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Faculty of Color and Collective Memory Work: An Examination of Intersectionality, Privilege, and Marginalization

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Abstract

As a means of highlighting new possibilities for interrupting White privilege, and supporting and honoring critical community building among faculty of Color in teacher education programs, this paper offers the theoretical and methodological resources of collective memory work as a tool for interrogating teacher education's entanglements in the complex, yet normalized, processes of White privilege. This paper, written by three faculty members of Color, aims to provide hope for an escape from the construction of hierarchies, taxonomies, and White/non-White binaries that establish and enforce arbitrary boundaries that prevent people from different racialized groups from working together to disrupt White privilege and oppression.

Keywords: collective memory work, faculty of color, intersectionality, marginalization, othering

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Understanding how the intersection of oppression operates across interlocking differences has long been a question of significant interest for educators and activists interested in disrupting White privilege (Cabrera, 2014). For instance, recent developments in using the critical race theory (CRT) principle of intersectionality have renewed interest in explaining how African American women, an identity category that the authors problematize in this paper, experience White privilege (Brewer, 2016). While considerable scholarly literature exists on women of Color and the intersection of oppressions, particularly regarding race with gender, little work exists on other intersections and commonalities of oppression related to different dimensions of identity (Crenshaw, 1989).

Current Knowledge

What is known about the intersection of race, teacher educators, and the education system is still minimal. The faculty remains mostly White, despite calls for diversifying the professorate (Guillaume & Apodaca, 2020). For faculty of Color, existing in overwhelmingly White spaces contributes to experiences of feeling marginalized and tokenized. The marginalization is also manifested in different acts of discrimination, such as those discussed in this paper (Stanley, 2006). However, despite the difficulties under which they labor, research shows that faculty of Color use a range of innovative pedagogies and collaborative learning approaches to their courses (Umbach, 2006). Faculty of Color also tend to interact more with students than White faculty (Umbach, 2006). Although often unrecognized by promotion and tenure committees, an essential aspect of the work of faculty of Color includes working with students of Color in ways that honor and respect student cultural knowledge and experiences (Cole, McGowan, & Zerquera, 2017). Research has found that in teacher education, this unpaid labor forms an important and necessary element for retaining undergraduate students of Color (Vasquez, 2019). These findings indicate a relationship between race and faculty, but none use an intersectional approach to investigate the individual and collective experiences of Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) faculty with the education system.

Project Synthesis

This research project emerged gradually after three new tenure-track faculty of Color in a teacher education program at a historically White university shared their personal and professional commitments to social justice with each other. Inspired by commonalities, they formed a writing group for mutual support, compassion, and intellectual possibilities for new ways of theorizing (Yosso, 2013). As originally envisioned by the three teacher education faculty members, a Chicano man, an African American woman, and a Black woman from Jamaica, the writing group was imagined as a counter-space where the three colleagues could find the necessary spiritual, emotional, and intellectual support for their respective scholarly and activist work (West, 2019). After a few meetings, however, the writing group transformed into a space for community building around the analyses of intersecting oppressions related to gender, race, and immigrant status in teacher education.

While collectively working together, they began to ask themselves: How can teacher educators, committed to revealing and disrupting White privilege and oppression, engage in critical community

building across a range of personal and social identity differences? One first step requires making visible and theorizing commonalities and links among oppressions across different identities and lived experiences (Crenshaw, 1989; Gillborn, 2015). In short, theorizing how people from disparate racialized groups experience White supremacy requires recognizing, acknowledging, and discussing interlocking and intersecting oppressions (Bebout, 2016). And to uncover and theorize about these commonalities requires a narrative approach to disentangle the nuances, multiple layers, and similarities among the different experiences. More specifically, as a means of highlighting new possibilities for interrupting White privilege and supporting and honoring critical community building among faculty of Color in teacher education programs, this paper proposes theoretical and methodological resources of collective memory work as a tool for interrogating teacher education's entanglements in the complex, yet normalized, processes of White privilege (Johnson, Kivel, & Cousineau, 2018).

Collective Memory Work

Feminist scholars originally developed *collective memory work* (CMW) as a research method for examining women's marginalized and under-theorized social realities (Johnson, Kivel, & Cousineau, 2018). As a method for research and critical community building, CMW draws on assumptions and procedures from a range of related self-study research traditions and consciousness-raising approaches (Bamberg, 2006). Collective memory work goes beyond other self-study methods by extending, complicating, and complementing methods such as duoethnography, collaborative autoethnography, and narrative inquiry (Higgins, Morton, & Wolkenhauer, 2018; Ngunjiri, Hernandez, & Chang, 2010). Unlike these related approaches, which also draw on narratives as units of analysis and action, participants, activists, and community members using CMW collaborate as researchers within a collective to theorize their memories (Clift & Clift, 2017). This collective dimension, rather than working in isolation or in pairs, which could unintentionally reproduce binaries, distinguishes CMW from other methods for examining how White privilege harms people from racialized groups. This collaborative aspect of CMW provides necessary counter-spaces and distinctive methodological advantages for theorizing and representing complex identities and examining social processes connected to intersecting oppressions that typically lack analyses.

This paper aims to provide hope for an escape from the construction of hierarchies, taxonomies, and White/non-White binaries that establish and enforce arbitrary boundaries that prevent people from different racialized groups from working together to disrupt White privilege and oppression. The three authors, teacher educators at a *predominantly* White institution (PWI), argue that institutionally legitimized and hegemonically enforced affinity groupings or "diversity" categories reproduce and maintain White privilege by blunting attempts at critical community building and solidarity work for racial justice (Berrey, 2015). By expanding our understanding of the advantages of using collective memory work to theorize the intersection of oppressions, this paper provides a number of significant implications for the work of disrupting White privilege.

Method

Design Overview

In terms of research design, the three-part procedure for this CMW examination combined personal narratives with a conceptual analysis of the intersecting themes followed by writing collectively. First, the participants drafted an individual narrative. Second, the researchers-participants analyzed each others' narratives using textual analyses. After agreeing on the findings that emerged from the narratives, they worked collectively to write the analyses and conclusion. This final step, writing analyses collectively, provides opportunities for new theorizations and is what differentiates CMW from similar methods.

For the study, the researchers chose a CMW approach to make visible the connections that faculty of Color share in common. This approach assumes that only by engaging with other faculty of Color in a group effort can we illuminate individual silos and move toward a path of coalition building (Hamm, 2018). Since CMW involves the analyses of a group of narratives, by necessity, it is a much more flexible approach than other narrative approaches such as autoethnography. Through collective theorizing of the participants' education memories across different school spaces, the researchers sought to show how memories can help faculty of Color make sense of their struggles while also recognizing their accomplishments. By examining these memories, they also sought to recast them as teaching and learning opportunities for other faculty of Color. According to Hamm, *collective memory work* "is an educational alternative, something tangible, offering the promise of practical experience and self-determined investigative learning" (2018, p. 118).

Researchers-Participants

The researchers of this study volunteered as the participants due to their involvement in a writing group. They consisted of three tenure track faculty in teacher education between their late forties to early fifties: a Chicano cis-gendered male with nine years in higher education; an African American cis-gendered female with 13 years in higher education; and an Afro-Caribbean cis-gendered female with seven years in higher education. Their prior relationship and subjective experiences established credibility in each other's understandings of the phenomena under examination and provided the data necessary for the study. It was understood that the purpose of the study was to use narratives to identify themes within and between their educational experiences as BIPOC. No other persons were recruited to participate. The research site for the study was a midsize predominately White institution in the midwest. The participants wrote the individual narratives before they gathered as a group. The formal data collection, analysis, and collective writing process occurred over multiple scheduled meetings on the campus.

Data-Collection

The participants constructed and recorded personal memories related to education in the form of brief written narratives. Following the principles associated with the CMW method, which encourage fluidness, the authors wrote these narratives using the third-person narrative standpoint and pseudonyms. The three faculty narratives provided the first level of data collected for the study (see Narratives

below). The second level of data included the emergence of themes within and between the narratives during the writing group meeting. All three participants met on campus for the meeting, where they disentangled, engaged with, and discussed the commonalities and differences in their respective narratives. As they deconstructed the narratives, the participants identified recurring themes and meanings regarding their experiences with education. No others were present as the levels of data were gathered.

Narratives

X

"Don't rock the boat." As a Chicano man in a tenure track position in teacher education, still an anomaly, and a former elementary teacher and student in urban Los Angeles, X's personal experiences with deculturalization in schools involve a range of dimensions. As a youth, he attended public schools typically considered just another stop along the school to prison pipeline, as some teachers would say menacingly (Yosso, 2013). Having avoided the pitfalls of urban schools, one of X's main intellectual commitments includes identifying how teacher education reproduces deficit narratives about people of Color by normalizing and protecting Whiteness (Bernal, 2002). As imagined by X, engaging in this work means confronting the primacy of Euro-centered epistemologies in teacher education, hence X's interest in the narratives of BIPOC faculty. Prior to his current academic appointment, he taught elementary education methods and foundation courses at two universities. The narrative that follows, written in the third person, highlights X's experiences as a hyper-visible Brown man working under the White gaze in primarily White spaces in academia (Orelus, 2013).

Upon completing an undergraduate liberal arts degree, X decided that teaching would be a space in which to intervene in the production of deficit narratives about BIPOC children. After teaching elementary school for several years, X thought that working in higher education and training new teachers might provide an opportunity for him to share some of his personal and professional knowledge. This knowledge includes the experience of attending dreadful urban schools throughout his K-12 education. Naively perhaps, X believed that teacher education programs, especially those professing to work for social justice, would be interested in merging theory with practice. For this reason, after completing a doctoral degree, X was excited to join the faculty at one such teacher education program. X always approached his teaching in a manner that he thought adhered to the social norms of academia. For instance, he always wore a dress shirt and blazer, even when his White colleges still dressed like graduate students. Unfortunately, X learned that many of the claims for social justice and equity simply function to check the boxes of diversity.

For instance, soon after a rash of overtly racist attacks against students and faculty on campus (a different university), X organized a faculty training session on normalized racism in teacher education. X approached this meeting in a spirit of goodwill and collegiality as an opportunity to initiate necessary conversations in the department, including the need for decolonizing pedagogies that confront the primacy of Whiteness (Dei, 2008). During the faculty meeting, X introduced different frameworks for examining racism, including critical race theory (Bell, 1979). This particular framework, which he presented using the

type of intellectually detached style favored by academia, highlighted decolonizing principles and first-person knowledge of the way racism operates on campus. X was able to draw from his experiences as a former teacher to illustrate abstract concepts, such as Whiteness as property (Harris, 1993).

X's colleagues responded with venom and hate, which he found perplexing at the time. For example, one faculty member sarcastically stated, "There's an MLK way of doing things and a Malcolm X way." This faculty member was articulating his view of decolonizing perspectives, which challenge the status quo, as a shady form of knowledge. This type of resistance happened more than once during the same meeting with the effect of silencing the discussion. The faculty members who repeated the statement "Don't rock the boat" always prefaced their comments by highlighting their progressive credentials through comments such as "I have Black friends, and they don't think like that." A sentiment repeated by several faculty members at subsequent meetings involved iterations of "We all came on different ships, but now we're in the same boat." The unrelenting drive toward normalizing sameness and inclusion became a way of emphasizing and highlighting the need for everyone to assimilate. X was targeted for calling attention to the racism in the department by having comments such as "Don't stick out" directed at him in the hallways between classes. As mentioned earlier, X did attempt to assimilate into the culture of academia by following what he thought were the norms of intellectual inquiry.

Some of the related comments repeated during that and subsequent meetings or encounters in the halls included assertions about the inevitability of progress and social justice in U.S. schools. For instance, faculty articulated this idea through statements such as: "This does not matter because in fifty years we're all going to be Brown anyway." When X asked the faculty member who made this comment to explain or elaborate, this person ignored X. Verbal resistance of this type became a regular pattern along with audible sighs, eye-rolling, raised eyebrows, and shrugs. All forms of epistemic violence, along with the glare of the White gaze, are designed to silence, intimidate, and maintain social arrangements with the faculty of Color seen as tokens (Vasquez, 2021).

Interestingly, according to one self-described liberal faculty member, the language of anti-racism and Whiteness produce discomfort for faculty. Ridiculously, one faculty member added that White women are "also victims of racism." This last point generated much agreement and head nodding among faculty, yet no one explained exactly how White women could be construed as victims of racism. Instead, the conversation shifted to students with disabilities: "It's not about race since special need kids are also victims." The faculty ignored X's comments about confronting systemic racism or the ongoing effects of oppression and colonialism on people of Color. Overall, despite the stated purpose of the meeting, faculty dismissed X as "too focused on race" and subjected him to much harassment and othering (Spivak, 1988). Over the next few weeks, faculty asked, always informally, why he was so concerned about "something that isn't there" and so invested in "radical" theories. Despite using his repertoire of skills, faculty members in the department refused to consider or discuss the possibility that everyday discourses may play masking and perpetuating various forms of racism. Again, all this after a series of racial hate crimes reported on campus.

Lynn

"Black girl from Cleveland…monitor her." Shakespeare wrote, "Past is prologue." Our everyday experiences contribute to the formation of self. Self-identity, self-confidence, and self-actualization can be viewed in response to our encounters and the meaning we derive from them. Crawford et al. (1992) recognize this, stating that "Significant events…and the way they are subsequently constructed, play an important part in the construction of self" (p. 37). Utilizing memories to understand our roles, actions and perceptions can offer insight into our choice of vocations and our work towards social justice and equity. Haug and Carter (1987), credited as one of the developers of collective memory work, tell us, "Everything remembered constitutes a relevant trace [of ourself]…because it is remembered for the formation of identity" (p. 50).

Lynn's narrative explores memories of her schooling, teaching in the K-12 setting, as well as her work in higher education, each of which contributed to shaping her identity as an educator committed to quality urban teacher preparation; equity and access for students of Color in urban schools; and education as social justice. The memories demonstrate how people of Color frequently experience microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007) throughout their matriculation through the American educational system and that these instances of deficit perspectives (Dudley-Marling, 2007) do not dissipate with the obtainment of terminal degrees.

Lynn's earliest memory of school is being taken to a massively large gym for an assessment prior to being enrolled in Head Start. Once inside, Lynn was asked a series of questions, "Have you ever seen a book before? Do people in your family read to you? How many books do you have at home?" To each question, Lynn responded, "Yes, I have lots of books at home. My mom and grandma read to me." In response, the questioner asked, "Are you sure?"

Throughout middle and high school, most of Lynn's teachers were African American in an urban school district. She performed well academically and was often selected for enrichment educational opportunities. During high school, her mother intentionally relocated to a predominantly White school district so that Lynn and her brother could receive what she perceived as better education. Once enrolled in the new high school, Lynn was not placed in the honors track as she had previously been in at her old school. When Lynn asked her school counselor why she was no longer in honors, she was told, "Her grades did not call for those classes." At the time of her transfer, Lynn had a GPA of 3.95 and was in the top 5% of her class. Feeling bored and disconnected became the new existence for Lynn. The teachers at the new school often mispronounced her name or asked her to use her middle name when they called upon her. Lynn frequently asked her mother to move back to the city to go to a school where she felt "cared for" and "like a real student."

The microaggressions continued at the same high school; all sophomores were given a list of possible career options that their guidance counselor and teachers believed would be good to consider. Excited that the list would confirm her dream of being a lawyer, Lynn received a list of the following occupations in rank order: 1. Secretary, 2. Seamstress, 3. Short-order cook, and 4. Housekeeper. For Lynn, this list confirmed the low expectations that her teachers held for her. It was after receiving this list that Lynn's mother moved the family back to the city. Lynn left the school in tears

and refused to go to school the following day.

Acceptance and admission to college as a first-generation student was an accomplishment that Lynn knew would change her life trajectory (Hébert, 2018; Dennis, Phinney & Chuateco, 2005). Yet, subsequently finding out that her admission's file included a note stating, "Black girl from Cleveland, may require intervention, monitor her," was a sobering statement, which brought the realization that admission did not mean full acceptance on the level Lynn thought.

Even in preservice teacher courses, Lynn was not exempt from marginalization. With the intention of being fully recognized, Lynn questioned her professor when he stated, "Teachers should not see color; they should only see students." Lynn's reply of "Then you miss seeing me at all because I am a Black student" was met with visible anger and raised voice of her professor, stating, "Race has nothing to do with schools, and you need to learn that now." Although Lynn previously had all A's on the course exams and no absences, she received a B for the course. When questioned on the final grade, the professor indicated that Lynn has "The wrong attitude about the teaching profession."

In Lynn's first years of teaching, she taught in high-poverty schools, primarily serving African American students. She taught with several new and veteran teachers who demonstrated in action and verbally indicated that they did not believe poor students and students of Color deserved their best teaching efforts:

- "Why are you going all out for these kids? Girl, don't waste your time or money", African-American mentor teacher;
- "These children are not capable of doing well in my class," White veteran teacher;
- "If you ever met the parents, you would know why this kid will never be successful," White veteran teacher;
- "I took this job, but I'm just waiting to be called by another district. This is not where I want to be. I can't work with these kids", new teacher (White), who had difficulty all year and took a job in another district halfway through the school year and leaving the class with multiple subs for the remainder of the year;
- "You don't have to do much here; I have used the same lesson plans for years. These kids don't even understand half the material, so it doesn't matter. I just changed the date and handed it to the principal," African-American veteran teacher;
- "Why did you choose to teach in this district? You should teach White kids in the suburbs. They are smarter and easier to teach, apply with me," White second year teacher; and
- "You spend too much time here, aren't you scared of this neighborhood? We are in the hood," White new teacher.

As a teacher education professor, Lynn fully expected, hopefully and naively, to be received respectfully and viewed as an expert in the profession. While true in some aspects, this ideal was frequently contradicted, particularly by students who have had few, if any, teachers of Color. Memory work snapshots illustrate this point: while standing in the classroom writing her

name on the board, being asked, "Do you know where Dr. Lynn is?"; "I did not expect you to be Black, you don't sound Black on the phone"; and "Where did you get this information from, I have doubts about this." These snapshots indicate the disbelief and inability to reconcile Black with knowledge and authority (West, 2001). Recently, students in Lynn's class were overheard while completing course evaluations, openly asking, "Why did we get the Black one?"

Tigress

"This land was made for you and me…Where do I fit in?" Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican politician and historian, said, "If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life." Armed with this quote as an integral part of her character, a student of Garveyism, a thread of her Afro-Caribbean cultural background, steeped in the works of Wole Soyinka and Chinua Achebe—great African writers. An avid lover of the Harlem Renaissance and as an immigrant with great expectations, Tigress sought to explore the American culture. Eighteen years ago, Tigress migrated from her beloved island home Jamaica to a midwestern state full of love and passion for exploring a new life. With the giddy feelings of newly wedded bliss, the world felt like her oyster, and possibilities were seen as limitless in the heartland of America. Tigress' confidence was cemented on a foundation built on a solid British Caribbean education background, an amazing educational experience as an educator in high schools in Jamaica, and significant contributions to her Jamaican educational and cultural legacy.

Advocacy was at the heart of her success, so it was so easy to choose an urban school system to work in, refusing to accept offers from suburbia. The need to connect with her people, African Americans, and enrich one's value of their culture created a sense of excitement and belonging with this small pocket of minoritized people in this midwestern state. However, the persistent structural racism at the societal level affected the dynamics of Tigress' life as a Black immigrant in America (Cohen, 1999). First, her academic credentials were thoroughly scrutinized to measure up to the standards of her new home. The humiliation was palpable as her White superiors fielded questions about her education and teaching experience, clearly attacking immigrant education. The White administrators interrogated her, a systemic extension of ICE (Dowling & Inda, 2013), about her status, an attempt to belittle and extinguish her fire and desire to teach her urban students. Tigress shared her complex ethnic identities and familial histories rooted in Caribbean, European, African, and American legacies, hoping to be accepted in an inclusive society. However, she was doubly othered in this space based on her Blackness and foreignness (Louis et al., 2020).

Unbeknownst to Tigress were the harsh realities of cross-cultural relations she would face as she navigated systems of oppression, domination, and discrimination with different racial and social groups in her midwestern city. Differences along the lines of class and culture can create intraracial tensions about norms, expectations, and behavior (Cohen, 2004). History demonstrates that American society, in many instances, is anti-foreign and anti-immigrant toward specific groups. Whereas the White immigrant will have assimilated by the second or third generation, Jamaican immigrants of Color cannot. Tigress was shut out by the people she thought looked like her and would embrace her "educated self" or persona in the struggling urban

school. You see, Tigress' arrival, a Jamaican immigrant of Color, to an urban school in the mid-west brought tension not only with her White counterparts but between her and her African American peers, students and parents. This tension amongst us Black people was a glaring reminder of White structures lasting divisive tactics, which haunt African Americans and Black immigrants (Awokoya & Clark, 2008).

Many questioned her language skills, "Is English your first language?" They spoke in slow tones to ask her basic questions for fear she would not understand them. She was ridiculed by her students, who had questions about her culture. "Do you live in huts? Do you see monkeys walking on the streets?" The parents verbally assaulted her. "Go back to Africa! Comb your nappy hair!" Tigress' dreadlocks confirmed her worst fears. Many assumed she smoked weed and listened only to Bob Marley all day long. Tigress was even gifted a customized apron with the map of Africa, Jamaica nestled in its new geographical location in Africa, displaced by her people (Jennings, 2010). It was a constant battle. Tigress soon realized assimilation and acceptance into mainstream American society were fraught with challenges. Her Black counterparts marginalized her. Crenshaw's work on identity politics where "intragroup differences are often ignored" gives a voice to minoritized groups within society.

Tigress' confidence grew as she sought to prove how valuable she could be to her students' success. Notably, she wrote the disciplinary system for the school, which was received well by most, but her White counterparts dissected the words and grammar, boldly underlining the errors in British English not aligned to Webster's English standards for Americans. Tigress used these experiences to educate her peers on American history, a hidden gem to many who failed to recognize the similarities between Afro-Caribbean experiences and that of a Black educated immigrant woman. Tigress, too, though, Afro-Caribbean was a part of the conflict and struggle of African Americans. It was a Black against Black issue that she sought to disrupt. Cohen (1999) has developed the concept of *secondary marginalization* to describe how the more privileged members of a marginalized group can take over from the dominant group the function of policing the behavior of less privileged members within the marginalized group. The White majority viewed Tigress as the "angry Black woman" and her African American peers as the "Black imposter," caught in the crosshairs of cultural fusion.

Findings

During our sharing, exploring, and analysis of the narratives, we realized that even though we represent different identities: a Jamaican woman, a Chicano male, and an African American female, our experiences represent powerful intersectionalities that provide a unique perspective. This perspective, one not typically discussed in teacher education, illuminates the process of schooling and crystalizes the myriad of difficulties experienced by faculty of Color at the university level. Hill-Collins and Bilge (2016) tell us that intersectionality can be used as a "heuristic analytic tool" (p. 2) to identify, exam and "solve problems" (p. 2). Utilizing the CMW model to recall, process, and analyze through intersectionality, we identified themes in our intersectionalities that reflect our collective experiences and offer insight into behaviors, practices, and policies that demonstrate the marginalization we as people of Color have endured. This paper constitutes the first time these three

authors have ever attempted to link their particular experience with White privilege to other faculty of Color. In itself, the social isolation of faculty of Color, also constitutes a theme that requires more examination.

Between the Narratives

The stereotypes and biases of cultures within American society are common themes explored in all the narratives. In short, White American is considered the gold standard or the normative, and the others, in this case, X, a Chicano male, Lynn, an African American woman, and Tigress, an Afro-Caribbean woman, exist in opposition to the dominant White society. In other words, they were all considered outsiders. For example, as a first-generation college graduate from a working-class Chicano family, X expected that his college students would have many questions for him, and they did. From his narrative, his presence was a surprise to students and colleagues. It was also evident that faculty positioned X as an outsider who did not belong in higher education. His role was primarily to bring legitimacy to the body of work around "diversity," but his presence remained that of an outsider where perpetual systemic biases against Chicano culture dominated students and faculty concept of him. This pervading theme of being the other or outsider is also evident in Lynn's narrative as she was given a list of possible career options that her guidance counselor and teachers believed would be good for her to consider. Lynn received a list of the following occupations in rank order: 1. Secretary, 2. Seamstress, 3. Short-order cook, and 4. Housekeeper. Lynn's narrative reflects the White hegemonic stereotypes and biases, where suppression and dominance of the African American race continue, even now, outside the constraints of slavery. While Lynn aspired to achieve a terminal degree, which she eventually accomplished, her education path was rife with constant reminders that she was Black and not honored in honor programs or academia. Tigress' narrative revealed that as an Afro-Caribbean immigrant woman, she soon realized assimilation and acceptance into mainstream American society were fraught with challenges. Unlike X and Lynn, both Americans raised in the American culture; Tigress expected the outsider label as a normal part of her social reality. No matter how much she contributed and improved intellectually, she suffered systemic oppression and biases which sought to strip her of her humanity to more easily exclude her from the White and Black American cultures. The intersectionality of these three different faculty of Color's narratives further reveals the constitutive nature of identity shaped by White dominance as it continues to perpetuate ideas, stereotypes, and biases around cultures and nationalism, shutting out the outsiders. As Love (2019) articulated, our complicated identities cannot be discussed or examined in isolation from one another.

Persistent racism affected all three faculty of Color at different times in their lives. Lynn's teacher's color blindness is symbolic of his dismissal of her, a Black student, as a human being as her presence was discounted in his classroom. X also experienced this color blindness, wherein his narrative, his credentials erased his race as he was now accepted into the dominant White society. While Tigress continues to be an outsider, her often scrutinized credentials brought some legitimacy to her acceptance in the dominant society. These three faculty of Color were able to break through the hard-hitting policies and systemic structures to assimilate into the dominant society to an extent. As Wynter (2015) stated, the west has brought the whole human species into its

hegemonic, now purely secular model of being human. The interlocking systems of oppression (Collins, 2013) worked against Tigress as cross-cultural and intercultural relations excluded her from societal inclusion on all levels. While people of Color expect to be marginalized by the dominant White society, it is even more challenging to be secondarily marginalized within one's race, which Tigress experienced. This is evidence that White dominant society continues to win the war against race and being human as they have influenced their subjected minoritized people to further exclude their immigrants or less advantaged people through intra-racial conflicts. Both Lynn and Tigress simultaneously were Black imposters, angry Black women while their White counterparts, as X pointed out in his narrative, were "victims of racism." This is inherently troubling as women of Color experiences cannot be equated to their White counterparts, whose Whiteness will always give them legitimacy, and the struggles will always be there for women of Color because of their melanin. The complex convergence of oppression faced by these faculty of Color is stark. Through an intersectional lens, we can address these issues of social injustice and disrupt the perpetuation of White hegemonic inequities amongst ourselves and in the professional practice of education.

Within the Narratives

X's experiences in teacher education and schools overall have been harmful and painful. Little regard has been shown to his intellectual trajectory, teaching expertise, or humanity. The demand that he "not make trouble" not only diminished his academic training but also invalidates the knowledge he carries as a result of his social location and lived experiences as a Chicano man and former teacher. Despite X's willingness to clarify his teaching and research interest in critical race theory, peers in his department failed to engage with his concerns as a means of silencing him. Moreover, X's peers did not care at all about his professional commitments to anti-racist pedagogies or his questioning of Euro-centric epistemologies. Given the current moment for racial justice, as well as the academy's commitment to becoming anti-racist, it is no wonder that faculty of Color feel battered and exhausted (Dumas, 2016). Describing X as "rocking the boat" constitutes a type of violence that seeks to force him to see himself as an "Other" in higher education. Powell and Menendian (2016) define *othering* "as a set of dynamics, processes, and structures that engender marginality and persistent inequality across any of the full range of human differences based on group identities" (p. 13). "Dimensions of othering include, but are not limited to, religion, sex, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (class), disability, sexual orientation, and skin tone" (p. 17). In short, X is an Other who does not belong in the academy. This othering goes beyond bullying and places an immense burden on X to establish and defend his humanity (Wynter, 2015). This in itself constitutes a form of punishment for X's difference rather than merely intimidation or harassment.

Lynn's snippets of memory demonstrate the perniciousness of matriculating through the American educational system for African Americans. While Lynn has always tried to maintain a hopeful perspective, knowing that she has benefitted from positive educational opportunities from childhood to professional life, she also has had to contend with the constant presence of racism and marginalization. Frequently as a student and an educator, Lynn experienced the *silencing* hooks (1994) identified as an

insidious part of schools: Schools as spaces where teachers were complicit in maintaining power structures and authority while simultaneously denying the potential of those they consider, Other. For Lynn, she met this othering with a determination to persist and excel. Through identifying these collective memories, it becomes evident to Lynn why she selected teaching as a career path and why her focus has always been on supporting students, who, like her, faced oppression and low expectations despite their ability to excel and drive to achieve. For Lynn, collective memory work (CMW) uncovered touchpoints that confirmed and reinforced her commitment to ensuring equity and access in education for students of Color. Additionally, the CMW helped Lynn to appreciate further the solidarity emerging between herself and her colleagues. By uncovering the nexus of experiences, there came a recognition of the importance of collectivism in supporting one another in a space that is unhealthy for the psyche (Martin et al., 2019) and frustrating professionally (Diggs et al., 2009).

Tigress' narrative embodies themes of displacement, double and intersectional othering of Black immigrants who dare to partake in the American dream (Gerstle, 2017). The constant interrogation of her identity with Whiteness at the center dictating who she ought to be diminishes her experiences and knowledge to educate in Black and White spaces. As a Black immigrant, displaced among her Black race, racialized, and discriminated from within and without, the suppressionist's White colonial systems manifested itself in her new world (Jennings, 2010). The need to disrupt the status quo becomes more urgent as Tigress' entrance into this racial space will not translate into Whiteness, in that she will continue to embrace her immigrant self as she appreciates others. The collective memory work further magnified the trap of White dominance to demean and demoralize Black peoples, stoking flames of divisiveness. However, Tigress's affinity with her colleagues of Color in the academy was strengthened through this work. With a surety of identity, Tigress navigated the cultural landscape emerging as a principal and then becoming a university professor. While the system was designed to exclude or mute her voice, Tigress fought for her foothold and situated herself in a body of work in education, diversity, anti-racist, abolitionist teaching, and culturally responsive pedagogy, intentionally disrupting and decolonizing the old order with a new paradigm shift, this land is our land.

The three narratives provided conclusive experiences of the researchers' decentering Whiteness in White spaces, affirming their identities although othered, giving voice to minoritized and racialized people who have contributed and will continue to disrupt hegemonic inequities actively.

Discussion

It has been over 30 years since McIntosh (1988) unpacked her invisible knapsack and opened a much-needed discussion on privilege and accountability. Yet, in these passing years, the use and expectation of privilege have not abated. Privilege and the perspective that people of Color are less than their counterparts remains evident in school settings (Matias & Zembylas, 2014; Milner, 2012). The themes and experiences shared in the three narratives provide evidence that even as people of Color obtain terminal degrees and become experts in their respective fields, their credentials and knowledge will remain in dispute or be positioned as subpar.

Persistent in building coalitions to achieve their respective goals, people of Color remain marginalized, challenging normative standards before achieving tenure, which entails questioning the dominant narrative of post-racial progress. By obscuring the histories of struggle over racism, colonialism, and justice, dominant institutions reproduce and institutionalize the racial hierarchies they profess not to recognize. By symbolically erasing our connections, intersecting identities, and subjugated knowledge from the department, and by silencing the questions and challenges to racist policies and everyday practices, higher education tacitly maintains and reproduces existing forms of inequality and injustice (Bonilla-Silva, 2006).

The significance of the work lies within the context of our country and the shifting demographics of the population. In the abundance of cultures, identities, and traditions, the default setting for schools cannot continue to be White. The centering of Whiteness as the normative standard is unacceptable in a nation crying out for justice. Resetting the center becomes imperative if the goal is to manifest pluralism instead of the hypocrisy currently endured. In addition, this work is valuable in working with teacher candidates who work with students of Color; children are also susceptible to being harmed by teachers who hold strong biases against them, given their racial, class, gender, and family backgrounds (Cooper, 2001).

With all this in mind, it is never easy to openly share and discuss the intersection of identities and oppressions from a critical perspective that challenges and disrupts the master script that faculty of Color must "stay in their lane." The risk is even greater for faculty of Color who draw on various theoretical approaches that question the western logic, symbolic violence, and othering that link immigrant status to different forms of oppression. For example, even though X speaks English and is a "native" born American, he is still subjected to the same language policing as Tigress. What links Tigress and X ultimately is that neither can ever count as fully American or even as fully human in an academic space where the normative standards always privilege Euro-centered logic. This risk of finding common ground among faculty of Color involves upsetting the standard pathways that have been established for different members of different marginalized groups. This challenge to the boxes that divide faculty of Color in many ways makes visible the normative logic of individualism.

Implications

All of the authors experienced marginalization and comments directed at them indicating that their ways of collaborating and learning (Lynn, Tigress & X); speaking, "Is English your first language?" (Tigress & X) and teaching experiences (Lynn, Tigress & X) were viewed as outside of the normative hegemonic standards (Apple, 1998). Therefore their life experiences, work, and professional credentials were frequently challenged and scrutinized. Faculty of Color experiences are often examined (Vargas, 1999 & 2002; Turner & Myers, 2000; Stanley, 2006). What has not been fully explored and what this work intends to do is utilize the memory work framework to identify and understand the impact of the collective episodic incidents on faculty and find the nexus that exists. Privilege and power continue to dominate spaces where minoritized people operate under the constraints of oppression that they learn to navigate but not necessarily accept as a permanent state of being (Wynter, 2015).

Regardless of the social class, educational level, or gender, faculty of Color encounter and absorb micro-aggressions and micro-invalidations regularly. Therefore, it becomes imperative that the faculty of Color form coalitions that validate, support, and counteract the epistemic violence in spaces in which they seek to learn, work, and succeed. Constructing the memory work narratives and their subsequent analysis permits the identification of intersectionality that uncovers the connectedness amongst faculty. This connectedness enables the development of relationships and solidarity that is necessary for faculty coalition building. Coalition building works to counter the "divide and conquer" strategies that institutions deploy to neutralize the voices of faculty of Color. A shift in practice to decolonizing higher education is imperative. Thus, we have come to the following implications about ways to move forward in interrupting how normative standards and marginalization manifest themselves in spaces. These conclusions require more than acknowledgment; they require actionable steps:

1. Honoring your cultural heritage and identity by decentering Whiteness (Hitchcock & Flint, 2015; Paris & Alim, 2014; Schmidt, 2018). We have an obligation to remember and value the culture, beingness, and intellectual traditions of people of Color.
2. Accountability and responsibility to ourselves, students, profession, and society (Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2009). Importance of sharing our narratives to empower candidates and help create spaces where oppression will be recognized and confronted (Milner, 2007).
3. Disrupt the dominant constructs that seek to dehumanize and invalidate the ways of being and knowing (Kendi, 2019). This disruption requires one to embody and operationalize the counter-narrative (Milner, 2005).
4. Faculty of Color should intentionally seek spaces, such as conferences and organizations that support networking and scholarship of BIPOC, which enables them to avoid falling into the trap of working in silos and feeling alone in the academy (Louis et al., 2016; Martin et al., 2019).
5. Universities should strongly consider cluster hires of BIPOC to increase representation, but more importantly, it enables the development of solidarity building amongst faculty of Color (Diggs et al., 2009; Pittman, 2012).

Directions for Future Work

These mainstream diversity practices, which we call *stay in your lane diversity*, obscure the multiple ways education sites remain implicated in reproducing racial, gender, and linguistic oppressions by essentializing and normalizing "basic" categories that rest on racist Euro-centered logic. Rushton (2004) offered that "Lived experiences can be translated into rich narrative stories useful for both teaching and research" (p. 62). The narratives of faculty of Color can help shed light on the negative impact deficit-minded educators and navigating America's historically racially-biased educational system has on Black, Latino, immigrant, and other marginalized groups. These voices can and should be used to correct the intentional negative framing, microaggressions, and inequitable opportunities and outcomes experienced by many.

Future directions for this work should include the creation of a framework applying memory work to investigate multiple aspects of identity to unsettle current informal and formal structures that continue to marginalize and limit the potential of people of Color.

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