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Dismantling Racism: A Narrative Analysis of the Evolution of and Factors Influencing White Anti-Racism Action

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Abstract

Dismantling white privilege requires anti-racist action of some sort. However, there is little research about the factors that influence White people to engage in anti-racist work or what can be done to promote White anti-racist action. We conducted an exploratory qualitative study to address this question where we interviewed White individuals, we had reason to believe were engaged in an anti-racist activity (n = 6). The research question was as follows: *To what extent, if any, are the participants aware of their white privilege, and how do they describe their journey to anti-racist action?* Findings suggest that dismantling white privilege is a complex journey. Participants engaged in dismantling work described an evolution of the understanding of their white privilege that included influential people that encouraged critical thinking or empathy and some combination of small and large revelatory moments. Participants also spoke to experiences of backtracking or resisting and a constant balancing act related to managing privilege. Scholarly and practical implications of this study are discussed.

Keywords: White privilege; White identity management; anti-racist action; social justice

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The concept of *white privilege* was first introduced in 1935 by WEB Du Bois (1935) in his essay "Black Reconstruction in America." Later, Theodore Allen wrote about white-skin privileges in an essay titled "Can White Radicals be Radicalized?" (Allen, 1967). While the term "white privilege" had been used for almost 100 years, White people, in general, started paying attention to the term when Peggy McIntosh, a White scholar, released her article "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" in 1988 (McIntosh, 1990). Her article identifies the many privileges associated with white skin, including not having to counteract race-based biases around violence and financial responsibility and having people of your race featured in school history classes (McIntosh, 1990). This article is regarded as one of the first times white privilege was given some weight in terms of its legitimacy (Crowley & Smith, 2015; Phillips & Lowery, 2015). It is important to note that this concept was coined in 1935, but it was not brought to the forefront of the conversations for White individuals until roughly 50 years later when it was written about by a White person (McIntosh, 1990).

While the concept of white privilege has been around for a long time, but there has been minimal research about White identity management; that is, research on how or why White people engage in dismantling white privilege (i.e., engage in anti-racist activity). Understanding how White people interact with their own privilege and what factors might influence them to dismantle it is critical to developing a theory of the White identity movement relevant to social justice.

This exploratory qualitative study analyzed the experiences of six White people identified as engaged in anti-racist activity. Through semi-structured interviews, participants identified both an evolving understanding of privilege and a series of factors participants believed influenced their anti-racist action. The findings have both theoretical and practical implications.

Literature Review

Many models and theories explore how people who hold power connected to their identity can become advocates of those they have power over. First, we discuss three of these theories that relate to or appear formative in the development of the model for this study—the 3D White identity management model. Second, we review the literature on what formative experience might lead a White individual to engage in anti-racism (i.e., dismantling behavior).

White Identity Management

Hardiman's *White identity management model* is one of the first models explaining how White people are shaped and changed in their views and actions regarding race. Positioned in a counseling framework, Hardiman created her model of White identity management in the early 80s by analyzing the autobiographies of White people who had been identified as having a "high level of racial consciousness" (Hardiman, 1982). Through this analysis, she identified five stages of White development: naïveté, acceptance, resistance, redefinition, and internalization (Hardiman, 1982). This stage-based process is similar to the evolutionary experienced we observed in our participants.

While Hardiman and others focus on the individual-level experience, other scholars have focused on the individual identity related to group affiliation. This group-level

consideration paved the way for the development of the 3D model. For example, *social identity theory* focuses on the interaction of social groups as they connect to the individual (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner & Onorato, 1999) and explains that individuals act in groups in different contexts. It has three constructs: centrality (access to the group-identity), in-group affect (feelings about the group), and in-group ties (sense of attachment to the group) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Using this theory, we see that White identity management could be done on behalf of group advancement or protection, even if the individual would not consider themselves a white supremacist. This theory paved the way for many theories coming out of social psychology and could be particularly useful in understanding group-image threat related to the 3D model.

The *self-categorization theory* evolved from social identity theory, but it differs by focusing on how individuals categorize themselves in reference to whatever group they belong to (Turner & Onorato, 1999). These categories begin at the interpersonal level (self-defined as an individual) and can move through the intergroup level (self-defined by what group they are in) to the subordinate level (self-defined by the groups they are not in). Of course, these identities are fluid and not linear, and one person can experience all three depending on the group context they are in (Turner & Onorato, 1999). It is important to understand identity as fluid and contextual, and looking at the 3D model through this theory could help determine if movement occurs in a linear fashion and if the stages are static rather than fluid.

The *3D model of White identity management*—the model used in this study—suggests that White people use three strategies to manage their White identity and privilege: deny, distance, and dismantle (Knowles et al., 2014). The underlying assumption is that individuals are aware of white privilege. Indeed, the 3D model actively rejects the *invisibility perspective*, suggesting that White people are generally unaware of their privilege unless an external force has pushed them to confront it (Knowles et al., 2014, p. 3). Instead, the authors argue that White people are aware of privilege but manage their responses to protect themselves and their group in one of those three ways. Individuals using the denial strategy reject the existence of white privilege. Individuals using the distancing strategy push back against the idea of white privilege or find some way of demonstrating it does not apply to them. However, White individuals utilizing the dismantling strategy actively take down systems of oppression (Knowles et al., 2014). This study is interested in White individuals in the dismantling stage and the formative influences on that experience.

Formative Influences

We identified in the literature four formative influences that might play a role in moving White individuals into the dismantling stage: level of education, interaction with diverse groups, intersectionality, and travel experience.

There are logical and theoretical reasons to believe education might be related to dismantling behavior. For decades, it has been known that college-educated individuals are more accepting and tolerant of target political groups (Bobo & Licari, 1989), likely because of the exposure to courses and individuals they would not have encountered otherwise. In fact, exposure to a diverse student population during collegiate years directly or indirectly impacts the

cultural competencies of White individuals later in the workforce (Jayakumar, 2008). This is not to say that a White individual who did not complete higher education could not be in the dismantling stage but, rather, that engagement in higher education can open this door.

Significant exposure and interaction with groups different from oneself could also possibly contribute to entrance into the dismantling stage. Bohmert and DeMaris (2015) conducted a longitudinal study to examine the impact of both interracial friendships and racially diverse neighborhoods on views of affirmative action and feelings of connection with minorities for undergraduate students. The results indicated that those with more interracial friendships and who lived in interracial neighborhoods had more positive attitudes towards race.

Intersectionality refers to the ways in which multiple marginalized identities inform the lived experiences of individuals (Crenshaw, 2017). Its roots rest on the experience of Black women for whom there is a convergence of two marginalized identities that leads to a unique experience, one that is markedly different from the experiences of White women and Black men (Collins, 1998). However, intersectionality can also help us identify where White people with minoritized identities may or may not be more likely to engage in dismantling behavior. Kleiman, Spanierman, and Smith's (2015) study examined the perceptions of White, straight men, and White men who identified as gay, bisexual, or queer. Those participants who did not identify as heterosexual were less colorblind and had higher levels of racial empathy. The results support the idea that, for White people, differing identities, such as sexual identity, can lead to a deeper understanding of marginalized people.

Similar to exposure to diverse groups, experience with traveling, particularly international travel, could possibly be a motivator to engage in anti-racist activism. This influence has been documented in studies on students who study abroad. Salisbury, An, and Pascarella (2013) found that studying abroad had positive and significant impacts on cultural competency. Similarly, Anderson et al. (2006) documented improvements in scores on the intercultural development inventory following a study abroad experience. The results were not as great of a change as the researchers hoped, which the authors attribute to a small sample size. These studies were only focused on college students and specific to study abroad trips; however, there are logical reasons to test this on a more general population, and certainly, more research is needed.

Methodology

Research Design

In this exploratory qualitative study, we used narrative analysis to examine the lived experience of White individuals engaged in anti-racist action. Exploratory studies are particularly appropriate for identifying and exploring complex social phenomena (Luker, 2008), such as formative influences on White-identifying individuals' understanding of white privilege. We selected *narrative analysis*, a form of qualitative analysis which examines the stories or accounts of individuals' experiences (Smith, 2000), because it offered the opportunity to identify the factors associated with anti-racist action from the participants' perspective. We expected that the participants' perspective would yield insights to inform the future

study and practice examining white privilege. The study included six in-depth case studies. We analyzed these cases individually and then conducted a cross-case analysis (Yin, 2009). The study took place in North Florida, which is part of what is known as the "Deep South" and has a long history of racism. As we point out in the discussion, the limited number of participants is a point of data in and of itself.

Sampling

The sampling goal was to identify White individuals engaged in anti-racist activism in what Knowles et al. (2014) would call the *dismantling stage*. Three waves of referral sampling (Gorard, 2013) were conducted. The first wave of referral sampling began by asking seven local activists of Color to identify White individuals who were actively engaged in anti-racist activism of any kind. It was expected that activists of Color would have a more accurate assessment of White individuals' anti-racist work than White people, and we had hoped this would be the only sampling method needed. The seven activists of Color collectively produced only one referral for one participant (see Discussion).

In our second wave of referral sampling (Gorard, 2013), we contacted leaders of local activist "hotspots" or what Luker (2008) describes as *data outcroppings*—places where we would logically expect to find examples of the phenomena we are studying. These so-called hotspots were identified by their public and recent racial justice and anti-racist work, and they included a feminist bookstore, a local community organizing hub, and two progressive churches known for strong activism. Three participants were identified through this method of sampling. We engaged in referral sampling concurrent with the first two sampling waves (Gorard, 2013). Specifically, study participants were asked at the end of each interview if they knew of another person who would fit the criteria for the study. Two additional participants were identified through this method of sampling.

The final sample was composed of six White-identifying North Florida residents, all of whom identified as cisgender, straight women. Each participant came from a middle to upper-class background, and the minimum level of education attained was a bachelor's degree. Participants' ages ranged in years from 30 to 80 (M = 57), and careers included K-12 teachers, higher education faculty members, and librarians. Half of the sample was retired.

Data Collection

A one-time, recorded in-depth interview of approximately 90 minutes was conducted with each participant. The interview was administered in three sections: a formative influences timeline (FIT), a semi-structured interview, and a demographic questionnaire. First, we began the interview with a formative influences timeline (Jones & Donmoyer, 2020). In the FIT, participants were given a blank sheet of paper with a line drawn horizontally across it. Participants were told to imagine this line was a timeline of their life and to identify the specific events and memories they believed contributed to their anti-racist work. The participants spent 5–10 minutes completing the timeline.

Then, we used a semi-structured interview guide to (a) invite participants to explain their FIT and (b) ask additional questions related to the research questions (Appendix A). The researchers developed the interview guide and pilot tested before

the study. It contained questions such as "How would you describe the evolution of your understanding of white privilege?" and "What motivates you to do this work?" The interview guide allowed for probing and emergent conversation.

Finally, we administered a brief demographic questionnaire (Appendix B). The questionnaire included questions on race, income, family of origin, and politics. Participants were advised they did not have to answer any questions with which they were uncomfortable.

Data Analysis

Phase I: Individual Case Analysis

A case summary was created for each participant—or what Polkinghorne (1995) would describe as narrative analysis. This one to two-page analysis ordered and summarized interview data chronologically and in a way that mirrored how the participant described the story themselves. This process allowed the researcher to identify the various contextual elements important to each case.

Interview and demographic questionnaire data were coded at the individual level in three phases. The first wave of coding deductively identified the presence (or absence) of the factors identified in the literature as relevant to the research questions (e.g., interaction with diverse groups). The second wave of coding identified the specific nuances of these factors and experiences (nuances that were later used to identify group-level patterns). This phase of coding included, for example, the nature of specific critical instances related to the participants' understanding of white privilege. Finally, the researcher coded inductively for emergent themes not identified from the literature.

Phase II: Cross Case Analysis

Next, we conducted a cross-case analysis. Specifically, we identified patterns and variations across interviews (Patton, 2002). This process included creating a high-level description of factors and a drilled-down description of patterns and variations identified for each variable. While the sample size was small, the patterns identified can be considered post hoc groups that may inform future studies.

Trustworthiness

We engaged in two specific activities to establish what qualitative researchers describe as the *trustworthiness* of data analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). First, we included the formative influences timeline in the study protocol. In addition to collecting valuable data, the FIT was originally developed as a tool to minimize researcher bias in interview-based studies (Jones & Donmoyer, 2020). During the FIT, participants are asked to provide their perceptions before the researcher asks any questions. Thus, participants are less likely to say what they believe the researcher wants to hear. This strategy increases the opportunity for emergent themes that can often contradict what the researcher might have hypothesized.

Second, we engaged in member checking. Specifically, we sent the narrative analysis to the interviewees and asked them to comment on (a) the accuracy of the summary and (b) their comfort level with how their story had been de-identified. Four out of the six participants responded, and only one requested minor edit to her story.

Findings

Three key themes emerged from the data. First, White-identifying participants who engaged in anti-racist work described an evolution of awareness. Second, these participants also described experiences of resistance or backtracking, suggesting that progress is not always steady. Third, their progress was influenced by a specific individual who encouraged their growth and direct experiences with people different from them.

Evolution of Awareness

In general, the sample was highly aware of their own privilege. Specifically, five out of six described an evolution to their understanding of their white privilege. These participants described a period of unawareness prior to being exposed to and, eventually, accepting and integrating the concept of white privilege. They also experienced a continuous reckoning regarding their own privilege. This played out in some painful moments where some participants had to step back from leadership roles to make room for Black people to lead. When asked why to do this work, one participant stated, "it doesn't feel like I have a choice; the only other option would be denial."

Two groups seemed to form: those who experienced this evolution slowly over time (n = 2) and those who had a pivotal experience where they accepted the concept (n = 3). Regardless of the evolution style, these realizations were typically tied to the participants' interests (teaching, education, volunteer work) rather than formal diversity education or training. In other words, awareness dawned organically as they moved through various life experiences.

For those that had a pivotal experience, it was usually tied to seeing racial disparities in their work in education (n = 2) or moving to a new location, in this case, from a Northern state to a Southern state (n = 1). These participants noted an abrupt shift in their understanding of their Whiteness. Interestingly, these participants do not note any negative emotions surrounding this awareness; rather, the participants described an almost empowered feeling of love, with one participant noting "we are all cousins" and another stating she had a strong need to "make the world a better place for her children." These statements potentially suggest a shift of denial into some form of distancing, where the participant wants to act based on a meritocratic threat but is also still tied to a colorblind, positive narrative.

For those participants who had a slow evolution (n = 2), it was usually deeply tied to their interests. One participant who studied education was presented with opportunities to take classes in women's studies, which helped normalize the dissecting of power structures. Another participant also had their slow evolution rooted in education. She majored in history and became interested in the Civil Rights Movement and other social movements; this opened the door to more classes and experiences focused on racial inequities.

There was one outlier. This participant did not describe a nuanced evolution of awareness. Instead, she stated she had been aware of her privilege since learning about slavery in grade school. However, the rest of the interview data did not support her suggestion that she was aware of her privilege or the sampling assumption that she was in the dismantling stage. For example, when asked about her past experiences with anti-racist activism, she described working with the National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and stated she took an annual event and "made it better" than it had been when a person of Color had organized this event previously. She appeared to take pride in her superior ability to organize the event, and she did not acknowledge the racial power dynamics at play.

Additionally, this participant did not describe the anti-racist work she participated in. Rather, her sole contribution was that she was a church committee member that addressed social justice. Overall, her lack of awareness of her role in systems of oppression and her lack of action led us to categorize this participant as not in the dismantling stage.

Resistance and Backtracking

Four out of the five participants who described an evolution stated they experienced some resistance or backtracking. This resistance was experienced at two stages of the aforementioned evolution. First, participants reported resistance occurred prior to awareness. For example, one participant stated that "none of us wants to feel the blame" and "most [White] people resist" learning about this until there is no longer a way to deny it. Second, participants reported resistance during critical incidents of engaging in anti-racist work. One participant said she felt "halted by others' racism" to the point that she could not act. This suggests that she does not yet have the skills to address racism with other White people and, thus, feels unable to make progress. Rather than doing the hard work of engaging with White individuals, this person dis-engaged temporarily (a form of backtracking).

Another participant described a time when she was actively engaged in racial justice activism but was told to step back by the people of Color involved. This participant stated that this request caught her by surprise, and she paused to process and, feeling hurt, stepped back almost completely. She eventually expanded her awareness and recognized that the people of Color indicated her behavior had been perpetrating rather than dismantling white supremacy. Still, the experience was initially very hurtful and caused her to resist engaging in anti-racist work temporarily.

Noteworthy Formative Influences

Influential Person

Multiple participants (n = 5) described having an influential person, typically a caregiver, in their early childhood or adolescent years. The caregivers either pushed them to think critically about the world around them or deeply valued empathy and kindness.

The emphasis on critical thinking (n = 2) was not race-specific but, rather, a general encouragement to think for oneself, question the world around them, and make choices based on logic. One participant noted how her father "always encouraged me to question everything." Her father valued "standing up for what you believe in, despite possible social repercussions," and while this was never used to dissect race with the participant, it led her to have a critical view of the world and not necessarily to take everything at face value. Another participant spoke about a similar relationship with her father. The participants indicated that the early push to think critically gave them the skills to approach the tough issue of white privilege with a logical and critical perspective.

For multiple participants (n = 3),

empathy was the primary takeaway from their influential person. This was exclusively taught using religion, as the influential adult encouraged the participant to think about others through the lens of Christianity. One participant noted that her parents' religious practices "helped to inspire a need to be kind to others and that all humans are equal." Another participant spoke about how her parents taught her to "be kind to all people, and never see the poor as less than." All three participants directly connected their future activism to childhoods where kindness and empathy were not just preached but expressly practiced.

Interaction with Diverse Groups

Interaction with diverse groups also emerged as an influential factor. Five out of the six participants stated that interaction with diverse groups was the most important factor contributing to their current anti-racist work. Specifically, participants made a direct connection between their understanding of white privilege, including their current anti-racist work, to past experiences with people who were different from them.

In discussing interactions with diverse individuals, participants were grouped into one of two categories: those who moved from the North to the South and were confronted with stark segregation and racism, and those who taught in K-12 schools and, in that capacity, witnessed stark segregation and racism. Two participants, both in their 70s, told similar stories of moving from Northern towns to North Central Florida when segregation was still legal. One participant spoke about small acts of resistance, such as letting her children drink from the "Colored" water fountain or going through the "Colored" entrance in the bakery. The other participant noted that her move to the South was one of the first times they had interacted with people of Color, and this direct interaction dispelled stereotypes she had previously held.

Two other participants spoke of their experiences as teachers and described segregation (past and present) in schools. Both participants had experiences where they were in charge of teaching two classes, one of which was a form of remedial education (e.g., low readers), the other, a more prestigious class (e.g., an honors class). The remedial class for both participants was mainly lower-income, non-White students, while the more prestigious class was almost completely White. This stark separation in students by the color of their skin impacted both participants to the point where they decided to understand why (i.e., this was their pivotal experience). One of these participants noted that even though she had been presented with the concept of white privilege earlier, this teaching experience gave her the "oh, I get it moment."

Discussion

The goal of this exploratory qualitative study was to address the research question: *To what extent, if any, are the participants aware of their white privilege?* Six people participated in this study. This small sample size is important to note because it prevents generalizability past the study; however, the research implications are still important.

We expected participants in the dismantling stage to be aware of white privilege and how they benefited from it. The data supported this expectation. Five of the six participants communicated their evolution of understanding their white privilege, with four describing experiences of backtracking and resisting this evolution.

Two emerging themes were found; interaction with diverse groups and an influential person who encourages critical thinking or empathy.

Implications

Theoretical: A Dynamic Evolution

The 3D model suggests that an individual cannot be in multiple stages at once—that the individual responds to threats either through denial, distancing, or dismantling (Knowles et al., 2014). This model also does not indicate whether evolution is progressive, linear and if backtracking can happen. However, the findings of this study indicate that evolution to the dismantling stage may occur but does not necessarily happen in a linear process and, additionally, that traits of multiple stages may occur simultaneously.

Specifically, five participants articulated an evolution of awareness of privilege. Four out of five of these participants reported experiences of backtracking or resisting this evolution, which suggests a presence of distancing-type behavior, even despite their movement toward and, in some cases, even while demonstrating what could be described as dismantling-type behavior. This fluidity was also evident by the number of participants who felt compelled to make sacrifices for people of Color to benefit and the painful admission they sometimes chose not to make those sacrifices. These sacrifices revolved around managing white privilege, typically in an activist setting (stepping up or, at times, stepping back) or were connected to speaking out when something racist was said or done. In either situation, the participants' sacrifice was connected to how they were perceived, either by giving up power by allowing others to speak or creating conflict when confronting someone behaving in a racist manner.

In both scenarios, participants felt there were times when they did not share power in how they would have liked and experienced different levels of guilt regarding these moments. Based on these data, future iterations of the model should explore multiple pathways to evolution and the dynamic movement at each stage. This model may not necessarily be linear and could instead be comprised of acute critical incident growth, slow and gradual growth, as well as resistance, and possible backtracking.

Another important addition, not just to the 3D model but all models of White identity management, would incorporate the potential foundational precursors for movement through the model. Notable potential precursors for participants in this study were the presence of a caregiver who encourages critical thinking or empathy and interaction with people different from the participant. Further research is needed to explore these and other potential triggers to establish what movement looks like and how it happens.

Critical thinking, specifically, and the ability to accept information that may shift one's worldview is a potentially necessary characteristic to overcome both the meritocratic threat and the group-image threat and allow someone to move from denial and distancing into dismantling behavior. Empathy potentially accomplishes this as well. Having a deep empathy for others may be a necessary foundational trait for White people who truly are in the dismantling stage, as it perhaps moves people to question their actions and impact on the people around them.

Practical: Individual Growth

Participants in this study described a constant balancing act of deciding when to step up and utilize their privilege to help make change happen or when to step back to allow marginalized voices to be heard. Similarly, participants noted that it is not always possible to say something or do something when another individual says or does something racist. These experiences can be very painful and can become a roadblock to progress if one is not open to growth. Helping White individuals manage the feelings they experience in these situations could help White people understand white privilege without engendering resistance. When we take an evolutionary perspective, the goal changes from being perfect to making progress on a long-term anti-racist journey.

Applied: Leadership and Training

Future trainings and workshops focused on cultural competency should incorporate the concept of evolution and provide a meaningful connection with the voices of diverse peoples. Trainings might incorporate significant practices in self-reflection, particularly regarding possible setbacks, which should be understood as part of a larger growth process. Because the most influential factor for participants was interactions with diverse individuals, leaders should encourage connection through activities such as: building authentic relationships with people of Color doing activist work, utilizing technology and history to share stories from people of Color, or paying speakers of Color to come in and discuss their experiences with systems of oppression.

Another aspect that may need to be incorporated into formal training is critical thinking. Training in and examples of critical thinking can help White individuals be open to changing their worldview based on information, and this could be an important step towards moving into the dismantling stage. Trainers may want to move away from traditional training and provide instead immersive experiences that may be more impactful. Of course, concern must be taken not to burden people of Color. There is a fine line between cultivating authentic connection and asking the "other" to bear the burden of education.

Limitations

The sample for this study was comprised of White, straight, cisgender women, all with a bachelor's degree or higher, and all with a middle or upper-class background. While some of the participants came from different religious backgrounds and some had disabilities, it was largely homogeneous. Qualitative researchers do not expect to generalize from a study with a total sample of six persons, and so, the goal is to generate insights and understandings that frame future studies (Donmoyer, 1990). This study has accomplished this goal.

One limitation of our referral sampling process was the dearth of responses from people of Color. There could be many reasons for this. First, the data collection for this study began after a politically tumultuous federal election cycle in 2016, which could have left activists of Color frustrated, disheartened, and discouraged by White individuals. Second, the people of Color in this study may not have responded because they did not know any White individuals who they truly believed were doing dismantling work. Anti-racist work is hard. White individuals can engage in distancing work that looks like and which they perceive to be dismantling work;

however, we believe people of Color are more likely than White people to see the fine line that separates dismantling and distancing. It is entirely possible that White individuals in the dismantling stage do not exist in large numbers.

We continue to believe in the importance of listening to people of Color when identifying White individuals engaged in anti-racist work, and we recommend that prior to future sampling, researchers build relationships with individuals of Color doing activism work.

Conclusion

White individuals must take on the responsibility of dismantling systems of racial oppression. The findings from the study suggest White individuals move through an evolution of understanding their white privilege. Understanding this evolution is key to promoting White involvement in anti-racist work. We call for future research on this experience as well as more effective dissemination of this knowledge through new ways of providing training and workshops. Models and theories need to capture the complex experience of managing white privilege and White identity while still being simple enough to frame research. Collaborative research approaches should be pursued in the future, focusing on both White identity management and what people of Color feel are the necessary motivations, attitudes, and actions of White individuals involved in effective and impactful anti-racist activism. Bridging the gap between academia and activism could also help to elucidate these complex issues. This conversation on race is ongoing within academia and in the public sphere, and it will evolve as more research is conducted.

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Appendix A
Interview Guide

Before we start on some of the activities, I want to give you some information about what you will be doing today and why. I also want to give you time to ask me any questions and for me to ask you some opening questions to get you started on thinking about today's topics.

As you read in the informed consent, I am studying how White people become motivated to work in anti-racist activism. My hope is, with this study, and your participation, that that motivation will be better understood in order to help motivate more White people to engage in anti-racist activism.

Before we begin with opening questions, do you have any questions or concerns for me? Remember, you can refuse to answer or participate at any time.

Also, remember that after our meeting today, I am going to type up a summary of our time together and send you a copy to verify that I have understood what you have said and to also make sure you are being presented in an anonymous way.

OQ1. What can you tell me about the type of work you do that involves activism?

Probing: Is that a formal or informal position?
Probing: Why have you chosen this work?

Now that we have talked about your work, I want you to think about how you got to where you are today, particularly in reference to your engagement in anti-racist work. I have in front of you a sheet that you can use to place your life history on. You can start from your birth or from a particular moment and end in the present. Any events or factors that you felt contributed to or hindered you in getting from where you were in your understanding of race, Whiteness, White identity, and White privilege can be placed, as best you can, in chronological order.

Feel free to ask any questions or discuss out loud your thought process at any time. You will have five to ten minutes to complete this.

IQ1. Great! Tell me about what you wrote?

Probing:

1. You mentioned (some variation of …) _____, could you tell me more about that?
2. It sounds like you are saying … (verify)
3. When you look at this, how would you describe the evolution of your understanding of White privilege?
4. Do you think there were times when you backtracked or resisted this evolution?
5. Who was influencing you during that time? (person, group of people, organization)

IQ3. Do you feel you have more left to learn? If so, what?

IQ4. Are you surprised that this is the work you are in presently, looking at the beginning and the present?

IQ5. What motivates you to do this work?

IQ6. Do you feel, in this work, that you (as a White person) must choose to make sacrifices in order for People of Color to benefit?

Probing: Are there times when you don't do this?

Appendix B
Questionnaire

We are going to move on now to a questionnaire. The questionnaire covers some variables that I am interested in, as well as demographic questions. I am going to give you time to finish it while we are together today, and if you have any questions during this part, please feel free to ask. After you are finished, I am going to glance over the questionnaire to see if there is anything relating to the topic of our interview that I might want to ask about. Remember, if you do not want to talk about or answer any questions, you completely have the right to do so.

1. What is your highest level of education? Check one.
    a. Some high school
    b. High school diploma or GED
    c. Associate degree
    d. Technical degree
    e. Bachelor's degree
    f. Master's degree
    g. Professional degree
    h. Doctoral degree

2. Thinking back to when you were a child, how would you classify your family's income level? Check the best estimate.
    a. Low income (i.e., your family struggled to make ends meet)
    b. Middle income (i.e., your family was generally able to make ends meet but may not have had enough for many "extras")
    c. Upper income (i.e., your family did not have to worry about money and had plenty for "extras")

3. Thinking about your current financial situation, how would you classify your income level?
    a. Low income (i.e., you struggle to make ends meet)
    b. Middle income (i.e., you are generally able to make ends meet but may not have enough for many "extras")
    c. Upper income (i.e., you do not have to worry about money and have plenty for "extras")

4. How would you describe your political affiliation? Use this tool to place yourself.
    a. RIGHT (conservative) _____LEFT (liberal)

5. Do you believe you have other identities that are marginalized? Check all that apply.
    a. Gender (non-male, non-binary, non-cisgender)
    b. Religion (non-Christian)
    c. Sexuality (non-straight)
    d. Ability (physical, cognitive, emotional/mental)
    e. Nationality (non-American)
    f. Citizenship (non-U.S. citizen)

g. Class (non-middle class or higher)
h. Other: _____

6. How much have you interacted with racial or ethnic groups different from your race or ethnicity?

    a. Not at all
    b. Moderate degree
    c. High degree
    d. Very high degree

7. How much do you interact currently with racial or ethnic groups different from your race or ethnicity?

    a. Not at all
    b. Moderate degree
    c. High degree
    d. Very high degree

8. Have you traveled abroad (out of the United States)?

    a. If yes, where:
    b. No

Debrief

DQ1. First, is there anything that struck you in the questionnaire that you want to discuss?

DQ2. I see you marked [see list] but did not mention that as something that motivated you to start your work in the earlier part; could you explain that?

a. Education
b. Socioeconomic status
c. Political affiliation
d. Intersectionality
e. Interacting with diverse groups
f. Travel experience

DQ3. Is there anything you want to discuss?

Thank you so much for not only participating in today's study but for doing the work that you do. I know these topics can be tricky to discuss, and so appreciate you taking the time to meet with me and answer my questions. I will be sending you a copy of the summary of today's meeting within the next week for your approval. And I will gladly keep you informed on the status of my study so that you can see the final project. Thank you again!