continued reliance on and exploitation of minoritized faculty to carry out inordinate service workloads creates significant barriers for those faculty members to meet other institutionalized expectations surrounding research publications and grant writing (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Matthew, 2016; Stanley, 2006).

In terms of teaching, student teaching evaluations are a requirement of the tenure process to document a faculty member's teaching effectiveness; however, course evaluations have been found to be biased with regards to both race and gender, which is harmful to the career projections of those who are minoritized by race, ethnicity, and

gender (Chávez & Mitchell, 2020). For lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) faculty, in experiencing homophobic and transphobic professional practices, they often consider whether or not to identify themselves as openly queer and/or trans to their students and colleagues, as biases may be revealed in student evaluations, harming their career trajectories (Davis et al., 2020). Through an Intersectional lens, it is documented that racially minoritized LGBTQIA+ faculty report that white colleagues often embody whiteness by establishing control to critique their work as faculty members, regulating unimportant tasks, and doubting their abilities to progress in tenure and promotion (Wright-Mair & Marine, 2021).

Altogether, the racialized and gendered organizational practices across the key core areas of evaluation—teaching, service, and research— have detrimental consequences on minoritized faculty across race, gender, and sexual identities to achieving tenure and promotion (Chávez & Mitchell, 2020; Davis et al., 2020; Matthew, 2016). To better recognize the unique experiences of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty within racially and gendered organized institutions, I review additional critical literature that illuminates the racial and gendered heterogeneity of tenure-track faculty.

White Women and Genderqueer Faculty at Work

Under the guise of gendered organizations, tenure-track white women document a discrepancy between the gendered expectations of them as faculty members and the realities of their livelihoods as white women (Kelly et al., 2018). In a qualitative longitudinal research project situated within a larger research endeavor called *Women in the Academy,* Kelly et al. (2018) found that white women faculty experience a double

bind within gendered academic workplaces. On the one hand, white women faculty were expected to be valuable academics to prioritize research over teaching and service, but on the other hand, they were expected to be so-called good women to assume nurturing, caretaker roles in teaching, service, mentoring, and advising roles (Kelly et al., 2018). Often called *care work,* women faculty are often expected to take on labor which encompasses mentoring, role modeling, and building relationships (Guarino & Borden, 2017). While care work is both meaningful and intensive, qualitative, and feminized forms of service (i.e., focus on relations and mentorship) are not adequately documented in the same ways that quantifiable task-oriented labor (i.e., focus on competitively selected leadership positions and statuses) is valued and measured in the academy (Hanasono et al., 2019). In other words, women are often expected to take on stereotypical gender roles in terms of service, yet this labor is not always recognized and calculated in the ways that other forms of service are documented in tenure and re-contracting packets, rendering the service and labor inconspicuous (Hanasono et al., 2019; Gordon et al., 2022).

In recognition of intensive service labor requests, the pervasive advice often offered by those in the academy is to simply decline service requests; however, the opportunity to lessen service loads is grounded in racialized and gendered organizational inequities (Gordon et al., 2022). Based on in-depth interviews with 25 tenured professors, Gordon et al. (2022) highlighted invisible service labor is a convoluted balance of power, authority, and care in racialized and gendered organizations. While white women and men of Color were asked and often expected to take on invisible labor, they also were in privileged positions to opt-out of the labor. Meanwhile, racially minoritized women

faculty, such as Black women, are not afforded options to opt-out, as their agency to decline service requests is often not respected by other institutional actors in power (Gordon et al., 2022). Further, when white women and men of Color declined invisible labor, they shifted much of the relational labor, such as DEI work, on to women of Color (Gordon et al., 2022).

Further, Ghosh & Barber's (2021) research with immigrant women faculty across white, Asian, Black, and Latina racial identities emphasized that while white women immigrant faculty experienced institutionalized isolation due to their foreign-born statuses and gender (i.e., language barriers, exclusion from social gatherings, and discrimination from students), the white women jointly experienced privileges based on race. An increasing amount of studies have highlighted the challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ faculty in higher education due to the prevalence of heteronormativity and the erasure of their identities and experiences (Davis et al., 2020; Dirks, 2016; Dozier, 2015). In regard to teaching, hetero-cis-normative ideologies and discourses in terms of professionalism impact LGBTQIA+ faculty's agency to openly express their gender and sexual identities and experiences in their pedagogical approaches and research (Dirks, 2016; Dozier, 2015).

For white women faculty, while organizational leaders prioritize the high output of research and securing grant funding for tenure, the gender double-bind expectations in terms of service and teaching disrupted white women's research and grant writing productivity (Kelly et al., 2018). Further, in research collaborative groups, white women faculty report they were expected to do a large portion of writing and thinking, while the men co-authors made minimal edits but gained more recognition due to their seniority

and tenure status (Kelly et al., 2018). In contradiction to the academic motherly and gendered expectations at work, some white women also document discrimination based on pregnancy and child-rearing from men colleagues while on the tenure track (Kelly et al., 2018).

Black Women Faculty at Work

Tenure-track Black women faculty experience the doubly-compounding effects of racial and gendered organizational expectations and evaluations. In terms of both teaching and service, Black women faculty are hyper-extended to serve as diversity and equity experts for their institutional communities and academic departments, work that is often not recognized, compensated, or quantifiable for tenure and promotion (Ferguson et al., 2021; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Porter et al., 2022). In particular, Black women experience cultural taxation, as they are frequently asked to serve as racial experts, advocates, and role models for their institutions (Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Padilla, 1994). Racialized and gendered organizational practices of cultural taxation for Black women faculty include: (1) the expectation to serve on numerous diversity and equity committees, (2) being asked to be the departmental racial and/or ethnicity expert, and (3) having to take on mentoring and advising for large groups of student groups, which again are expectations that are not placed on white counterparts (Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Padilla, 1994; Stanley, 2006; Turner, 2002). To showcase how cultural taxation often plays out, Camille, a Black faculty woman member, in research conducted by Hirshfield and Joseph (2012), shared: "Um, wanting a Black face, or a face card of any kind. I mean, I've had people say to me things like, you know, 'Could you have dinner with this

job applicant? We need a woman; we need a Black woman.' That's from a particularly insensitive secretary" (p. 221).

Paradoxically, while Black women faculty are expected to be diversity experts, their competence is also often questioned as they navigate both the effects of gendered assumptions that women are not intelligent enough for faculty positions, in conjunction with the racialized assumptions that Faculty of Color are not deserving of their positions due to Affirmative Action (Luna et al., 2010; Turner, 2002). Often placed as tokens in the academy, Black women experience assumptions and misinterpretations of their scholarly, racial, and social identities and, therefore, experience difficulties gaining credibility within their predominantly white departments, consequently impacting tenure, and their mental and emotional health (Ghosh & Barber 2021; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Turner, 2002). In terms of teaching, Black women faculty report hostility from white students who interrogate and dismiss their teaching qualifications due to negative perceptions of their race and gender (Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020; Pittman, 2012). White student resistance to Black faculty's critical and antiracist pedagogical approaches manifests through silence, passive-aggressiveness, hostile stances, racialized motivations to intimidate and report Black women to deans or department chairs (Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020). The hostility that Black women faculty experience in their classrooms often leads them to develop strategies to navigate these hostile interactions for their survival and continuation in the profession towards tenure (Pittman, 2010), especially considering that institutions and other colleagues often do not protect Black women from racialized and gendered conditions and consequences (Carroll, 2017).

Haynes (2017) contends that the academy's continued reliance on student teaching evaluations is rooted in white supremacy to normalize, advantage, and privilege both white faculty and white students' interests and innocence as an embodiment of whiteness. To express it differently, Black women's positionalities often challenge white supremacy, and therefore, Black women often encounter push-back and push-out from white students and white colleagues (Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020; Ferguson et al., 2021). A Black woman Assistant Professor and immigrant from the Caribbean expressed that racialized, gendered, and ethnic stereotypes shape how her white colleagues interact and evaluate her work, as they often assume that she is not qualified or competent (Ghosh & Barber 2021).

In regard to research and publications, Black women faculty experience double standards, as the written rule is to publish in tier-one academic research journals, whereas the unwritten rules are that white faculty often view Black women's research agendas as less rigorous, especially when their research is grounded in racial and social justice (Harley, 2008, Matthew, 2016). In the racialized and gendered atmospheres of higher education, Black women's pedagogies, epistemologies, and scholarship are repeatedly undervalued and underfunded, creating significant barriers for Black women to achieve the institutionalized pressures to research, publish and secure grant funding (Harley, 2008). Further, since Black women are systematically excluded from faculty positions, Black women faculty experience less opportunities to engage in collaborative research with colleagues in their departments and fields, more so as compared to other women faculty counterparts (Turner, 2002).

Another area of inequity is mentorship between tenured senior positions and tenure-track junior professors, which are key relationships to navigating the academic terrain. Black women experience difficulties finding mentors who understand the realities of being a Black woman in the academy, especially at predominately white institutions, due to systemic and institutional oppression (Fries-Britt & Kelley, 2005; Holmes et al., 2007; León & Thomas, 2016). As such, Black women and their women of Color counterparts often do not have access to senior mentors who come from the same racial, ethnic, and gender identities—which can be highly beneficial to navigate the white and patriarchal institutional environments towards success on the tenure track (Holmes et al., 2007). While cross-racial faculty mentorship is both beneficial and encouraged by Black women (Grant & Ghee, 2015; Holmes et al., 2007), too often, senior white faculty members do not have enough cultural awareness, competency, or skills to provide adequate mentorship and support to Black women (León & Thomas, 2016). To counter the lack of mentorship in white institutions, Black women and women of Color often create spaces for empowering and authentic relationships with peers who are also racially minoritized faculty in the academy (Baldwin & Johnson, 2018; Fries-Britt & Kelly, 2005).

On the road to tenure, it is apparent that Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty experience different levels of institutional, departmental, and collegial networks and support (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Kelly et al., 2018) rooted in racialized and gendered organizational environments that distinctly shape judgments, assumptions, expectations, and outcomes of their academic work (Acker, 2006, 2011; Ray, 2019). While white women and white genderqueer faculty experience the side-

effects of gendered organizations, which can sometimes lead to departure or denial of tenure (Gardner, 2013), white women receive more adequate access, support, and resources, as compared to their Black women counterparts on the path to tenure and promotion (Ghosh & Barber 2021; Gordon et al., 2022; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017). In the academy, the compounding effects of racialized and gendered organizational operations can adversely impact Black women faculty, leading to their departure (Griffin et al., 2011), being denied tenure (Carter & Craig, 2022), or progressing to Associate Professor positions, meanwhile continuing to navigate oppressive racialized and gendered organizational dynamics (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017). While institutionalized efforts have sought to advance DEI, in recent years, many of those efforts have been rhetorical and neoliberal in nature, which oftentimes leads to the further exacerbation of overlapping systems of oppression in scholarly settings.

Neoliberalism in Higher Education

Across the United States, leaders at colleges and universities have committed to similar mission and vision statements to advance DEI in recognition of the historical and systemic inequities that exist in higher education (Smith & Mayorga-Gallo, 2017). On the surface, it may seem as though leaders are addressing historical and multifaceted systems of oppression, however, too often, promises of DEI are problematized to be neoliberal tactics rather than authentic and strategic efforts to disrupt systemic oppression within the organization (Heinecke & Beach, 2020; Nzinga, 2020; Smith & Mayorga-Gallo, 2017). Neoliberalism refers to the influence of the free market to commodify educational resources and goods, by prioritizing individualism, competition, and profit at all costs (Giroux, 2002, 2007, 2008, 2011; Kezar et al., 2019; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter

& Rhoads, 2004). The dynamics of neoliberalism in higher education contribute to colonial, competitive, and corporatized academic environments that prioritize the profitability of knowledge over the construction of new knowledge (Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017), individualism over collectivism (Kezar et al., 2019), and productivity and metrics over communities and relationships (Wright-Mair & Museus, 2021). Given the structures of higher education, leaders tend to uphold neoliberalism and multiple systems of oppression through inequitable distributions of power, resources, and opportunities, disproportionately harming racially minoritized faculty, staff, and students (Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Nzinga, 2020; Stein, 2016, 2019; Wright-Mair & Museus, 2021).

Contemporary neoliberal DEI discourses in higher education were particularly relevant after state-sanctioned violent murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Elijah McClain and the rise in #BlackLivesMatter protests throughout the summer of 2020 (Beeman, 2021; Porter et al., 2022). At the time, the heightened awareness of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement pressured institutional and organizational leaders to offer statements of support to insinuate promoting antiracism and DEI work, yet those efforts did not provide strategic action plans to prioritize antiracism in policies, programs, and practices within the organization (Beeman, 2021; Bell et al., 2021). To put it differently, many institutions of higher education offered tokenistic support and neoliberal co-optation of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement by underestimating the prevalence of racism and failing to address systemic issues that contribute to the disrespect and disregard of Black livelihoods in the academy (Bell et al., 2021). Throughout the compounding effects of the racial, social, and health-related crises during the COVID-19

pandemic, the neoliberal DEI institutional measures were particularly harmful to Black women and women of Color faculty (Beeman, 2021; Ferguson et al., 2021; Porter et al., 2022). Prior to COVID-19, Black women faculty members were already hyper-exploited to address systemic inequities in their institutions (Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Turner, 2002), but were now left to carry an extended workload in the areas of teaching, service, and mentoring (Ferguson et al., 2021; Porter et al., 2022). Much of this extra labor involved being designated to lead and support institutional DEI committees and support new-found pedagogical commitments to antiracism work, which further exacerbated Black women's labor during the continued societal, racial, and health-related crises (Beeman, 2021; Ferguson et al., 2021; Porter et al., 2022).

In this way, HWCUs continue to recruit and rely on the labor of Black women and Faculty of Color, all the while the harmful effects of white supremacy and compounding systems of oppression within those organizations remain (Kelly et al., 2017; Smith & Mayorga-Gallo, 2017; Wright-Mair & Museus, 2021). While some DEI initiatives are instituted to counter harmful practices, pedagogies, and policies, those institutional efforts are often placed on the backs of Black women in the academy, who are hardly recognized or appreciated for their labor in terms of tenure and promotion (Beeman, 2021; Ferguson et al., 2021; Porter et al., 2022). Thus, many DEI strategies were, and continue to be, an illusion of the neoliberal and capitalistic game to financially benefit the organization rather than support individuals who experience oppression within the organization (Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017; Kelly et al., 2017; Smith & Mayorga-Gallo, 2017; Stein, 2016, 2019; Wright-Mair & Museus, 2021). As Yoon (2022) states, "These institutions create nice, positive-feeling, under-funded, non-

institutionalized diversity and inclusion programs as decorative accents to the white

supremacist structure" (p. 439). Revealing the effects of racialized, gendered, and

neoliberal higher education organizations is relevant to Black women, white women, and

white genderqueer faculty's cross-racial collaborations to showcase that while DEI

efforts sometimes occur, those efforts can aid in (re)producing the interconnected

structures of whiteness and patriarchy. In the next section of the literature review, I

uncover whiteness at work to highlight literature to reveal the impacts of whiteness on the

cross-racial collaborations of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer

faculty.

Whiteness in the Workplace

Whiteness operates not only at the structural and organizational level (Acker,

2006, 2011; Ray, 2019) but also at the cultural and direct levels of higher education

(Bonilla-Silva & Peoples, 2022; Cabrera et al., 2017; Mustaffa, 2017). At the cultural

level, whiteness is maintained through the normalization and stabilization of whiteness as

the dominant paradigm and culture (Bonilla-Silva & Peoples, 2022; Cabrera et al., 2017;

Gusa, 2010; Mustaffa, 2017). In particular, at HWCUs, whiteness as a cultural ideology

is formally and informally embedded in the language, cultural practices, policies, and

traditions of the institutional climate, which bears structural racism by privileging white

groups and harming racially minoritized groups (Bonilla-Silva & Peoples, 2022; Cabrera

et al., 2017; Gusa, 2010). Some examples of whiteness at the cultural level include: (1)

Eurocentric epistemologies, pedagogies, courses, and curricula (Bonilla-Silva & Peoples,

2022; Stein, 2019), (2) inequitable policies and practices, such as tenure processes,

budget allocations, or racially biased student course evaluations (Cabrera et al., 2017;

Chávez & Mitchell, 2020; Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020), and (3) harmful environments, such as racist mascots and statues on campuses (Stein, 2016)—all of which maintain hegemonic traditions of whiteness at many campuses across the nation (Bonilla-Silva & Peoples, 2022).

In most higher education institutions, whiteness operates as the overarching backdrop, working as a normative and dominant culture, contributing to racism as a site of power and control (Bonilla-Silva & Peoples, 2022; Gusa, 2010, Patton, 2016). At the direct and interpersonal levels, racialized (inter)actions take multiple forms and varying intensities for racially minoritized individuals and communities at HWCUs (Bonilla-Silva & Peoples, 2022). Those who are within the dominant culture, namely white people, sustain racialized systems of oppression by othering those who are minoritized through daily microaggressions and racialized discourses (Cabrera et al., 2017; Sue, 2010; Sue et al., 2010). In unearthing whiteness at the cultural and direct levels, it can be acknowledged that despite some antiracism rhetoric in higher education, whiteness is embedded into everyday aspects and functions of educational environments and workplaces (Cabrera et al., 2017; Gusa, 2010; Mohajeri & Nishi, 2022; Mustaffa, 2017; Patton, 2016; Yoon, 2012, 2022). In the following sections, I describe Black women faculty's experiences of, and resistance to, daily occurrences of whiteness in the workplace. Then, I explore literature that documents white women and white queer faculty's complacency in whiteness in the workplace. In the final section, I reveal the limited empirical literature that positions Black women and white women faculty in dialogue about their cross-racial collaborations in the academy.

Black Women Faculty

Recognizing the critical value of their work and labor, Black women leaders face socio-cultural dilemmas that have required a legacy of survival to persist both within, and against compounding systems of oppression in the workplace and the wider society (Fries-Britt, & Kelly, 2005; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Lanier et al., 2022; Patton & Haynes, 2018). Framing their work within CHRD, Lanier et al. (2022) described the sociocultural dilemmas of Black women leaders: while Black women consequently experience the racialized and gendered oppressions within their work environments, living at the intersections also uniquely positions Black women leaders to confront inequities with criticality to advocate for protection and liberation for themselves and others. To put it differently, at the intersections of race and gender, Black women rely on their lived experiences of multiple forms of injustice to cultivate their leadership to be catalysts of change and social justice (Lanier et al., 2022; Patton & Haynes, 2018). As such, Black women leaders both choose and are often obligated to "*Go High in a World of Lows"* (Lanier et al., 2022, p. 196). As a result of oppressive organizational environments and leaders in power who uphold misogynoir, Black women have had to display exceptional qualities of intellect, innovation, and resilience to both navigate and counteract intersecting forms of isolation and minoritization in higher education (Fries-Britt, & Kelly, 2005; Lanier et al., 2022; Patton & Haynes, 2018).

There is a growing body of literature that documents tenure-track Black women's encounters of racialized and gendered challenges in the academy (Carroll, 2017; Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020; Ferguson et al., 2021; Fries-Britt et al., 2011; Fries-Britt & Kelly, 2005; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Matthew, 2016; Pittman, 2012; Stanley,

2009). Given the systemic exclusion of Black women faculty in the academy, many Black women report being the sole Black women in their department (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017) or being their student's first encounter with a Black woman professor (Blackshear & Hollis, 2021). Often being the only Black woman faculty in predominantly white spaces creates conditions for institutional isolation and exclusion, both socially and collegially, which has a negative impact on tenure and promotion (Blackshear & Hollis, 2021; Fries-Britt, & Kelly, 2005; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017). Within the larger qualitative longitudinal research project, *Women in the Academy,* research with four tenure-track Black women uncovered that while Black women have unique experiences en voyage to tenure, they also share some common experiences at the intersections of race and gender. In their counternarratives, Black women faculty described: (1) being the only Black women in their department requiring them to create spaces for themselves within and outside of academia, (2) the importance of finding spaces of collectivity, such as religion, spirituality, family, and larger communities to oppose minoritization on the track to tenure, and (3) finding and using their voice to survive and destabilize institutional isolation and oppressive spaces (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner 2017). In many cases, to cope with both the pressures of tenure and the oppressive contexts of higher education, Black women faculty identify nurturing relationships and find ways to give back to their communities through scholarship, advising, and teaching in the academy to support their own well-being (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017). To challenge normative structures of racism, sexism, and individualism in the academy, Black women faculty find or create ways to use their voice in the academy to maintain their well-being to survive (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017).

In often daily exchanges, Black women and women of Color faculty often encounter hostile forms of racial and gendered (inter)actions, microaggressions, microinsults, and microinvalidations from white colleagues and students who dismiss and devalue their intellect, credibility, and authority as faculty members (Blackshear & Hollis, 2021; Carroll, 2017; Luna et al., 2010; Pittman, 2012). As an example, Black women observe blatant disrespect when students and colleagues refuse to use their title, "Dr.," whereas, white men faculty are consistently referred to as "Dr."—invalidating Black women's qualifications and accomplishments as faculty members (Blackshear & Hollis, 2021). In terms of interactions with colleagues, those who are white colleagues are often too quick to diminish and resist Black women faculty's insights, especially when Black women share critical perspectives that challenge whiteness and white supremacy, leading to isolation within their departments and wider campus communities (Carroll, 2017; Pittman, 2012).

Furthermore, unlike their white counterparts, Black women and women of Color engage in protective measures, such as code-switching, avoidance, or the silencing of their perspectives, to steer clear of further harm in the workplace (Dickens & Chavez, 2018; McCluney & Rabelo, 2018; Settles et al., 2019; Stanley, 2009). As such, due to the racialized and gendered contexts of academia, Black women and women of Color do not always have the institutionalized agency or protection to report and speak out on oppressive working relations and conditions (Dickens & Chavez, 2018; McCluney & Rabelo, 2018; Settles et al., 2019; Stanley, 2009). The ongoing, daily occurrences of whiteness, coupled with patriarchy, create conditions where Black women are hyper-aware that white individuals are surveilling or will be aggressive towards their words,

appearances, facial experiences, or actions (Pittman, 2012)—known as the *white gaze* (Fanon, 1967; Rabelo et al., 2021; Yancy, 2008). The term *white gaze* refers to a social and historical hegemony that involves the power structures of whiteness and the othering Blackness through an objectifying gaze and an extensive system of authority and surveillance, particularly relevant in the workplace for Black women (Fanon, 1967; Rabelo et al., 2021; Yancy, 2008). For Black women, the white gaze operationalizes through an institutional expectation to adhere to whiteness and white norms, in order to be successful within a predominantly white organization (Rabelo et al., 2021). The white gaze creates conditions for the "Black ceiling,"— a solid barrier to moving up the corporatized ladder in leadership (Erskine et al., 2021). In addition to the white gaze, individuals on campuses of higher education tend to rely on harmful controlling images, stereotypes, and tropes of Black womanhood in order to control and dehumanize Black women in society and in the workplace (Collins, 2002; Harris-Perry, 2011; hooks, 1982/2015, 1992; Patton & Haynes, 2018).

Historically, Black women have described stereotypical, controlling tropes, including *mammy, sapphire, jezebel, and superwoman* (Collins, 2002; Harris-Perry, 2011; hooks, 1989/2015), which points to the stereotypical racialized and gendered expectations of Black women, particularly their labor both at home and within places of employment (Patton & Haynes, 2018). The *mammy trope*, which derives from the antebellum slavery period, describes the expectation of Black women to serve as a caretaker psychologically, emotionally, and physically for others through the embodiment of self-sacrifice to comply with others' demands at the determinant of Black women's well-being and health (Collins, 2002; Haynes et al., 2020; Patton & Haynes,

2018). *Mammy moments* are carried out through interactions, actions, or threats that are overtly and covertly embedded in disrespect and distrust of Black women that are held on, over, and against Black women faculty, while simultaneously expecting motherly and nurturing reactions from Black women (Howard-Baptiste, 2014). The second and third trope includes *Sapphire* and *Jezebel*. The *sapphire* trope depicts Black women as malicious, stubborn, rude, and loud, shown through the stereotypes of the "angry Black woman," and the *jezebel* trope portrays Black women as innately promiscuous and manipulative (Haynes et al., 2020; Patton & Haynes, 2018). A fourth trope is the *Superwoman*, a portrayal of Black women as strong, self-sacrificing, and devoid of experiencing emotions and pain (Collins, 2002; hooks, 1994; Patton & Haynes, 2018). Woods-Giscombé (2010) describes the Superwoman trope as a double-edged sword for Black women—being both a means of survival and detriment— to endure the stress of race and gender-based discrimination.

Revealing the impact of whiteness and patriarchy for tenure-track Black women faculty at both the organizational and interpersonal levels, and the stereotypical tropes that are often placed on Black women is important to uncover how oppression continues to operationalize in higher education. In order to cope and persist within oppressive environments, Black women have both historically and in the present, have advocated for social justice and intersectional frameworks (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Harris & Patton 2019), however, the onus to transform systems of education cannot be the sole responsibility of Black women faculty and leaders (Bell et al., 2021; Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019; Lanier et al., 2022; Patton & Haynes, 2018). Higher education institutions, workplace environments, and colleagues who continue to undervalue Black

women's voices and collectivistic perspectives lead to Black women faculty being forced to find work at a different institution or contribute to their departure from the ivory tower altogether (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017). Given that Black women faculty critical agents of change, institutional environments, and colleagues must effectively listen to the voices and perspectives of Black women, acknowledge their accomplishments, compensate for their contributions and labor, and work towards antiracist, intersectional change at the structural, organizational, and individual levels (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Lanier et al., 2022; Patton & Haynes, 2018).

White Women and White Queer Faculty

While institutional and educational professional settings may come across as culturally responsive and antiracist, whiteness persists through the (mis)alignment of white individuals' beliefs, intentions, and actions, described as *whiteness-at-work* (Yoon, 2012, 2022). Drawing on critical whiteness studies, Yoon (2012) articulated the paradoxes of whiteness by following a group of white, cis-gender women who were elementary school teachers who met regularly to address inequities within their public-school community. Paradoxically, while the white women were well-intentioned and equity-minded, they simultaneously perpetuated whiteness in their thinking, discourses, and actions (Yoon, 2012). While the white women sought to host critical discussions on race/racism, their dialogues only allowed for assertions of their social justice work, rather than critical critiques of their whiteness. In addition, white women educators tended to compare their beliefs to other white educators yet avoided taking accountability for their racialized problematic statements and actions (Yoon, 2012).

The whiteness-at-work framework (Yoon, 2012) has been extended to higher education settings, which provides a way to contextualize the racialized paradoxes of whiteness and describe the complex nature of whiteness as institutional, cultural, and interpersonal sites of conflicts and violence (Mohajeri & Nishi, 2022; schneider, 2022; Yoon, 2022). In acknowledging the paradoxes of whiteness, it can be recognized that there is no point of arrival to antiracism for white individuals (Yoon, 2012, 2022; schneider, 2022). Rather white scholars, faculty, and leaders must engage in life-long work to (re)imagine whiteness to respond to racial inequity and engage in continuous reflexivity to critique whiteness alongside other white individuals as a "non-negotiable imperative" (Patton & Haynes, 2020, p. 42) towards racial justice in higher education.

Within the whiteness fabric of higher education, white individuals, both individually and collectively, tend to employ ideologies, actions, and dialogues to maintain their white racial dominance over racially minoritized peers, colleagues, and students (Earick, 2018; Gusa, 2010; Haynes, 2017; Matias et al., 2022; Murray & Brooks-Immel, 2019; Yoon, 2022; Wing Sue et al., 2009). In particular, research documents that white faculty are often hesitant and reluctant in discussions surrounding race/racism and tend to become racially defensive when their white dominant statuses are confronted and challenged (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2014; Earick, 2018; Haynes, 2017; Wing Sue et al., 2009). Specifically, white women tend to hide behind oppression in relation to the patriarchy, while oftentimes failing to acknowledge the advantages that whiteness brings to our education and career opportunities (hooks, 1994). As described by Accapadi (2007), the dual oppressor/oppressed identities of white women is a source of racialized tension, especially when white women are challenged to consider race and

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racism by women of Color colleagues. Similarly, white individuals who are members of the LGBTQIA+ community tend to acknowledge their minoritized status in terms of gender and sexual identities but hardly recognize and interrogate race and racial dynamics (Daniel, 2019).

While some white individuals have participated in disrupting racism in academia, our efforts are sometimes performative, as we do not disrupt our racist perspectives and actions towards Black women and women of Color in our academic workplaces (hooks, 1994). Thus, while white individuals may have an understanding that Black women and women of Color are racially minoritized, white women and white queer individuals simultaneously perpetuate whiteness through racist and exclusionary practices in our epistemologies, pedagogies, and workplace interactions through a dismissal of how intersectional oppressions impact everyday life and employment (Combahee River Collective, 1977/1982; Daniel, 2019; hooks, 1982/2015, 1994; Moon & Holling, 2020).

Since white personhood is often constructed as niceness, pureness, and goodness (DiAngelo, 2021; Galman et al., 2010; Leonardo, 2008, 2009, 2013), the innocent personification entrenches the notion that white individuals are incapable of racism, often leading to the coddling of white women within racialized workplace situations (Accapadi, 2007). As an example, three white women faculty, Galman et al., (2010), self-study of whiteness in their practices found that their white womanhood led them to need to be viewed as "nice" by students and colleagues. The three white women faculty's niceness at work led to conflict avoidance in discussions about race/racism, contributing to their failure to disrupt the racialized status quo within their classrooms and workplaces (Galman et al., 2010). In other words, within the innocence and goodness trope of white

western middle-class feminine norms, the default cultural script is that white individuals are good teachers and good workers who cannot engage in harm, which often positively benefits our educational paths and careers and keeps us devoid of confronting racism (Accapadi, 2007; DiAngelo, 2021; hooks, 1994; Leonardo, 2008, 2009, 2013). Thus, white individuals in higher education must seek to challenge and deconstruct our whiteness and acknowledge the impact of our whiteness. One way to critique our whiteness is relying on the social justice archetypes as a lens to understand our daily complacency and paradoxes within whiteness and our sometimes-performative social justice efforts.

As a witness to ongoing functions of whiteness in the workplace, Earick (2018), who is a CWS scholar and white women faculty, documented over 60 critical incidents of racism by her fellow white colleagues who also proclaimed they were social justice advocates. Over the course of six years and at two predominantly white institutions, Earick (2018) interpreted seven white scholar social justice archetypes, relying on critical incident journaling and observances during departmental/ program meetings. The first three archetypes—*Sista, Sympathizer,* and *Hero*—describe white scholars who are outwardly committed to social justice work, yet who reduce systemic issues of race/racism to performativity. For example, Earick (2018) describes a white woman within the *Sista* archetype who studied multiculturalism and racism in order to master the subject, rather than critique her roles within a racist society. The next two archetypes, *Worker Bee and Suffragette* describe white scholars who pose as social justice advocates yet, who also coincidentally maintain cultures of whiteness through niceness and collegiality. For example, the *Worker Bee* is always too busy to engage in racial work,

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and while the *Suffragette* works to sign petitions and engage in equity meetings, they also distance themselves from colleagues of Color when there are any potential threats that disadvantage their careers (Earick, 2018). The following two archetypes, *Interpreter and Sheriff,* represent white scholars who maintain barriers which actively disrupt social justice work in the academy. For example, the *Sheriff* maintains that the rules and regulations must be followed at all costs—even if those practices and policies are systemically oppressive for students and colleagues of Color (Earick, 2018). Rather than the archetypes being a point of fixed categorization, the archetypes serve as a point of reflection for white individuals to critique how our thoughts, actions, and behaviors contribute to racialized harm in higher education (Earick, 2018).

In addition to sometimes failing in our efforts in social justice work, white individuals can also comfortably function within the existing hierarchical power structures without having to challenge our whiteness (Accapadi, 2007; Frankenberg, 1993; Galman et al., 2010; Hoerl 2021; Leonardo, 2008, 2009). For instance, within the neoliberal academy, Hoerl (2021), a white woman tenured academic, describes that white women tend to focus on our personal upward mobility to overcome harms in relation to sexism and sexual discrimination, yet those individualized survival tactics come at the cost of neglecting racially minoritized colleagues who experience a storm of dangerous waters in the academy. Specifically, the meritocratic and oppressive workplaces of higher education create conditions for white women to allocate our intellect and assets to advantage our individualized careers, meanwhile consequently failing to recognize and engage with those whose research agendas and workplace experiences differ from our own experiences (Hoerl, 2021; hooks, 1994). White faculty members' individualized

approaches to advocacy in the academy is rooted in whiteness, which contributes to harm, isolation, and exploitation of Black women colleagues (alexander, 2022; Earick, 2018; Hoerl, 2021; hooks, 1994).

alexander's (2022) exploratory study uncovered Black femme[4] faculty's experiences with white femme faculty in the academy, and found that white femme faculty were complacent in misogynoir in a multitude of ways in the academy. Some of the prominent ways white femmes contribute to hostile environments for Black femme faculty included: (1) denying the realities of the impacts of white supremacy for Black faculty by insinuating that sexism is more prevalent than racism, (2) contradicting the accomplishments and reputations of Black women colleagues, (3) stealing the intellectual ideas and job duties of Black women, which lead to the tenure and promotion of white women, (4) leveraging proximity to whiteness to gain awards and benefits at the expense of Black women, and (5) befriending Black femmes to support white feminist initiatives on campus meanwhile neglecting the intersectional concerns of Black women. Thus, white women and femme faculty tend to capitalize on our whiteness by relying on our access to influential campus leaders to advocate for organizational changes that benefit our individualized careers, maintaining whiteness as an authority of control at the expense of Black women/femme faculty (alexander, 2022; Daniel, 2019; Hoerl, 2021).

In racialized workplace situations, white women and genderqueer faculty have decision-making power that impacts the careers and livelihoods of racially minoritized counterparts, especially since white individuals have the benefit of both institutional

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[4] alexander (2022) relies on "masculine" and "femme," rather than "male" and "female" to describe socially constructed notions of gender to critically challenge and disrupt cisgender heteronormativity. I am conscious to also use "femme" when citing alexander's (2022) article to honor the author's epistemic disruption of gender.

structures and the unreserved support from other white institutional leaders in power, who tend to nurture emotional reactions, judgments, and decisions about Black women colleagues (Accapadi, 2007; alexander, 2022; Daniel, 2019; hooks, 1994). Thus, white women and femmes tend to oftentimes rely on whiteness to advance our careers, meanwhile denying Black counterparts full access to participate as faculty members within higher education (alexander, 2022), often carrying the "racism torch" (Daniel, 2019, p. 22)—all the while often claiming racialized ignorance, and innocence (Accapadi, 2007; alexander, 2022; Daniel, 2019; hooks, 1994). Lastly, Murray & Brooks-Immel (2019) found that white faculty, staff, and administrators in predominantly white-run institutions operated in ways to both preserve whiteness (i.e., white defensive moves) and sometimes opted to challenge whiteness (i.e., white counter-moves). In operating in ways that maintained whiteness, white academics engaged in white deflection to avoid discussions about whiteness and instead relied on their minoritized experiences across socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religion, and personal tragedies. Counter to white defensive moves, some white educators took accountability for their whiteness, articulating the complexities of their multiple identities and critiquing their whiteness through conscious awareness and evaluation of their racialized institutions and interactions with others in the academy (Murray & Brooks-Immel, 2019).

Cross-Racial Collaborations

There is scant literature that critically considers the multiple truths and perspectives of Black women and white women and their viewpoints on their cross-racial collaborations in the academy. From the current literature, Davis & Linder (2017), co-authors who are a Woman of Color and a white woman, problematize whiteness to

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engage in reflexivity and take part in a difficult dialogue about their experiences with race and research. In their research, Davis & Linder (2017) document a critical incident between them that led to tension in their relationship which later turned into a reconnection and collaborative effort as co-authors to deconstruct whiteness in research. At the time, Davis, who is a woman of Color, was a graduate student and had a visceral reaction to Linder's presentation on her work with students of Color, since she was a white woman and did not have shared identities with the racially minoritized populations in her research. Davis questioned Linder's motivations for the research, especially since she noted that white people tend to be interested in racial equity only if it somehow benefits them as white individuals. Davis & Linder (2017) engaged in reflexivity on the critical incident and developed a framework for engaging in cross-racial collaborative research efforts, which includes: (1) examining motivations for such research, (2) careful considerations of conducting research cross-racially, (3) acknowledge and discuss whiteness and power dynamics, and (4) engage in cross-racial dialogues and subsequent reflection.

Similarly, Bell et al. (2003) were a group of Black women and white women co-researchers who experienced conflict in their research, which sought to explore Black women and white women's efforts to address inequity in the workplace. However, in conducting the analysis, the Black women and white women disagreed in their positionalities and viewpoints of the research. The Black women researchers questioned if white women would raise their voices in times of injustices or if they would continue to be silent, whereas the white women in the group wanted the Black women researchers to know that their silence was sometimes a strategy. After months of debate, the Black

women and white women came together as co-researchers to discuss the complexities of their relationships, interpretations, and efforts in social justice work. Davis & Linder (2017) and Bell et al., (2003) acknowledge that cross-racial collaboration and research is increasingly complex and difficult; they also posit that cross-racial collaborative efforts among women of Color and white women can be important to challenge multiple systems of oppression in the academy. Given the historical and current racialized interactions between white women and Black women, there is little research that explores their cross-racial collaborations to explore their multiple perspectives. Thus, this study explores the narratives of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty members' reflections on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace relying on a critical conceptual framework grounded in Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD.

Conceptual Framework

To prioritize and clearly examine the distinct experiences and nuanced perceptions of tenure-track Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty members, I employed the following critical theories as a conceptual framework: Intersectionality, Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS), and Critical Human Resource Development Theory (CHRD). Together, my use of the three theoretical frameworks allowed for a comprehensive examination of the power dynamics amongst Black women and white faculty, the impact of whiteness on their relationships, and their HWCUs organizations and workplace environments. Below, I provide a depiction of each critical theory and discuss the applications of the theories in current higher education literature. Then, I explain how the three critical theories are integrated as a conceptual framework to guide the study.

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Intersectionality

Intersectionality is an analytical sensibility to acknowledge, understand, and critique compounding systems of oppression, particularly for Black and Women of Color, given their simultaneous positionings at the intersections of racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990). Intersectionality problematizes single-axis theoretical lenses and analysis that consider race and gender as irreconcilable and provides a critical lens for a multidimensional examination of the complex interconnections of systems of oppression, such as racism and sexism, at both the micro-level and the macro-level (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Harris & Patton, 2019). Crenshaw (1990) outlined three forms of Intersectionality— structural, political, and representational. Structural Intersectionality refers to the complexity of how structures within the U.S., such as the legal system and community resources, tend to contribute to and perpetuate the systemic injustices for Black women and women of Color (Crenshaw, 1990; Harris & Patton, 2019). For instance, Crenshaw (1990) explains that in domestic violence cases, women's shelters tend to address physical assault but often lack the resources to address the underlying issues of underemployment and discrimination that contribute to Black and Women of Color's abusive situations. Similarly, political Intersectionality refers to movements that tend to focus on a singular approach to inequity (e.g., white feminism or antiracist movements), which erase and make invisible the experiences of Black women's experiences at the intersections of race and gender (Crenshaw, 1990; Harris & Patton 2019). Lastly, representational Intersectionality examines how Black women are often (mis)represented in music and media, contributing to the objectification, hyper-sexualization, and stereotypes of Black

women in society (Crenshaw, 1990). Altogether, the three forms of Intersectionality intentionally center Black women and women of Color, challenge single-axis approaches to social issues, and pave the way for a multifaceted approach to advance social justice, equity, and coalition building across social and political movements (Bilge, 2013, 2014; Collins & Bilge, 2020).

Intersectionality is a powerful, critical analytical tool to amplify the experiences of multiply-minoritized individuals and critique compounding systems of power and privilege towards informing a transformational social justice agenda (Bilge, 2013, 2014; Collins & Bilge, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1990; Harris & Patton, 2019). There is a growing body of higher education scholarship that critically and effectively relies on the power of Intersectionality to provide a counternarrative to Black women's experiences in the academy. Some of the Intersectional scholarship highlights the experiences of tenure-track Black women faculty discusses: bullying and hostility (Hollis, 2018, 2021), the compounding effects of social and health crises on the exacerbated labor of Black women (Porter et al., 2022), and the unique, close personal-relationship mentoring styles and expectations of Black women (Griffin et al., 2011). Likewise, I rely on Intersectionality to narrate Black women faculty's experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace at the intersections of race and gender. Since Intersectionality is foregrounded in Black women's positionalities (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Harris & Patton, 2019), I am conscientious to employ Intersectionality to elevate the counternarratives of Black women in the professoriate. Further, I depend on structural and political Intersectionality to highlight the interconnected power dynamics of race and gender to emphasize the discrete positionings of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty to

discuss the complexity of their multiple identities and cross-racial collaborations in higher education. To further explore the cause and impact of whiteness in the workplace, I also turn to critical whiteness studies (CWS) as a theoretical perspective.

Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS)

The examination of whiteness was first conceptualized by Black scholars, including James Baldwin (1984/1998), W.E.B. Du Bois (1903/1998), Toni Morrison (1994), and Ida Wells (1970), all of whom contributed to theoretical constructs for current scholars to recognize and problematize the construction of whiteness in society and education. Since then, the field of CWS has grown into an interdisciplinary field of study to counteract whiteness and white supremacy in cultural, social, political, and educational contexts (Cabrera et al., 2017; Foste & Irwin, 2020; Leonardo, 2013; Matias, 2022; Matias & Boucher, 2021; Whitehead, 2021). Additionally, it is important to recognize that the major foundations of CWS are linked to and informed by Critical Race Theory (CRT) scholarship (Blaisdell & Taylor Bullock, 2022). Explicitly, CRT scholars interrogate historical, political, cultural, and societal systems and norms in society that contribute to racial hierarchies and oppression toward advancing racial justice and liberation for racially minoritized communities (Bell, 1992; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Patton, 2016). In turn, the foundations of CRT have critically informed CWS theorists to critique white hegemony, complicity, and privilege within systems of racial oppression (Blaisdell & Taylor Bullock, 2022). While CRT informs CWS, a key distinction between the theories is that while CRT nurtures racial liberation for racially minoritized peoples (Leonardo, 2013), CWS is a framework to address racialized harm caused by whiteness and white

supremacy (Matias, 2022). In regard to CWS, two pillars guide a critical study of whiteness: (1) racism and white supremacy are functioning at all times, and (2) the exploration of whiteness is an approach to enhance society's understanding of the impact of systemic and interpersonal racism on racially minoritized people (Matias & Boucher, 2021).

To employ these pillars, CWS scholars must ground their scholarship in the seminal work and epistemologies of scholars of Color (Matias, 2022; Matias & Boucher, 2021) to go beyond an examination of the racial reflexivity of white people to critically reveal the harmful impacts of whiteness on racially minoritized identities (Cabrera, 2022; Leonardo, 2013; Matias, 2022; Matias & Boucher, 2021; Whitehead, 2021). Specifically, within previous CWS scholarship, there has been a tendency to focus on white individuals' reflections on white privilege and whiteness. However, there has been a lack of connection regarding how white racial dynamics impact and harm racially minoritized identities (Cabrera, 2022; Matias & Boucher, 2021). While scholarship on white individual's complacency in racism has been useful, recent scholars in the broad field of education (Blaisdell & Taylor Bullock, 2022; Leonardo, 2013; Matias, 2022; Matias & Boucher, 2021) and within higher education scholarship (Cabrera, 2022; Stewart, 2022; Whitehead, 2021) have critiqued previous applications of CWS scholarship. Thus, there have been recent calls to action for CWS scholars to explore white individuals' racial dynamics and demonstrate the impact of whiteness on racially minoritized identities at the interpersonal and systemic levels (Cabrera, 2022; Leonardo, 2013; Matias, 2022; Matias & Boucher, 2021; Whitehead, 2021).

Within the higher education literature, CWS has primarily been used to address racism among students to broadly explore white undergraduate students (Foste, 2019; Foste & Jones, 2020; Whitehead, 2021), and more specifically, white men (Cabrera, 2014), and white women (Linder, 2015). Currently, there is limited literature that employs CWS to explore faculty and administrators' identities and workplace environments in higher education. From the current literature, CWS scholars uncover the racialized moves and countermoves of white faculty and administrators (Murray & Brooks-Immel, 2019; Tevis & Foste, 2022); white social justice archetypes (Earick, 2018); and the pedagogical approaches of white queer faculty (schneider, 2022). As aforementioned, there is a call to action for CWS scholars to concurrently explore white individuals' involvement in whiteness and racism and the impact of racialized harm imposed on communities of Color (Cabrera, 2022; Leonardo, 2013; Matias et al., 2022; Matias & Boucher, 2021; Stewart, 2022; Whitehead, 2021). Thus, in this study, I employ CWS to explore Black women faculty's experiences of and resistance to whiteness in the workplace, in addition to relying on CWS as a critical lens to examine white women and genderqueer faculty's reflexivity of their complacency in whiteness in the academy. As a third critical theoretical framework, I also rely on Critical Human Resource Development Theory (CHRD) to explore the oppression at the organizational level with the specific workplace context of HWCUs.

Critical Human Resource Development Theory (CHRD)

Critical Human Resource Development Theory (CHRD) is a growing body of interdisciplinary literature that takes a more critical stance on the field of human resource development (Fenwick, 2004, 2005). CHRD scholars integrate critical management

studies, critical pedagogy, and critical theory to illuminate and problematize the nature of systemic oppression, exploitation, and violence in places of employment (Bierema & Callahan, 2014; Bohonos, 2019; Fenwick, 2004, 2005). As such, CHRD scholars seek to improve supportive workplace conditions and environments and advance pathways for individual and organizational transformation to advance social justice (Bohonos, 2019; Fenwick, 2004, 2005). CHRD encompasses five domains: *relating, learning, changing, organizing* (Bierema & Callahan, 2014), and *advocating* (Collins et al., 2015).

The first domain, *relating,* exhibits the importance of fostering positive relationships and calls for individuals within workplace contexts to address dynamics of exclusivity and incivility within an organizational context (Bierema & Callahan 2014). The second and third domains, *learning and changing,* refer to the importance of promoting and enhancing learning through critical reflectivity and action to implement sustainable change at the personal and organizational levels (Bierema & Callahan, 2014). The fourth domain, *organizing,* refers to individuals, leaders, and scholars promoting critical organizational development grounded in individual sensemaking and storytelling to critique organizational power dynamics (Bierema & Callahan 2014). The final domain, *advocating,* refers to individuals cultivating agency within an organization and championing justice and equity (Collins et al., 2015). Relying on the five domains, CHRD scholars and practitioners challenge individuals and leaders within an organizational context to engage in critical perspectives that critique underlying assumptions, dehumanizing norms, and praxes of power and privilege in the workplace and encourage individuals and leaders to be agents of change (Bierema & Callahan, 2014; Collins et al., 2015; Fenwick, 2004, 2005).

Within the higher education literature, CHRD has been engaged to expose and discuss the dilemmas and voices of Black women leaders in higher education (Lanier et al., 2022; Stanley, 2009) and used as a tool to explore and advocate for organizational change that better supports women, racially minoritized, and queer faculty (Davis et al., 2020). Similarly, I use CHRD to disrupt the normativity of oppression in higher education and to encourage Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty to be reflective of the power dynamics within their academic workspaces. Moreover, I employ CHRD as a lens to recommend higher education institutions towards cultivating healthy and life-giving institutional environments that promote anti-oppressive and collaborative workplace relationships and environments.

Integrating the Theories

Together, Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD establish the critical underpinnings of this critical-constructivist narrative inquiry to examine critical incidents of whiteness across race and gender identities for Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty. By integrating the theories together, I am able to: (1) examine the systemic and Intersectional oppressions that distinctly impact the experiences of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty, (2) name and deconstruct whiteness in the workplace, and (3) advocate for pathways to counteract systemic and interpersonal harm at the individual and organizational level in the workplace. To be specific, I rely on structural and political Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990) to illuminate Black women faculty's perspectives at the margins of racial and gendered oppression and to interpret the differences in positionalities among Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty at the individual and systemic levels in higher education. I also rely

on the two tenets of CWS, as outlined by Matias & Boucher (2021), to examine whiteness in the workplace, to understand white women and genderqueer faculty's reflexivity of whiteness and recognize the impacts of racialized dynamics in the workplace on Black women faculty in the academy.

I employ both Intersectionality and CWS to inform CHRD to explore how white faculty members and institutional leaders can take action to promote antiracism at the organizational and interpersonal levels alongside Black women faculty colleagues. In relation to CHRD, I rely on all five tenets, including: relating, learning, changing, organizing, and advocating (Bierema & Callahan, 2014; Collins et al., 2015) to thoroughly: (1) encourage Black women and white faculty's introspection about power dynamics in cross-racial collaborations in the workplace (i.e., relating), (2) uncover Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty's narratives of incidents of whiteness towards learning about and changing hegemonic organizational practices (i.e., learning and changing), and (3) to emphasize ways in which institutional members, particularly white individuals, can take critical action to advance social justice at the organizational and interpersonal levels to better support Black women (i.e., organizing and advocating). Altogether, Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD provide a critical, comprehensive approach to inform all aspects of this study, including the methodology, research design, analysis, results, and implications.

Chapter Summary

The literature offers an overview of the historical foundations of Black and white feminisms, and the persistence of white feminism and epistemologies that devalues, excludes, and harms Black women and women of Color today. Furthermore, the

racialized, gendered, and neoliberal organizational environments of higher education contribute to inequitable evaluations and expectations of the work of faculty across race, gender, and sexuality. It is important to recognize that oppressive organizational environments impact the cross-racial collaborations in the academy, as Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty have varying work-related presumptions, assessments, and outcomes of their work as faculty members. In relation to whiteness in the workplace, Black women, at the intersections of race and gender, experience harm and hostility from colleagues and students who discredit and ostracize Black women as faculty members. While white women and queer faculty experience the harms of sexism and heterosexism, whiteness concurrently benefits their careers and interactions in their workplaces. The racial domination that white women and white queer faculty experience can lead to the perpetuation of racialized interactions with Black women faculty colleagues.

While there is literature that documents white women and white queer faculty's contributions to challenging whiteness in their workplace and classrooms, whiteness operates as a paradox in which white individuals' intentions do not always align with their behaviors and actions. To further explore the complex collaborations of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty in the academy, I rely on the conceptual framework of three critical theories, Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD. The reliance on three critical theoretical frameworks in the study is useful to extensively explore the complex nature of institutionalized oppression and the cross-racial interactions of Black women and white faculty in the academy.

Chapter 3

Research Paradigm, Design, and Analysis

The purpose of this critical-constructivist narrative inquiry is to uncover stories of whiteness in higher education workplaces from the perspectives of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty. This study is grounded in critical theoretical frameworks— Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990), CWS (Matias, 2022; Matias & Boucher, 2021), and CHRD (Bierema & Callahan, 2014; Bohonos, 2019)—which guided the critical construction of the research's structure, design, and analysis. To explain my assembly of the research, I organized this Chapter into three sections: (1) research paradigm, (2) research design, and (3) analysis, rigor, and ethics. In the first section, I define the core components of the research paradigm, describe my personal researcher paradigm, and outline the effectiveness of narrative inquiry methodology for the study. Then, I describe my researcher positionality, which offers a critical constructivist epistemological standpoint of my engagement and relationship to the study, given my multiple social identities and lived experiences as a white woman. In the second section, I explain the research design, including the participant selection and recruitment, data collection methods, and protocols. Then in the third section, I outline the Listening Guide (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan et al., 2003) as the data analysis approach, and I further outline my strategies for ensuring researcher rigor through trustworthiness, and authenticity. I also discuss the boundaries of the study to outline some of the limitations of the study. I conclude the chapter with an overview and summary of the methodology and research design.

Research Paradigm

To engage in critical scholarship, I must be intentionally reflexive and transparent about my research paradigm, which often goes unnoticed and unquestioned (Creswell & Poth 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A researcher's paradigm conceptualizes the researcher's worldviews which shape who, what, when, where, why, in what way, and by what means the research is conducted (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Overall, a research paradigm consists of three important aspects—*ontology*, *epistemology, and methodology* (Guido et al., 2010). *Ontology* is a metaphysical understanding of the nature of reality, whereas some believe that reality is to be investigated, others believe reality is a social construct to comprehend and deconstruct as a phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). *Epistemology* is an understanding of the nature of knowledge (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017), which describes the individual understanding of what counts as knowledge and how knowledge is constructed (Creswell & Poth, 2016). For instance, whereas some believe there can only be one truth, others believe there are multiple truths (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). *The methodology* describes the explanation and justification for the methods (i.e., data collection procedures) used throughout the research (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In summary, a researcher's worldviews and perspectives are influential to the research design, process, interpretation, and analysis, which should be transparent in explaining the research (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Below, I reflect on my ontological, epistemological, and methodological viewpoints as it relates to the study.

From an ontological perspective, I am a historical realist, which means I believe that reality is socially constructed through historical, cultural, socio-political, and economic forces that shape the world (Lincoln & Guba, 2009). In my research, I recognize that each individual's perspective about the world is deeply influenced by the

social constructions of our society, such as race and gender. From an epistemological

perspective, I am a critical constructivist. A critical epistemological viewpoint involves:

(1) a critique of how multiple systems of oppression operate in society, (2) advocacy to

uncover the unique experiences of people within those systems, (3) embracing and

understanding multiple forms of truth, and (4) critical action to disrupt inequity (Creswell

& Poth, 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Guido et al., 2010). To put it another way, I

acknowledge that systems of power and oppression exist and are deeply embedded in our

society, institutions, communities, and interpersonal and individual livelihoods. As an

educator, I seek to conceptualize, deconstruct, and take critical action to advance social

and racial justice. Additionally, I align with a constructivist epistemological viewpoint,

which emphasizes that knowledge is co-constructed through interactions and

interpretations, allowing for shared meaning-making and multiple perspectives of a

phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Guido et al., 2010). That is to say, I believe in the

power of making space for those who engage in the research to interpret, co-construct,

and make meaning of their experiences as a form of research inquiry.

The methodological approaches of the study align with my ontological and

epistemological viewpoints to construct the narratives of tenure-track Black women

faculty, and white women and white genderqueer faculty in the study. Narrative inquiry,

a storytelling methodology, explores the research through participants' lived experiences

and narratives (Kim, 2015). Over time, the epistemological underpinnings of narrative

inquiry have evolved from positivist positionings (i.e., belief in one objective truth) into

constructivist (i.e., belief in multiple forms of truth and the co-construction of

knowledge) and critical (i.e., belief in multiple forms of truth that are influenced and

deeply connected to power and privilege in society) approaches to research (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Pinnegar & Daynes (2006) describe the four turns in the use of narrative inquiry in academic scholarship, which include: (1) researcher and participant relationships, a turn from previous positivist understandings of objectivity to more constructivist and critical understandings of subjectivity, (2) quantitative to qualitative, a turn from numbers as data to words as data, (3) general to the nuanced, a turn from generalizing research to contextualizing the nuances of contexts and participants of the research, and (4) multitude of truths and knowledge, a turn from one viewpoint of truth to a recognition of multiple perspectives and knowledge. In this study, I employed a critical-constructivist epistemological framework relying upon narrative inquiry methodology to encourage Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty to share their narratives of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry is a way of knowing through the art of storytelling based upon narratives of the studied phenomenon (Clandinin, 2006, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Kim, 2015). Researchers who rely on narrative inquiry methodology explore the accounts of individuals' histories, livelihoods, perspectives, and experiences as a form of research to understand how individuals make sense of their worlds (Clandinin, 2016). Moreover, narrative inquiry is a relational practice to explore phenomena within a metaphorical three-dimensional space, which includes: temporality, sociality, and place (Clandinin, 2006, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry, *temporality* refers to inquiries acknowledging that storytellers are individuals who have a past, present, and future that shape the ways stories are lived,

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told, retold, and relived (Clandinin, 2016). *Sociality* is the simultaneous positionings of a narrative at both the personal (i.e., feelings, hopes, desires, reactions, and ethics of the person) and social conditions (i.e., environment, social factors and forces, and other people who shape an individual's experiences) (Clandinin, 2016). The sociality commonplace also considers the relationship between the researcher and the participants, as critical and constructivist narrative inquirers acknowledge their influence on the relationships within research (Clandinin, 2016). The third commonplace, *place*, describes the specific contexts or physical locations where a narrative takes place, recognizing that environment shapes narratives (Clandinin, 2016).

The three-dimensional spaces of narrative inquiry overlap and indefinitely bind together, requiring narrative inquirers and storytellers to look backward and forward, and inward and outwards to explore a phenomenon (Clandinin, 2006, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I engage in the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry in this study by: deeply listening to and retelling the past histories, lived accounts, and future aspirations of each storyteller (temporality*),* honoring the emotions, aspirations, and expressions of each individual in conjunction with acknowledging the social forces that influence and shape an individual's personhood and experiences (sociality)*;* and considering the location of each of the participants, which shapes how the narratives are told (place). In addition to engaging in the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry, researchers should also consider defining their specific narrative genres. As categorized by Kim (2015), the three genres of narrative inquiry include (1) autobiographical (e.g., autobiography and autoethnography), (2) biographical (e.g., life story or oral history), and (3) arts-based (e.g., literary-based, or visual-based arts inquiry). In this study, I relied on a

biographical approach (life story) and the arts-based approach (visual arts), known as genre-blurring (Kim, 2015). In alignment with the biographical approach, I relied on two methods, narrative interviews, and the CIT, and I relied on timeline drawings in alignment with the arts-based narrative inquiry approach (Kim, 2015).

As a "researcher-storyteller" (Barone, 2007, p. 468), I collaborated with three tenure-track Black women, two white women, and one white genderqueer faculty member to explore critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. As a researcher, I aimed to go beyond the narration of individual narratives to explore the complexities of how individuals interact, impact, and are subject to larger historical and socio-political forces of power and oppression (Clandinin, 2016), in alignment with the use of the three critical theoretical frameworks, Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD in the study.

Counternarratives and Narratives

Critical theoretical scholars who employ Intersectionality situate narrative inquiry as an important methodological tool to center the voices of racially minoritized identities, particularly those at the double or triple intersections of oppression, through the power of counternarratives (Berry & Cook, 2018; Chadwick, 2017). Counternarratives are grounded in CRT to elevate, narrate, and center the voices and experiences of racially minoritized individuals as a form of resistance to the dominant narratives of whiteness (Decuir & Dickson, 2004; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). In particular, Berry & Cook (2018) emphasize that narrative inquiry methodology is well-suited to explore the nuanced experiences of minoritized individuals, specifically for Black women and Latinas since they simultaneously navigate both the dominant master narrative (i.e., hegemonic stories that serve the dominant social groups ideologies) and the counternarrative (i.e., stories,

lived experiences, and perspectives of individuals at the margins that oppose the hegemonic stories) (Berry & Cook, 2018).

In a subsequent piece to Liu & Ball's (2019) praxis of transformative education, Miller et al. (2020) outlined three key elements of counternarratives in research which consist of: (1) CRT as a model of inquiry (2) critical reflection and generativity, and (3) transformative action towards equity for racially minoritized communities in education. In this research, since I do not rely on CRT as a theoretical framework, I focused my attention on the two latter elements of critical counternarratives. To be specific, I first rely on the *critical reflection and generativity, which* are models of praxes to encourage participants to be introspective about systems of oppression, and also includes providing opportunities for racially minoritized participants to express their ideas of ways to address inequities and injustices in education (Miller et al., 2020).

I then apply the *transformative action* element of counternarrative, which aims to generate new insights, practices, and strategic plans for social justice in education (Miller et al., 2020). The purpose of the elements of counternarratives is not to shift the responsibility of those who are racially minoritized to solve racialized inequities. Rather, the elements of counternarratives guide pathways to forefront racially minoritized individuals' voices and insights to inform avenues for leaders within educational institutions to employ critical and transformative action to promote a social justice agenda (Miller et al., 2020).

Altogether, the elements of counternarratives of critical *reflection, generativity,* and *transformative action* (Miller et al., 2020) in this narrative inquiry guide pathways for the researcher to illuminate the Black women faculty voices and insights to expose,

critique, and analyze the dominant master narrative. Then, the Black women's counternarratives inform avenues for leaders and educational institutions to take transformative action to advance racial and social justice within academic workplaces. Since *counternarratives* are grounded in CRT, with a core purpose of elevating the voices and perspectives of racially minoritized communities (Berry & Cook, 2018; Chadwick, 2017; Decuir & Dickson, 2004; Miller et al., 2020; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002), I instead rely on *narratives* to encourage critical reflexivity with white women and genderqueer faculty.

Narrative inquiry methodology is often employed by CWS scholars (i.e., Earick, 2018; Foste 2019; Foste & Jones, 2020; Linder, 2015; schneider, 2022) to encourage white individuals to be racially reflexive about themselves as racialized beings within the societies and institutions that assume their dominance towards exposing and challenging individual, interpersonal and institutional forms of whiteness. To put it differently, since white faculty tend to avoid discussions about race and their roles in perpetuating racism (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2014; Haynes, 2017; Wing Sue et al., 2009), narratives are a tool to encourage white individuals' reflexivity to examine their individual and collective roles in preserving whiteness in higher education. In the study, I aimed to encourage white women and genderqueer faculty to be critically reflexive of their complacency of whiteness that impacted Black women colleagues in the workplace. I share the narratives of the white women and genderqueer faculty to uncover their perceptions and examine avenues for white individuals to take initiatives to recognize and dismantle whiteness within HWCUs. In light of the fact that I asked Black women and white individuals to share their histories, livelihoods, and perspectives, it is important that I too, share my

viewpoints and experiences in vulnerability. As such, the following is a detailed account of my positionality, which I also shared with each of the participants.

Positionality

One of my mother's favorite photos of me is a picture of my family at Easter. I am about four years old, wearing a yellow and turquoise floral dress, with platinum blonde hair and big green eyes, standing next to two of my Black cousins dressed in suits. In the photo's background are my Pacific Islander aunt, her Black husband, and two of my three biracial siblings, who are Pacific Islander and white. Throughout my childhood, I can vaguely remember questioning why I looked so similar to my mom and my nana, who are white, but not like my dad, grandparents, and extended family members, who are Pacific Islander, Black, and biracial. In some ways, I looked similar to my older brother, Nick, and younger siblings, Dani, and Alex—we are tall, have light skin complexions, and have teeth that required years of painful braces to fix. Since I somewhat looked like my siblings, and since my family raised me to believe that this was undoubtedly my biological family, and was taught colorblind ideologies at school, I hid any lingering confusion about race and family dynamics for a later date.

That day came in high school when I was confronted by those family dynamics. As a sophomore, my parents sat me down in my best friend's living room to tell me that I had a different biological dad than my siblings. As the story goes, my biological dad punched a hole in the wall when my mom told him she was pregnant, and he never turned back. Learning this information was earth-shattering for me, as I deeply questioned my personhood, fell into a depression, and felt like an outcast within my own family. My place in the family has been a hidden component of my life that has often gone unsaid. I

can recall the number of times I have spoken with my family about where I come from, and I continue to feel deeply ashamed, while also trying to continue to process, heal, and forgive.

Although I now know I am not blood-related to most of the family members I call grandma, grandpa, dad, aunt, and cousin, I remind myself that I have been, and continue to be, fully embraced, and loved by this family. Growing up, when we all got together, my grandma would make us traditional Indonesian satay with peanut sauce and rice, and we would play solitaire and watch television at way too loud of a volume with my grandpa. My family members would, and continue to, go above and beyond to spoil all nine of the grandchildren at Christmas time, and my siblings and cousins never treated me as other. Each of my family members always made me feel a part of the family and never questioned whether or not I belonged. With time, our extended family relationships have changed due to loss, divorce, and other life transitions, however, I can attribute much of my personal and educational success to the nourishment and kind-heartedness that my unique multiracial family has provided me.

Throughout my life, it has been a continuous journey to understand who I am as a person, my various identities, and my family dynamics, while also further making sense of, and advocating for, racial and social justice. In getting to know myself better as a white woman, I now know the importance of acknowledging and leveraging my inherited racial privileges to advocate for racial equity, particularly in white spaces. While I have often resisted vulnerability, I have also come to know that vulnerability is one of the key components of social justice to understanding self within multiple systems of oppression.

Beginning my Social Justice Journey. When I reflect on my journey of coming

to understand whiteness and the privileges I hold, I heavily cringe. I know that I was

uneducated and problematic, hurt many of my friends and even my family members, and

I have perpetuated racism through ignorance and arrogance. My unawareness about

issues of racism and other forms of oppression, were both products of my white

innocence, or my nativity and denial of issues of surrounding race and racism (Dace,

2012; Leonardo, 2008, 2009, 2013) and the historically and predominantly white

educational systems of which I was a student. Many of the white educators throughout

my school years often ignored and disregarded critical discussions on social justice

issues. Throughout my K-12 school years, I attended Catholic School, and discussions

surrounding race, gender, sexuality, and class were nearly non-existent, except for

pushing colorblind ideals, promoting heteronormativity and homophobia, and the

epitome of purity surrounding womanhood. I was taught many problematic viewpoints,

which I knew were wrong in some ways, however, I also did not yet have the language or

critical awareness to name or understand those ideals and norms. I was Catholic in one

sense, but also felt hurt and confused by the many ways the school leaders mistreated and

harmed some of my teachers and friends, and how I was treated as a woman in those

spaces.

My undergraduate courses were the first step and encounter in becoming more

critical and racially aware. I learned about the history of racism after taking a social

psychology course with a tall, awkward, white man professor, and my journey continued

as I enrolled in multiple feminist and sociology courses. I remember that I would often

bother my roommates with my newfound feminist knowledge. By first coming to

understand the inequities that exist for women (something I was not taught in my K-12 school years), I then came to understand further the importance of Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990) and the effects of racism on Black women and Women of Color. On the surface level, I understood that there were multiple experiences and compounding systems of privileges and oppression for racially minoritized women. However, looking back, much of the information I learned and encouraged was deep-seated in white feminism. I was content with this type of feminism because it centered on my experiences. At this time, I also viewed many of the issues of systemic oppression outside of myself—meaning issues surrounding race were something with which I did not have to contend. As an example, while I learned about institutionalized racism in the criminal justice system and had a lot of empathy for those injustices, I did not see how I contributed to many of those systemic issues, or what I could do about those injustices… cue a wake-up call in graduate school.

(Un)Doing and (Re)Learning: Am I the Problem? After almost 16 years in school, I had my first ever Black woman professor in my master's program, who was immensely important to me in understanding how whiteness and compounding systems of oppression operate. In each class, I was continuously challenged and confronted to be critically reflexive of my white womanhood and further, understand the complexities and operations of oppression in higher education. For much of my graduate program, I was deeply uncomfortable and often experienced cognitive dissonance for days on end, trying to make sense of myself and systems of inequities. I was also introduced to many Black women scholars, namely Drs. Janet Helms (1990, 1995), bell hooks (1982/2015, 1989, 1994), Beverly Tatum (2017, 2019), Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989, 1990), and Gloria

Ladson-Billings (1998, 2014) who helped me to make sense of what it meant to be a white woman educator. Specifically, I was drawn to how bell hooks (1994) wrote about white women who tended to lean on their minoritized identity as a woman while disregarding any other privileges that they hold, such as being white, and I was respectfully called out by bell hooks herself! With more time, I became more comfortable with being uncomfortable and perpetually sought to engage in critical reading and discussions about the complexities of race and gender and unpacking my roles in perpetuating racism and heteropatriarchy.

Throughout my ongoing journey in higher education, I have witnessed the presence of racially charged workplace environments that unfortunately have an adverse effect on Black women faculty, administrators, and students. In moments of introspection regarding my own experiences within this context, I recognize that there have been instances where I unintentionally played a role in contributing to situations that caused harm to my racially minoritized colleagues. The study has provided an opportunity for me to critically reflect on these occurrences and gain a deeper understanding of how my actions, at times, have perpetuated these challenges. It is important for me to acknowledge my role and actively work towards being part of the solution moving forward.

During the study, I was involved in my own critical incident of whiteness that impacted a Black woman colleague. It is important to share this experience as it highlights how well-intentioned white individuals, such as myself, can become more aware of the privileges afforded by whiteness in the workplace. In this particular incident, we were engaged in a Zoom call as part of an Innovation and Creativity committee,

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discussing plans for an upcoming event. I must admit, I was not actively contributing to the conversation as I was in the dissertation phase, while men of Color were sharing their insights and ideas for the event. I contributed to the meeting by adding up some of the numbers for our budget in our shared Google Doc. At one point, the group leader expressed gratitude, saying, "Gabby, thank you so much for doing this!" As the meeting progressed, there was a Black women staff member who was diligently organizing and detailing the budget, while I continued to listen without actively participating. Towards the end of the meeting, the leader once again thanked me, remarking, "Gabby, thank you so much for putting the budget all together, this looks really great!" Another Black woman senior leader paused the meeting and confirmed, "That was not Gabby. In fact, the other Black woman was responsible for setting this all up, isn't that right, Gabby?" I nodded in agreement, and the meeting leader replied, "I just assumed that it was Gabby."

In that moment, and in various other instances throughout my career, the influence of whiteness had a positive impact on me, leading to the underlying assumption that I was the one responsible for the work, which in reality was the labor of my Black woman colleague. While this incident did not involve overt harm towards my Black colleagues, and I did acknowledge the misperception in the Zoom chat, I learned from this situation that I can do more to recognize and confront whiteness in the moment by using my voice to actively challenge assumptions and advocate for the accurate recognition of my colleagues' contributions.

Where I Enter: Sitting with the Messiness. My journey to understanding, engaging, and seeking to promote social justice and antiracism work has not been linear. I

continue to sit with the messiness to make sense of myself, others, and the 'isms' of our

society. I recognize that our social identities are not static and simple— rather, our

identities are multilayered and socially constructed (Hall, 1996). I know myself to be a

complex human being who continues to learn, grow, develop, and be reflexive of my

white womanhood. In my view, white women, and other white individuals, are

responsible for acknowledging the pervasiveness of white supremacy in the academy and,

further, are accountable to take action to combat racist interactions, practices, and

pedagogies. In addition, it is essential to acknowledge that much of what I know about

race and gender, and promoting equity in the academy, has been a product of the labor of

Asian, Black, Indigenous, and Latinx peers, colleagues, administrators, and faculty

members. Although I seek not to tokenize these scholars and practitioners, I recognize

that most of the work centered on equity and justice in the academy is being done by

racially minoritized populations, namely, Black women. Therefore, as I engage in this

work, I must always hold an awareness and acknowledgment of my privileges and

(mis)understandings of my complacency in systems of racial injustice. As such, critical

consciousness, reflexivity, and action are integral to my praxes toward advocating and

promoting research and systems of education that are collaborative and justice-oriented.

  In this research, I recognize that I write and engage from the perspective of a

cisgender white woman, which undeniably has an impact on the study. Throughout the

research, I sought to be critically self-aware and introspective of my identities, especially

in knowing the historical and current racialized dynamics among Black women and white

women. Given my identities, I have deeply reflected on how to best engage in the

research alongside Black women, recognizing that I am an outsider listening to their

experiences. I acknowledge that my presence alone can prevent Black women from being authentic about how they experience racism amongst white women colleagues. I am fully aware of the dynamics I bring as a white woman, and I sought to be transparent in my positionality and purposes of the research to share the counternarratives of Black women and to hold white individuals, such as myself, accountable for intersectional and antiracist work.

Research Design

In this critical-constructivist narrative inquiry, I collaborated with six participants, which included three Black women faculty, two tenure-track white women faculty, and a white genderqueer faculty member at HWCUs. I recruited a small group of participants in alignment with narrative inquiry methodology to capture the detailed accounts of each storyteller (Clandinin, 2006, 2016; Kim, 2015). Each participant partook in two personal narrative interviews and reflected on critical incidents of whiteness, relying on the CIT and timeline drawings in between interviews. Below, I detail the research design, including the participant recruitment strategies and selection, the data collection methods, and the data collection protocol.

Participant Recruitment and Selection

To recruit participants, I conducted a nationwide search and used the snowball sampling technique (Patton, 1990). The snowball sampling technique harnesses the power of social networking and connections to recruit individuals who may be interested in engaging in the research (Patton, 1990; Woodley & Lockard, 2016). Snowball sampling is an important tool for recruiting minoritized populations, specifically Black

women faculty, as they are often systemically excluded from faculty positions and representation in academic research (Woodley & Lockard, 2016). As such, I relied on my networks and those of the participants after they agreed to partake in the study, to recruit six Black and white faculty members for the study.

To start the recruitment process, I sent a personal email to my existing social networks. I requested that those within my network forward the recruitment materials to others who may be interested in partaking in the study. In the initial email, I explained the eligibility for participating in the research and included a link to a website that included more about the purposes of the research and my researcher positionality (*see Appendix A).* Given the nature of the research on a sensitive topic and my positionality as a white women researcher, I was purposeful in being transparent about the focus of the research and my positionality in seeking to build trust and rapport with any potential participants. In the recruitment materials, I directed those interested in the study to complete a brief introductory form, which included questions about the individual's racial and gender identities and workplace environments *(see Appendix B).* I also included a research flyer in the recruitment materials, which I shared on social media sites, including Facebook and Twitter *(see Appendix C).* To be eligible for the study, individuals were required to meet the following criteria:

- Tenure-track faculty,
- Self-identified Black women, including Bi-racial, African Americans, Afro-Caribbeans, Afro-Latin Americans, and/or Black international faculty,
- Self-identified white women, including white U.S. faculty and white international faculty,

- Self-identified women, including cisgender, transwomen, genderfluid, or genderqueer identities,

- Have a terminal degree (Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D.),

- Currently work at a historically white college and university (HWCUs),

- Worked at their institution for over a year,

- And who are engaged in antiracism work, defined as research, teaching, and/or service centered on challenging historical and current socio-political, economic, cultural, and environmental forces that have upheld racial power and privilege systems within education.

The brief introductory form was open on Qualtrics from November 2022 to January 2023, and 25 individuals expressed interest in the research. From the 25 entries on Qualtrics, 14 were identified as fraudulent entries, as the entries did not include working emails and also provided suspicious submissions to the open-ended questions (Lawlor et al., 2021). Some of the suspicious submissions included: "My sexual orientation at birth is female," and "At the same time, the EU combats discrimination on the grounds of sex, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation." Relying on Lawlor et al. (2021) framework to address fraudulent entries in social research, I determined the fraudulent entries to be unique participation fraud (i.e., fraudulent entries for research incentives) and alias fraud (i.e., fraudulent submissions from those seeking to conceal their identities). Knowing there may be potential disruptions to the research, I attempted to set up virtual meetings with a few of the fraudulent entries, but there were no participants who attended the Zoom sessions.

From the remaining 11 entries in the Qualtrics survey, three individuals did not

meet the criteria for the study, which included: two individuals who did not leave contact

information and one Black woman faculty member who lived abroad and had not worked

at a U.S. higher education institution for the past five years. If there was contact

information available, I corresponded by email with those who were not eligible for the

study. In November, eight individuals met the requirements for the study, including two

Black women faculty, five white women faculty, and one white genderqueer faculty

member.

Since the overarching purpose of the study was to amplify Black women's

counternarratives and encourage racial reflexivity with white faculty, it was important to

have equal participation from both Black and white faculty in the research. Thus,

throughout the next few months, I continued to share the recruitment information with

my networks in search of a few more Black women faculty members who may be

interested in partaking in the research. I also relied on the networks of the participants to

recommend other prospective participants for the study, in alignment with snowball

sampling (Woodley & Lockard, 2016). In January, a third Black women faculty signed

up to participate. There are a few important factors to acknowledge that contributed to the

recruitment of Black women faculty in this study, including (1) the severe systemic

exclusion of Black women in the professoriate, in which statistically there are fewer

Black women faculty than white women counterparts (NCES, 2022), (2) compounded

with the extensive workloads and pressures Black women faculty often already

experience (Beeman, 2021; Ferguson et al., 2021; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Porter et

al., 2022), and (3) the nature of the research topic, in which Black women may not want

to engage with a white women researcher in order to educate others about their experiences (Carby, 1982; Edwards, 1990; hooks, 1992).

Since there were more white women and white genderqueer faculty interested in participating in the study than Black women faculty, I followed up with three white women to thank them for their interest in the study and to let them know that I would be moving forward with six participants total. This decision was grounded in the research design to uncover incidents of whiteness from the perspectives of both Black women and white faculty members. Altogether, there were three Black women faculty, two white women, and a white genderqueer faculty member each participated in two in-depth personal interviews and who each created timeline drawings to reflect on their experiences.

Among the six participants, three identified as African American/Black women, two identified as white women, and one individual identified as white and genderqueer. The participants were all employed at HWCUs, from across the West Coast to the East Coast Region of the United States. The participants also comprised all levels of tenure-track academic rankings, including assistant, associate, and full professors, see Table 1 for a visual representation of participant demographics. The faculty members were also from a variety of academic disciplines, including: Higher Education and Leadership, Education, Sociology and STEM. Throughout the research, I do not discuss in length the regional locations of the faculty members and their specific disciplines to protect participant anonymity, especially given the sensitive nature of the research. Upon completing the study, each participant received a $30 gift card to Elizabeth's Bookshop

and Writing Centre, a Black woman-owned bookstore whose mission is to amplify and

celebrate Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and Queer voices.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant Pseudonym	Race	Gender/ Sexuality*	Academic Rank	Years as a faculty member
Dr. Zora	African American	Cisgender woman	Associate Professor	20
Dr. Kiki	white	Cisgender woman, lesbian	Full Professor	13
Dr. Kristen	white	Cisgender woman, heterosexual	Associate Professor	10
Dr. Alana	African American	Cisgender woman, heterosexual	Assistant Professor	6
Dr. Quinn	white	Genderqueer, queer	Assistant Professor	6
Dr. Shelly	Black	Cisgender woman	Assistant Professor	4

Note. *Some of the participants disclosed their sexuality, while others did not share this

information. Since the primary focus of the study was on the intersections of race and

gender, I did not ask all participants about their sexuality. However, some participants

were forthcoming to share their sexual identity, as this is also a salient aspect of their

being.

Research Methods

The data collection methods in the study align with the epistemological underpinnings of the research, narrative inquiry as a methodological approach, and the three critical theoretical positionings—Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD— that guide the research study (See Table 2). The three data collection methods I employed in the study include: narrative interviews, the critical incident technique (CIT), and timeline drawings. I relied on narrative inquiry genre-blurring to include biographical and arts-based approaches (Kim, 2015). To be more specific, the narrative interviews and CIT are positioned within the biographical genre, and the timeline drawings are positioned within the arts-based genre of narrative inquiry methodology (Kim, 2015). Each method was used as a tool to elicit narratives and lived experiences within the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry—temporality, sociality, and place (Clandinin, 2006, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I also asked Black women faculty interview questions to elicit the use of the two elements of counternarratives in the study, which include (1) critical reflection and generativity, and (2) transformative action (Miller et al., 2020). In addition, I asked white women and genderqueer faculty questions to engage in racial reflexivity and ways they could take initiatives in their workplace for social justice, in alignment with CWS scholar's use of narrative inquiry (Earick, 2018; Foste, 2019, Foste & Jones, 2020; Linder 2015; schneider, 2022).

Table 2

Research Questions, Theoretical Frameworks, and Sample Prompts

Research Question (RQ) and Subquestions (SQ)	*Guiding Theoretical Frameworks*	*Sample prompts/narrative interview questions*
RQ: What are tenure-track Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace at HWCUs?	Intersectionality, CWS, CHRD	Critical incident technique and timeline drawing prompts
SQ1: How do Black women faculty characterize and navigate critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace at the intersections of race and gender?	Intersectionality, CWS, CHRD	Reflecting on your timeline drawings, how do you identify critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace?
SQ2: What are Black women faculty's experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace involving white women colleagues?	Intersectionality, CWS, CHRD	How do your relationships with white women in the academy advance or prohibit social justice and antiracist practices in higher education?
SQ3: How do white women and genderqueer faculty reflect, describe, and critique their complacency in whiteness in the workplace?	CWS, CHRD	How do you understand your identities of being a white woman and genderqueer faculty, and how do your identities influence your relationships and practices with colleagues?

Research Question (RQ) and Subquestions (SQ)	Guiding Theoretical Frameworks	Sample prompts/narrative interview questions
SQ4: How do white women and genderqueer faculty engage in racial reflexivity to recognize the impact of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace on Black women?	CWS, CHRD	In what ways have you experienced agreement or conflict with Black women colleagues in the workplace? How do you make sense of the situation(s)?

In the following sections, I further detail each of the three methods, including narrative interviews, the CIT, and timeline drawings.

  Narrative Interviews. Narrative interviews were used as the primary data collection method to explore the participants' livelihoods and experiences as tenure-track Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty in the academy. Narrative interviews rely on an open-ended interview format, also known as unstructured interviews, that allows interviewees to share their stories uninterrupted (Kim, 2015). As such, narrative interviews rely on a shift in power dynamics that allow the interviewee, rather than the researcher, to structure the direction of the interview (Chadwick, 2017), permitting the space for participants to express themselves openly by sharing the complexity of their narratives, which are too often untold (Kim, 2015). In this way, narrative interviews are co-constructed, where the interviewer travels alongside the narrator throughout the interview (Chadwick, 2017). During the narrative interviews, the researcher is responsible for actively listening and asking follow-up questions to encourage the (re)telling of stories (Kim, 2015). Thus, the researcher comes to the interview with a few prepared open-ended questions to promote narration and follows the

participant's lead to structure the narrative format (Kim, 2015). The use of narrative interviews aligns with Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990), to foreground the counternarratives of Black women at the intersections of race and gender and furthermore encourage counter-white hegemonic narratives with white faculty.

The Critical Incident Technique (CIT). The CIT was used as a secondary data collection method to uncover critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. The CIT is a reflexive tool that encourages interviewees to move beyond a surface-level description of events within a critical-constructivist epistemological approach. Through a critical lens, researchers relying on the CIT as an approach asks interviewees to be introspective and aware of individual and collective systemic oppression that contributes to workplace incidents (Bruster & Peterson, 2013; Butterfield et al., 2005; McDaniel et al., 2020). By using the CIT within a critical-constructivist epistemological approach, interviewees can gain a deeper understanding of intricate organizational and workplace conflicts, procedures, and values (Bott & Tourich, 2016; Butterfield et al., 2005).

The selection of the CIT as a method also closely aligns with CWS and CHRD theoretical frameworks to disrupt the hegemony of whiteness in the workplace and embolden faculty participants to be reflexive of their identities, workplace dynamics, relationships, and organizations. Overall, there are five steps to the CIT method: (1) highlighting the general aims of the study, (2) setting specific contexts of the CIT, (3) collecting the data, (4) analyzing the data, and (5) interpreting the data and sharing the results (Flanagan, 1954). To accomplish the steps of the CIT method, I provided each participant with a detailed overview of the purposes of the study, and the contexts of the

CIT. The participants were also asked to create timeline drawings along with the CIT to reflect on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace.

Timeline Drawings. Timeline drawings, also called autobiographical timelines, combine art therapy and the CIT to illuminate participants' multi-layered voices and experiences (Leitch, 2006). Timeline drawings are creative illustrations constructed by participants to reflect upon personal and professional significant events towards illuminating the participants' multi-layered voices and experiences (Guenette & Marshall, 2009; Kolar et al., 2015; Leitch, 2006). To put it differently, timeline drawings are simple designs that help storytellers (re)construct and (re)contextualize past life events and critical incidents (Guenette & Marshall, 2009). Especially when engaged in narrative research on sensitive topics, combining timeline drawings with narrative interviews can help construct participants' meaning-making of their complex individual experiences (Guenette & Marshall, 2009; Leitch, 2006). Thus, alongside narrative interviews, timeline drawings are visual aids and a point of reflexivity to encourage participants to (re)tell their narratives using art and narrative (Guenette & Marshall, 2009; Kolar et al., 2015; Leitch, 2006). The selection of timeline drawings as a method aligns with CHRD to position employees to engage in reflection on oppression in the workplace. In this study, I used timeline drawings as a reflexive tool for tenure-track Black women, and white women, and white genderqueer faculty to share their experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. I further detail the data collection protocol for each method in the following section.

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Data Collection Protocol

   After each of the six participants agreed to be a part of the study in the brief

introductory form, I contacted them to sign the participant consent form *(see Appendix*

D). Then, each of the faculty were asked to partake in narrative interview one, create a

timeline drawing with the CIT as a guiding prompt, and then partake in narrative

interview two. Each of the narrative interviews were scheduled for 60-90 minutes with

the researcher on Zoom technology. In between narrative interview one and two, each of

the participants were given a prompt that outlined the context of the CIT and were asked

to create timeline drawings to showcase their experiences of critical incidents of

whiteness in the workplace. The timeline drawings and CIT were a point of reference

throughout the second narrative interview with each of the participants. The narrative

interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Each

of the data collection procedures, including narrative interview one, CIT and timeline

drawings, and narrative interview two, are described in detail below.

   Narrative Interview One. The first narrative interview focused on listening to

each participant's life story. Within narrative interviews, the life-story interview

positioned interviewees to share important events, experiences, and feelings throughout

their lifetime that they chose to tell (Kim, 2015). In the first interview, I shared my

positionality and focus of the study at the beginning of the interview, towards building a

meaningful and trustworthy relationship with each participant. I then reviewed the

purpose of the research and shared information about narrative inquiry methodology so

that participants were aware of the importance of sharing their perspectives, experiences,

and narratives as they engaged in the research. After engaging in conversation about the

focus of the research, I asked open-ended questions to encourage participants to narrate

their life experiences. With the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry in mind, I centered the first narrative interview on asking participants to look backward in time to share their life stories and significant events that shaped them as an individual and as a faculty member. Prior to asking questions, I prompted each of the participants to take a moment to reflect on their experiences or important events throughout their life regarding their gender and racial identities and educational experiences.

Further, as informed by structural and political Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990), I was intentional to ask different types of sub-questions to the Black women, white women, and white genderqueer participants to acknowledge and recognize their distinct experiences. For example, some of the questions I asked Black women faculty included: What are some of your most memorable moments as a faculty member where your race or gender made a significant impact? What are some empowering experiences you've had as a Black women faculty member? What are some disempowering experiences? Some of the questions I asked the tenure-track white women and genderqueer faculty included: Reflecting on your life and your education, how have you come to understand your racial, gender, and other identities? Tell me about a time when you may have made a mistake in antiracism work in the workplace. What happened, and what did you learn from that experience?

CIT & Timeline Drawings Creation. In between narrative interviews one and two, participants were given a guided prompt to reflect on critical incidents of whiteness and to create a timeline drawing(s). The CIT and the timeline drawings prompts were used as tools to cue participants to look inward and outward within the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2006, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) to reflect

on their experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. The Black women faculty participants in the study were asked to reflect on overall critical incidents of whiteness that impacted them. They were all prompted to reflect and create a timeline drawing that represented critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace that involved white women colleagues, including other faculty members, deans, or administrators, that significantly impacted them. Whereas the white women and white genderqueer faculty members were asked to be introspective about their contributions to overall critical incidents of whiteness and, more specifically, incidents that affected Black women in the workplace, including other faculty members, deans, or administrators. I sent the prompt to each of the participants via email and asked them to bring the timeline drawings to the second narrative interview.

A brief example of the prompt for the CIT and timeline drawing(s) is as follows: Please share a timeline drawing to describe a critical incident of whiteness that took place within your institution of higher education. Timeline drawings are a creative outlet (i.e., drawings, paintings, collages, etc.) to represent significant personal or professional events. The creation of the timeline drawing aims to illuminate your voices and reflect on your experiences surrounding critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. Some examples of the reflection questions the Black women faculty were given included: What was a critical incident of whiteness in the workplace that significantly impacted you? What critical incidents of whiteness have occurred in your academic workplace with white women? Who were the key informants? How did your institutional environment influence the incident(s)? Some examples of the reflection questions for white women and genderqueer faculty included: What critical incident(s) of whiteness have you

encountered, or were a part of, in the academic work that impacted Black women colleagues? What were your decision-making processes, roles, and responsibilities throughout the critical incident(s)?

Narrative Interview Two. The second narrative interview was focused on listening to participants' experiences and reflections on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace, given their respective racial and gender identities. Before beginning the interview, I had a casual conversation with each of the participants and then asked them to explain the creation of their timeline drawings to reflect their critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. In alignment with the use of two elements of counternarratives in the study (i.e., critical reflection and generativity, and transformative action) (Miller et al., 2020) at the end of the interview, I asked questions to explore Black women's insights toward creating and sustaining antiracist and intersectional cross-racial HWCU workplace environments. In the second narrative interview with Black women faculty, some examples of the guiding interview questions included: Reflecting on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace, how do you make sense of the situations today? How did the situation(s) impact you? Considering your identities as a Black women faculty, how can white women colleagues and institutions of higher education better support your holistic self?

In the second narrative interview with white faculty, I also focused on asking questions about their critical incidents of whiteness, which was geared towards exploring the reflexivity of their complacency in whiteness. At the end of the interviews with each of the white faculty participants, I asked them to look forward to share ways they and other white individuals can better counter whiteness in the academy. Some examples of

the guiding interview questions included: How was the timeline creation for you? Did it aid you in thinking about racial inequities and incidents in the workplace? Reflecting on the critical incident(s) of whiteness in the workplace, how do you make sense of the situation(s) today? Considering your identities as a white faculty member, moving forward, do you have any reflections or thoughts on how you can better speak out on inequities and whiteness in the workplace? What are some strategies you or other white individuals can do to better support Black women in the academy?

Research Journal

In narrative inquiry methodology, a reflexive approach is crucially important to maintain the rigor and integrity of the research (Kim, 2015). As such, I kept a research journal to record my thoughts, observations, emotions, and insights throughout my dissertation research journey. My research journal was a conceptual point of reference to reflect upon my positionality and engagement with the participants throughout the research. Rather than the research journal being a point of data collection, it served as a tool to aid in my conceptualization of the research, the conceptual framework, the analysis, the findings, discussion, and implications. The journal was particularly valuable during the data collection phase to capture my reactions and reflections on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace.

Data Analysis

Given the complexity of the multiple truths among Black and white faculty, and the sensitive nature of research focused on racialized workplace interactions and incidents, it was important to choose an analytical approach that allowed me to engage

deeply with the narratives of each individual participant. It was mutually important to align the analysis with the criticality and co-constructiveness of my research paradigm, and the guiding conceptual framework grounded in Intersectionality, CWS and CHRD. As such, I sought to find data analysis that would assist me to: (1) acknowledge the unique, complex, and intersectional experiences of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty, (2) uncover the ongoing critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace at HWCUs, and (3) illuminate systemic oppression in the workplace and advocate for pathways for individual, interpersonal, and organizational justice, and equity. With the overarching research paradigm and theoretical considerations in mind, I decided to use The Listening Guide (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan et al., 2003) as an analytical approach, in order to center the unique voices and individualized experiences of each of the narrators.

The Listening Guide

The Listening Guide aligns with narrative inquiry and critical theoretical positionings to story individuals' inner worlds and navigation of their relationships and instances of conflict within socio-political and cultural contexts (Brown et al., 1989; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Lyndon & Edwards, 2021; Mauthner, 2017; Taylor et al., 1995; Tolman & Head, 2021; Woodcock, 2010, 2016). The Listening Guide, first known as the Voice-Centered Relational Method, was developed by Brown and Gilligan (1992) as a qualitative and feminist analytical approach to deeply listen to the voices of each storyteller (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan et al., 2003; Lyndon & Edwards, 2021; Woodcock, 2010, 2016). Within the Listening Guide, the researcher relies upon four listenings, which are purposeful to listen to, and (re)construct the complex narratives of

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each person's story (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). In each of the four listenings, the

researcher pays attention to different perspectives, or voices, of the narrator (Brown &

Gilligan, 1992). The four listenings include: (1) listening for the plot, (2) listening for

first-person accounts and the creation of an I-poem, (3) listening for contrapuntal voices,

and (4) composing an analysis (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan et al., 2003; Lyndon &

Edwards, 2022; Tolman & Head, 2021).

      Listening to the Plot. In the first listening, the researcher simultaneously listens

to and reads each narrative, and actively explores the construction of the story and the

plot in each narrative (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Woodcock, 2010, 2016). The

researcher's aim of the first listening is to pay attention to the contexts of the story (the

who, what, when, where, and why) (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). The first listening also

provides the researcher an opportunity to explore the critical plot that is most meaningful

to the narrator (Woodcock, 2016). During the first listen, the researcher also notes

moments of silence, or pause, to reflect on the participant's voice and records their

researcher responses to prompt further thinking in the analysis (Woodcock, 2016).

      Listening to the First-Person Accounts and the Creation of I-Poems. In the

second listening, the researcher revisits the research questions as a reminder of the focus

of the analysis and reviews the emerging themes noted from the first listening session

(Woodcock, 2016). Then, the researcher deliberately listens for "I" statements in each

narrative to explore the narrator's reflections, conflicts, and meaning-making of their

experiences (Woodcock, 2010). Throughout the second listening, the researcher

underlines phrases with "I," "me," "you," and "we" in the transcripts while

simultaneously relistening to the interviews (Woodcock, 2016). This second listening

assists the researcher in going beyond exploring the plot and themes of the narratives, towards an in-depth exploration of each of the participant's positionalities and personal experiences (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). After listening for the "I" statements in each narrative, the researcher creates I-Poems, also known as voice poems, which are constructed directly from the narrator's voice (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). In the poems, each of the "I" statements are spaced out on separate lines, like a poem, and kept in sequential order as the storyteller told them (Gillian et al., 2003). The purpose of the creation of I-Poems is so that the researcher meaningfully pays attention to first-person accounts and systematically explores how the narrator speaks of themselves and their interpersonal relationships (Woodcock, 2010, 2016). In a separate document, the researcher notes the "I" statements in the transcripts, along with noting any vital information that arises in the listening (Gilligan et al., 2003).

     Listening for Contrapuntal Voices. In the third listening, the researcher is attentive to the contrapuntal voices, or the multidimensional voices and perspectives of each interviewee (Gilligan et al., 2003). In other words, the researcher pays attention to the different voices or themes within each narrative to capture the individual's point of view in conjunction with their societal experiences (Gilligan et al., 2003; Taylor et al., 1995; Woodcock, 2010, 2016). The purpose of the third listening is to provide a more thorough and extensive analysis to answer the specific research questions in the study (Woodcock, 2016). In this listening, the researcher creates color-coded themes throughout the narrative and finds overlapping sections, which further prompts exploration and analysis in the fourth listening (Woodcock, 2010, 2016). This part of the

analysis is unique as it helps the researcher resist dichotomies and make sense of the

nuances and relationships of themes revealed in narratives (Woodcock, 2010, 2016).

Composing an Analysis. In the fourth listening, the researcher extensively

analyzes and synthesizes themes from the previous listening (Gilligan et al., 2003). In this

listening, the researcher pieces together the emerging themes from each of the 'listenings'

and provides in-depth accounts of the participant's experiences (Woodcock, 2016).

Throughout the analysis, I kept a trail of evidence using a color-coding system to track

the emerging themes throughout each of the 'listenings' and record additional

observations and notes in the margins (Brown et al., 1989; Woodcock, 2016).

Additionally, the Listening Guide encourages consistent reflexive journaling by the

researcher to address their positionality and understanding that influence the data analysis

(Gilligan et al., 2003). Throughout the analysis, I recorded my introspective thoughts and

feelings in my researcher journal. Upon completing the analysis and (re)construction of

the counternarratives and narratives, I provided each participant an opportunity to review

the results and contribute to the implication that were identified from the study, giving

them a two-week time frame for feedback.

Researcher Trustworthiness, Ethics, and Confidentiality

In qualitative research there are five main criteria to establish trustworthiness: (1)

credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, (4) confirmability (Lincoln & Guba,

1985), and (5) authenticity (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). *Credibility* requires the researcher to

establish confidence in congruency and accuracy throughout the research (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985). To establish high credibility, I integrated: (a) methodological triangulation

or the use of more than one method (i.e., narrative interviews, CIT, timeline drawings),

(b) theoretical triangulation, or the use of multiple theoretical viewpoints (i.e.,

Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD), and (c) environmental triangulation, or the use of

multiple contexts to understand the phenomenon (i.e., research at multiple HWCUs) to

collect the data (Stahl & King, 2020). I also engaged in a member-checking process to

establish the credibility of the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Member checking in qualitative research involves the researcher providing an

opportunity for feedback regarding the accuracy of the representation of participants'

experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Upon the completion of the data collection, I

ensured member checking by providing each of the participants the opportunity to review

their personal transcripts and offer any feedback or edits. Then, after completing the

analysis, I sent the participants the (re)construction of their personal counternarratives

and narratives, giving them a two-week time frame for feedback.

In regard to member-checking with the (re)construction of the counternarratives,

there were some minor edits from the Black women participants, including requests to

omit some details such as geographic and demographic information, and suggestions for

small revisions to details of the critical incidents to ensure anonymity. There were also

minor requests from two of the white faculty members regarding their personal

narratives. Specifically, one white faculty member raised a concern about a small

inaccurate transcription and requested a correction to accurately reflect her statements.

One white faculty member also asked the researcher to modify some details of her

narrative, such as departmental office names, to further ensure anonymity. I agreed with

each of the participants' suggestions and made the respective changes to protect

participant identities and preserve privacy. Overall, there was agreement among the

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researcher and participants in the culminating showcase of the counternarratives and narratives.

Next, *transferability* refers to the conveyance of patterns and descriptions of the research to apply to another similar context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stahl & King, 2020). To establish the transferability of the research, I provided a detailed description of the importance of the research and its application to institutionalized settings and workplace environments in higher education. Next, *dependability* refers to the coherence of the research so that the research can be recreated in future research in similar contexts with participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, dependability was established through thick descriptions of the purpose, researcher positionality, data collection techniques, analysis, results, and implications. *Confirmability* involves the researcher presenting the findings as an authentic reflection of the participant's responses (Stahl & King, 2020). I established confirmability in the study by providing transparency of my positionality, engaging in continuous reflexivity throughout the research process, and engaging in member checking. Finally, *authenticity* is the researcher's responsibility to present multiple perspectives of each participant by providing an in-depth description of their values and lived experiences (Lincoln and Guba, 1986; Shannon & Hambacher, 2014). In this study, narrative inquiry methodology allowed for authenticity through a rich illustration of the participant's accounts in their true voices and expressions.

To ensure researcher ethics, before engaging in the study, I gained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Rowan University. To maintain the participant's confidentiality, I asked each participant to choose a self-selected pseudonym in the brief introductory form. All identifiable and personal data collected throughout the research

was de-identified during the point of transcription by the researcher. In advance of taking part in the study, the participants received detailed information on the purpose of the study, the requirements of partaking in the research, and signed consent forms. All data related to and conducted in this study was stored on my password-protected computer and secured in a Rowan network which required my identification login information for access. To protect the anonymity of the participants, I only referred to the institution where they were employed using broad geographical terms. The recordings of the interviews were used strictly for transcription and analysis and were destroyed upon completion of the study.

(Re)construction of the Counternarratives and Narratives

In the following Chapter Four, I present a (re)construction of the counternarratives and narratives of each participant focusing on their most pertinent experiences which I identified after engaging the Listening Guide (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan et al., 2003) as an analytical approach. In the presentation of the counternarratives, I focus on the *critical reflection* element of counternarratives (Miller, et al., 2020) to illuminate the Black women faculty's voices and vantage points to counter traditional racialized and patriarchal hegemonic domination in education (Berry & Cook, 2018; Chadwick, 2017). In alignment with *generativity* and *transformative action* elements of counternarrative (Miller et al., 2020), the Black women faculty participant's perspectives inform ways for institutional leaders to address and take action towards promoting a racial and social justice agenda in higher education, which is later detailed in Chapter Six. I also present the *narratives* of white women and white genderqueer faculty to share their backgrounds, experiences, and their reflexivity of critical incidents of

whiteness in the workplace with Black women. I highlight the critical incidents of whiteness from participants' accounts based on their engagement with the CIT and timeline drawings, to (re)tell the participants experiences that were most related to the research questions. (Please see *Appendix E* to view the participant's timeline drawing creations).

In the presentation of the counternarratives and narratives, I was purposeful to illustrate the participant's experiences relying on their true words, expressions and descriptions elicited from the research. Put simply, the counternarratives and narratives are presented in the real and authentic words of the participants. In order to make each of the participants' stories clearer and more concise, I edited only a few grammatical revisions to their words and modified minor details to ensure participant anonymity. After I (re)constructed the counternarratives and narratives, each of the participants had the opportunity to read and review their personal stories to share their feedback. This "collaborative (re)construction" (Kim, 2015, p. 169) is grounded in the critical-constructivist epistemological approaches of the study within the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry to story the participant's backgrounds, experiences, social identities, emotions, and expressions (Clandinin, 2006, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Altogether, in the presentation of the (re)construction of the counternarratives and narratives, I sought to (re)tell the story of the research in the true words, voices, expressions, and experiences of Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty participants.

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the research paradigm utilized in this study, which includes a critical-constructivist epistemological framework and narrative inquiry methodology. I highlighted my positionality in this work, in noting my subjectivity of the research and the influence of my lived experiences and perspectives as a white woman researcher. It was necessary to explain my positionality to maintain transparency regarding my identities and experiences, particularly since I conduct research with Black women who have a different racial reality than I do as a white individual. I sought to be authentic in sharing my narrative, as I asked all of the participants who engaged in the research to share their past experiences and reflections on sensitive information about power dynamics in the workplace. In the study, I recruited six participants for the study through snowball sampling, collaborating with three Black women faculty, two white women, and a white genderqueer faculty member. I also outlined the research design and narrative inquiry methodology. I also mapped the analytical approach and addressed matters related to trustworthiness, authenticity, confidentiality, and ethics. Finally, the chapter clarifies the process to (re)construct the counternarratives and narratives, presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

Counternarratives and Narratives

In this Chapter, I present the counternarratives of Black women faculty and the narratives of white women and genderqueer faculty. In the presentation of the counternarratives of Black women faculty, I focus on the *critical reflection* element of counternarrative (Miller et al., 2020) to uncover their experiences of critical incidents of whiteness at the intersections of race and gender. I also share the white women and white genderqueer faculty narratives, to present their stories and reflections on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace. The counternarratives and narratives presented of the participants' stories are shared in their own and true words, with minimal edits made by the researcher. The central focal point of the counternarratives and narratives is to share critical incidents of whiteness that were elicited from the CIT and participant timeline drawings, which were (re)told in their interviews. Moreover, the participant pseudonym names were included in their introductions, however, their specific pseudonym names were excluded from the (re)telling of the critical incidents of whiteness, as another protective layer of participant anonymity. In the following sections, I organized the counternarratives and narratives into three parts: (1) Introductions, (2) Black Women Faculty Counternarratives of Critical Incidents of Whiteness with White Women, and (3) White Women and Genderqueer Faculty Narratives of Critical Incidents of Whiteness with Black Women.

"Everybody's Got A Story, Right:" Introductions

Dr. Zora: African American Woman Faculty Centering Race, Culture, and Gender

My semester is just starting, and it's a whirlwind. You come back from break, you've got your first week, you're easing in, and then suddenly, it's like bam! This is due, there is this meeting and that, but it's nothing new, so it's good. In thinking about my life growing up, I don't think this is unique to me, I think it's something that could be common in many African American families, but my parents, particularly my mom, often talked about race, culture, and gender. It was just common, I understood what it meant to be female, and I was empowered as a female, and I was never made to feel that there wasn't something I could do. We also talked about race quite frequently. In dinner conversations, issues of race came up a lot about what was happening in terms of Black people and politics. My grandmother was known for having this scrapbook where she would just cut out anything in the paper that had to do with Black people. I think that was because of the lack of representation in books, news, and media, so whenever there was something, it could be the smallest or the biggest of things, and she would put it in the scrapbook. The scrapbook was something that my mother inherited, and then later, I inherited it. I had a sense of who I was as a girl and as a Black girl from a very young age, which I appreciate because it never was a challenge to talk about those things.

In fourth grade, I was going to be bussed, and my parents insisted that being bussed would not privilege or advantage me. They did not want me to go to a school where I wasn't welcome, so I wasn't bussed, and I ended up going to another school that was very racially diverse. It was a cool school, but it was getting too cool, so I then went to an all-girls private school. My best friend, who was the smartest person I ever knew,

ended up attending a different private school. She was really smart and so confident, and when she got to the private school, she became an average 'C' student, and she never got over that before. So, I never felt as though I was marginalized for my grades, unlike my dear friend. Since we were one of a few Black girls in both of our schools, it might have been nice if our parents got together and sent us to the same school, but that didn't happen.

Later in life, I became a fifth-grade teacher in a major city for many years, and I loved being a teacher. I decided to pursue my doctoral studies around literacy because I saw things in my classroom that really bumped up against what the data indicated. In my city, they would publish the test scores in the newspaper, and the scores in our district were always so low on the bar graph that you could hardly see the score. There was nothing coming up on the bar graph, but I knew my students' literate lives were different from what that data was showing, so that encouraged me to pursue my doctoral studies. I was not thinking about a faculty position, but that just kind of happened. Midway through my doctoral studies, I had two life-changing events, one was the illness of my mother, and then the other was an accident that prohibited me from going back to teaching fifth grade. I cannot stand that long, so I had to think of another career path, so I started applying to universities and ended up at an institution. I was fortunate, it was really supposed to be a one-year temporary position, but it turned into a tenured position, so that is how I got here!

Dr. Quinn: Genderqueer Faculty Member with Irish Catholic Family Background

I'm from a rural area, like a small farming town. My grandpa had an eighth-grade education, my mom didn't go to college, and my dad has a teaching degree, and they

have a farm! My family is also Irish Catholic and came to the U.S. during the potato famine. I'm sure that the first generation had plenty of issues, but they also could get a farm through the land that was taken from the Indigenous folks. Also, in the book, *How the Irish Became White*, you learn that the Irish were not seen as white at the time, and white was not considered to be Irish. The Irish became white by separating themselves from other groups of Color, especially Black people or African American descendant people, and people who were enslaved, by being extra racist to put themselves in that position of power (Ignatiev, 2009). I don't know how my great-grandpa was perceived then, but I imagine he participated in becoming white by separating himself from marginalized communities—I mean, I don't know, he's been dead for 110 years. So, for the last two or three generations, my family has been considered white, so I have had access to whiteness, and my larger community has had more government funding. There is a history of people who were never denied the G.I. Bill loans and farming loans, and so I grew up in a state where a large majority of people had access, and I have had a good education because of that access.

Growing up, I always remember my dad saying, "Don't be a teacher!" I wondered, "What else would it do in this town of seven hundred people? There's nothing else to do?" He was like, "You only know teaching and farming. There's lots of stuff to do. You could pick anything." I did think, "You get a law degree, and then you go do what?" It didn't make sense to me, so I ended up getting an education degree at one of the state teaching schools. Afterward, I planned on moving home, but my resume was online, and a school from another state called me and wanted to do a phone interview. I had never been west of the Missouri River, so that seemed crazy! Well, before the interview, they

called my references and offered me the job, so I took the job, sight unseen, and taught there for five years. Later, I moved internationally, and I taught there for three years. While I was there, I got acquainted with the public-school teachers and started working with them. I met someone with a Ph.D., and it was the first person I met that was friendly, and that had a Ph.D., as opposed to some of my previous professors. I decided to apply to doctoral programs. I applied to one program and one school. Then, I got a job as an Assistant Professor, and I have been here for six years. I'm a member of the queer community, I am white. I don't know that I identify as a woman, but I am a parent/mother, so it is a complicated identity for me, but I'm not like a dude.

Dr. Shelly: Black Woman Immigrant Faculty Dedicated to International Equity

This is my fourth year as an Assistant Professor. I am finally getting my footing after COVID, after being largely virtual for about a year and a half, things are returning to being on campus, and I have a better understanding of my role and my institution. I was a biology and chemistry major in college and was interested in medicine, so I also studied biology in my master's program. After my master's degree, I was trying to figure out what to do next, and after exploring different career paths, I decided to apply for Ph.D. programs.

During both college and master's programs, I was applying to medical schools, and it didn't work out. So, after my master's degree, I was trying to figure out what to do next, and after exploring different career paths, I decided to apply for Ph.D. programs. In my work and research, I do a lot of international work, and I'm also an immigrant. As a Black faculty member, I often mentor international students or those with a lot of international interest. I never ask for this, but many of them will bring me trinkets and

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gifts from their travels or the place they call home. I have loved upgrading my office with those bracelets, artifacts, and decorative items. Sometimes when I look around, I'm just really honored that when they would do that sort of thing, it shows me that they enjoy working with me, and they want to continue, and it's like a small token of that, and that always makes me feel really good and special as an instructor, as a mentor, and as a faculty member.

Dr. Kristen: White Woman Faculty and Child of First-Generation College Students

I am in my tenth year as an Associate Professor, and my role has shifted dramatically this year. I am the child of first-generation college students. My parents both have doctorates, my mom is an M.D., and my dad is a Ph.D. in clinical psychology, but they come from humble backgrounds. My parents worked from the minute I was born, so I had a nanny who was a Black woman, who took care of my sister and me until I was twelve years old. I think her youngest is seven years older than me, but still, thirty-nine years later, they call me their sister, they will use that language. I don't see them very often, but there was a very strong bond with that family. In high school, I liked chemistry and math and decided that I would become an engineer because that is one of the hardest things to do, so I did. I went to an Ivy League, and I had an amazing experience, and hopefully, it's clear that I had a lot of socioeconomic privilege, money was not part of the discussion when I picked a college. After graduation, I worked for two years in pharmaceuticals, which was terrible. I hated it, but it allowed me the space to think about what I wanted to study in graduate school, and I later decided to pursue a Ph.D. in engineering. I did have a very difficult end of my degree due to some drama

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with my advisor, but I realized I was completing the degree because I wanted to teach at the college level and that it wasn't about the research.

As I was finishing my degree, there was a posting in every department across the university, which were all tenure-track teaching positions, so tenure-track but only teaching. I applied and got on campus interviews for two departments, but I did not get either of the jobs, and I was very upset. Then, a couple of weeks later, another department chair called me and said, "Hey, I know you applied for these other instructor positions. Would you be interested in interviewing for other teaching positions?" I was like, "You know I'm not that kind of engineer, I have no training in that branch of engineering," and he was like, "It's fine!" So, I interviewed, and it was supposed to be a one-year appointment, but the HR people messed it up, so it ended up being a full tenure-track teaching position. After some time, I shifted into a tenure-track position with a research agenda in a different department. Now, my research efforts involve improving equity for women in STEM. I also see it as a part of my role as a hetero-cis, white, upper-class woman to work on equity and antiracism to make the spaces more welcoming and safe for everybody.

Dr. Alana: Black Woman Faculty with Unapologetic Authenticity

This year has been interesting, as I'm in a hybrid role serving as half professor and half administrator on the tenure track. My year has been one of both triumph and challenge, but anytime I get the opportunity to share my story, I like to because I think we learn more through stories. I identify as a cisgender, heterosexual Black woman, and I always knew who I was. I knew early in my life that I was heterosexual, and I've never struggled with my gender identity or anything like that. My racial experience has been

interesting because I grew up in a town where there's a lot of Civil War history, and there is a lot of you're either Black or white. I mean, things look a little bit different now, but when I was growing up, you were either Black or white. I also know my maternal and paternal lineages were enslaved, and I've had the privilege of learning our story as we've traced our family's history through our family dynamics. We are unapologetically Black in my family, but it's never been to the point where it's been an isolating Blackness. We have quiet people. We have the nerds. We have smart people. We have the country folk, bi-racial relationships, and adoption, so we have all these different things in my family, and I've always known that I was Black. I also occupy multiple roles. I am a mother. I am a daughter. I am a cousin. I'm a friend. I'm a mentor. I'm a homeowner.

I have a very interesting journey toward becoming a faculty member. My doctoral program was one of the Top Ten in the country, and I say that because the program attracted many people who wanted to become faculty members. I never wanted to be a faculty member, but I ended up falling in love with my dissertation topic, and I tried to walk away from this love of collecting stories. Since I didn't want to be a faculty member, though, I ended up going the administrator route. At the time, working as an administrator, I also somehow got talked into serving as an adjunct faculty member, and I found that I was happier on Thursdays from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. than I was from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. I was like, "Oh, my gosh! I cannot believe how much I love this!" Later, I had the opportunity to choose between a non-tenure track position and a tenure-track position, and I decided on the non-tenure track position as I wanted to avoid the pressure of the junior faculty member trying to earn tenure at a prestigious institution. After a few years in that position, I had an opportunity for a job promotion where I could

negotiate to become a tenure-track faculty member. Now that I'm trying to get tenure, I'm cracking up at just the irony of resisting the very thing that I was passionate about. I also realize that earning tenure will give me the opportunity to open more doors. So, for all of the resistance that I did for several years, I'm here. It's laughable, but it is my journey, and I'm proud of it because I've done it with authenticity and thoughtfulness.

Dr. Kiki: White LGBTQ Faculty Member with an Academic Identity

I grew up in this place and space where everyone valued education. The area is now a major city, but at the time, it was truly the intermix of every aspect of diversity because it's next to another major city, but it was also its own suburb. There were first-generation Italians, first-generation Columbians, and first-generation Haitians, so a mix of immigrants and religious and spiritual beliefs. The suburban city where I grew up was like a unified place, even though there were elements of systemic racism, and the neighborhoods were segregated. My parents divorced when I was a toddler, and it was the first divorced family that many people knew, so we were also outcasts in our own way. I had a single mom who supported two kids in a very wealthy kind of area but also not wealthy. As a kid, I could go to a birthday party in the housing projects, or I could go to a birthday party at this executive's house, and everybody else did, too. I eventually ran out as soon as I could to a nearby state, where I became in culture shock because I didn't understand where all the people of Color were, which was very weird for me. The state eventually grew diverse while I was there, which led me to a teaching degree, and I later got two master's degrees. At that time, my now wife had moved, and I said at some point I would also move with her, which eventually led me to get my doctorate.

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When I eventually went on the job market, I had to do a lot of soul-searching because I had several on-campus interviews. There were many factors at play in deciding where I would end up. My support network was here, and at the time, it was one of the very few states with civil unions, so I ended up here! I am going to be honest, in the aspect of understanding my identities as a white woman faculty member, I never look at it in those three ways together. I consider an academic identity, for sure, but I feel like I wouldn't be like, "a white woman, LGBTQ faculty,'" right? Part of that is an equal aspect of my identity, but more specifically, it is also my rejection of the white woman part, but I do know that is how I am seen and viewed.

"I Expect Whiteness to be at the Table, but I'm Also at the Table Now:" Black Women Faculty Counternarratives of Critical Incidents of Whiteness

The Out-of-the-Way Racist Administrator, and the Coffee Racialized Remark

I remember that day so clearly. This happened when I was a graduate student with a former administrator. I used to work, as many people do, as a graduate assistant (G.A.) while I was in my Ph.D. program. At the time, I was working in an office where everyone was a white woman, except for me. One day my boss walks in and sees me talking to another colleague and playfully says to her, "Oh, what are you doing, fraternizing with the help?"— referring to me. The other woman and I just looked at each other like, "Hey? Did that just? Did she just really say that?" I think I laughed nervously and then sort of returned to my seating area and continued to work. I remember thinking at that moment, "That was weird, right, that was inappropriate, but maybe I'm just being really sensitive." I think it was later that week I was in one of my classes for my Ph.D. program, and we were talking about a similar topic. I retold the story of what happened with my boss, and

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the whole room gasped, including the professor, everyone was like, "Oh, my gosh! Like, did she really say that?" I was like, "Yeah, so I'm not crazy, you all thought that was really inappropriate too?" That was a critical incident because it's a very racialized term, there's a movie about it, and there was a power difference because I was a G.A. at the time. The comment was also not really related to my job, it was a comment that didn't need to happen in the context of our work, right? So it wasn't about my job, it wasn't about any of the tasks I was assigned, it was out-of-the-way racist.

I remember taking note of this incident, as well as many others, throughout the course of the year when I was working for that person. Since the G.A. was a one-year appointment, at the end of that academic year, I went to the Office of Equal Opportunity at my university. The reason I waited to report was that I was afraid of retaliation, even though that is technically against the law, and she's not allowed to do anything in response, but I was still afraid of that happening, so I waited until she was no longer my boss. I went to the Office of Equal Opportunity at my university and said, "Hey, I would like to share some of what I've experienced this past year, and I have a record of all of the things that I heard," and there were a lot of incidents similar to this instance. I think this incident, in particular, was one of the most egregious incidents, but she would say other things to me, so I reported all of it.

After that G.A. appointment, I worked in a different unit on campus as an administrative assistant. I helped with administrative tasks, and I would like to set out coffee and snacks for students, which was also part of my job. I had just started working there and then I got a prestigious dissertation fellowship, which was actually the first time anyone from my university had received that particular fellowship. A week or so after I received the fellowship, we were sitting in a big staff meeting, and I think it was a

department chair who said, "We just want to make sure we congratulate her for this very prestigious fellowship. We're bummed because this means we're gonna lose her, but we're just so excited for her to go do this awesome opportunity." A white woman staff member then responded, "Yeah, I couldn't believe that this is the same girl who gets the coffee," which was a comment made in front of everybody. In my mind, I was like, "Why did she need to say that?" Like, first of all, that wasn't an explicitly racist thing, but I'm the only Black person in the room. One, why couldn't it be the girl that gets the coffee? Why are you so dismissive of the intelligence and contributions and capacity of people who are not necessarily like super high-paid positions on a university campus? Why do you look down on different types of labor? And two, why would you say that to my face?

Peer Advocacy, Institutionalized Racism, and Racialized Stereotypes

One of my colleagues, who is African American, was just having trouble in her courses. She was updating her syllabi, she was curving grades, and she was meeting with students.

We met regularly, but she just kept getting so much pushback from students. She loved the content, and she was a really good person. I didn't know a lot about her as a teacher, but I tried to learn more to see how I could be supportive of her, and it just got really, really bad. It almost seemed like there was just talk in the pipeline, you know, students talk, and it was almost like the word got around, students would anticipate having her and they would just not be very generous to her, it just got really bad. Other colleagues helped her, but I feel like she reached out to me the most because I was a Black woman, and she was also a Black woman. When it came to tenure time, it was not good, and I did write a letter of support that outlined how we've been working together and how we were going

to continue to work. She ended up leaving, and I just feel like we missed something in terms of the university, in terms of the college, and in terms of my department. How could this happen to someone that cared so much? It just felt like there was something spreading, and there was this culture that had developed around her, and it was very painful. I just always felt that so much of it had to do with race, that's how I felt. I mean, the person is in a good place now, but when something is that bad, couldn't we find a way to come together to figure it out? We didn't support her, I felt like.

This was another instance in which something happened, and I didn't say anything back. A white woman colleague was talking about working with kids, some African American kids, and she said, "They were so cute with those big bug eyes and their hair sticking up." That person thought that was okay to say, and I did not say anything because I think I was kind of dumbfounded. I didn't know what to say, I just thought that sounded so stereotypical. The woman was white, and I'm Black, and you thought it was okay to say that to me? But obviously, this had a profound impact because I remember it so well. It was like, you could say they're cute, but then she had to "other" them, and those are things that are associated with stereotypes.

The Office of 14 White Women

I was the only Black person in my office at the time. I was working as a director, and I was the only Black director, the youngest director, and the only person with a doctorate in the entire office, and I was still two levels below the leader at the time. We were hiring a new senior leader, and the prior senior leader had built up the office and he had a father mentality mentorship style. I met the person several times, he was a great person, but he had a very patriarchal feel. It was also an office with a majority of white

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women, and they always talked about how the previous senior leader had served as a father figure, that he affirmed them, and they always used words like 'protection' to describe his leadership. So, when it came time to hire someone new, they brought in three finalists, including two white men and one white woman. So here we go, all that happened, and those were the power dynamics.

The first interviewee they brought in was a white man, and I did not like this person. The whole time he was there for his interview, he did not engage with me, he barely acknowledged my presence, and I was uncomfortable because he seemed like he was pandering to everybody else but me. The second finalist was my favorite, he was a white male who was extroverted and identified as queer, and he was unapologetic about it, which I appreciated! He was all about relationships. There was also a white woman finalist, and on the first day of her interview, I was traveling for work and was out of the office. So, the second day, I met her, and I immediately said, "Oh!" She had a warm personality and was looking people in the eye. We were at a big roundtable, so it's like 16 people in the office, and about 14 of them were white women. The woman finalist was interviewing for the job, and as I was looking around, I saw all of my colleagues have stern faces. So, I introduced myself, and we just started talking, she described her leadership style, and I was like, "Yes, she's doing all these things!" The whole time, the others in the office had their arms folded and weren't even asking questions, there was just silence during our Q&A session with her. I was just spitballing questions because I didn't get to know her the day prior.

Later, we were debriefing, and they were all like, "Well, nobody from in the office is qualified even to have applied for this, except for her because she has a

doctorate. Do you want this job?" I was thinking, "No!" Microaggression number one, no one asked me to apply for the job when the job call was out there, and no one engaged me to say, "Hey, would you be interested in leading in this office and applying for the position?" No one did, but they asked me passively. Then they all were like, "Well, I like the first white male"—the one who did not engage me—"I like him because when we think about the former leader, he always made us feel comfortable. We need somebody to protect us, and we didn't like the woman because she described her leadership style as this, but y'all seem to get along best." I said, "Why?" and they were like, "Well, you have similar personalities, and y'all were talking back and forth." They had canceled her out because she wasn't a male, and they said she couldn't lead because they didn't have a sense of protection. So, I said, "No, it's not fair how you all are assessing her, y'all are describing the previous leader as though you want a father figure, and we need a good leader. She had a strategic plan, she was genuine, and she described her leadership style." They looked at me like I was crazy. So, I said, "This is patriarchy!" I was like, oh shoot, and immediately, it was complete silence from everybody white. All those women!

I remember being intensely frustrated because no one made a comment, and no one acknowledged it, they all just walked away. I was microaggressed, I wasn't followed up on, and I felt like I was plunged into a corner. In the end, guess who was hired? It was the woman! She also didn't know the background of them not trusting her during her interview, so when she came in, they were all like different people and best friends, and I could no longer lead in that organization. The situation changed how I led and functioned in the office, and I left after that experience of feeling like, "Wow! They do not value

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me." I became more distrustful of the folks around me, and I couldn't be in that space anymore. It was detrimental to me, and it was almost like I didn't feel safe.

"I've been Complicit, I am Sure of It, but I Can't Think of Times in the Academy:" White Faculty Narratives of Critical Incidents of Whiteness

The Center for Pedagogical Excellence Advisory Board vs. the DEI Office

I think part of the issue of discussing critical incidents of whiteness with Black women, is that there are just not that many people of Color in my department, especially Black folks. So, when thinking about a critical incident, I thought about how many actual interactions I've had with Black women. There was a time when the Department for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Innovation (DEI) was established on campus, leading to the reorganization of The Center for Pedagogical Excellence. As a long-standing advisory board member, I observed that the decision seemed to be made unilaterally without much input from the board members. The advisory board, who were a majority of white folks, had a meeting with the leader of DEI, who was a Black woman, to discuss our concerns and to see if there were other options. I don't remember what the leader of DEI said anymore, but basically, the tone was basically like, "This is what we're doing, too bad, so sad, don't whine."

It was really bizarre, in most meetings that I go into, people are collaborative and cooperative. The advisory board felt like nobody wanted to listen to us. I think people will probably say this all the time about interactions with people of different races, like, "Oh, well, if a white man had behaved the same way, I would have had the same feelings about it." Maybe that's not always true, but I really felt like if anybody else had come into the room and behaved that way, I also would have been really irritated and put out. I don't think those feelings were because she's a Black woman, I didn't understand how she

thought this would be a productive conversation. It just doesn't make much sense, like the whole point of The Center for Pedagogical Excellence is to like guide faculty, especially in teaching, and yes, I guess DEI is important for that. But one of the main roles of the Center for Pedagogical Excellence is to guide new faculty orientation and to help people with their tenure and re-contracting packets, and those were all under the Provost. So, the university ended up restructuring the departments, with the Center for Pedagogical Excellence remaining under the Provost Office, with some collaborative initiatives with DEI. It was just strange that these initial decisions were made with no consultation, and it felt like the leaders were just like, "We're going to do what we want whether you like it or not!"

Black Woman Colleague up for Tenure, Voting in the Race Wars

There is this one incident that I struggle with still, and to be honest, it was not necessarily anything that I was in control of, but more of a witness at my previous institution. There was a Black woman, who was also disabled, and who I really enjoyed as a colleague and who should have gotten tenure, but she did not. I feel some sort of way, still, because I do not think people understood or appreciated her, and I think some of it is racist right? I guess, just to be fair, I honestly believe there was a woman of Color senior leader at the time too. So, I think that is the worst part for me. I've also seen Black women in my career have aggression towards other women of Color, like from a competitive spirit, which is not true of the community in and of itself, but it was my experience previously, but is not the case everywhere. I feel like it still stings and sits with me because, as a white woman, I am not in a position of power. I am, in general, and have privilege, but in a moment like that, it was not my department, it was not my

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program, I am not on the college committee, and I am not in the Dean's office. It was traumatic, and it gives me pause. I think it is a secondary kind of vicarious trauma that blocks me from seeing other incidents. If there is someone who is a person of Color who can do this to someone else, then I, just by being born, have committed a lot of these things. How can I not see that about myself?

There was another time when we needed to vote on a department chair, and it was the craziest thing I've ever seen. This had nothing to do with me, but the department chair vote turned into a white woman faculty who was going to run, and a Black man faculty member who was going to run. It was a typical departmental vote, but it ended up being a tie. So, the department had to go through all these other channels like the Dean's office and the Provost's office because it literally turned into a good portion of the Scholars of Color teaming for the Black man to get the department chair vs. a majority of the white faculty teaming for the white woman. I remember thinking then, "Is this a race war? Is this about race? Is it about competencies? Is it about who could be a good leader?" I remember asking myself all of these questions, and I ended up abstaining from voting, which was even worse, because that's my complicit-ness in that I didn't want to be part of the race wars and I also valued both as colleagues. I was fine either way with whoever was the Department Chair, but I can't get down with the ugly. I also think I was dumb, I don't think I was cognizant enough to be like, "Why can't I just vote in support of the Black man, why didn't I?" I knew my decision wasn't about racism, my decision was about track-record of what would happen from a competency standpoint, but I also couldn't handle that it became about race. So yeah, I would say it was an incident where I was complacent, and there was tension.

***The Lack of Institutional Protection for a Black Woman Student, #BlackLivesMatter
and a K-12 School***

This happened when I was in graduate school, and I was an instructor. I had a

student, who was a Black woman, and I thought she was a great student. She had

challenges outside of the classroom that many of my other students did not have—she

was the foster parent for her nephew, and she didn't have a computer or internet at home,

so we ended up getting her an iPad. She got an 'A' in my class, and I'm also a pretty

flexible grader. As soon as someone says, "I have to take care of a child," I'm like, "It's

cool, bring them to class, or we can figure it out!" I know not everybody is that way, and

I think she maybe had failed another class, and I later found out that the university was

going to kick her out of the education program. So, they planned to give her a Bachelor

of Arts degree in education, but without her being able to do student teaching, so she

wouldn't be able to get her teaching credential. I went and talked to the Dean, who was

white, who told me things like, "Have you even talked to her in person? She can't even

look you in the eye." I thought, "Maybe she's not looking you in the eye because you're

such a whoa ahhh!"— I thought it was racially coded, but this situation was way above

my pay grade, as I was still a grad student, so I stopped trying with the Dean. But then I

thought, "This is so awful that I need to take this to the next level!"

I was pointed to the DEI Director, who was a Black woman, and who I met

previously when I was on a panel. I set an appointment with her, and I thought she was

going to be able to get the student back into the education program. I told her what

happened, and she was like, "Oh, that seems concerning, I'll look into it." I later followed

up, and I didn't really get much of an answer, but I felt like she said, "There are some

things going on that you don't understand, and that's why we need to kick her out." I was

like, "I'm the instructor of record. What are these things? We need to make this happen!" I was really upset this student was being dismissed from the program, but I also didn't want to disrespect the Black woman DEI Director. I also didn't want to just defend this student because they were Black, but she also deserved to be in this program, and she deserved to graduate. It was also a whole thing because the university had put the Black student's picture on the pamphlet advertising the college and people had offered her jobs and mentoring based on the pamphlet. I was like, "Oh, so now we're putting the Black student on this pamphlet and saying, 'Oh, we have diverse teachers', and then we kick her out so she can't even teach because she doesn't have the credential?!" I was upset, and I basically burnt the bridge with the Director of DEI because there was definitely a conflict about the situation. In the end, the student got kicked out, and she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Education but without teaching credentials.

I had another incident with a K-12 school near our university campus. Two Black women from my institution had recommended me to do professional development at their kid's school, and one of them said, "They won't listen to Black people, but maybe they will listen to you." So, I had an idea to do professional development by getting everybody in my family to pretend that they were a parent or community caller leaving a voicemail, and then the teachers had to think to quickly re respond and resolve the situation. So, the teachers got in partners, and then they shared what they discussed and how they would react to the situation on the spot. My family member recorded a fake voicemail that was like, "Hey! I am a local cop, and I saw you have a Black Lives Matter flag out front, and I just wanna make sure that you're not presenting the cops and Black Lives Matter as antagonists." So, this specific group presents their situation and says, "This is our video,

and this actually is something that happened three years ago." A cop had told them to take the Black Lives Matter flag down at the school, and they did without question, which I didn't know, so all of this was coming up for me at that moment. So, I'm like, "Oh wow, okay, so this is something that you've gone over before, so what would you tell the cop?" And they were like, "Well, we've decided to invite the cop to the school and have an appreciate the cop day, so everybody can learn to love the cop."

I said, "Alright, I'm going to push back on that just a little bit. Will all of your students be comfortable around law enforcement?" You know, that just seemed like a weird thing to say, and then, a teacher responded, "Well, my grandpa's a cop, and he's not racist," and I was like, "Nope, no one's saying that. I'm gonna come out of the closet here and say the guy who made this video is my family member, and he actually is a state detective, and we have conversations all the time, where I say, all cops are bastards." Those in the room were like, "All cops are bastards? How can you say that? My brother, dad, cousin, son, whoever is a state trooper, I thought this talk was gonna be about racism today, not about cops?" I was a little bit surprised how quickly this had gone off the rails, and I was trying to listen and bring it back to like, "It doesn't really matter if your family member is a cop, what matters is that the reality is, you may have some students that might not have the relationship you want them to have with the cops for contextual reasons."

They were not even having it as a discussion moment because they acted as if they had never heard of all cops are bastards (ACAB). They thought I had made up that phrase on the spot. I was like, okay, "Well, it might also be a problem that you're putting a Black Lives Matter flag up without doing any contextual research about what Black

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Lives Matter stands for, you've never heard of ACAB?" So, this went on for 30 minutes, and then the teacher was like, "Well, let's all just sit quietly for five minutes and reflect on what just happened." Some of the teachers ended up staying behind afterward, and everybody else stormed out. A week later, I had a meeting with an administrator to talk about this situation, and I was not scheduled again to facilitate the professional development, and I think I got fired! As I reflect on this incident, it continues to tell me how prevalent whiteness as an oppressive force is in workspaces at my institution, in my communities and in outside schools, and that I benefit from it. I mean, I made money from that K-12 school! Actually, the last email I sent their administrator was like, "You owe me $800, send that check asap!"

Chapter 5

Findings

In this study, I engaged with three Black women, two white women, and a white genderqueer faculty member to uncover critical incidents of whiteness in the academy. In Chapter Four, I presented a (re)construction of the *critical reflection* element of counternarratives (Miller et al., 2020) of the Black women faculty, and the narratives of racial reflexivity of white women and genderqueer faculty. The presentation of the counternarratives and narratives highlights participant's experiences of critical incidents of whiteness, which were (re)told by the participants from their engagement in the CIT and timeline drawings. In particular, I shared portrayals that were most salient to the participants that I noted after engaging in the analysis of the data, as well as stories that were relevant to the research questions. The portrayals of the counternarratives and narratives illuminates the voices of the participants, relying on their true words to share their emotions, expressions, and experiences.

In this chapter, I highlight the findings from the research that I generated from the data analysis. In engaging in the four 'listenings' of The Listening Guide (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan et al., 2003), I identified eight themes from the research. The findings encompass four themes foregrounded in the counternarratives of the Black women faculty, which include: (1) Encountering and Counter-Navigating White Colleagues' Whiteness, (2) Silencing and Separation as Forms of Protection, (3) Driving Justice through Advocacy and Community, and (4) Collaborations with White Women who Counter Whiteness. The four themes from the narratives of white women and genderqueer faculty include: (1) Critiques of Self and Complacency in Whiteness, (2) Lack of Intersectional Perception with Black Women Colleagues, (3) Observations of

Institutionalized and Internalized Oppression, and (4) Negotiation of Power and Privilege. In the following sections, I detail each of the eight themes which are further supported by excerpts from the narrative interviews.

Black Women Faculty

The Black women faculty members, Drs. Zora, Alana, and Shelly, possess distinct lived experiences as individuals; their experiences are also interconnected due to the shared realities they face at the intersections of race and gender within the academic environment and wider society. Dr. Zora is an Associate Professor and has worked in her role for the past two decades. She is also a wife and has a passion working with young racially minoritized students. Dr. Alana is an Assistant Professor and has an enthusiasm for implementing critical theory to practice in higher education. She is also a mom and has an enthusiasm for all aspects of social justice. Dr. Shelly is an Assistant Professor, and she is also an immigrant to the U.S. and has a focus on equity and international work.

Each of the Black women faculty reflected that critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace did not take much recollection, as those incidents were often emotional and harmful, and therefore these events were imprinted in their memories. In particular, Dr. Shelly and Zora stated that the timeline drawing helped them to recall the emotions they were feeling during the incidents, and Dr. Alana stated the CIT and timeline drawing prompt helped her to visualize the chronological order of her experiences of critical incidents of whiteness throughout her career. Overall, the individual voices, counternarratives, and timeline drawings of Black women faculty in the study revealed the effects of whiteness in the workplace, both at the interpersonal and structural levels, as captured in the four themes further detailed below.

Theme 1: Encountering and Counter-Navigating White Colleague's Whiteness

The three Black women faculty recounted several critical incidents of whiteness with white colleagues, supervisors, and white students in the academy. The problematic incidents took place during their roles as faculty members and throughout their educational trajectories, making critical incidents of whiteness common occurrences in their experiences. In particular, in their roles as faculty members, Drs. Zora, Alana, and Shelly documented frequently encountering and counter-navigating white colleagues whose (inter)actions sustain the status quo of whiteness and oppression in the workplace. Specifically, the Black women described encountering colleagues' whiteness through the following three ways: "racial homework", "pressures to become more like certain white colleagues", and "managing the process to challenge whiteness." In their experiences, white colleagues who maintain existing hegemonic conditions contribute to workplace environments which often require Black women faculty to counter-navigate whiteness, such as having to make pedagogical adjustments or being placed in positions to challenge their white colleague's perpetuation of whiteness and oppression. For instance, one Black woman faculty participant shares that she often takes on labor from white colleagues who seek validation that they are doing racism 'right.' She emphasizes:

> My colleagues will come to me— I make this joke about racial
> homework—they'll bring their racial homework to me and be like, 'Tell me I'm a
> good person,' or 'Tell me I'm not racist.' So, I feel like there's a lot of that labor
> that comes when you don't ask for it, and you just are existing, and people sort of
> expect that of you. Especially when you're a woman, there are assumptions about

being maternal or warm, and I think by nature, I think I am those things, but like

I'm not a mother.

In this instance, the Black women faculty describes how her white colleagues often assume that she will be nurturing of their "racial homework" and supposed antiracist efforts. For her, this requires extra labor to counter-navigate white colleagues who hold expectations for her to be maternal and caring in conversations about race. In a second interview, this participant later reflected that the frustration for her, and likely other Black women, is that there is the everyday labor of being a faculty member, plus the added layer of addressing racism. She shares:

I would characterize [critical incidents of whiteness] as a default to innocence and a default to surprise, which may or may not be insincere. I find that frustrating because, as a woman of Color, and as a Black woman in particular, you always have to police people's emotions and, like you, feel like you are subjecting everyone to a guilt trip, which I don't like to do… like, I'm not people's caretaker. So, I'm not invested in being like, 'You did a bad thing. I want you to understand how you did bad things.' So, I think critical incidents of whiteness are oftentimes imbued with this, and it's a protective measure, but in a sense, like, 'I have no idea what you're saying, I did not mean that at all.' Like, this total shock, which sometimes feels disingenuous because you are really smart, and you do exist in the current world, where you understand comments, context, and interactions. So, you are not as innocent or as surprised as you are pretending to be, which sort of exacerbates the tension of the moment because you have to deal with the comment or the incident itself. Then, you have to deal with the additional layer of

getting [white] people to admit to something when they are feigning a lot of innocence.

As noted in the excerpt, in encountering critical incidents of whiteness, not only is there a harmful impact from the incident, but then the racialized situations are often further exacerbated by white colleagues' automatic defaults to innocence and an element of surprise that the situation is racialized. In these specific participants' experiences, instead of the racialized incident being acknowledged and addressed, white colleagues tend to divert to innocence to undermine racism, which ultimately centers her white colleague's whiteness.

One of the Black women faculty members recounted an experience where she faced challenges within a department culture that did not appreciate her constructivist pedagogy. Despite her student-centered and open-minded approach, her white colleagues did not value her as an individual or as an instructor. Specifically, when the Black woman participant was first employed at her HWCU, she experienced white colleagues who sought to enforce their authoritative pedagogical views and practices upon her, so that she could receive more positive student evaluations and earn tenure. She voices:

I had to make so many adjustments [to my instruction], which was really hard because I believed the way I was teaching and the way I was encouraging students to think and talk… But… even though [constructivist pedagogy] was articulated from leadership in the program that was good practice and welcome, it wasn't so much supported. It was kinda like, 'Yeah, you better just go in there and do some direct instruction, so you can get the kind of evaluations so that you can get you tenured.'

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This participant further stated that in her first year as a professor, students did not welcome her constructivist pedagogical viewpoint, which was negatively reflected in her student course evaluations. While her departmental leadership stated they supported constructivist pedagogy at the time, it was not always encouraged in practice. Further, this participant encountered and counter-navigated white colleagues who prescribed their instructional framework on to her as a faculty member. These overarching dynamics from both the leadership and her white colleagues made her feel undervalued in the department. She states:

> Although I had good relationships with my white colleagues, I felt very misunderstood. Not seen for who I am but seen for how I can become more like certain white colleagues in that department. That was really troubling for me because I felt like I knew who I was and who I was working to become, and for some reason, that wasn't valued.

Upon reflection, this Black woman faculty member discussed that the interactions with her white colleagues who failed to appreciate her worth as an individual and as a constructivist professor compelled her to leave that department. In making the decision to leave her department, she tackled with some reservations of doing so, in considering the perspectives of her Dean and faculty peers, however, she decided that transitioning to a new department was an important career move. In leaving that particular department, she escaped an hostile environment and sought out an opportunity elsewhere that was more supportive and aligned with her pedagogical practices.

Likewise, another Black woman faculty participant shares her experience of navigating her dual roles as both a professor and an administrator. In these capacities, she

frequently encounters white colleagues who adhere to harmful pedagogical practices, and

as a part of her administrative role, it often becomes her responsibility to actively

challenge and confront these practices. She states:

> I'm responsible for managing the process to challenge [whiteness], that's when I'm
>
> called into question [by white colleagues] right like, 'Well, I have more years of
>
> teaching experience than you.' Yeah, but you are still out here being a racist, so
>
> fix it. Or when they lean into their scholarship, publications, and relationships
>
> with people in the academy, and now I have to say, 'Yes, but in your classroom,
>
> Black people feel unsafe, and members of the LGBTQ+ community feel unsafe.
>
> Your curriculum is causing curricular violence and pedagogical violence against
>
> people who are historically marginalized.'

In her capacity as both an administrator and a professor, this participant regularly

navigates the dynamics of managing her white colleagues' whiteness, curricular violence,

and harmful pedagogical practices. To be specific, *curricular violence* refers to harmful

aspects of curricula that reproduce white supremacy or other forms of oppression (hooks,

1994; Patton, 2016). Similarly, *harmful pedagogical practices* describe teaching

methods, strategies, or approaches that suppress student voice, discourage participation,

or promote an oppressive, hierarchical classroom environment (Ladson-Billings, 2014;

Leonardo 2008, 2009, 2013). In this instance, the Black woman faculty participant

describes white colleagues who perpetuate curricular violence and harmful pedagogical

practices through a lack of cultural responsiveness and through exclusionary pedagogies

and practices for Black and LGBTQ+ students in the classroom.

As part of her administrative role, this Black woman participant is frequently tasked with confronting those harmful praxes, however, she often encounters resistance from white colleagues who deflect the conversation by emphasizing their teaching, scholarship, publications, and connections within the academic community. She also further reflected on the paradox that some of these white colleagues, despite maintaining harmful practices, also contribute to social justice causes and participate in protests. To counter-navigate these situations, she intentionally silos her roles so that she can remain ethical in her interactions with white colleagues. To put it differently, the Black woman faculty member expresses that she does not let her administrative duties (e.g., addressing and managing harmful pedagogies) directly impact her other role as a professor (e.g., teaching and research), so that she can remain collaborative with white colleagues. While she often silos her positions and relations, the participant elaborates that her white colleagues' negligence does contribute to extra labor, especially when students are experiencing violence and harm in the classroom.

Lastly, a Black woman faculty participant emphasizes the ongoing task of managing and confronting whiteness in the workplace, frequently hampering the success, creativity and innovation of herself and other Black women faculty members. She says:

I think the academy and faculty work can be quite remarkable and really, really beautiful when people just allow you to do your job… I will speak for myself, and I would venture… that this is the case for a lot of Black women. We just want to do our jobs, and when we're allowed to do that, I think there is a lot of creativity, innovation, and dedication that can come from that. So, I think friction happens when emotions or stereotypes stand in the way… But as Tony Morrison said,

racism is oftentimes a big distraction because then we have to stop, address the

incident, address the racist practice or discourse, and then emotions get wrapped

up in that, and then that becomes like a whole big dialogue, interaction, debrief,

task force…but that does not leave the actual work alone, either. You still have

to get back to that.

Again, this participant relays that racism adds an additional labor to both encounter white

colleagues' emotions surrounding whiteness, in addition to counter-navigating instances

of racism through dialogue, debriefs, or task forces. As she shares, it becomes evident

that encountering whiteness and racism in the academic setting demands considerable

effort from her and other Black women. This laborious task not only diverts from their

ability to fully engage in their roles as faculty members. Throughout these

counternarratives, it is clear that the Black women faculty encounter white colleagues'

whiteness in a multitude of ways, such as racial homework, emotions and innocence,

pedagogical tensions, and curricular violence. The Black women faculty also describe

ways they take on additional labor to counter-navigate whiteness, such as adjusting their

instruction, challenging white colleagues who uphold whiteness and pedagogies of

oppression, or leaving their department.

Theme 2: Silencing and Separation as Forms of Protection

Upon reflecting on their experiences with white women in academia, all three

Black women faculty recounted obstructive racialized incidents with white women

throughout their careers. In those instances, as a form of protection, the Black women

expressed moments of silencing and separation from white women who perpetuated

whiteness through damaging interpersonal discourses and actions. As a means of self-

preservation, the Black women faculty members described moments of silence and separation from white women who perpetuated such behaviors. In other words, the Black women faculty experienced racist interactions with white women and, due to the distress caused by these incidents, sometimes found themselves unable to speak out. To further protect themselves, the Black women faculty members also described separating from individuals who exhibited harmful behaviors, such as racist white women. To be specific, the Black women faculty members described separating themselves by: distancing themselves from harmful white colleagues, keeping their professional circles small, and carefully considering power dynamics in the workplace. By separating themselves, the Black women described ways they strive to maintain their authenticity and challenge the expectations and racialized interactions that are often placed upon them in predominantly white spaces. At times, these critical incidents of whiteness with white women necessitated the Black women to pursue different positions or seek alternative employment opportunities.

In the first presented counternarrative titled, *The Out-of-the-Way Racist Administrator and the Coffee Racialized Remark*, a Black woman participant shares her experience of encountering a racially hostile work environment involving a white woman administrator who demonstrated racist behaviors. During the incident, a white woman administrator approached the Black woman doctoral student and made a derogatory comment to another colleagues, saying, "Oh, what are you doing, fraternizing with the help?" This comment had a deeply racialized undertone, leaving the participant perplexed and unable to respond in the moment. Following this incident, the Black doctoral student and the white woman administrator actively avoided each other, resulting in minimal

contact in their workplace. For the participant, this avoidance brought a sense of relief. She expresses:

> I noticed whenever we would be in the same room or interact, like crossing each other in the hallway or getting coffee, she would not speak to me nor make eye contact, and I wouldn't either. Honestly, that was kind of a relief because I was anticipating hostility or a debrief, and I would much prefer no interaction to another hostile interaction.

Throughout the remainder of the semester, the participant and the white woman went their separate ways, and the Black woman doctoral student was able to later report the racist encounters to the Office of Equal Opportunity—only after her contract was completed due to fear of retaliation from the white women administrator.

In this counternarrative, the participant further shares that in the following academic year, she took on the role of an administrative assistant in a different department while pursuing her doctoral degree. During her time in that position, she experienced yet another racially charged incident involving a white woman who belittled her achievements and undermined her work. In this particular incident, the participant's accomplishments in being offered a prestigious fellowship were acknowledged by the department chair during a college-wide meeting. However, a white woman coworker made a disparaging comment in front of everyone, saying, "Yeah, I couldn't believe this is the same girl who gets the coffee." This remark left the participant silenced, as it constituted another instance of racially charged discourse she was left to endure publicly. She reflects that while the comment itself may not have been explicitly racist, the situation was racialized due to several factors: she was the only Black person in the room,

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the white woman was demeaning different forms of labor on campus, and the comment was made in front of a large audience. The participant states, "Again, in the moment, it's so uncomfortable that you kind of brush it off and laugh, but later on, you realize how wildly inappropriate it was to say something like that."

In the second counternarrative titled *Peer Advocacy, Institutionalized Racism, and Racialized Stereotypes*, a Black woman participant shares her experience of encountering hostile discourse from a white woman colleague. The colleague made racially stereotypical comments about working with young African American students, describing them as having "big bug eyes and their hair sticking up." In the moment, the Black woman faculty member was unable to address the racialized comment, as she was left shocked at the racialized statement. She reflects:

> I could have very easily said, 'Wow, you know, that sounds really stereotypical,' and if it were someone that I had more of a relationship with [this person], they probably wouldn't have said that, but I had no retort, I had nothing. I just was shocked, kind of, you know, it's like [the situation plays] over and over again for me.

The experience profoundly impacted the participant, as she still remembers the moment vividly due to the disturbing nature of the comment. Another Black woman faculty member also described an instance in which was able to directly speak out about injustices in the workplace, however, she was met with further isolation and microaggressions from white colleagues.

In the third counternarrative of critical incidents of whiteness, titled *The Office of 14 White Women*, a Black woman faculty member recounts a situation where her white

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colleagues perpetuated patriarchy by disqualifying a white woman applicant because they believed she would not offer them protection. The Black woman directly confronted her colleagues, pointing out their need for protection as a patriarchal ideal. However, there was no dialogue or follow-up from her colleagues after the incident. Further, during the debrief session, her white colleagues made a backhanded offer for her to take the leadership position, even though she was not considered initially. This left her frustrated and distrustful of her colleagues, especially since they later hired the white woman applicant and acted collegial, despite their prior comments about her leadership. The lack of support from her white colleagues and the overall office environment led the Black woman participant to eventually seek a new position within a year, separating herself from her colleagues.

Furthermore, two of the Black woman participants, who currently hold Assistant Professor positions, highlighted the ongoing challenge of navigating power dynamics when it comes to speaking out or reporting incidents of racism in the workplace. One participant shared that racialized incidents are commonplace in her current role, which involve white students, faculty, and staff. Given the complex power dynamics inherent in the tenure-track process, including the dynamics of her relationship with the Dean as an Assistant Professor and her identities as a Black woman, she must carefully consider which "racial cards" she can play to report such incidents. For this participant, deciding whether to address racism involves weighing the potential energy and time required to report, and the responses and perceptions of institutional leaders regarding her experiences of multiple racialized incidents. She expresses the following:

As a Black woman at work, I have a certain number of cards that I can play. I'm going to encounter racist incidents all the time…so I have to decide when I [will] speak up because every time you speak up, it requires a lot of energy.

Also, I think every time you speak up, it requires [energy] because people are so afraid of being seen as racist these days and, or the label of racism, and a lot of time [the fear of the racist label] seems to outweigh the racist incident itself. So, if you're going to bring up something as racist, or you're going to document it… then [you have to be aware that] your peers are then required to react and respond in due measure. So, I feel like I can't be like the boy who cried wolf all the time, even if I'm experiencing these things all the time, I cannot bring up to my Dean or to my Associate Dean every time something like that racist happens because there's fatigue and I think I'll be…. taken less seriously. So… if I'm going to report something, I have two or three times where it has to be something big, and I'm using up one of my chances to be really listened to and to get a response. And I have, by the way, since I've worked here, there was one time where I really spoke up, and I was like, 'Okay, I'm using up one of my three cards.'

In these situations, the Black woman faculty member is faced with the task of deciphering among multiple racialized incidents and evaluating various factors. This includes assessing the perpetrator's response to being labeled as racist, contemplating which incidents senior leaders are more likely to address and respond to, and weighing the incidents of racism that she will have to endure alone. At times, she chooses to expend one of her "racial cards" in hopes of increasing the chances of receiving some form of institutional response to her experiences of racism. In some cases, she uses one of

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her limited "racial cards" to report incidents, gambling for the possibility of institutional response.

Similarly, another Black woman participant emphasized the influence of power dynamics when it comes to speaking out against harmful racialized discourses in the workplace. Reflecting on her experiences with white colleagues, she shared that she tends to keep her professional circle small as a way to cope and protect herself. She emphasizes:

> As it relates to power dynamics, it's the external [white women outside of my department] where… they impact me in the face of, 'Gosh, I really just don't want to work with them,' right, but they don't really impact me enough to where I make the decision to leave an organization. It's just that I don't deal with that person on the committee kind of thing. So, I kind of segment [my relationships] because I really try to stay within my circle of influence as much as possible as a professional, and I think that that it's not compartmentalizing, it is a form of coping skills and a protective factor for me when it comes to racial incidents, and some of that is because of those moments.

In this quote, the participant reflects on the influence of power dynamics in determining her professional collaborations with white women in the academic setting. She consciously chooses not to associate or engage with white women who exhibit harmful behaviors, and she strategically limits her professional circle to safeguard herself from potential harmful characters within the workplace. The participant also acknowledges feeling "blessed and protected" as she has not encountered too many critical incidents of

whiteness with white women, which she attributes to her deliberate approach of keeping her immediate professional circle small.

Overall, the experiences of Black women faculty in the study highlight the complex dynamics they navigate within the workplace, encompassing silence, separation, power dynamics, and the negotiation of their multiple identities based on race, gender, and employment status. These Black women often found themselves rendered speechless in racialized situations with white women, expressing "shock", "discomfort", and a "sense of inappropriateness' '. The Black women faculty oftentimes resorted to separating themselves from white women who perpetuated harm by avoiding interactions and limiting their professional circles as a means of self-protection. While some Black women were able to report incidents of racism, they described this involves carefully playing their "racial cards," to anticipate the responses of both the wrongdoer, senior leaders, and the institution at large. In other cases, Black women reflected they were only able to express their concerns about racist individuals only after leaving their positions, or if they did speak out about injustices, they described experiencing further silencing and separation from their white colleagues.

Theme 3: Driving Justice through Advocacy and Community

Within their interviews, Drs. Zora, Alana, and Shelly provided insights into their strategies for resisting institutionalized and interpersonal oppression, highlighting their dedication to strategic advocacy and community building. These Black women faculty members confront various forms of racism and sexism while actively challenging oppressive systems, not only for their own benefit but also for the betterment of others within their predominantly white higher education contexts. The concept of "driving

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justice" emerges from their experiences, describing their active resistance and confrontation of the oppressive systems that pervade their professional and personal lives, acting as a necessary tool to navigate the white waters of academia. Ultimately, driving justice serves a dual purpose: it acts as a form of activism, actively dismantling oppressive structures, while also enabling Black women faculty members to not just "survive and thrive" within their roles in academia. Specifically, the Black women faculty shared several ways they champion justice, which include: engaging in peer advocacy with fellow Black women faculty, maintaining a steadfast commitment to effecting change within their universities, fostering supportive communities with other Black scholars, and sharing their experiences in vulnerability, particularly with their students.

For instance, one participant exemplified her commitment to opposing racism and sexism by consistently supporting her African American faculty colleague. The Black woman participant recounted an incident where her colleague, who was on the tenure track, faced racial biases and hostility from students without receiving any support from the department, college, or university. These cumulative instances ultimately led her African American colleague to leave the institution when the tenure review process approached. Throughout the entire situation and beyond, the Black women faculty participant held unwavering support for her fellow African American colleague by providing peer guidance and advocacy to strategize ways to destabilize multiple forms of oppression. Some of the strategies to support her African American colleague included: offering ongoing socio-emotional support, strategizing ways to counter bias in the student course evaluations, and discussing pedagogical strategies. Notably, prior to the tenure

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review of the African American colleague, the participant wrote a letter expressing her support. She reflects:

It was painful to see her struggle because she was trying so hard…. and after a while, I just felt like I was the one trying to support her, and I couldn't do it by myself. I did spend a whole weekend, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, figuring out how to say everything the right way and help people understand where I was coming from, with my want to support her and why I thought she should be supported.

Reflecting on the situation, the participant acknowledges the pain and disappointment she still feels, recognizing that there was more the institution could have done to support her colleague who "cared so much." She notes there was some other colleague's support in the situation, however, within due time, she felt alone to support her colleague in confronting and resisting interpersonal and institutional oppression. While the participant ultimately did not have control over the outcome of the situation, she strategically committed to peer advocacy and support of her African American colleague to resist oppression. She still has a close relationship with her formed African American colleague, who is in a "better place now."

In addition to peer advocacy, the Black women faculty members describe other ways they drive justice in the academy. One such way is through their pedagogical approaches, to challenge students, especially white students, to critically examine and confront their deficit views of racially minoritized youth. As Black women faculty, they each reflected on how they aim to disrupt and problematize these perspectives, both in the classroom and within their mentorship of students. Specifically, one Black woman

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faculty participant frequently draws upon her own encounters of critical incidents of whiteness to co-construct difficult dialogues with her doctoral students about racialized environments in higher education. She explains:

> I've even done case studies with my students about [critical incidents]. So that's one thing I actually have done I've used some of the incidents that I've experienced as a leader, being an administrator or being a director and leading teams and offices. I have [assigned] de-identified case studies in the classroom… I've had to be extremely vulnerable to practice and model critical self-reflection [with my students].

In her role as an educator, she openly and honestly shares her personal experiences with students, emphasizing the importance of critical self-reflexivity to uncover instances of racism and discrimination within higher education. She also recounts in her early career as a tenure-track professor, one of her "most memorable moments" was working with her first Ph.D. student, who is a woman of Color. The faculty member and her student discovered numerous shared interests, such as being mothers, a common research focus, and a mutual enthusiasm for the student affairs aspects of higher education. Their connection grew into an "amazing relationship that nurtured into a co-mentorship," which was further solidified when the Ph.D. student served as Teaching Assistant (T.A.) during a summer course. Throughout the course, both the Black woman faculty member and her T.A. experienced harmful interactions from students. She further reflects:

> That summer brought me so much joy [connecting with the woman of Color doctoral student] because it was one of the roughest summers ever….I experienced every form of oppression, racism from students, sexism from

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students, misogynoir, misogyny, everything you could think of… ageism, blatant

disrespect. All of that came out of that summer, and my constant was actually

having that student. I remember we started talking about her dissertation, and she

said, 'I want you to serve as my chair.' Within that moment, I realized that I had

just developed this relationship with the student where she watched me

experience all of these forms of oppression, where I still showed up every day and

was still respectful to students. She also saw me questioning if I was okay to

continue into a second year as a faculty member…. I remember she wrote me a

note, she said, 'I don't want anyone else to serve as my chair because not only do

you know what I'm studying, but you also are helping me see that I can survive in

the academy and that I can thrive in the academy.'

In navigating multiple forms of interpersonal "isms" from students, the faculty members

and her doctoral student were able to depend on each other in the face of oppression

throughout their course. By relying on each other, they found ways to navigate the

ongoing harmful situations, to encourage, support, affirm, and be there consistently for

each other to "survive and thrive" in the academy. Another way Black women faculty

describe driving justice is through involvement in committee work to promote

social/racial justice and equity within their institution. One Black woman participant

shares she finds empowerment, over time, through her continuous involvement in

committee work. She expresses:

I think the real moment of empowerment came when there was an incident…. the

campus police took the young folks out of the car, had them kneel on the ground

and were criminalizing them and we wanted to make a statement [as a

committee]. We had to go through all these hoops to make a statement…. and at the time, there were like eleven of us who were in this one office, and we were like crafted this beautiful statement, and we emailed it to the people that were there, and everybody was right on it in the moment and wanted to say, you know how we felt about it, and what we thought the role of the university should be. And we had to go through so many hoops just to put that out on the college with an email blast, and we actually never were able to do that. But with the Office of DEI now… we don't have to hide our voice; we can have our voice and go public with it. That's been really huge, and it represents a long jump, a long leap, a long trajectory, a long movement that's been positive.

In this particular incident, a participant recounts an event on campus in which racially minoritized students were unjustly criminalized by campus police. In response, she and other committee members actively engaged in advocacy by drafting a letter of support for the racially minoritized students. However, due to bureaucratic obstacles and excessive requirements, the letter was ultimately not sent out to the campus community. Over the years, the committee has witnessed organizational changes on campus, such as the establishment of the Office of DEI, which has provided more avenues and opportunities for faculty committees to speak their truths and actively engage in advocacy on campus.

Finally, one Black woman faculty member shares her genuine enthusiasm for academic work, particularly in the areas of research and teaching. These moments allow her to operate within her *Zone of Genius*, a concept she learned from the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, led by Dr. Kerry Ann Rockquemore. For her, the

Zone of Genius represents a space where she can nurture her talents and passions towards true fulfillment and effectiveness in her work as a faculty member. However, she acknowledges that incidents of racism often introduce additional layers of burden and stress, detracting from the moments where she could otherwise find fulfillment in her work. To regain a sense of her Zone of Genius, she intentionally carves out space and opportunities to connect with other Black women scholars. Whenever she can be part of a community with fellow Black women scholars, she experiences a genuine sense of "camaraderie, joy, and valuable insights."

By engaging in strategic advocacy and fostering a sense of community, the Black women faculty members actively pursued avenues to drive justice, paving ways for them to "thrive and survive" within their HWCU workplace environments. They each recognized the importance of collective action and sought to create change by challenging oppressive systems, some of their efforts include advocating for their colleagues, supporting each other through peer mentorship, and actively working towards institutional change. Through their perseverance and commitment, the Black women faculty members demonstrated their determination to create more equitable spaces, for themselves, and for others within academia.

Theme 4: Collaborations with White Women who Counter Whiteness

Each of the Black women faculty members in the study express having some meaningful collaborations with white women who are colleagues, mentors, and friends. Specifically, the Black women faculty members describe having positive relationships with white women who possess certain qualities and engage in specific actions. These white women are characterized by: their willingness to engage in difficult dialogues, their

role as supportive mentors, their acknowledgment of complicity in upholding systems of whiteness, and their efforts to decenter themselves in the work of racial justice. For example, one Black faculty member shares that in her new department, she has found more positive relations with white women. She shares:

> Since being [in the new department], I felt like I was allowed to become myself, I was understood... It was so liberating, and it's with people I like! We're friends outside of work like we go to lunch. We go to the city. We go to dinner. We text on weekends. We're multi-racial. Right now, it's one Black faculty (me), our Asian American faculty member, and two white women. The four of us are really, really close, and they are all people that are really willing to do the work around race and culture. And it's not to say we don't make mistakes, it's not to say we don't offend each other, it's not to say we don't get a little touchy sometimes, but I know in their heart… the kinds of conversations that we've had, and they've been good conversations about the significance of us working hard to see each other and understanding how we might feel about certain things. I can depend on them; they can depend on me. I know that would not be in every department, I know that's my department, and I really, really value my colleagues.

She reflects that in the department, the group of multiracial women colleagues have created an environment where she feels comfortable expressing the impact of any racialized statements or actions that may arise. As a group of women faculty, they often discuss race and culture, and each remains open to feedback from others in the department, which has been valuable in their cross-racial collaborations. Outside of work, they have nurtured their friendship, which she enjoys, and which has been meaningful to

her. All in all, they can depend on each other, keep an open communication, and engage in difficult dialogues in their group. While she expresses that she has positive relationships with the women in her department, she also indicated a sense of caution. She states, "You never know at any given moment what might happen in a relationship, but thus far, our relationships have been solid." Thus, while she knows the genuine intentions and "hearts" of each of the women in her department, she is also aware that relationships can change at any time.

Likewise, another Black woman faculty member shares she has some positive relationships with white women mentors who have been "committed to her success" throughout her career. She demonstrates:

Some of my favorite mentors have been white women. I have not necessarily, personally encountered a majority of negative white women. One of my favorite mentors is a white woman. She helped me to understand how to navigate higher education and the academy through an understanding of my power and how to do it. She loves me and has been committed to my success since we met.

In her experiences as a Black woman faculty member, this participant has had limited encounters with negative or hostile white women. Additionally, she states her favorite mentor is a white woman mentor, who has played an instrumental role in shaping her professional journey and who has effectively shaped ways for her to utilize her power within the academy. During the second interview, this participant again expressed her deep gratitude for her white woman mentor. She also reflects that within her current department, there are white women colleagues who actively serve as "allies,

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advocates, and co-conspirators" to challenge whiteness and other forms of oppression. Reflecting on these relationships, she states:

> [It is] a privilege to say that [there are]... multiple white women who are actually trying to eradicate all of these 'isms' with me and forms of oppression within their own work, outside of work, and in the communities that they live in.

In this quote, the Black woman faculty member shares a sense of privilege she feels to be a part of a department where multiple white women share her commitment to challenging oppression alongside her. She highlights their ongoing dedication to this important work within and beyond the academic setting. Similarly, another Black woman participant reflects on her close friendship with a white woman who is committed to countering whiteness. She illustrates:

> She's just really down for the cause. She'll call out other white women. She'll say things like, 'We're part of the problem.' She will not default to innocence. She won't weaponize her emotion, her fragility, or her femininity. It's dope. I'm just sort of amazed, and she does it in a way that doesn't require false humility…. I think there's a way to recognize your whiteness, and there's a way to advocate for people of Color. There's a way to be reflexive without these, like rhetorical maneuvers or you try to evade responsibility, be it through emotion, be it through innocence, be it through even humor, where you attempt to distance yourself [from other white people] when you, in fact, whether you mean to or not, are an exasperating part of the problem.

In this quote, the Black woman faculty describes her white woman friend and colleague as someone who actively participates in critical conversations about whiteness. This

active involvement includes: calling out other white women, recognizing her own complicity in whiteness, avoiding the trap of white innocence, refraining from weaponizing fragility and femininity, and consciously decentering herself as a white woman. The faculty member further reflects that while some white colleagues attempt to engage in this work, they often evade responsibility by relying on emotions, innocence, humor, or distancing themselves from other white people, without acknowledging their own benefit from and contribution to whiteness. The participant further observes that it is possible for white colleagues to reflect on whiteness without burdening people of Color or feigning false humility. She appreciates that her white woman friend can navigate this work in a way that simultaneously decenters herself and challenges whiteness. In these instances, the Black women express that meaningful collegial relationships can be established with white women when they are willing to actively engage and support advocacy efforts while remaining critically conscious of themselves in the process.

White Women and Genderqueer Faculty

Dr. Kristen, Dr. Kiki, and Dr. Quinn are white women and a white genderqueer faculty member, respectively. Each of them possesses unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. Being white, they also benefit from systems of whiteness in academia and society. Dr. Kristen is an Associate Professor who is passionate about promoting gender equity in STEM. She is married and has young children. Dr. Quinn, an Assistant Professor, holds an unwavering passion for critical literature. They are married, queer, and a parent. Dr. Kiki, who is a Full Professor, is dedicated to mental health in education. She is married to a woman and has children. Throughout the narrative interviews, each of the white women and the genderqueer faculty members were reflexive of their white

identities and roles in anti-racism. While they could critique their past practices and interactions in sustaining whiteness, they also acknowledged their inability to recognize critical incidents of whiteness that affected Black women in their workplace. Overall, the study revealed the individual experiences and narratives of these white women and genderqueer faculty, shedding light on their understandings, perception, and observations of whiteness in the workplace. I further detail the four themes across the narratives of the white faculty members below.

Theme 5: Critiques of Self and Complacency in Whiteness

The white women and white genderqueer faculty members expressed their involvement in anti-racism work both within their institutions and in their broader communities outside of academia. Given their engagement in racial work, these white faculty members were able to critically examine and acknowledge the influence of whiteness on their thoughts, actions, and emotions, as well as recognize their complacency in perpetuating whiteness. Specifically, they each identified various ways they have (re)produced whiteness throughout their roles as faculty members, such as: perpetuating white perspectives in academic research, diverting attention from Scholars of Color in meetings, recognizing missed chances to address racism with other white colleagues, and acknowledging underlying assumptions associated with whiteness, such as diplomacy, humor, and friendliness.

For instance, when I asked a white faculty member to explain a time they made a mistake in antiracism work, they responded, "Oh! So, you mean a time I was a racist?" This particular white faculty member critiqued their whiteness throughout their life, and engaged in reflexivity about how whiteness benefited their upbringing and education.

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Throughout their time as an educator, they have continuously sought to challenge their

deficit thinking surrounding issues of racism. They share:

> Now, I would say I'm a work in progress. I'm still a racist. I'm still homophobic.
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> I'm still sexist, and I freely admit that to my students, who are like jaw-dropping
>
> and pearl-clutching. But I intend, or I try to actively be working on it.

For this faculty member, understanding their complacency in whiteness and other societal

inequities, including sexism and homophobia, is an ongoing and everyday process. They

have spent the past ten years listening and learning from racially minoritized

communities, often through platforms like "Black Twitter," to better grasp their

complacency and the impacts of racism. Additionally, they criticize the unspoken

presumption of their friendliness and niceness which is linked to whiteness and unearned

academic successes. They explain:

> I was told by an academic, she is also my ex-girlfriend of five years, and she is
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> Latina, and she said once that the reason I would function so well in academia
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> was that I had, like, a set of middle-class values that could not be unlinked from
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> my race. I don't want to put words in her mouth, but it stuck with me, and of
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> course, my reaction was like, "That's not true or whatever!" And then, six months
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> later, I was still thinking about it. I'm like, okay, I get what she was saying
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> because she grew up with like kind of trauma all around her— racism and
>
> structures— and I grew up not having to have those fights all the time. So, people
>
> frequently say to me, 'You're so diplomatic. You're so funny. You're so friendly.
>
> You're so…' and I think that those are probably—not that people of Color cannot

be friendly and funny—but I think that those are linked to my whiteness and my unearned successes.

With insights from their Latina ex-girlfriends observations, they now recognize how their whiteness and middle-class status contribute to an underlying assumption of politeness and friendliness in academia, which shapes unearned achievements as a faculty member.

Similarly, another white faculty member openly reflects on her identity as white individual in a racialized society. She acknowledges that whiteness influences "all aspects of every part of my being, both in thoughts, actions, and emotions that have been conditioned under white supremacy." For her, acknowledging, understanding, and critiquing her embodiments of white supremacy has been an ongoing process. She mentions that her education and experiences in higher education as a faculty member have played a significant role in shaping her understanding of her white identity and whiteness. She reflects:

> I feel like the cycle of self-reflecting right and thinking, thinking deeply, plus
> trying to process all the things that I'm witnessing myself and noticing, and then, I
> think with each degree came more, not just more like vocabulary, but more
> critical questioning of myself and practice…and so … I feel like a lot of that
> knowledge and self-piece resulted from having to do and engage in education.

With her formal education and background as a counselor and educator, she has acquired the necessary tools and skills to observe, contemplate, and actively dismantle white supremacy. However, she also admits her complicity in the process, acknowledging how

she previously perpetuated whiteness in her research and academic work as a faculty member. She contemplates:

> I probably perpetuated or was complicit [in whiteness] just by the sheer nature of doing the work I was doing because I was doing what the white man was doing [and] because I didn't necessarily want to work harder, I was like I'm going to work smarter, I am going to do what we've already doing and just be done… and not just as a white woman but as an untenured person… I also think of someone who identifies as LGBTQ+ …. I've always known, and I've always been hyper-aware of people, lenses, and views ...So I've always known the privilege that came across with that too, but complacent, I'm sure it's the gendered thing, too. The layer of gender-ness is just sickening.

Prior to achieving tenure, she admits to upholding the racialized status quo in her scholarship. She did this by (re)producing academic work that aligned with the norms established by white men in her field. This allowed her to avoid the extra effort required to challenge those existing norms. Furthermore, as someone who identifies as LGBTQ+ and white, she acknowledges her privilege within the academic setting, as she recognizes that others in the academy have generally not been resistant or oppositional towards her viewpoints. Throughout her tenure, she has since sought to actively promote racial justice within white in her predominately white women field.

During our conversation, this white faculty member shares that she is frequently present in academic spaces where Scholars of Color make up the majority, and where she is one of the few white individuals. Prior to entering these spaces, she consciously reminds herself to refrain from speaking, aiming to provide room for others to voice their

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opinions. However, upon reflecting, she realizes that despite her intention to let others speak first, she often finds herself habitually interjecting into the conversation. She specifies:

> In a complicit way, I probably divert attention at times from other people. The difference is I know it's happening before it's happening, but I'm trying not to do it. And then I'm really pissed off after the fact and thinking about it as well.

In self-reflection, she acknowledges the challenge she faces in attempting to hold back from speaking before Scholars of Color and giving them the space and opportunity to share their opinions. She recognizes her complicity, as she is accustomed to expressing her thoughts and ideas in conversations. Additionally, she shares her ongoing commitment to unlearn the conditioning of whiteness and white supremacy both within herself, and within her professional practices.

The third white faculty member, too, acknowledges her privileges as a faculty member, especially since she comes from a higher socioeconomic class and went to prestigious universities. As a faculty member, she critically examines her own actions that have perpetuated whiteness in her roles. In particular, she named instances where she made statements that were dismissive, invalidating, or microaggressive towards Black students in her classrooms or on campus. She shares that since the murder of George Floyd and the heightened visibility of the Black Lives Matter Movement, antiracism has become a more prominent focus in her thoughts and work. Before the summer of 2020, she acknowledges, "I wasn't actively promoting racism, but I also wasn't actively opposing it." The national racial reckoning during that time played a significant role in her realization of her lack of engagement in antiracism efforts. Since

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then, she has taken steps to initiate conversations about race with her children and actively participate in antiracism work in her classroom and within her institution. Additionally, she recognizes areas where she could have done more to address race-related issues with other white women colleagues. She expresses:

> I think we went to one of the implicit bias training or something like that, and [my white woman counterpart] was talking about how like she was really worried about her kid…getting into college because he's a white… and I was just like, 'Oh, yeah'..…And I wish I'd been like, 'Your kid's going to be fine. You don't have to worry about this!' It was an opportunity to interrupt some racist thinking that I didn't take advantage of. I think, [I didn't say anything] in an effort to sort of keep the peace, to not make her uncomfortable.

She reflects on this specific incident where she had a missed opportunity to engage in a dialogue with her white woman colleague who held racist viewpoints, despite both of them participating in implicit bias training. She also chose not to respond in order to maintain peace. I shared with the participant that I too, continue to work towards addressing racist remarks in the moment with other white individuals. She recognizes that her involvement in antiracism work should be to "make [more] white people uncomfortable in a good way", and she seeks to have more uncomfortable discussions.

In the ways mentioned above, the white faculty members critiqued themselves and their practices and viewpoints to recognize instances of racism. Specifically, they critically assessed their complacency within the structures of whiteness within the academic environment. However, they also acknowledged that their whiteness hinders their full awareness of this complacency, particularly concerning their interactions with

Black women colleagues. As each of the white faculty members were unable to name

critical incidents of whiteness that impacted Black women in the academy.

Theme 6: Lack of Intersectional Perception with Black Women Colleagues

In reflecting on critical incidents of whiteness with Black women, all three white

faculty stated they could not recognize or recall instances of their complacency in

whiteness that impacted Black women colleagues. While the white faculty members

acknowledged the likelihood of such incidents occurring, they were unable to pinpoint

those specific racialized incidents. Two of the white faculty participants, who also

identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community, and often made sense of their whiteness

alongside their queerness, specifically mentioned "blind spots." These "blind spots"

hindered their ability to thoroughly examine incidents that affected Black women within

the academic context. Considering that "blind spots" could be a potentially ableist term

because it uses a metaphor that relates to vision impairment or blindness to describe a

lack of awareness or understanding, I have replaced it with the term, *a lack of*

Intersectional perception. A lack of Intersectional perception is a descriptive term that

signifies an unconscious lack of knowledge or awareness that restricts an individual,

particularly white individuals, from recognizing and understanding the Intersectionality

of race and gender and the ways in which their actions or perspectives may perpetuate

racism and sexism.

When prompted to be reflexive of incidents that have affected Black women, one

white faculty member shared her struggle in creating a timeline drawing. She attempted

to complete the drawing multiple times but found it challenging to capture any incidents

involving Black women, resulting in her inability to complete a drawing or name a

critical incident of whiteness. Despite contemplating the prompt several times, she expressed difficulty in recognizing or recalling moments where her actions perpetuated whiteness specifically with Black women, although she could remember instances involving Black men. She explains:

> I have to admit, I can think of incidents, essentially, that I've watched or encountered with Black men, but I can't actually picture an incident enough to put on a timeline with Black women. I think that's very telling in some ways of me, in the sense that I've always been hyper-focused and understanding of Black men, and have I just by default not paid enough attention to Black women? I don't know the answer… all I can come up with is that I continue to question inquisitively.

This white faculty member acknowledges that she has been overly focused on men of color, particularly Black men, in her work. She questions whether this focus has resulted in her not giving enough attention to Black women, which may explain her lack of awareness regarding how her actions may have impacted Black women colleagues. As such, instead of recounting a specific incident involving Black women, she shared the narrative titled *Black Woman Colleague up for Tenure, Voting in the Race Wars*. In this narrative, she recalls a contentious vote for the Department Chair position, which became a divisive issue between a Black man and a white woman who were both candidates. In the department, the Scholars of Color largely supported the Black man, while white scholars predominantly supported the white woman. Recognizing the racial dynamics at play, this white faculty member chose to abstain from voting. She views these instances as an act of her complacency in whiteness, as she now reflects she should have voted for

the Black man. Again, while she can acknowledge her complacency in this instance involving a Black man, she struggles to provide personal examples regarding her interactions with Black women colleagues. Recognizing her lack of Intersectional perception specifically with Black women colleagues, she further reflects:

> I feel like it doesn't matter who you are [as a white person], and I would consider us as advanced knowledge white people, right, that we still [perpetuate whiteness] every f****** day, and there's no argument on that. I just feel like I want someone to walk around and be like, 'Blind spot, blind spot, blind spot.' It's not even the mental load of second-guessing, it's the mental load of how can you not see it, where are you missing to not see it?

In this excerpt, the faculty member acknowledges that despite considering herself knowledgeable on racial issues as a white person, she still lacks racialized and Intersectional perceptions, which hinders her understanding of how she contributes to whiteness in the workplace with Black women. She recognizes that she likely perpetuates whiteness on a daily basis, as many other white individuals do, but struggles to identify specific instances involving Black women. Further, as a scholar researching mental health and education, she is acutely aware of the perpetuation of trauma that can cause further harm, particularly for Scholars of Color who are often "hyper-alert" and have to adapt their behavior in the face of oppression through "code-switching". While she is fully cognizant of these experiences, especially given the current socio-political climate, she is uncertain about her role in countering these dynamics beyond being aware and open to being called out on her lack of Intersectional perception.

Similarly, in another timeline drawing depicting critical incidents of whiteness, a white faculty member encountered difficulty in naming specific incidents where they were complacent in perpetuating racism towards Black women. In their narrative titled *A Lack of Institutional Protection for a Black Woman Student: #BlackLivesMatter and a K-12 School,* the faculty member recounted instances where they sought to actively advocate for racial justice. One such incident involved the white faculty member being referred by two Black women from their institution to conduct professional development at a nearby school. In this instance, the white faculty member encountered resistance from K-12 teachers who pushed back on key aspects of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement. While the white faculty member eventually got fired from the professional development role due to disagreements with the K-12 administration, they also recognized they financially benefited from the situation. In further reflecting on their timeline drawing and acknowledging that they were unable to identify specific instances of complacent with Black women colleagues, the white faculty member shared:

> I was thinking, like, 'Why is nothing coming to my head where I'm not the one doing the calling out, like immediately?' And then I was thinking, 'Is it because I am a bit more reserved or quiet? Do I not spend enough time with critical people or People of Color? Am I just like super woke?' I mean, that is not the case. I have been called out a lot on my racism, but it's typically with Latino people, and I do spend a lot of time in Latino spaces. So then, I thought, 'Oh, wow, how sad,' I mean the cliche—I do have friends who are Black, but do they not feel comfortable calling me out? Anyway, that's kind of been going through my head. I do get called out frequently, it's just typically with Latinos.

As this white faculty member reflects, they acknowledge that they have been called out on their racism, particularly in Latino spaces. They further mention that typically the Black women they have worked with were their supervisors or Deans, so they tended to be quiet in those interactions, especially considering their position as an untenured faculty member. They also note having a close Black woman colleague with whom they engage in conversations about racism, and that these conversations primarily revolve around discussing racist incidents involving students and their collaborative advocacy efforts at their institution. In reflecting on their collegial relationships and interactions with Black women, the white faculty member further recognizes that their Black friends or colleagues may feel uncomfortable calling them out on their racism. The white faculty member indicates that their personal lack of Intersectional perception with Black women colleagues may also be due to the reality that multiple forms of oppression are always in operation. They share:

> I was trying to think of [an incident] where I was part of the racist moment, you know? And I was like, it is so hard… I could think of a billion times when I've been homophobic, and I wonder if it's my whiteness that is creating this blind spot. I also think it's almost hard for me to come up with racist or homophobic or classist or gendered moments because it happens so all the time….I do it all the time, [try to] look for those blind spots, they're just so hard to see when it's not something you're attuned to, and I say this as someone who's like frequently blind to my blind spots about homophobia— my own homophobia when I'm a part of that group. So, it's extra hard to constantly be assessing them when it's about a

group that I occupy racially that is not marginalized. So yeah, I guess I'll just keep

perpetually doing that [looking for blind spots].

In their journey to comprehend their complicity within multiple systems of oppression,

including their own homophobia, this white faculty member acknowledges the challenge

of assessing the specific areas where they are complicit. They also recognize the direct

correlation between whiteness and a lack of Intersectional perception, which hampers

their ability to identify instances involving Black women.

Although their timeline drawing did not depict an incident of racism involving Black

women, in our first interview, this faculty member recounted a specific moment when they made

a racialized comment about culture and food to a Black woman colleague, who promptly called

them out. During the conversation, the white faculty member referenced their wife, a woman of

Color who also enjoys eating chicken feet. Expressing their personal dislike for chicken feet, the

white faculty member remarked to the Black woman colleague, "What you really need is a good

pork chop... or a good sirloin steak!" In response, the Black woman poignantly replied, "Well,

there's a reason we eat chicken feet and pig's feet, and you eat sirloin and pork chops… it's

because you were throwing us the leftovers, and that's what we learned to cook," drawing

attention to the historical contexts of colonialism and slavery. Throughout our interviews, this

white faculty member, in particular, candidly shared their ongoing commitment to consistently

recognize and deconstruct their everyday racism.

Similarly, the third white faculty member also struggled to identify critical

incidents where they were complacent in perpetuating whiteness with Black women.

Within their department, they noted a lack of Black women presence, with very few

People of Color overall. As such, she mentioned that she has had very few interactions

with Black women in the academy throughout her tenure. In her narrative titled, *The*

Center for Pedagogical Excellence Advisory Board vs. the DEI Office, this faculty

member recounted a specific meeting with a Black woman leader from the DEI Office.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the restructuring of the Center for Pedagogical

Excellence to be placed under the influence of the DEI Office. However, during the

meeting, all of the white Advisory Board members, including this faculty member,

opposed the proposed restructuring. They thought the responsibilities related to faculty

duties, such as teaching, tenure review, and re-contracting, should remain under the direct

influence of the Provost's Office. Reflecting on this incident, the white faculty member

contended:

> I don't think my personal whiteness affected these situations. It is possible that in
>
> that Advisory Board meeting, the fact that everybody else was white, besides the
>
> Black woman leader, affected the situation. But me, personally being white, I
>
> don't think it had anything to do with it.

Despite recognizing that most of the white Advisory Board members were against the

reorganization of the Center, and acknowledging the influence of the sole Black woman

leader advocating for the change, this white faculty member was unable to grasp how her

own whiteness played a role in shaping the situation.

Based on these excerpts, the white women and genderqueer faculty members were

unable to identify and deeply reflect upon incidents that may have affected Black women

within the academic setting, due to their lack of Intersectional perception. Despite their

ongoing efforts to combat racism and white supremacy in society and education, they

acknowledge lacking a comprehensive understanding of how their own racism impacts

Black women colleagues. As such, the white faculty members also emphasized that

recognizing and comprehending the impact of their whiteness is an ongoing journey, as they continuously question instances that may have affected Black women colleagues.

Theme 7: Observations of Institutionalized and Internalized Oppression

While the white faculty members lacked awareness of their own racialized impact on Black women, they did mention occasionally observing how structural oppression may affect Black women and some women of Color colleagues. Specifically, each of the three white faculty members discussed that institutional oppression may contribute to some Black women and women of Color demonstrating "internalized oppression," "modifying who they are," and having a "competitive spirit" in the academy. In these observations, the white faculty acknowledged overarching institutional oppression that contributes to these dynamics with a few Black women and women of Color colleagues.

For instance, a white woman faculty member shared her perspective on an incident she observed at her previous institution. The incident involved a Black woman colleague who did not receive tenure, and the white woman faculty perceived a sense of competition with a women of Color senior leader, which may have contributed to the challenging situation. The white faculty member noted that people at the university did not fully "understand or appreciate" the Black woman colleague, highlighting the presence of institutional racism. Throughout the event, the white faculty member emphasized that she had no control over the situation because it did not occur within her department, program, or college committee. She shared her thoughts, saying:

> [The situation] scarred me because it was the most blatant aggression I had seen
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> from a [woman of Color] in power to another Black woman in the academy…
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> [and] I've seen people not supporting each other, right?... But I look at that

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incident, and I look at what happened, and I pray that it never happens again because it caused this ugliness.

In this white faculty member's personal observations, she noted that institutional racism played a significant role in the denial of tenure for the Black colleague. This situation was further complicated by a perceived "competitive spirit" between the Black colleague and a woman of Color senior leader. According to her viewpoint, this dynamic created an unpleasant atmosphere within the department and college, which she hopes to not witness in the future. She also mentioned experiencing a "secondary kind of vicarious trauma" as a result of this incident, which she believes may hinder her ability to recognize her own critical incidents of whiteness that may have impacted Black women colleagues.

Additionally, this white faculty member shared that in equity meetings, on occasion, she has observed instances where Black women and women of Color, in her perspective, seem to have a limited awareness of racial issues or exhibit signs of internalized oppression. As a result, this white faculty member discusses that she has developed skills to engage in dialogue with her Black women and women of Color colleagues regarding racial consciousness or internalized oppression. She goes on to explain:

> I can't say that I do that with a conflicting tone, but I do it in a counselor-esque way, in a very question-oriented way that's not necessarily attacking… I can think of a couple of instances where [lack of self-awareness has occurred], and I am shocked and probably hurt…trying to see from their perspective as a Black Female, recognizing internalized oppression, but not necessarily wanting to point

that out blatantly. So, having to push back with a question, which then, collectively, gets answered… It is a skill.

Recognizing instances of internalized oppression, this faculty member states she engages in facilitating group discussions with her colleagues, a skill she has developed over time. She also mentions that she has acquired this skill through her experience in facilitating dialogues with racially minoritized students in her courses, focusing on topics such white supremacy. These experiences in the classroom have equipped her to have similar conversations with Black women and women of Color colleagues. To make sense of these instances and others, the white woman faculty member often visualizes a map of the complexities and interconnections of oppression across all aspects of society to pinpoint the relations and impacts of systemic racism and oppression. This allows her to identify and understand the relationships and impacts of systemic racism and oppression more clearly.

Another white woman faculty member also reflected on the potential influence of institutional environments on Black women and women of Color, noting that they may feel compelled to "modify who they are" within the academic setting. In the white faculty members' contemplation of power dynamics across race and gender in the academy, she considered her own critical incident of whiteness and discussed some of the potential broader impact on Black women and women of Color colleagues. She discusses:

I do wonder how much the structure selects for behaviors like that, women of Color who end up in…leadership positions who have had to modify who they are in the academy to be able to be successful and get into leadership positions. And so yeah, it's unclear…if she had to modify herself to be accepted or promoted.

In her observations, this white faculty member noticed that a woman of Color leader may have felt compelled to conform to rigid norms in order to thrive in the academic environment, which she attributed to the institutional structures of oppression. During our interviews, the white faculty member also discussed a personal instance in which she shared a traumatic experience during graduate school with a woman of Color colleague but received a troubling response. She shared:

> In a grant meeting… one of the women of Color, or I don't know how she would identify, but she definitely doesn't identify as white. She can be very abrasive and also is very opinionated and has victim-blamed me about experiences I had in graduate school that were very traumatic and then doubled down when I called her out on it. So, again this issue of, like, okay, what structures were in place that selected for that way of being for these women of Color? What was happening in the academy that…made them feel like they just had to sort of plant their steak and dig their heels in to be heard or be successful… that I don't feel like I have to do as a white woman.

In those instances, this white faculty member felt a sense of victim-blaming for her traumatic experiences and recognized the impact of institutional structures that may create conditions where Black women and women of Color feel compelled to assert themselves strongly. She observes that the structure of institutional oppression affects Black women and women of Color in ways that she, as a white woman, does not personally experience.

Similarly, another white faculty member shared in the narrative, *The Lack of Institutional Protection for a Black Woman Student, #BlackLivesMatter and a K-12*

School, an instance where they encountered tension with a Black woman who was a DEI Director. At the time, the academic program was considering dismissing the student for numerous reasons, which meant the student would not be able to earn her teaching credentials, preventing her from graduating and pursuing a career in the K-12 system. As the white faculty member attempted to assist the Black woman student, they encountered tension with a Black woman DEI Director and other institutional leaders whose decisions ultimately resulted in the dismissal of the Black woman student from the academic program. Specifically, the white faculty identifies compounding factors that led to the outcome of the decision to dismiss the Black woman student, which included: the white faculty who could have passed and better supported the student in their courses, the white man Dean who had "racially coded" comments about the Black woman student, and the institutional leaders, such as the Black women DEI Director who did not seem to assist the Black woman student.

The incident was troubling for the white faculty member, especially since the Black women DEI Director could not share specific details about why the student was being dismissed, even though the white faculty member was the instructor of record. The white faculty shares that in their perspective, the DEI Director did not support the Black woman student, however, they also acknowledge that they may not have the whole story or context of the situation. Reflecting on this incident, the white faculty member interprets it through a political lens:

> You know, politically, this is what we struggle with. If we had a woman
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> president, would it make a difference?... If we have a Black president, are we
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> post-racial? Like, obviously, we're not. So, I'm sure that in some sense, I thought

that I would find a racial ally that would support the student because this Director

was Black, but you know, in the end, I mean, I should have known this, it does

not matter because white people could have passed her through, you know... It's

so much more about the institution sometimes—not that we don't need

representation in these spaces, but yeah, it was like a hard conflict for me.

In the given statement, this white faculty member acknowledges that institutional

structures play a significant role in shaping the decision-making processes of faculty and

leaders in higher education institutions. In the instance, the white faculty member was left

frustrated by the situation, but also noticed that Black women leaders may often have to

carefully choose their battles due to various factors, such as conflicting priorities that may

require their attention, which can impact their decision-making processes and actions.

In the cited excerpts, the white women and white genderqueer faculty members

share their personal observations on how institutional environments may impact the

experiences of Black women and Women of Color, particularly in relation to internalized

oppression, interpersonal dynamics, and decision-making processes. The white faculty

members recognize that institutional structures may create circumstances where Black

women and Women of Color may feel pressured to compete, navigate complex decisions,

or in some cases, may internalize oppressive beliefs and behaviors, in ways that they as

white individuals, do not personally experience.

Theme 8: Negotiation of Power and Privilege

Finally, the white women and genderqueer faculty also reflected on how they

negotiate their racially inherited power and privileges in order to recognize and challenge

institutional and interpersonal oppression in the academy as faculty members.

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Highlighting instances of their efforts demonstrates their understanding of their roles, and their current efforts as white individuals to be agents of change. Specifically, the white women and genderqueer faculty considered negotiating power and privilege by considering: their roles within justice work at the national level vs. the local level, strategies for integrating antiracism and social justice into their lives beyond academia, and their awareness of their privileges and how these privileges shape their engagement in this work. For example, one white woman faculty member states that she often contemplates her roles in driving progress in social justice at the local or national level. She also alludes to the pressures of the individualized, neoliberal institutional environment and systems of rewards in the academy. She reflects:

> That is a worry actually for myself, for white women specifically, we do have positions of power, and we have to recognize that, and then we also have to do something with it. But that doing something with [power] doesn't have to be at the hands of the patriarchy and systemic stuff that is already in place, I don't need to become a Department Chair in order to feel like I'm supporting, let's say, women of Color and scholars of Color and removing barriers, right? That's one way. But to me, that's performative… even though I know it has implications for changing a small sphere of influence… I don't think my brain has moved from the individual to the collective, and it's really hard to do both. So, I feel like you also have to make a decision in that regard, do I work locally at my own institution, which I feel like I was doing in my own way for lots of things for a while. Or do you do this nationally, right? Because the reality is the academy rewards you for

what you do nationally, but they need you to do things locally so that people can do things nationally.

In the above quote, the white woman faculty member reflects on her role and power as a white individual in supporting Scholars of Color, and more specifically women of Color academics. She acknowledges the influence of institutional patriarchal structures on the experiences and outcomes of scholars of Color, but grapples with the academy's emphasis on national-level work. Currently, her focus has shifted to the national level, which has brought about feelings of anxiety as she strives to engage in antiracism work without causing harm. The faculty member also shares that she has recently experienced significant health-related issues, which further complicates her pursuit of balancing justice work with her personal well-being. She recognizes that navigating these complexities is a delicate balance for her, involving considerations of her own power, influence, skills, mental health, and livelihood. She further acknowledges that Scholars of Color face additional layers of complexity in this navigation. With these considerations in mind, she continues to question her roles and responsibilities in this work, indicating a willingness to critically examine and reassess her contributions, stating:

> You're not a white savior, right? Like this is a larger institutional piece [of oppression], it doesn't necessarily fall on you. But [white individuals] have a lot of skill sets from all of this [power] that could be extremely helpful. How do you utilize that in a very strategic way, both personally and professionally? And so that you can also live life and not just have an academic identity?

As an individual who acknowledges her racial privilege, she continues to grapple with the delicate task of balancing her efforts to challenge institutional oppression while strategically using her professional and personal skills, all while maintaining a fulfilling life outside of academia. A recent incident exemplifies this struggle: the faculty member encountered tensions with two white women co-authors who held racist viewpoints. These individuals were the editors of a widely used book in her field, which framed the topic as "at risk children and adolescents" rather than adopting a more empowering and positive perspective such as "at promise youth." Both the faculty member and another colleague were contributing a chapter to the book, but they ultimately decided to withdraw from the project. Their decision was motivated by their unwillingness to be complicit in a process that perpetuated harmful perspectives, as well as personal considerations related to family and health. The white women editors responded in a hostile manner, which served as a stark reminder to the faculty member of the deeply ingrained nature of racism, particularly among white women. Reflecting on this incident, she recognizes the pressure imposed on individuals to conform to academic expectations and the harm that is often caused in the process. She remains committed to finding a balance between her academic pursuits, challenging institutional oppression, and leading a meaningful life.

Another white faculty member expressed their ongoing quest to integrate antiracism, social justice, queering, and quare-ing into their existence, extending beyond their responsibilities as a faculty member. They described this endeavor as a "perpetual search" and stated the following:

I think teachers, professors, and academics need to make social justice an identity, meaning social justice is not part of the job, but it's a part of your life…. We need to be in D.C., at the Black Lives Matter March, at the Iran March, or at the abortion march…. this is what professors are supposed to be, we're supposed to be like the intellectual pushers…Every day, you would wake up and be like, 'Oh, this is part of my life!' … [white] academics seems to be need to be more holistic about what we believe our activism is….. I think if we accepted that being anti-racist or being for social justice, or being, queer, quare-ing was the identity of a professor, it wouldn't be like, 'Oh, look at I did the syllabus!,' it would be like every day, you would wake up and be like, 'Oh, this is part of my life!'... Again, I haven't mastered that way of being either, but it's my perpetual search.

This faculty member emphasizes the importance for academics, particularly white academics, to engage in activism beyond the boundaries of their offices, colleges, or campuses, as they believe it is crucial to speak out against injustices in spaces that extend beyond academia. They attribute their own growth and progress in acknowledging their own racism and confronting white supremacy to the influence of other white individuals who have demonstrated boldness, fearlessness, and a refusal to compromise in their antiracism work. This faculty member also constantly reminds themselves that the pursuit of revolution is ongoing and encourages themselves to engage in conversations about race on a daily basis. They strive to serve as a role model for their white students by embodying boldness, and reflect on their approach with the following words:

If I had to tell myself like I would say, 'Keep doing it', not because you want accolades, or whatever… but because I hope that my students can see that and

say, like, 'Oh, like it's okay to admit that you're racist, and then reflect on it

perpetually, and then fix it.'

For this faculty member, it is a crucial role for white individuals to continuously

acknowledge and address racism. They also shared an instance of their observations of

racism embedded in professional spaces, which can serve as an example of how white

individuals can be attentive of racism within their professionalized environments and

speak up to change existing language, policies, or formal structures embedded in white

supremacy. In this instance, the white faculty member shared that at a recent professional

conference, they noticed that the conference handbook policies stated that the conference

could "only take place in locations south of the Mason-Dixon line due to weather

conditions". They explained that the Mason-Dixon line historically symbolizes the

division between slave territory and free states, related to slavery. Although the faculty

member questioned whether Black people may have reclaimed the term, they decided to

raise their hand and inquire about the reference to the Mason-Dixon line in the handbook.

Within ten minutes, the board voted to change the wording in the handbook. This

experience prompted the faculty member to recognize the presence of white supremacy

within their institution, professional spaces, and communities outside of academia, and

that they seek to be more consistent in their efforts across multiple social movements.

Lastly, another white faculty member emphasizes the significance of integrating

antiracism and DEI into daily practices for white individuals. She highlights her recent

endeavors on campus, such as promoting equity in hiring committees, improving on-

campus interviews, and advocating for parental leave. By actively engaging in activism

related to gender equity, she has gained a better understanding of her responsibilities in utilizing her inherited racial privileges to dismantle racism. She states:

> I see it as my duty as a human and as somebody with a lot of privilege to work in this space. I was also like very involved in trying to advocate for parental leave…for a faculty and staff, and so obviously, the burden falls on women so clearly for that work, and it sort of opened my eyes to like how the burden of antiracism can't fall only on the people who are affected by racism because like they're tired from being marginalized, and their voices just aren't respected as much because of racism.

Through advocating for parental leave and addressing gender-related concerns at her institution, this white faculty member came to the realization that promoting antiracism within the university community is also her responsibility as a white individual. These experiences prompted her to reflect on her role within the academy to consider how she can better actively integrate social justice and antiracism into her advocacy efforts. In the aforementioned ways, the white faculty members discussed ways they seek to engage in a process of self-reflection and examination of their power and privilege within the academy. They aim to understand their roles in antiracism as white individuals and explore ways to incorporate social justice and antiracism into their personal identities. They also acknowledged the significance of leveraging their privilege to actively participate in antiracist efforts.

Chapter Summary

In this critical-constructivist narrative inquiry, I examined the experiences of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty members in the academy.

Relying on The Listening Guide (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan et al., 2003) as an analytical approach, I identified eight themes from their counternarratives and narratives. In this chapter, I presented the study's findings, which shed light on the counternarratives of Black women faculty and the perspectives of white women and white genderqueer faculty regarding their workplace environments and collaborations at HWCUs.

Black women faculty in the study shared their experiences of navigating hostile workplace environments characterized by whiteness and patriarchy. They discussed encountering oppressive behaviors from white colleagues and often took on the responsibility of confronting and challenging these dynamics. They also each discussed power dynamics in the workplace that played a role in hindering their ability to speak their truths. While there were some instances where reporting racist behaviors only occurred after leaving their positions due to fear of retaliation. To navigate these challenges, Black women faculty expressed strategic advocacy and often formed a community with other Black scholars. They also highlighted relationships with white women colleagues who are "down for cause" and who actively challenged whiteness and stood against multiple forms of oppression alongside them in the academy.

White women and white genderqueer faculty in the study engaged in self-critique of their whiteness, examining their past understandings, approaches, and practices that perpetuated racialized power dynamics in their roles as faculty members. While they were able to critique their whiteness in certain aspects, they struggled to introspectively recognize instances where they had harmed their Black women colleagues due to their own whiteness. Some white faculty members attributed a lack of Intersectional perception to their inability to identify their complacency in whiteness that impacted

Black women. While they could not name those instances for themselves, they shared

some observations of the impact of institutional and interpersonal racism on Black

women and Women of Color was discussed. Finally, the white women and genderqueer

faculty discussed their negotiation of power and privilege as they consider their roles in

antiracism and activism within the academy. In the following chapter, I further discuss

the findings, offer implications for research and practice, and share my final researcher

reflections.

Chapter 6

Discussion and Future Directions

In this critical-constructivist narrative inquiry, I examined the counternarratives of Black women and the narratives of white women and genderqueer faculty experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in their workplace environments at HWCUs. Although the participants were not employed at the same institutions and were not colleagues, their diverse experiences provided valuable insights into complex power dynamics and relations within the academic workplace. In Chapter Four, I presented the (re)construction of Black women's counternarratives, and the narratives of white faculty's critical incidents of whiteness. These counternarratives and narratives shed light on their realities and reflections of the cross-racial collaborations of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty in the workplace. In Chapter Five, I presented eight key findings that were constructed from the counternarratives and narratives of participants, using the Listening Guide (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan et al., 2003) as the analytical approach.

Overall, this research exposes critical incidents of whiteness to reveal ways in which whiteness is (re)produced in the academic workplace at both the interpersonal and organizational levels. The findings contribute to a nuanced understanding of the central tensions in the cross-racial collaborations of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty in academia. Additionally, the research provides critical insights for white leaders and faculty members to consider and implement to propel more diverse, justice-oriented, and equitable workplace environments. The comprehensive findings of the study address the main research question: What are tenure-track Black women, white

women, and white genderqueer faculty experiences of critical incidents in the academic workplace at HWCUs? The four research sub-questions include:

1. How do Black women faculty characterize and navigate critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace at the intersections of race and gender?

2. What are Black women faculty's experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace that involve white women colleagues?

3. How do white women and genderqueer faculty reflect, describe, and critique their complicity in whiteness in the workplace?

4. How do white women and genderqueer faculty engage in racial reflexivity to recognize the impact of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace on Black women?

In this chapter, I begin by providing a detailed discussion of the findings in relation to my research questions and conceptual framework—Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD. The discussion aims to enhance an understanding of the multiple truths of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty. I delve into the intricacies and implications of the study's findings, exploring the multiple truths that emerged from both the counternarratives and narratives. Specifically, I present pathways for white institutional leaders and faculty members to consider promoting antiracist, intersectional and justice-oriented workplace environments. These implications draw upon the generativity and transformative action elements of counternarrative, as outlined by Miller et al. (2020), in order to collaboratively develop practical implications for institutional and interpersonal change within higher education. Towards the end of this chapter, I acknowledge the

limitations of the study, propose potential avenues for future research, share my final reflections, and provide a concluding summary.

Discussion

Given the interconnected nature of whiteness and patriarchy at both the individual and societal levels (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990), engaging in critical discussions that encompass race and gender requires navigating the complexity and nuances inherent in showcasing the diverse truths, experiences, and perspectives of individuals situated within intersecting systems of oppression. It is crucial to acknowledge the multidimensionality of critical incidents of whiteness, recognizing the intricate interactions, power dynamics, and potential areas of conflict or solidarity that emerged within the context of this research. Conducting cross-racial research, particularly research that centers on whiteness to acknowledge and challenge racial dominance, is inherently intricate. However, the findings of this study play a crucial role in uncovering multiple perspectives of Black women faculty and white faculty, to provide insights for organizational leaders and institutions to foster anti-oppressive and collaborative workplace environments.

To provide a foundation for the discussion, it is essential to acknowledge the critical theoretical assumptions that underpin the findings. First, a structural and political Intersectional lens (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990) emphasizes that Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty experience distinct and unique circumstances within systems of racism and sexism. Second, whiteness and racism are perpetually active, and analyzing whiteness provides insight into the systemic and interpersonal impact of racism on racially minoritized individuals (Matias & Boucher, 2021). Finally, the exploration of

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oppression in the workplace is vital to identify pathways to counter and dismantle systemic and interpersonal harm, at the individual and organizational levels (Bierema & Callahan, 2014; Collins et al., 2015).

In this research, I utilized Intersectionality, Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS), and Critical Human Resource Development (CHRD) as frameworks to comprehensively examine the complex structures of oppression that impact cross-racial collaborations and relationships in higher education. By employing a structural and political Intersectional lens (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990), I was able to critically analyze and understand the intersecting dynamics of race and gender among tenure-track women and genderqueer faculty. Additionally, I drew on CWS scholarship to uncover how whiteness operates in daily workplace interactions, aiming to challenge racial power dynamics and dominance (Matias & Boucher, 2021). Moreover, the study incorporated Intersectionality and CWS perspectives to inform CHRD, which aimed to identify and dismantle whiteness and patriarchy, ultimately fostering interpersonal and organizational transformation within the academic workplace. Intersectionality, CWS, and CHRD provided a comprehensive and critical lens that informed the study's findings, discussion, and implications for creating Intersectional and antiracist workplace environments in higher education. In the following discussion, I analyze and unpack the critical incidents of whiteness as documented in the research, aiming to reveal the impact of, and ways to address interconnected forms of oppression within the workplace. In the subsequent discussion, I outline three major points: the impact of the inevitability of whiteness and patriarchy, the complexities of unmasking whiteness and complacency, and the multidimensionality of critical incidents of whiteness.

The Impact of the Inevitability of Whiteness and Patriarchy

The counternarratives of the Black women faculty members, Drs. Zora, Alana, and Shelly, captured their realities in encountering a multitude of racialized and gendered critical incidents with white colleagues who contribute to hostile work environments. The findings encompass four themes foregrounded in the counternarratives of the Black women faculty: (1) Encountering and Counter-Navigating White Colleagues' Whiteness, (2) Silencing and Separation as Forms of Protection, (3) Driving Justice Through Advocacy and Community, (4) Collaborations with White Women who Counter Whiteness. These findings align with existing literature on Intersectionality, which emphasizes the systemic marginalization and exclusion experienced by Black women faculty in academia, as well as the ways Black women are often required to encounter and resist oppression in order to cope, survive and be successful in the academy (Blackshear & Hollis, 2021; Carroll, 2017; Ferguson et al., 2021; Fries-Britt & Kelly, 2005; Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Lanier et al., 2022; Luna et al., 2010; Patton & Haynes, 2018; Pittman, 2012; Porter et al., 2022). This study uncovers new insights into how Black women faculty encounter and counter-navigate the perpetuation of whiteness by their white colleagues, while also documenting their experiences of both hostile and positive interactions with white women at HWCUs.

Throughout the study, the Black women faculty shared their experiences of being consistently placed in challenging situations where they were expected to educate, provide emotional support, and navigate the perpetuation of whiteness and patriarchy by their white colleagues. For example, one Black woman faculty member, who holds both a dual role as a faculty and an administrator, described how she often found herself in the

position of educating her white colleagues about the detrimental impact of their

hegemonic pedagogical practices on minoritized students. In response, these white

colleagues dismissed her expertise in critical practices and pedagogies by emphasizing

that they had more teaching experience, scholarly achievements, and network

connections within the academic community. Another Black woman participant

expressed the underlying expectation for her to be a racial caretaker to comfort white

colleagues' emotions and innocence, and affirm their supposed efforts towards racial

justice. These instances reflect the troubling mammy trope, rooted in the history of

slavery, which depicts Black women as nurturing figures content with servitude (Collins,

2002; Haynes et al., 2020; Howard-Baptiste, 2014; Patton & Haynes, 2018).

Thus, in addition to the harmful actions of some white colleagues and supervisors

that perpetuate whiteness and violence, Black women faculty also face an additional

oppressive burden of addressing white fragility (DiAngelo, 2019) and navigating

instances where white colleagues deflected to racial innocence (Accapadi, 2007; hooks,

1994; Leonardo, 2008, 2009), or assumed racialized ignorance (alexander, 2022; Daniel,

2019). As one Black woman faculty member explained, when critical incidents of

whiteness occur, there is an initial harmful impact, which is then intensified by white

colleagues' immediate claims of racial innocence. This white racial dynamic ultimately

reinforces whiteness and undermines the significance of the initial racialized incident and

the impact on the Black woman faculty member. Throughout the counternarratives of the

Black women participants, it becomes apparent that the constant need to confront and

navigate these diversions of whiteness adds to an already demanding workload that Black

women faculty already experience (Ferguson et al., 2021; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Porter et al., 2022).

Moreover, two Black women Assistant Professors revealed that power dynamics within the workplace require a delicate balance when it comes to speaking up or reporting racialized incidents. To be specific, Black women discussed being hyper-aware of the power dynamics in the workplace (e.g., whiteness and patriarchy) in addition to hierarchies in academic roles (e.g., supervisor/supervisee, Dean/Assistant professor). These power dynamics greatly influenced their ability to voice their concerns or report instances of racism, discrimination, and retaliation. This was especially true because institutional and interpersonal power dynamics favor whiteness, as the Black women describe having to consider: the white perpetrators' response; potential retaliation due to speaking out; their institutional leaders' response to them documenting multiple racialized incidents; and their personal labor and emotional capacity to endure the process of reporting racism. One Black woman participant shared that she frequently encountered racialized incidents as a faculty member, and oftentimes faced the challenge of deciding when to report racism, in carefully weighing that her senior leaders may only consider a limited number of racialized incidents. These complex and overarching power dynamics at both the institutional and individual levels contribute to the maintenance of oppressive environments, leaving Black women faculty members without adequate protection or support, which oftentimes has detrimental effects on their mental and physical well-being (Ghosh & Barber, 2021; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Turner, 2002).

The culture within the institution of silencing issues of discrimination results in a lack of accountability for white individuals and leaders who perpetuate racism in the

workplace. This culture maintains a lack of accountability, and also enables a workplace climate where white individuals and leaders who engage in racialized (inter)actions face minimal consequences. The institutional culture of a lack of accountability sends a message that acts of racism and discrimination will go unchecked, which reinforces a system that tolerates and condones such behavior. The absence of meaningful consequences for those responsible for racialized actions creates an environment of impunity, where harmful behaviors persist without repercussion.

Further, in regard to Black women's critical incidents of whiteness with white women, the experiences shared by the Black women faculty varied in experiences and intensities. For example, Drs. Zora and Shelly recounted multiple instances of racialized incidents with white women, while Dr. Alana expressed feeling "blessed and protected," as she has not encountered too many hostile encounters with white women. Despite these differences, all three Black women faculty members mentioned experiencing racialized and gendered discourses from white women colleagues, supervisors, and senior leaders. Some of the hostile experiences described by the Black women faculty members included being referred to as the "help," a reference directly linked to the demeaning mammy trope (Collins, 2002; Haynes et al., 2020; Howard-Baptiste, 2014; Patton & Haynes, 2018). They also encountered diminishing comments regarding their achievements and work ethic, which are known as racialized microinvalidations and microinsults (Sue, 2010; Sue et al., 2010). Additionally, they had to counter-navigate white woman colleagues making stereotypical comments about Black youth. These critical incidents of whiteness highlight the intersectional nature of the experiences faced by Black women faculty, where racism and sexism intertwine to shape their encounters with white women in the workplace.

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Overall, the impact of whiteness and patriarchy on the Black women faculty in the study encompassed various aspects. They faced the laborious task of addressing: (1) curricular and pedagogical violence, (2) navigating and considering the racialized discourses of their white colleagues, (3) experiencing silencing and separation from harmful white women, (4) seeking new positions in different departments or institutions to counter-navigate whiteness, and (5) grappling with the isolation that comes power dynamics to weigh the interpersonal and institutional consequences of speaking out and reporting racism. In the face of these dynamics, the Black women employed strategic actions to resist institutionalized and interpersonal oppression. One example of this resistance was a participant offering unwavering socio-emotional support to a fellow Black woman colleague who was experiencing harm during the tenure review. Together, the Black women colleagues strategized ways to counter bias in student course evaluations, sharing pedagogical strategies, and the participant wrote heartfelt letters in support of her colleague.

The Black women also described driving justice through advocacy and community-building, which involved engaging in vulnerable discussions with students about racialized experiences in academia, cultivating connections with other Black scholars, and finding space to be innovative, creative, and transformative in their work as faculty members. While the Black women faculty demonstrated resistance in the face of oppressive workplace cultures, environments, and colleagues, it is important to recognize that they should not have to endure these conditions. Instead, institutional leaders, particularly white individuals, need to actively dismantle structures that perpetuate whiteness and promote antiracist and Intersectional policies and practices. This work

should be approached through critical lenses and should involve engagement at both the individual, interpersonal and organizational levels.

The Complexities of Unmasking Whiteness and Complacency

The white women and genderqueer faculty, Drs. Quinn, Kristen, and Kiki recounted their understanding of their white identities and their current roles as faculty members to counter whiteness in the academy. The findings encompass four themes from the narratives of white faculty: (1) Critiques of Self and Complacency in Whiteness, (2) Lack of Intersectional Perception with Black Women Colleagues, (3) Observations of Institutionalized and Internalized Oppression (4) Negotiation of Power and Privilege. Some of these findings are supported by CWS literature, which explores how white faculty and leaders in higher education acknowledge their complicity in perpetuating racism, as well as their efforts to challenge racial dominance within educational settings (Davis & Linder, 2017;Murray & Brooks-Immel, 2019; schneider, 2022). The findings in the study highlight a significant observation: white women and genderqueer faculty who are already self-reflexive about their white identities and committed to antiracist work, were unable to recognize and name their complacency in critical incidents of whiteness involving Black women colleagues.

Specifically, all three white faculty members demonstrated an awareness of whiteness in society and within their institutional contexts. They acknowledged and critiqued their own racism, including their contribution to maintaining and perpetuating white hegemony, the impact of white supremacy on their thoughts, actions, and emotions, and instances where their interactions and behaviors exhibited racism. For instance, one white woman faculty member admitted that during her first five years in academia, she

did not actively engage in research that deconstructed racism. Instead, she followed the example of her white men counterparts and focused on publishing research that did not challenge the status quo to secure tenure. The other two white faculty members also shared instances where they unknowingly perpetuated racism through their misunderstandings and communication with racially minoritized students and colleagues, or through previous racialized misunderstandings and communication within the academic setting. It is worth noting that two white faculty members, who are also part of the LGBTQ+ community, emphasized that addressing their own racism is an ongoing process that requires self-reflexivity on their racial dynamics and taking action to dismantle racism within their institutions and broader communities.

Although the white faculty members acknowledged their complicity in perpetuating whiteness within the academy, they were not able to identify or examine how workplace incidents may have impacted their Black women colleagues. In relation to being introspective of critical incidents that impacted Black women colleagues, none of the white faculty members could name or examine how incidents in the workplace may have affected Black women colleagues in the engagement with the CIT and timeline drawings. One white genderqueer faculty member, however, was able to recall an instance where they made comments about culture and food. In response, their Black woman colleague pointed out that these comments were connected to slavery and colonialism.

Altogether, despite my intentions in the research to have the white faculty reflect on critical incidents of whiteness where they were complicit in, or perpetuated with Black women colleagues, the white faculty were unable to name those instances. The white

faculty members provided a few reasons for their inability to name their complacency in racialized moments involving Black women. Some mentioned having limited interactions with Black women, while others acknowledged a lack of Intersectional perception when it came to those incidents. Two white faculty members expressed concern about their inability to recognize critical incidents with Black women, as they understood that their limited racialized perception hindered their ability to fully comprehend the impact of their whiteness on Black women within their institutions.

The inability of the white women and white genderqueer faculty to provide specific details about critical incidents involving Black women colleagues can be attributed to several factors. One possible reason is their unwillingness to acknowledge their own racism or discriminatory behavior towards Black women, as they may have been hesitant to confront the uncomfortable truth of their actions. Another factor is the influence of their white identity and the privilege that comes with it, which is likely a contributing factor to understanding the racial dynamics at play and recognizing instances of complacency in racism. Additionally, some white faculty members may have deflected attention away from their own shortcomings by highlighting instances where they believed they had been advocates with Black women. It is also possible that some white faculty members genuinely intended to be advocates for Black women and actively worked towards creating supportive spaces. However, it is important to consider that their perception of advocacy may differ from the experiences and perspectives of their Black women colleagues.

In further reflection, one white faculty member shared that they had been called out on their racism, primarily in Latino spaces. Similarly, another white woman faculty

member expressed that she could reflect on critical incidents involving men of Color, but struggled to identify similar occurrences with Black women colleagues. The third white faculty member mentioned that she was unable to name incidents of whiteness with Black women, citing the lack of Black women in her department as a reason for limited interactions. However, she did acknowledge experiencing critical incidents of whiteness in the classroom with Black students.

In light of the fact that the white faculty members were able to recognize incidents involving Latinx communities, men of Color, and racially minoritized students, while failing to distinguish incidents with Black women, highlights the importance of Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990), as it demonstrates that Black women are often overlooked in the collective consciousness of antiracist awareness and movements. This finding aligns with the perspectives of Black feminists who have long argued that the dominance of white individuals within systems of white supremacy hinders our ability to fully comprehend our inherent and often covert racism towards Black women (Collins, 2002). In summary, the white faculty members exhibited an awareness of their complicity in racialized incidents with other racially minoritized groups, but they struggled to recall or acknowledge similar racialized moments involving Black women. This highlights the need for a more comprehensive understanding of Intersectionality and the importance of the counternarratives of Black women within systems of oppression in higher education.

The Multidimensionality of Critical Incidents of Whiteness

As I actively listened to the diverse perspectives of Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty, I engaged in journaling and critical reflexivity to deeply explore the multifaceted nature of critical incidents related to whiteness. This process allowed me

to understand both the interpersonal harm caused by racialization and the broader structural impact of whiteness within organizations. Throughout my research, I encountered two instances that highlighted the varying viewpoints of Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty regarding critical incidents of whiteness. These differing perspectives stemmed from their distinct positions within systems of power and privilege. I recognized that these divergent viewpoints may give rise to conflicts and misunderstandings, as Black women may be focused on challenging and dismantling systemic racism, while some white women may struggle to acknowledge their own complicity and inadvertently perpetuate harmful narratives or behaviors. In my journal reflections, I particularly examined the observations of white women and genderqueer faculty regarding institutionalized and internalized oppression, as well as the narrative surrounding the restructuring of the Center for Pedagogical Excellence.

In my journal, I reflected on the fact that the white faculty participants did not personally acknowledge instances where they were complicit in perpetuating whiteness with their Black women colleagues. However, their narratives did touch on their personal observations of some Black women and women of Color whose decision-making seemed to contribute to internalized oppression at the interpersonal or institutional level. The notion of some of white women participants suggesting that Black women have internalized oppression is complex and multifaceted, and as such, it is essential to approach this topic with sensitivity and a nuanced understanding. While it is true that internalized oppression can be a result of systemic oppression and the socialization within those structures— a phenomenon that can occur with both white women and Black women (Pheterson, 1986)— it is important to recognize that not all Black women

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internalized oppression. Furthermore, it is important to avoid attributing the phenomenon of internalized oppression solely to the narratives from white individuals regarding the internalized oppression of Black women. During the course of this research, I encountered a few challenging situations where some white participants discussed their observations of internalized oppression among Black women and Women of Color. This was particularly difficult for me, as a white woman, because I believe it is not our place, as white individuals, to categorize or discuss such instances, especially due to our limited scope on the realities of racism. In light of this finding, I experienced a deep sense of discomfort when discussing internalized oppression and, at times, became upset with the white participants for focusing on these observations instead of engaging in self-reflexivity about their own role in perpetuating harm. Further, as a critical-constructivist researcher, I also acknowledge that there were potentially more actions I could have taken during the interviews with the white participants to disrupt these narratives or provide alternative perspectives when discussing these instances.

Given these dynamics, instead of solely focusing on individual observations of internalized oppression, it is crucial to address and dismantle the structures and systems that perpetuate racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination, while also amplifying the voices Black women in defining their own counternarratives and experiences. Additionally, it is crucial to acknowledge the presence of oppressive racial hierarchies within academia, as outlined in scholarly works such as Acker (2006, 2011) and Ray (2019). These oppressive hierarchies perpetuate the exploitation and dehumanization of Black women academics, and continue to promote and reward individualized productivity and success (Wright-Mair & Museus, 2021), which can potentially lead to

internalized, or the maintenance of, institutionalized oppression (Williams, 2012). As a result of these complex institutional dynamics, some individuals may feel compelled to adapt to these existing conditions in order to thrive or simply survive within the academic environment. Ultimately, white supremacy and sexism is deep-seated in our society, institutions, and workplaces that Black women and white women can internalize or perpetuate various forms of oppression in order to endure or seek to be successful within those systems that were/are established for white men (Pheterson, 1986). These overarching organizational dynamics highlight the broader historical, colonial, and structural effects of white supremacy within higher education institutions that perpetuate and reinforce whiteness in everyday operations in higher education (Patton, 2016).

Throughout my journal reflections, I also took a closer look at the counternarratives shared by Black women faculty, which highlighted their experiences of encountering misogynoir from their white students, colleagues, supervisors, and senior leaders. They each emphasized the broader impact of structural racism, such as how their colleagues' curriculum and pedagogical approaches perpetuated racism and caused harm in their work environment. The white faculty's sustained pedagogical practices directly affected the Black women faculty, who had to take on additional labor to address and navigate the racist and deficit teaching of their white colleagues. This had significant consequences, as one Black faculty member felt compelled to apply to a different department due to the impact of their white colleagues' pedagogical viewpoints. Reflecting on these instances, I critically questioned the opposition of the majority white faculty Advisory Board to a restructuring initiative proposed by a Black woman leader. The initiative aimed to integrate the Center for Pedagogical Excellence with the DEI

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Office, which could have potentially addressed various areas, including curriculum, pedagogy, inequities in student evaluations, and promoting equity in tenure and re-contracting processes.

The restructuring of the Center for Pedagogical Excellence and its placement under the influence of the DEI Office entailed complex dynamics between the white faculty members who opposed the restructuring and the Black woman leader advocating for the change. Several factors came into play, including faculty governance, departmental relationships, and the broader impact of moving departments. Faculty governance refers to the collective decision-making processes and structures within academic institutions (Jones, 2011). In this case, the white faculty members who opposed the restructuring may have felt that their authority and control over the Center for Pedagogical Excellence was being challenged. They also may have been accustomed to a particular power dynamic and influence within their department, and the proposed change threatened their established roles and responsibilities. The Black woman leader advocating for organizational change may have been driven by a desire to address systemic inequities and create a more supportive and inclusive environment for both faculty and students. The clash between the white faculty members and the Black woman leader reflects broader dynamics of power, privilege, and differing perspectives on equity and inclusivity.

This instance highlights the challenges that can arise when individuals with different racial backgrounds and experiences navigate institutional structures and strive for organizational change. Additionally, the impact of moving departments should be considered. Restructuring the Center for Pedagogical Excellence and aligning it with the

DEI Office can have far-reaching effects on faculty development, teaching practices, and institutional culture. Overall, the complexities of the situation lie in the intersecting factors of faculty governance, power dynamics, and the potential impact of departmental changes. Understanding and navigating these complexities require open dialogue, a willingness to challenge existing norms, and a commitment to fostering an inclusive academic environment that values diverse perspectives and promotes equitable practices.

Altogether, my reflections on the direct and incidental impacts of whiteness, and the multidimensionality of the critical incidents of whiteness are interconnected to previous literature on whiteness at work (Yoon 2012, 2022). In noting the paradoxes of whiteness (Yoon 2012, 2022), white individuals' beliefs do not always align with our actions (whether consciously or not) in institutional and interpersonal decision-making. In that misalignment, whiteness often creates and maintains structural whiteness (Yoon 2012, 2022), which can (in)directly impact Black women in the workplace. Further, Earick (2018) social justice archetypes showcase that while white individuals may outwardly support social justice, we sometimes fail in the work by opting out of service work; maintaining existing rules, policies, and structures; or by distancing ourselves when there are potential threats to our careers. Recognizing white individuals' intentions to advance social justice and the paradoxes of whiteness at work (Yoon 2012, 2022) can contribute to some missteps and misalignment in our work as white individuals, which can be a point of reflexivity for white individuals to further critique, understand, and take action to destabilize direct and incidental racism within our institutions to foster greater solidarity with Black women in the academy.

How We Move Forward

The findings discussed above bring attention to numerous areas where interpersonal and organizational change is needed within HWCU settings. Although my research questions did not directly focus on organizational environments, the insights gained have significant implications for institutional leaders and faculty members in their efforts to cultivate inclusive, anti-oppressive, and collaborative work environments. Through a critical-constructivist narrative inquiry lens, it becomes essential to value and respect the individual stories, experiences, and realities shared in the research. Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge that these findings may not be universally applicable to all HWCU institutions, but they do offer important considerations for leaders and faculty members. Specifically, by engaging with and reflecting on the insights gained, white leaders and faculty can play a vital role in driving positive change and fostering more equitable and supportive environments within their institutions.

In the sections below, I offer some insights for institutional leaders and faculty, namely white individuals, to consider fostering greater solidarity with Black women within institutions of higher education. Throughout the considerations, I forefront structural and political Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1990) and CWS (Matias & Boucher, 2021) to inform the five tenets of CHRD— relating, learning, changing, organizing, and advocating (Bierema & Callahan, 2014; Collins et al., 2015) to offer implications for practice generated from the research study. Furthermore, I emphasize the elements of counternarratives, generativity, and transformative action (Miller et al., 2020) to center the perspectives of the Black women participants, highlighting their ideas for advancing antiracism and justice. In essence, I collaborate with the Black woman

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participants to co-construct the implications of the research, as expressed throughout their interviews. In the following two sections, I provide the following considerations for white institutional leaders and faculty: (1) Be Bold, Be Humble and (2) Be Intersectionality-Minded: Individual, Interpersonal, and Organizational Change.

White People: Be Bold, Be Humble

As white individuals, we must continue to (re)commit to embodying justice and antiracism into our lives. This requires aligning our actions and efforts both within and beyond the academy to advocate for political, structural, and individual change across multiple social movements. We must also recognize the socio-political impact of racism and sexism on our communities, workplace environments, and institutions. Given the complex, paradoxical, and visceral nature of whiteness in the workplace (Yoon, 2012, 2022), it is essential for white faculty, including white women and genderqueer faculty, to embrace boldness to actively disrupt whiteness on a daily basis. This involves speaking out against racism and making decisions that directly confront it in our communities, workplaces, professional associations, and campuses. Being bold necessitates taking full responsibility for critiquing and countering racialized power dynamics by recognizing our privileges, engaging in continuous critical self-reflection, and accepting accountability for our own past and present racial wrongdoings. It also requires taking concrete action to challenge and interrogate antiracism from an Intersectional standpoint, aiming to foster mutual understanding and solidarity with Black women within our workplaces (Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019). Being bold also means taking action to challenge and interrogate antiracism from an intersectional standpoint in order to foster mutuality and solidarity with Black women in academia. Being bold also requires white individuals to be critical

of our socialization of niceness, friendliness, and white neutrality (Bohonos, 2019; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; DiAngelo, 2021; Galman et al., 2010; Leonardo, 2008, 2009) which often hinders our (in)ability to challenge our own beliefs and those of our white colleagues in an ongoing effort to dismantle racism.

As such, to confront persistent racial incidents in the workplace, white individuals must embrace being bold by acknowledging the ugliness of racism and addressing our own complacency within whiteness. This includes calling in or calling out other white individuals to challenge their racism and staying committed to the ongoing work of dismantling racism. While it is common for white individuals to avoid difficult conversations about racism due to feelings of guilt, shame, and tension (Bohonos, 2019; DiAngelo, 2019; Linder, 2015; Matias, et al., 2022) it is necessary for us to be bold enough to admit our own racial wrongdoings and engage in intentional conflict with other white people to challenge racism. Until white individuals are willing to be bold to admit to our own racial wrongdoings and engage in intentional conflict with other white people to challenge racism, the racialized power structures remain.

As shared by Black women faculty in the study, addressing and challenging whiteness in some ways, is narrowed down to being a "good white colleague." This includes several key actions, such as (1) practicing "self-control" within power and positions to reconsider perspectives, (2) "being intentional about interrogating assumptions," (3) "doing the internal work" and "staying committed to the work," (4) "pushing back on whiteness with other white individuals, especially when Black people are not in the room," and (5) sharing "space for Black women to be seen and heard." Within the academy, those who aspire to be good white colleagues must actively commit

themselves to recognizing, interrogating, and deconstructing whiteness as an ongoing and everyday practice. This entails exercising self-control to pause and critically examine our thoughts, emotions, assumptions, perspectives, and positions of power. It also requires a perpetual dedication to both internal and external work, consistently challenging and dismantling our own racism. Moreover, it involves creating space for Black women to be truly seen and heard by stepping back, acknowledging, and managing our white emotions, engaging in self-reflection when confronted with our racism, and being mindful of not dominating conversations or taking up excessive space. The commitment to the journey is crucial, as dismantling individual and institutionalized racism requires a lifelong effort to unlearn ingrained habits, practices, and structures that uphold whiteness.

Further, it is crucial for white individuals to be humble in our approaches to this work, recognizing that we will never have a complete understanding of our complicity in whiteness, particularly when it comes to our interactions with Black women. Being humble entails white individuals acknowledging the inherent paradoxes of whiteness, understanding that even with the best intentions, we may still make mistakes along the way, as our intentions do not always align with our actions (Earick, 2018; Yoon, 2012; 2022). To be humble, we must also actively engage in listening and learning, being open to vulnerability to admit our racialized mistakes, and expecting to be called out/in on our misconceptions and misunderstandings about race.

In addition to the ongoing work of being bold and humble, as emphasized by a Black woman participant, white individuals in academia must also commit to tangible and intangible actions that promote, sustain, and actively participate in critical reflexivity and change at the individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels. This commitment

requires adopting an intersectional lens, recognizing the interconnectedness of various forms of oppression and privilege and how they intersect with race and gender. It also requires continuously reflecting on our own positionalities and power dynamics, challenging, and dismantling oppressive systems and structures, and actively seeking to create equitable environments within our academic institutions. Overall, by embodying both boldness and humility, white individuals can contribute to dismantling whiteness and fostering a more inclusive and just academic community. This involves acknowledging the privileges we have, engaging in ongoing critical reflection on race, and taking ownership of our oppressive behaviors. It also requires us to actively intimidate and challenge racism with an intersectional perspective, fostering mutual understanding and solidarity with Black women in the academic setting. It is through this commitment that we can begin to create meaningful change and work from an Intersectional standpoint to build mutuality and solidarity with Black women (Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019).

Be Intersectionally-Minded: Critical Reflexivity and Action for Change

I desire a justice-oriented culture of belonging, and I want my white colleagues to desire it, too, because it helps them to be great people, and it helps them for whatever identities they might have that might be marginalized or harmed or have the potential for trauma. It's not just about me. It frees all of us. Antiracism frees all of us. Justice supports and provides fairness for all of us. Belonging, inclusion, and love provides opportunities for all of us to feel cared for innately. - *Dr. Alana*

The quote above emphasizes the importance of creating and maintaining justice-oriented workplaces to foster equitable environments for Black women while also

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benefiting white colleagues by promoting a sense of belonging, inclusion, and love. By

prioritizing Intersectionality, leaders and institutional environments can effectively

challenge and counter Intersecting systems of oppression, such as whiteness and

patriarchy, leading to more equitable workplace environments. As outlined by Erskine &

Bilimoria, (2019), embracing Intersectionality as a transformative strategy yields some

positive outcomes for organizations, white individuals, and Black women alike. For

instance, organizations benefit through more equitable evaluations, and through enhanced

group and organizational effectiveness (Erskine & Bilimoria, (2019). For white

individuals, engaging with Intersectionality brings new insights, ideas, and skills,

enabling them to become more effective problem solves and contributors, and for Black

women, benefit from career support, development, and advancement, while also

nurturing their well-being and a sense of thriving (Erskine & Bilimoria, 2019). By

recognizing and actively addressing the co-existing operations of oppression,

organizations can create a more just and inclusive workplace that benefits everyone

involved. This involves challenging systemic inequities, dismantling biases and barriers,

and valuing the diverse contributions and experiences of all individuals.

Through a commitment to Intersectionality, higher education organizations can

foster lasting, transformational justice and equity where all individuals can thrive and

reach their fullest potential (Patton & Haynes, 2018). Given that Black women faculty are

critically important agents of change, institutional environments and colleagues must

effectively listen to the voices and perspectives of Black women, acknowledge their

accomplishments, and compensate for their contributions and labor, and work towards

fostering antiracist, Intersectional change at the structural, organizational, and individual

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levels (Kelly & Winkle-Wagner, 2017; Lanier et al., 2022; Patton & Haynes, 2018).

Black women faculty's epistemologies, praxis, and activist contributions are a pivotal

blueprint for envisioning and taking critical, intersectional action toward lasting

transformational social and racial equity within higher education (Patton & Haynes,

2018). As such, the retention and promotion of Black women faculty in the academy is of

crucial importance to achieve institutional goals to (1) advance critical research and

theory, (2) teach diversity courses with critical pedagogical stances, and (3) mentor,

retain, and support racially minoritized students in higher education (Patton, 2009; Patton

& Haynes, 2018).

Taking into further consideration that many Black women leaders and faculty

have already committed to advocating, promoting, and implementing strategic actions to

promote intersectional and justice-oriented educational environments in the academy

(Harris & Patton 2019), there is a (re)new(ed) emphasis for white individuals to engage

in critical reflexivity and action for change that fosters anti-oppressive and collaborative

workplace environments (Bell et al., 2021; Erskine, & Bilimoria, 2019). As such, to forge

ahead in work that challenges whiteness from a justice-oriented lens, white institutional

leaders and faculty should consider the following five elements: relating, learning,

changing, organizing, and advocating.

Relating. To acknowledge and understand the racialized dynamics we bring into

a workspace, white faculty members and leaders must be self-reflexive and critically

conscious of racialized power dynamics in our cross-racial collaborations in the academy.

To address inequitable dynamics in workplace structures and correspondences, white

leaders and faculty members must first be aware of racialized phrases, discourses, and

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references to Black women tropes that create and maintain hostile environments that Black women are often left to counter-navigate. Then, it is important for HWCUs, leaders, and administrators to seek to foster positive, antiracist collaborations in the workplace so that all employees, particularly Black women, experience opportunities for full participation in their roles in higher education. It is important to take action to address and alleviate the barriers for those with multiply-minoritized identities, specifically Black women, to report discrimination and harassment in the workplace. For instance, administrators and leaders can examine: What is the process for addressing racism when a Black woman graduate student is experiencing ongoing hostile interactions from a white woman senior administrator? How do we offer levels of protection, resources, and guidance for those who are harmed? What does the accountability structure and process include, such as expectations and consequences for leaders who engage in racialized and exclusionary behavior?

Learning. Given the presence of multiple, ongoing critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace, which is direct (i.e., racialized discourses) and structural (i.e., the maintenance of structures of whiteness), daily continuous reflexivity and learning for white individuals is of critical importance. In knowing that white individuals, even those who already engage in antiracism work have a lack of racialized and Intersectional perceptions, continuing forward in racial discussions that is only centered on the perspectives of self-reflection of white people, such as a majority of the CWS scholarship, white individuals have missed opportunities to engage in this work more fully, deeply, and critically. As such, white individuals can be more intentional to ground their thinking, reading, and learning centered on Black Feminism and Intersectionality to

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acknowledge and understand the perpetuation of our racism within compounding systems of oppression. For white individuals, this means proceeding with caution not to exploit or tokenize Black women, but rather, can include engaging in the already published works of Black women to read, engage and think more critically about our complacency in racism, sexism, classism, and other compounding forms of oppression. For example, white caucus groups can have book studies to read the foundational works of Black feminists and facilitate dialogues within the group to be reflexive about how white individuals contribute to whiteness at the individual, interpersonal, and structural levels. In addition to those ongoing critical discussions, it is also crucial to strategize and implement action to challenge the existing structures and organizational practices in which we occupy and work.

      Changing. In seeking to change, white individuals must continuously work to be Intersectionally-minded within our institutional decision-making about policies, practices, curriculum, and organizational structures. This includes catering an Intersectional frame of mind in various areas of work, such as on advisory boards, committees, within our departments, or larger academic associations and national organizations. Within white individuals' current areas of influence, we can seek to challenge our individualized forms of productivity and (re)direct our labor, resources, and efforts in solidarity with racially minoritized colleagues, specifically Black women. For instance, when voting for a department chair, we can consider: who is the most equitable leader? When on committees, we can consider: would this organizational structural change, new policy, or decision benefit those who are multiply minoritized, such as Black women? Within our departments, we can consider: what are more equitable ways to

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facilitate interviews? In foregrounding decision-making in Intersectionality and antiracism, we can seek to create organizational structures to organize and advocate for anti-oppressive and collaborative work environments. Furthermore, given the vast literature (e.g., Evans-Winters & Hines, 2020; Ferguson et al., 2021; Harley, 2008; Hirshfield & Joseph, 2012; Holmes et al., 2007; Matthew, 2016; Pittman, 2012) that demonstrates tenure-track Black women and women of Color experience compounding forms of inequities in the tenure and promotion process, there are several opportunities for white individuals to challenge current inequitable structures. Some examples of ways white leaders can destabilize current inequities include: challenging hegemonic inequitable measures across teaching, service, and research; elevating and implementing critical scholarship and pedagogical standpoints; and minimizing reliance on student course evaluations as a deciding factor in tenure and promotion decisions.

Organizing. Given the ample research on racial and gender inequity on the tenure track, now is also the opportune time for higher education institutions and leaders to examine all aspects of the evaluation processes of faculty work to promote equity across the board through a critical lens. In organizing for change, leaders within systems of higher education should seek to cultivate workplace environments that allow for faculty, especially Black women, to voice their concerns, to share their perspectives, and offer suggestions for relational and institutional change. Academic leaders seeking to facilitate change that better promotes and supports faculty with co-existing identities across race and gender can start by engaging in listening tours or equity audits, through critical lenses to honor the narratives and multiple truths of faculty members. For instance, within an institutional listening tour, an external confidential facilitator can offer multiple avenues

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for sharing faculty perspectives and experiences: online surveys, affinity focus groups, or personal interviews. Some other tools may include the critical incidents technique, timeline drawings, or narratives to encourage reflexivity on workplace structures and relations. Engaging in listening tours and equity audits within individual organizations of HBCUs would be important to uncovering the specific and central issues within that organization. From the results, leaders must implement strategic action to review HR policies, faculty handbooks, and faculty bylaws through an intersectional and justice-oriented lens to examine existing structures and policies.

      Advocating. In order to promote social change, white individuals need to actively engage in social justice and activism beyond the confines of academia. It is crucial to recognize that our institutions are mirrors of society, and therefore we must utilize our privileges to advocate for change within our families, neighborhoods, and communities. This involves undertaking challenging conversations with our loved ones who harbor racist beliefs about minoritized groups, such as Black women, and actively work to change white individuals' perspectives. Additionally, we can contribute to social justice causes by utilizing our skills and resources to make meaningful donations. Furthermore, attending protests and marches in solidarity with different movements is another powerful way to show support and amplify voices for change. It is essential to embrace activism as a means to include counter-narratives and critical race theory in the curriculum of education, recognizing the importance of diverse perspectives and challenging the status quo in education. While the above suggestions are certainly a heavy lift, implementing an intersectional lens to simultaneously counter whiteness and

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patriarchy towards cultivating more justice-oriented and equitable workplace environments is an important momentum forward.

Implications for Research

The findings I constructed in the study offer a foundation for continuing critical research to uncover the power and oppression in the workplace and the complexities of multiple truths of individuals in higher education. Specifically, this research can set a foundation for understanding and considering the intricacies of cross-racial collaborations in the academy towards nurturing antiracist and intersectional workplace atmospheres that center justice and equity in decision-making processes and interpersonal relations. As previously mentioned, there is limited literature that explores the multiple perspectives of racially minoritized faculty, such as Black women, and those who are racially privileged, such as white women and genderqueer faculty. By taking into consideration the viewpoints of Black women, white women, and white genderqueer faculty, I was able to illuminate their multiple truths, experiences, and perspectives to challenge whiteness and patriarchy at HWCUs and offer considerations for pathways to move forward in antiracist, intersectional and justice-oriented workplaces.

Since this research centered on whiteness to identify and deconstruct racialized power, future research can focus on addressing critical incidents of anti-Blackness and its intersectional dimensions in the workplace to expose how individuals and institutions devalue, minimize and minoritize the full participation of Black women faculty. Future research would also benefit from discussing critical incidents with Black women and white women, and genderqueer faculty who are colleagues to uncover their perspectives and dynamics in the workplace. To engage in this research, it would be important to

consider any potential retaliation among colleagues that can result from publishing the research. Additionally, a longitudinal study with white faculty to promote prolonged reflexivity and understanding of the construction of whiteness in higher education would be illuminating and insightful. Collaborating with white faculty to document critical incidents of whiteness through journaling and other forms of reflection would promote ongoing racial reflexivity and deepen our understanding of how whiteness operates within academic contexts. Additionally, future research about non–tenure-track faculty higher education would be illuminating, as these positions tend to be occupied more frequently by Black women due to compounding forms of systemic oppression and neoliberalism. Finally, extending research on cross-racial collaborations with administrators and student affairs practitioners, such as Black women, white women, and white genderqueer individuals, would offer another angle to expose power dynamics and relations at work.

Limitations of the Study

There are a few limitations of the study which are important to recognize and consider. As detailed in Chapter One and in my positionality statement, I do not share similar racial identities with the Black women participants in this study. In fact, I am a beneficiary of the same systems that minoritize and harm Black women and other racially minoritized identities in systems of higher education. While my intentions are to uplift Black women's voices and challenge whiteness as a site of control, given my identities as a white woman, I am likely to misinterpret the key counternarratives and realities of Black women faculty and the impact of racial harm. As noted in the research by Bell et al. (2003), Black women and white women researchers can have varying and oftentimes

conflicting viewpoints on data analysis in research engaged with Black women and white women participants.

While it was my aim to work alongside a Black woman Ph.D. peer or colleague to discuss the analysis, at the time of the study, many of my peers were also in their dissertation phase and focused on their own research and, therefore, did not have the capacity to also be engaged in my research. While I was able to have brief discussions with Black women colleagues and peers that shaped my thinking and writing throughout the dissertation, our conversations were not in-depth to consider the specifics of the research. In being unable to thoroughly collaborate with a Black woman peer in the research some of the central dilemmas I reflected on include: Is it ethical to collaborate with a Black woman peer in a dissertation process, knowing the academy would only truly recognize my labor in the individualized process of the dissertation? Am I prioritizing your own goals to finish the dissertation over representing the true voices and experiences of Black women faculty? How can I engage in cross-racial work, such as this research, without adding to the labor and tokenization of Black women in the academy? While I still sit with and consider some of those central tensions, I do believe this study and future research would have benefited from collaboration with a Black woman peer or colleague to hold critical discussions about the research design, analysis, and write-up of the findings.

Further, while there was genderqueer representation with white faculty, the Black faculty who signed up for the study all identified as women. As such, the study could have benefited by engaging with a Black genderqueer faculty member. In addition, all the interviews were conducted via Zoom technology, which may have created a barrier to

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getting to know the participants in an authentic way. Despite the few boundaries of the current study, this research is a critical starting point to further acknowledge, understand, and host cross-racial discussions and collaborations in higher education.

Researcher Final Reflections

This dissertation undertaking was both complex and meaningful to me as a researcher and as an individual, as I was critically challenged in a multitude of ways. When I began this study, I was interested in learning and reflecting more on workplace incidents within higher education systems, specifically with faculty members. I became interested in this topic in my close work with faculty members in my employment in higher education as well as my continuous observations and questioning of my own whiteness in the workplace. In the study, I was grateful to be able to talk with the Black women and white faculty members throughout the study to listen to their backgrounds and experiences. Through their counternarratives and narratives, I was able to be more reflexive about questioning my whiteness, my roles as a white woman, and reflected more on incidents of whiteness in which I have been involved in or have witnessed in higher education. Specifically, listening to and engaging with the participant's experiences and the impact of tensions, conflicts, and the preservation of oppression in the workplace enhanced my insights and understanding of the impact of whiteness and racism in higher education.

Many times throughout the study, I was uncomfortable in being aware of the white womanhood I brought to the research, especially engaging with Black women in knowing and studying the tensions in Black women and white individual's cross-racial collaborations. In reflecting on the design of the research, I know my lenses as a white

individual came with tensions and dilemmas in the research, which I sought to acknowledge and be transparent about throughout the process. I continue to "sit with" the research and make sense of the complexities that I personally brought to the research, as well as make sense of the tensions and dilemmas in the research. Finally, in knowing the limited viewpoints of white people about racism, such as a lack of Intersectional perceptions or the trouble of understanding our own complacency, I know it to be important for white educators and administrators to continue to listen to and believe the experiences of Black women in the academy.

While it is certainly not my suggestion for all white individuals to engage in research with Black women, there are ways white people can continue to listen and learn from Black women without being tokenizing or taxing, such as reading, engaging, and sharing the published works of Black women, and valuing the perspectives that Black women share in higher education. From there, white people, such as myself, can continue to raise our racial consciousness and take action to do and be better. Overall, engaging in this research will have an enduring influence on my life and career to continue to advocate for change. While I was previously engaged in institutional work that challenges the racialized status quo, this study served as a strong reminder for me to show up, speak up, and engage in internal and external work, continuously.

Conclusion

This study utilized a critical-constructivist narrative inquiry approach to authentically capture and share the voices, experiences, and expressions of Black women, white women, and genderqueer faculty members. It emphasized the importance of

amplifying the counternarratives of Black women, ensuring that their stories are heard, acknowledged, and believed towards envisioning and taking transformative action for change in higher education (Patton & Haynes, 2018). Moving forward, it is crucial for white individuals to continue to demonstrate boldness to elicit narratives that reveal our complicity in perpetuating whiteness, particularly in the ways it impacts Black women in professional spaces. By doing so, we can challenge and engage other white individuals in this critical work and hold ourselves accountable to engage in feminism and antiracism that is more intersectional. While there remains the (im)possibility of interpersonal and institutional change, it is my sincere hope Black women continue to voice their aspirations and ideals in this work. I also hope that white women and genderqueer individuals continue to (re)new our efforts, by deepening our engagement and approaching the work with more mindfulness, humility, and ongoing commitment.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Email

[SUBJECT] Research Study: Call for Participants - *Exploring Tenure-Track Black and White Women Faculty Experiences of Critical Incidents of Whiteness in the Workplace*

Dear [TITLE, FIRST NAME, LAST NAME],

Greetings! My name is Gabrielle McAllaster, and I am a current Ph.D. Candidate at Rowan University. I am writing to ask if you would be willing to share the enclosed information below. with your networks or colleagues who may be interested in partaking in my dissertation study. I am seeking to listen to the experiences of tenure-track faculty members at historically white institutions of higher education, which include:

- Self-identified tenure-track Black women,
- Self-identified tenure-track white women,
- Who are engaged in antiracism work, defined as research, teaching, and/or service centered on challenging historical and current socio-political, economic, cultural, and environmental forces that have upheld racial power and privilege systems within education,
- Have some availability from November 1, 2022 - January 31st, 2023.

The participants in the study will be asked to engage in the following:

- 1st Interview (60 - 90 minutes on Zoom)
- Create a timeline drawing (a simple drawing to reflect on critical incidents in the workplace)

- 2nd Interview (60 - 90 minutes on Zoom)

Upon completion of the study, co-researchers (i.e., participants) will receive a $30 gift card to Elizabeth's Bookshop and Writing Centre, a Black woman-owned bookstore whose mission is to amplify and celebrate Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and Queer voices.

Please have your colleagues who may be interested fill out the brief introductory form. . Additionally, here is a link to find more information about the study and my researcher positionality. I've also attached the research flyer. Many thanks for helping to advance our collective knowledge about the experiences of tenure-track Black and white women faculty in the academy!

If you have any questions, please reach me at:

Email: mcalla23@rowan.edu

IRB Approval # PRO-2022-308.

Thank you for your time and support!

Sincerely,

Gabrielle McAllaster

Ph.D. candidate, Rowan University

Appendix B

Brief Introductory Form

Hello, my name is Gabrielle McAllaster. I am a Ph.D. Candidate in Education at Rowan University. I am interested in better understanding how you think and talk about your experiences as tenure-track Black and white women faculty and the intersections of race and gender for my dissertation project. More specifically, I am interested in your experiences of critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace to understand better how institutional and interpersonal power and privilege impact the academic workplace at historically white colleges and universities (HWCUs). Please consider being part of my study, as I hope to learn more about power dynamics among tenure-track Black and white women and the daily realities of interacting with colleagues. I would very much like to hear about your perspectives and lived experiences.

 The participants I am looking for in the study are:

- Self-identified Black women, including: Bi-racial, African Americans, Afro-Caribbeans, Afro-Latin Americans, and/or Black International tenure-track faculty,

- Self-identified white women, including white U.S. faculty and white international faculty,

- Self-identified women, including cisgender, transwomen, genderfluid, or genderqueer identities,

- Tenure-track faculty,

- Currently work at a historically white college or university (HWCU),

- Worked at their institution for over a year,

- And are engaged in antiracism work, defined as research, teaching, and/or service centered on challenging historical and current socio-political, economic, cultural, and environmental forces that have upheld racial power and privilege systems within education.

If you decide to be a part of the study, you will be asked to engage in the following:

- 1st interview (lasting approximately 60 - 90 minutes) on Zoom,

- Create a timeline drawing, which are simple drawing(s) to aid you in reflecting on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace,

- 2nd interview (lasting approximately 60 - 90 minutes) on Zoom.

In this form, you will be asked sensitive information about your race, gender, and other social identities you are willing to share, as well as some brief information about your institution of employment and scholarly interests. There may be some psychological risks, including feelings of stress that stem from remembrances or stories that may involve strong emotions regarding your identities and/or institution of employment. The information collected in this brief introductory form will be included as part of the research data if you agree to participate. Any part of the published research will not include your individual information or that of others, and your institutional place of employment location will be referred to using only broad geographic markers.

Please note all data from this brief introduction form will be stored on the password-protected computer of the co-investigator (Gabrielle McAllaster) and secured in a Rowan network which requires the researchers' Rowan identification login information for access. The researchers in this study will be the only individuals with access to this data.

All identifiable and personal data collected throughout the research will be de-identified during the point of transcription. Participant identity will be protected by using self-selected pseudonyms that you will choose in this form. Your self-selected pseudonyms will be stored along with your actual names in a password-protected Rowan database via Qualtrics and kept separate from the rest of the data collected in the study. Any information from this form that is linked to your personal information, including your name and email, and chosen pseudonym, will be immediately destroyed upon completion of the study. Again, only the researchers will have access to this information. Furthermore, all information submitted will be immediately destroyed if you are not chosen to participate in this study or if you decide to quit at any point during the study.

Upon completion of the study, you will receive a $30 gift card to Elizabeth's Bookshop and Writing Centre, a Black woman-owned bookstore whose mission is to amplify and celebrate Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and Queer voices.

Many thanks for helping to advance our collective knowledge about the experiences of tenure-track Black and white women faculty in the academy!

If you have any questions, please reach me at :

Gabrielle McAllaster, mcalla23@rowan.edu

This form will take approximately 8 to 10 minutes to fill out.

This study has been approved by the Rowan IRB.

IRB Approval # PRO-2022-308.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the

Office of Research Compliance at (856) 256-4078– Glassboro/CMSRU.

Q1. I have read the information above about the study or it was read to me and know that

being in this study is voluntary. I choose to complete this brief introductory form.

❍ Agree

❍ Disagree

If Disagree Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey If Agree Is Selected, Then Skip To

Please indicate your race

Q2 Please indicate your race: (check all that apply)

❍ African American

❍ Bi-racial _____

❍ Asian

❍ Asian American

❍ Black

❍Multiracial/Mixed-race _____

❍ Indigenous

❍ Native American

❍ Pacific Islander

❍ White

❍Other _____

Q3 Please indicate your ethnicity:

_____

Q4 Please indicate your gender: (check all that apply)

❍ Woman

❍ Man

❍ Genderqueer

❍ Nonbinary

❍ Transgender woman

❍ Transgender man

❍ I do not want to disclose

Q5: **Please share other identities (i.e., sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, dis/ability and/or neurodiversity status, and religious/spiritual beliefs) that you would be willing to share:**

_____

Q6. Are you currently on the tenure- track?

❍ Yes _____

❍ No _____

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Q7...If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q7. Does your research, teaching, and/or service focus on antiracism work, defined as work that challenges historical and current socio-political, economic, cultural, and environmental forces that have upheld racial power and privilege within society and education?

❍ Yes _____

❍ No _____

❍ Other _____

Q8. Are you currently employed at a historically white institution of higher education?

❍ Yes _____

❍ No _____

❍ Other _____

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Q9...If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q9. How long have you worked at your historically white college or university?

_____

Q10. Please share a self-selected pseudonym name that will be used throughout the research: _____

Q11. Would you like to participate in the current study? This includes:

- 1st interview (lasting approximately 60 - 90 minutes) on Zoom,

- Creation of a timeline drawing (simple drawing(s) to reflect on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace), and

- 2nd interview (lasting approximately 60 - 90 minutes) on Zoom.

❍ Yes

❍ No

Q12 Please provide your name and email address. This information is needed in order to contact individuals who are selected for the study and will only be used for that purpose. All information submitted will be destroyed immediately if you are not chosen to participate in this study. If you are not selected to participate in the study, you will receive an email from the researcher to confirm your ineligibility.

Name _____

Email _____

Appendix C

Research Recruitment Flyer

Seeking tenure-track Black and white women faculty to share their experiences

In a study focused on critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace at historically white institutions of higher education.

IRB APPROVAL #: PRO-2022-308

Research eligibility:

I am seeking to listen to the experiences of tenure-track faculty members at PWIs, which include:
- Self-identified Black women,
- Self-identified white women,
- Who are engaged in antiracism research, teaching, and/or service
- **Have some availability from November 2022 - January 2023.**

Upon completion of the study, you will receive a $30 gift card to Elizabeth's Bookshop & Writing Centre, a Black woman-owned bookstore.

Time and technology requirements:

- Two (2) 60 - 90 minute personal interviews on Zoom. The specific dates and times are flexible and are determined on your availability.
- Creation of a timeline technique (simple drawings to reflect on critical incidents in the workplace)
- Access to Zoom and paper, pens/markers/pencils

How to sign up:

Please scan the QR code below using your phone's camera or click the URL link below to complete a brief introductory form.

https://rowan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2nHnR214w8PkhXo

About the researcher:

My name is Gabrielle McAllaster, and I am a Ph.D. Candidate at Rowan University. As a researcher, I focus on understanding and challenging power and privilege through critical lenses to advance racially and socially just higher education institutions. More specifically, as a critical-constructivist white woman researcher, I hope to leverage my privileges to openly explore ongoing issues of whiteness in the workplace in academia for my dissertation research. Professionally, I currently serve as a doctoral coordinator in the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Rowan University. *Please follow this link to read more about the purposes of the research & my research positionality:* **shorturl.at/dfgBP**

If you have any questions or would like more information about partaking in this study, please contact me directly at:
Email: mcalla23@rowan.edu
Phone at (856) 226-4727.

Appendix D

Research Consent Form

ELECTRONIC INFORMED CONSENT (ADULTS) KEY INFORMATION TO TAKE

PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Title of Study: Exploring Tenure-Track Black and White Women Faculty Experiences

of Critical Incidents of Whiteness in the Workplace

Principal Investigator: Dr. Raquel Wright-Mair

Co-Investigator: Gabrielle McAllaster

You are being asked to take part in a research study. This study will seek to document the

experiences and perspectives of tenure-track Black and white women faculty who work at

predominantly white institutions (PWIs) of higher education. The purpose of this research

is a multifold approach to name and disrupt racism and patriarchy in the academy by

focusing on the critical incidents of whiteness as narrated by tenure-track Black and

white women in the academic workplace.

If you agree, you will be asked to complete a brief introduction form and engage in two

(2) interviews conducted on zoom, as well as create timeline drawing(s) to reflect on

critical incidents of whiteness in your workplace. The interviews will be approximately

60 to 90 minutes in length and will be recorded by audio and video recorded for later

analysis by the researcher. The total time required of participants will be between three

(3) to five (5) hours. This estimation considers the brief introduction form, the two

interviews, the timeline drawing creation, and a review of the results.

Participation is completely voluntary. It is up to you to decide if you would like to participate. The risks associated with this study are minimal. Participants will not be exposed to any more risk of harm or discomfort than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. The interviews may cause you to question some of your professional practices, experiences, and relationships in higher education. If you experience discomfort in this process, you are free to discontinue completing the interview(s) at any time. You may also discontinue your participation at any time for any reason. Any potential risk is minimal.

This study may be of no direct benefit to you, but your participation in this study will help to document how educational environments do or do not support the success of Black and white women in the academy. The interviews will encourage you to reflect on your experience and the work you do every day, providing insights into the field of higher education about ways to support the successes of women tenure-track faculty. Upon completion of the study, you will receive a $30 gift card to Elizabeth's Bookshop and Writing Centre, a Black woman-owned bookstore.

If you are interested in participating, please carefully review the informed consent form on the next screen. This consent form is part of an informed consent process for a research study and it will provide you with more detailed information that will help you decide whether you wish to volunteer for this research study. It is important that you take your time to make your decision. You may share this consent form with a family member or anyone else before agreeing to participate in the study.

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If you have questions at any time, you should feel free to ask the study team and should expect to be given answers that you completely understand. The study team will answer any questions you might have before volunteering to take part in this study. You can also request that the study team read the consent form to you over the phone.

Contact information for Principal Investigator:

Dr. Raquel Wright-Mair, wrightmair@rowan.edu

Rowan University James Hall 3076

Contact information for Co-Investigator:

Gabrielle McAllaster

mcalla23@rowan.edu

This form will take approximately 8 to 10 minutes to fill out.

This study has been approved by the Rowan IRB.

IRB Approval # PRO-2022-308.

 If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at (856) 256-4078– Glassboro/CMSRU.

Q1. I would like to review the informed consent form.

ADULT CONSENT FORM FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

TITLE OF STUDY: Exploring Tenure-Track Black and White Women Faculty Experiences of Critical Incidents of Whiteness in the Workplace: A Critical-Constructivist Narrative Inquiry

Principal Investigator: Dr. Raquel Wright- Mair

1. What is the purpose of the study?

This dissertation study will seek to document the experiences and perspectives of tenure-track Black and white women faculty who work at historically white institutions of higher education. This research aims to name and disrupt racism and patriarchy in the academy by focusing on the critical incidents of whiteness as narrated by tenure-track Black and white women in the academic workplace. This critical-constructivist narrative inquiry aims to amplify Black women's experiences of critical incidents and encourage racial reflexivity with white women faculty in the academic workplace. Tenure-track women faculty in the academy are on the front lines of education and are the experts of their own experiences, paired with knowledge and expertise in higher education systems. By engaging in the narratives of Black and white women in this critical-constructivist narrative inquiry, I seek to recognize the multiple truths amongst Black and white women and illuminate critical incidents of whiteness in the workplace.

2. Why have you been asked to take part in this study?

You are invited to participate in a research study exploring the narratives of tenure-track Black and white women faculty in higher education. You are being asked to participate in this study because you self-identify as a tenure-track Black or white woman, are engaged in antiracism work in the academy, and work at a historically white college or university. I consider you an expert informant on how educational environments affirm or diminish your sense of self regarding critical incidents of whiteness and your faculty roles.

3. What will you be asked to do if you take part in this research study?

If you choose to participate in the study, you will be asked to complete a brief introduction form and engage in two (2) interviews conducted on zoom, as well as create a timeline drawing to reflect on critical incidents of whiteness in your workplace. The interviews will be approximately 60 to 90 minutes in length and will be recorded by audio and video recorded for later analysis by the researcher. The total time required of participants will be between three (3) and five (5) hours. This estimation considers the brief introduction form, the two interviews, the timeline drawing creation, and a review of the results. Before the data collection takes place, all of the participants will be provided information with (1) a detailed overview of the aims of the study, (2) the context of the critical incident and timeline drawing, and (3) the general focus of the two (2) narrative interview sessions. Participants may choose to skip any question they do not wish to answer.

There will also be a thorough participant feedback process, including opportunities to review transcripts and drafts (as desired) and to both review and contribute to the recommendations for practice that the study generates. All interviews will be audio and video recorded via Zoom technology. The video recording(s) will be used strictly for analysis by the researcher. The audio of the interviews will be transcribed using a professional transcription service, and all identifying information will be removed at the point of transcription. Since we will be using Zoom to conduct the interviews, I want to assure you that the visuals from the Zoom recordings will be destroyed upon completing the analysis.

4. Who may take part in this research study? And who may not?

Tenure-track faculty who self-identify as Black and white women and who work at PWIs of higher education will be recruited for this study. Anybody else with other identities and roles may not take part in this study.

5. How long will the study take, and where will the research study be conducted?

The overall study will take approximately 9 months, 4.5 months will be used to collect the data, and 4.5 months to report and publish. However, your participation will include two interviews that will last approximately 60 - 90 minutes and the creation of timeline drawing(s).

6. How many visits may take to complete the study?

Two virtual interviews are required to complete the study.

7. What are the risks and/or discomforts you might experience if you take part in this study?

There are no inherent physical risks in the procedures themselves, and it is not anticipated that participants will experience risks in completing the interviews. Participants will not be exposed to any more risk of harm or discomfort than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. The interviews may cause you to question some of your professional practices, experiences, and relationships in higher education. If you experience discomfort in this process, you are free to discontinue completing the interview(s) at any time. You may also discontinue your participation at any time for any reason. Any potential risk is minimal.

8. What, if any, are the benefits for you if you choose to take part in this research study?

This study may be of no direct benefit to you, but your participation in this study will help to document how educational environments do or do not support the success of Black and white women in the academy. The interviews will encourage you to reflect on your experience and the work you do every day, providing insights into the field of higher education about ways to support the successes of women tenure-track faculty.

9. What are the alternatives if you do not wish to participate in the study?

Your alternative is not to participate in the study.

10. How many participants will be enrolled in the study?

Approximately 6 participants.

11. How will you know if new information is learned that may affect whether you are willing to stay in this research study?

During the course of the study, you will be updated about any new information that may affect whether you are willing to continue taking part in the study. If new information is learned that may affect you, you will be contacted.

12. Will there be any cost to you to take part in this study?

There is no cost to you to participate in this study.

13. Will you be paid to take part in this study?

Upon completing the study, you will receive a $30 gift card to Elizabeth's Bookshop and Writing Centre, a Black woman-owned bookstore.

14. Are you providing any identifiable private information as part of this research study?

I am collecting your name and email address. Your identifiable information will not be used in any of the future research projects or disclosed to anyone outside of the researchers.

15. How will information about you be kept private or confidential?

All efforts will be made to keep the personal information in your research record confidential, but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Your personal information may be given out if required by law. Presentations and publications to the public and at professional conferences and meetings will not use your name and other personal information. Your identifiable information will not be used in future research projects or disclosed to anyone outside the researcher.

All recordings of the data will be stored:

- In the researcher's password-protected computer with no link to the participant's identities
- Participant identity will be protected through self-selected pseudonyms (which will be stored along with the participant's actual names in a password-protected Rowan database via Qualtrics and kept separate from the rest of the collected data in the study. Any information that is linked to your personal information, including your name, email, and chosen pseudonym, will be immediately destroyed upon completion of the study.
- The recordings will be approximately 60- 90 minutes long for each interview and will be destroyed upon completion of the study procedures.
- All the visuals from the Zoom recordings will be destroyed upon completion of the analysis.

16. What will happen if you are injured during this study?

If at any time during your participation and conduct in the study you have been injured, you should communicate those injuries to the research staff present at the time of injury. The Principal Investigator's name and contact information is provided on this consent form.

17. What will happen if you do not wish to take part in the study or if you later decide not to stay in the study?

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or you may change your mind at any time. If you do not want to enter the study or decide to stop participating, your relationship with the study staff will not change, and you may do so without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also withdraw your consent for the use of data already collected about you, but you must do this in writing to Principal Investigator Dr. Raquel Wright - Mair - James Hall 3076, 201 Mullica Hill Road, Glassboro, NJ, 08028 If you decide to withdraw from the study for any reason, you may be asked to participate in one meeting with the Principal Investigator.

18. Who can you call if you have any questions?

If you have any questions about taking part in this study or if you feel you may have suffered a research-related injury, you can call the Principal Investigator:

Dr. Raquel Wright-Mair,

Department of Educational Services and Leadership

Rowan University,

856-256-471.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you can call:

The Office of Research Compliance

at (856) 256-4058– Glassboro/CMSRU

19. What are your rights if you participate in this research study?

You have the right to ask questions about any part of the study at any time. You should

not agree to participate unless you have had a chance to ask questions and have been

given answers to all of your questions.

This study has been approved by the Rowan IRB.

IRB Approval # PRO-2022-308.

Q2: I have read the above information and agree to participate:

○Next (Agreement to Participate)

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

 If you do not wish to participate, please exit this screen at any time.

I have read the entire information about the research study, research risks, benefits, and

alternatives, or it has been read to me, and I believe that I understand what has been

discussed. All of my questions about this form or this study have been answered, and I

agree to volunteer to participate in the study.

Q3. I agree to be audio and video recorded via Zoom technology. Please note the

video recordings will be used strictly for analysis by the researcher to review the

interviews for analysis. The audio recordings of the interviews will be transcribed using a

professional transcription service, and all identifying information will be removed at the

point of transcription.

All visuals and audio from the Zoom recordings will be stored on the researcher's

password-protected computer and secured in a Rowan network which requires the

researchers' Rowan identification login information for access. Further, all data will be

de-identified, and recordings will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

❍Yes, I agree to be audio and video recorded via Zoom technology.

Q4. I have read the above information and agree to participate:

❍ Yes, I agree to participate in this study.

Q5. Please enter your name in the text box below:

_____

Q6: Please enter your preferred contact information: This information will only be

used to contact you about this study and will never be shared with others outside the

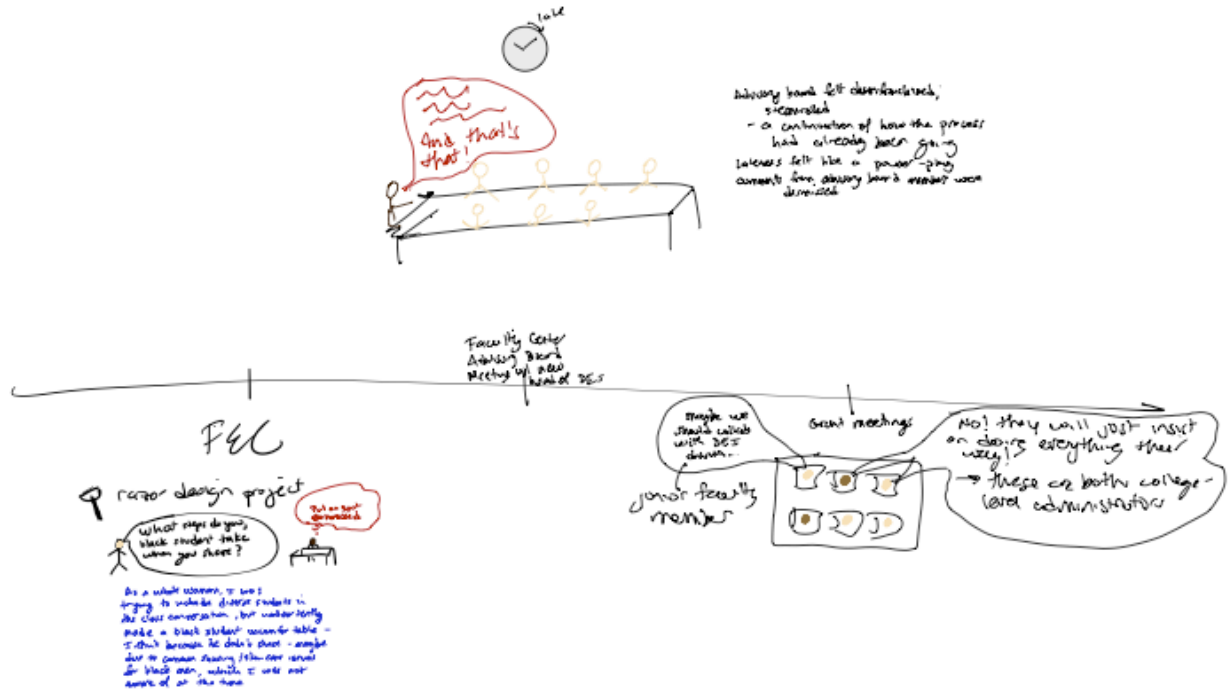**research team without your permission.**

Email: _____

Phone:_____

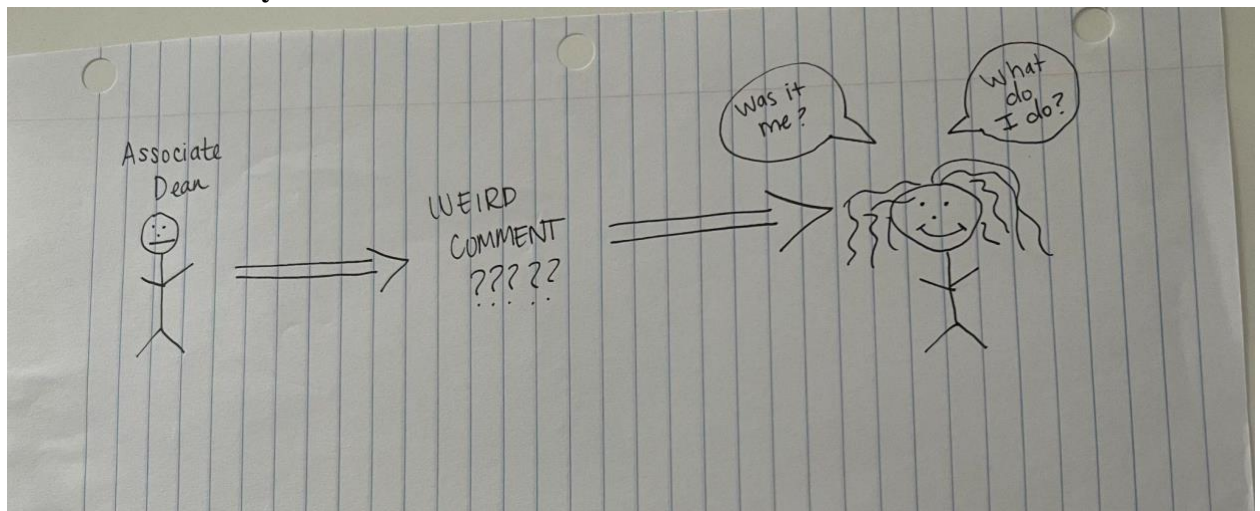
Q7. Please click the box below to submit:

❍ Submit

Appendix E

Participant Timeline Drawings
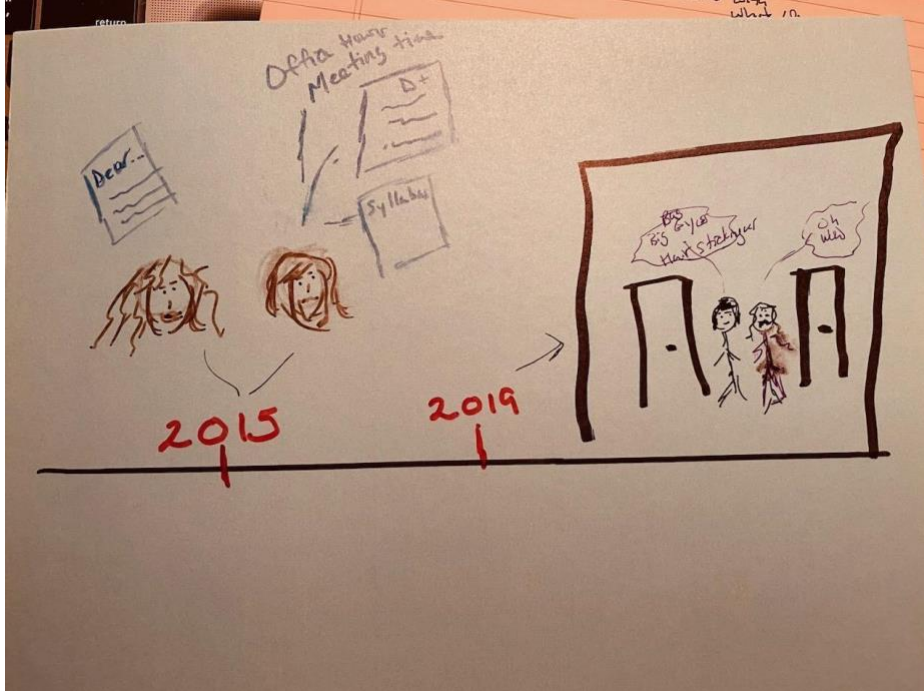
The Center for Pedagogical Excellence Advisory Board vs. the DEI Office

The Out-of-the-way Racist Administrator and the Coffee Racialized Remark

Peer Advocacy, Institutionalized Racism, and Racialized Stereotypes

The Lack of Institutional Protections for a Black Woman Student, #BlackLivesMatter and a K-12 School