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"WALK THE WALK": A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATORS' PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Jessica R. Williams

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by

JESSICA R. WILLIAMS

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JESSICA R. WILLIAMS

Supervising Professor: Regina Praetorius

Committee Members: Annie Nordberg, Brittanie Ash, Jandel Crutchfield, and Jaya Davis

Abstract

The profession of social work has a long-standing history of social movement contribution, including in recent times. The May 2020 murder of George Floyd was an international flashpoint for global protests demanding racial justice, including within the US criminal justice system. Using Narrative Inquiry, the present study explored the stories of social work educators' participation in current social movements for racial justice. Results from this study indicate that contemporary social work educators value a variety of social movement contributions, including protesting, community organizing, and incorporation of anti-racism in social work education. The participants of this study highlighted the importance of embarking on a personal journey toward anti-racism praxis including transparent critical-self-reflection, continued community engagement, and constant learning. Implications from this study include the incorporation of social action, utilization of anti-racist pedagogy, and disruption of systems that perpetuate oppression.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

For decades scholars have pointed out the disproportional representation of people of color within the criminal justice system. Though tensions have waxed and waned, these reached a head in May of 2020 following the public murder of George Floyd. Despite a global pandemic, and during a traumatic presidential administration, hundreds of thousands turned out in protest of the killing of unarmed Black people by law enforcement officials. Given the current time of heightened awareness of racial injustice specifically within the criminal justice system, where are the social workers? This study aims to tell social work educators' stories of participation in social movements related to the racial injustices which are exemplified by the US criminal justice system (CJS).

Background of the Study

Social work as a profession has been engaged in social change for over a century (Abramovitz & Sherraden, 2016). Since the 1960s, the profession's code of ethics has identified social action as a major component of social work practice (Abramovitz, 1998). The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) currently identifies social and political action as avenues through which social work seeks to address social injustices (NASW, 2021a). One of the six core values of the social work profession is "social justice." The Council on Social Work Education that accredits social work education programs also highlights the profession's commitment to social change. Social work has a history of addressing social systems, and social work practice in various settings providing diverse points of interaction with the CJS (Rine, 2021). Previous literature has noted the benefits that social work can bring to the CJS, such as facilitating reform and connecting CJS issues with larger social issues (Cox & Augustine, 2018).

While there are many professionals in various disciplines committed to ending the unjust conditions perpetuated by the CJS, social work is especially well suited to create meaningful changes in the social movement toward addressing these issues (Wilson, 2010). Cox and Augustine (2018) identified paths for social workers to address the inequities of the CJS including "engagement in struggle and social action to change the oppressive political, economic, and social/cultural systems that generate conditions of poverty and support discrimination, violence, environmental destruction, and related conditions" (Cox & Augustine, 2018, p.170). Social workers have turned to anti-racist approaches to aid in the pursuit of addressing these injustices.

Study Purpose

The purpose of the present study is to narratively explore the contributions of social work educators to current social movements for racial justice. The present study aims to expand the knowledge base of how social work educators contribute to these social movements. Social action toward social justice is a key pillar of social work, and is integrated in social work education, thus it is vital to understand if and how educators are modeling the professional values of social work. This study aims to explore the tensions educators experience when participating in social movements. Further, this study is nested at a unique point in time that captures the widespread protests of the summer of 2020, but also the subsequent countermovement against diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. The present study was conducted during a time when anti-racist approaches, included in wider DEI initiatives, are highly contended. The relational and narrative nature of this study echoes social work values and is collaborative in ways that foster connection and partnerships.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Social Movements

Definitions

Social movements are seen as paths to create profound social change; throughout U.S. history, social movements have created pervasive change and shaped American democracy (Amenta & Caren, 2022; Cox & Augustine, 2018). For example, the women's suffrage movement fought for the ratification of the 19th amendment, giving women the right to vote; the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s ended legal segregation in the south (Reisch & Andrews, 2002).

Throughout the literature, there are various definitions of social movements. Political science scholar Wilkinson (1971) defined social movements as "a deliberate collective endeavor to promote change, having at least a minimal degree of organization, and founded upon the normative commitment and active participation of followers or members" (p. 104). From sociology, Snow et al. (2004) provided another definition:

> social movements can be thought of as collectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are a part. (p. 11)

Social movements are seen as collective actions to promote social change around specific grievances (Wilkinson, 1971). Further,

> Social movements can be thought of as organized yet informal social entities that are engaged in extra-institutional conflict … oriented towards a goal. These goals can either

be aimed at a specific and narrow policy or be more broadly aimed at cultural change.

(Christiansen, 2009, p. 2)

Dianni (1992) furthers this by including conflictual collective action, arguing that social movements are also defined as having "an oppositional relationship between actors who seek control of the same stake" (p. 21), suggesting that protesting specifically distinguishes social movements (della Porta & Dani, 2006). A closely related term is social action, defined by Weil et al., (2013) as a set of behaviors, individual or collective, that organizes and garners power with the goal of changing existing conditions for marginalized populations. Following from the Snow et al. (2004) definition of social movements, Yarmel, (2021) defines an activist "as anyone who regularly participates in such collectivities" (p. 427). Based on these definitions, this study considers a social movement a set of collective actions aimed to confront injustice.

Theories

There are a number of theories that have been used to explain social movements, including theories of collective behavior, theories of resource mobilization and political processes, and new social movement theories. First, are the theories of collective behavior, also called strain or breakdown theories. This group of theories views social movements as psychological phenomena and thus focuses on individual motivation (Staggenborg, 2016). Snow et al. (1998) suggest that social crises or social disruption are key factors in social mobilization. These periods, viewed as 'moments of rupture', produce 'critical junctures' that create opportunities for transformation (della Porta, 2020). For example, deprivation theories posit that social movements form among individuals who feel deprived of resources in an attempt to improve their conditions. Another theory of social movements is the mass society theory which

suggests that participating in social movements brings a sense of empowerment, though this theory has scant empirical support (Staggenborg, 2016).

Another set of theories used to explore social movements are resource mobilization and political process theories, which attempted to address the flaws of the collective behavior theories (Staggenborg, 2016). Resource mobilization theories suggest that individual mobilization to action is due to social ties, not feelings of frustration. Resource mobilization (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) conceptualized social movement success as the ability to acquire resources and mobilize individuals. However, critics of these theories argue that it underestimates the importance of social conditions and emotions (Goodwin et al., 2004). Next, the political opportunity theory posits that individuals act collectively when there are political opportunities for change, that is, individuals act collectively when there is a greater chance of success in altering harmful social structures (Snow & Soule, 2010). Finally, there are the New social movement theories that attempt to understand the intersection of the micro and macro levels of social movements (Pichardo, 1997), with some scholars considering the global impacts of social movements (Buechler, 2000). Separately, Bunnage (2014) considers the individual, social, and contextual when exploring the retention of social movement participation. Individually, sustained participation is impacted by the resources and circumstances of an individual, as well as the sense of commitment and responsibility to engage (Bunnage, 2014). Socially, sustained participation is impacted by a sense of collective identity and connections to social networks. Organizational commitment and culture also impact continued social movement participation (Bunnage, 2014).

While the focus of many social movement scholars is related to origins, others have provided ways to explore the outcomes of social movements. Giugni (2008) provided three

categories of examination: personal and biographical consequences, political consequences, and cultural consequences. Personal and biographical consequences include continued social action participation (Corrigall-Brown, 2011), transformative consciousness raising (Bunnage, 2014), and formation of activist identity (Corrigall-Brown, 2011). Political consequences include the exploration of social movement impact on the political environment through exploring things like protests (Piven & Cloward, 1979), the focus on single or multiple issues (Andersen & Jennings, 2010; Gamson, 1990), and even the context of the current government (Amenta, 2006). Cultural consequences include social movements shifting public opinion (Banaszak & Ondercin, 2016), incorporation and influence in literature and the arts (Milbrant, 2010), and the formation of collective identities (Polletta & Jasper, 2001).

Contextualizing the Current Social Movement

There are injustices within the CJS, many of which intersect with other oppressed and marginalized identities (e.g., race, gender), or social issues (e.g., racism, homelessness). In the past decade, there have been numerous murders of Black individuals by law enforcement. George Floyd was murdered in May of 2020 by police officers. The incident was filmed and was widely spread on social media. An immediate outcry took place and a movement to pursue racial justice was re-invigorated.

It is impossible to separate these injustices, and strategies to remedy, into distinct silos, however, the current CJS social movement is comprised of the following five main pillars (Lo et al., 2021): 1) Safety beyond policing; 2) Police accountability; 3) Ending unjust punishments; 4) Eliminating racial disparities across the justice system; and 5) Removing barriers facing individuals affected by the justice system.

Social Work History

For over a century, social workers have driven innovations in social policy, advocated for social change, and participated in social movements (Abramovitz, 1998; Abramovitz & Sherraden, 2016; Warde, 2021). Historically, social work is more socially active at times of social movements, such as during the Great Depression era, the New Deal era, and the 1960s Civil Rights Movement and War on Poverty (Abramovitz, 1998). Social work has a history rooted in social movement participation, detailed below; however, it is important to point out that this represents a snapshot of the 'successes' of social workers. In each of these cases, social workers could have done better. For example, "most New Deal legislation excluded African Americans and otherwise granted preferential treatment to men, White people, industrial workers, and two-parent families" (Abramovitz, 1998, p. 3). These historical exclusions and pitfalls are critical points of note when considering the history of social work and social action.

During the Progressive Era, social work emerged and helped establish what would become the basis for the US social welfare system (Reisch & Andrews, 2002). Social workers pursued laws that banned child labor, and created public health standards, and housing codes (Reisch, 2016; Warde, 2021). During this time, social workers were socially active in the Labor Movement by forming unions, participating in strikes, pushing forward labor and social welfare legislation, and helping to create organizations to pursue these social issues (Reisch & Andrews, 2002). Following WWI, some radical social workers were considered threats to national security for their views as pacifists and members of feminist organizations (Reisch & Andrews, 2002). After a slump of activism during the Roaring 20s, social workers were key in drafting and enacting policies in response to the Great Depression (Abramovitz, 1998). Macro social work practitioners worked with President Roosevelt as contributors to creating the New Deal (Reisch, 2016). Further, social workers contributed to drafting and enacting other social legislation like

the Social Security Act of 1935 and the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933 (Abramovitz, 1998). Following WWII, social workers fought to expand the New Deal as McCarthyism and communism paranoia led to purges of social programs and government agencies (Reisch & Andrews, 2002). The social movements of the 1960s and the War on Poverty brought a new surge in social work action.

Today, social workers engage in social change with and for vulnerable populations and address social problems including human trafficking (Abrams et al., 2021); Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender plus (LGBT+) populations (Swank & Fahs, 2014); intimate partner violence (IPV) survivors (Barocas et al., 2020); reproductive rights (Gomez et al., 2021); disability rights (Eiler & D'Angelo, 2020); climate change (Noble, 2016); economic inequalities (Goldberg, 2012); and COVID related inequalities (Rodriguez, 2020). Social workers are also engaged in addressing the injustices of the CJS. For example, one of the Grand Challenges of social work is to Promote Smart Decarceration (Epperson et al., 2018).

Social Work Guiding Documents

The profession's commitment to social change has been codified for many decades via its guiding documents (Warde, 2021). Social work in the US is primarily guided by two organizations: the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). The NASW Code of Ethics is widely recognized as the most prominent code of ethics for social workers (Reamer, 2013). The first code of ethics was adopted by NASW in 1960 and was constructed of 14 statements regarding social work conduct (Reamer, 2013). The first of these statements is an explicit endorsement of social action: "I regard as my primary obligation the welfare of the individual or group served which includes action for improving social conditions" (NASW, 1960, p. 1). The current preamble includes "advocacy"

and "social and political action" as activities through which social workers can strive to end social injustices. The code of ethics identifies the value of social justice as one of its 6 core ethical principles:

> Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people. (NASW, 2017).

This core value encourages social action in pursuit of social justice. Social work's commitment to social action can also be seen in its educational accreditation standards. CSWE's Commission on Accreditation (COA) uses The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) as a guide for accrediting bachelor's and master's social work programs which also include a call for addressing social justice. The current version of the EPAS outlines nine competencies, one of which calls for social work education to "Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusions (ADEI) in Practice" (CSWE, 2022).

Social Worker Activism

Most MSW students identify social change as the main mission of social work (Han & Chow, 2010). Research indicates that social work focal area influences social action, with students whose emphasis was macro-focused were more engaged with social action (Apgar, 2021; Dodd & Mizrahi, 2017; Mizrahi & Dodd, 2013). Macro students join social justice

organizations more frequently (Krings et al., 2020) and activist networks are associated with higher levels of activism (Swank, 2012; Swank & Fahs, 2013).

A civic engagement survey of BSW and MSW students found that out of three types of engagement, participating in civic activities had the highest participation rate with lower levels of participation in electoral and political voice (Hylton, 2015). Another finding from this study was that 40% of the students reported not participating in electoral activities (Hylton, 2015). However, a different study found that 92% of the first-year MSW students sampled were registered to vote and 56% reported encouraging others to vote (Ostrander et al., 2018).

Research has also focused on personal characteristics in connection with social action by social work students, though findings have been contradictory (Krings et al., 2020). While some studies have found that White students (compared to students of color) are more engaged in activism at the beginning of their education (Dodd & Mizrahi, 2017), other studies did not find associations between race and social action (Mattocks, 2018; Ritter, 2008). Another personal characteristic that has been linked with increased social action is identifying as non-heterosexual (Dodd & Mizrahi, 2017).

Not only do the guiding documents of the profession require social action, but social work practitioners expect that of each other (Felderhoff et al., 2015). However, clinical practitioners report spending only 2% of their weekly time engaged in community advocacy (Whitaker & Arrington, 2008). There is also a lack of social workers serving as elected officials (Lane & Humphreys, 2018; Miller et al., 2021). For social work practitioners, predictors of social action include age and feeling a professional responsibility to participate in social action (Mattocks, 2018). Similar to social work students, practitioners whose education was macro-focused engage more with social action (Apgar, 2021; Mattocks, 2018). For social workers,

higher political efficacy is positively correlated with higher amounts of planning on engaging in political activities in the future (Ostrander et al., 2018; Ritter, 2008). While social workers are more politically active than the general public, only 46% surveyed in a study reported being "active" or "very active" (Ritter, 2007).

Social Change in Social Work Education

Aspects of social action are taught in a variety of ways in social work education; though, social work education has been critiqued for not adequately preparing students for meaningful social change engagement (Abramovitz & Sherraden, 2016; Ritter, 2008). There are a number of things social work education has done to increase the social action of students and future social workers including using various frameworks, approaches, and activities to encourage social action. There appear to be benefits of teaching explicit frameworks, as students noted a positive experience using an explicit framework for advocacy engagement (Bliss, 2015). Various frameworks have been used to develop students' policy and advocacy engagement (Heidemann et al., 2011; Krings et al., 2019). Additionally, there have been courses designed to encourage social action (Dudziak & Profitt, 2012) as well as curriculum modification aimed at promoting macro social work (Austin, 2019).

Specific policy advocacy courses increased students' intent to participate in political advocacy (Schwartz-Tayri et al., 2021; Witt et al., 2020). Other studies have explored student understanding of their social actions and by using classroom activities like developing genograms about political participation, student understanding was increased (Crowell, 2017). Another classroom technique that has increased student social action includes service learning (Byers & Gray, 2012; Metzger, 2012), like The NASW's Legislative Education and Advocacy Day (LEAD) activities (Friedman, 2020; Nowakowski-Sims & Kumar, 2021). Lane et al. (2018)

found that students and professional social workers that went to a political activity engagement training had more plans to engage politically. Increased confidence to do macro social work was also identified via experiential learning (Jewell & Owens, 2017).

Anti-Racist Pedagogy

Anti-racist social work first emerged in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia in the 1970s with the purpose of exposing the structural nature of racism and challenging oppressive practices (Lavalette & Penketh, 2014). Subsequently, anti-racist pedagogy (Blakeney, 2005) is conceptualized as being able to "explain and counteract the persistence and impact of racism using praxis as its focus to promote social justice for the creation of a democratic society in every respect" (p. 119). Kishimoto (2018) outlines three components of implementing anti-racist pedagogy. First, is incorporating the topics of race and inequality into course content. Second, is teaching from an anti-racist pedagogical approach, and finally is anti-racist organizing on campus and connection to the community. Another related term being integrated into social work education is equity-mindedness (Beasley et al., 2022), defined as when an individual

> becomes aware of racial identity, uses disaggregated data to identify inequitable racial and ethnic outcomes, reflects on racial and ethnic consequences of practices, exercises agency to produce racial and ethnic equity, views the classroom as a racialized space and self-monitors interactions with students of color (CSWE, 2020a, para.1)

Anti-racist pedagogy requires educators to balance reflection and action, along with challenging and supporting students in navigating tensions (Ladhani & Sitter, 2020).

Current Study

While some aspects of social movement participation by social workers have been researched, scholars call for continued exploration of social movement contributions (Jeyapal,

2017). The current social movement for racial justice in the CJS has created responses in many helping professions such as community psychology and academic medical centers which are seeking to make changes reflective of this movement (Morse & Loscalzo, 2020; Shaw et al., 2021). Given the array of skills (e.g., community organizing, advocacy) social work is well poised to participate in this social movement and as a profession, is called to engage in social action such as participating in social movements. Further, social work educators are tasked with teaching the next generation of social workers that will contribute to social change. Therefore, the current study is intended to fill gaps in our understanding of social work educators' contribution to social movements related to racial injustice. Using a narrative inquiry approach, this study aims to collect and analyze the stories of social work educators' participation in the current racial justice social movements.

Chapter 3: Methods

This study is a qualitative, narrative inquiry exploring social work faculty experiences with current social movements related to racial injustice. Qualitative research offers a view of personal experiences which then provides insight into real-world phenomena and offers an exploration of how meaning is created from social experiences through interpretive practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). While there are many approaches to qualitative research, a narrative approach is the best fit for exploring the current topic. This social phenomenon will be illuminated via study participants' stories of participation in social movements. Narrative methods allow participants to share detailed stories of their lives.

Narrative Inquiry as a Theoretical Framework: Theoretical Origins and Assumptions

Narrative refers to many concepts at various levels of social research, including methods and analyses. This research is based on Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) Narrative Inquiry, which is described as "a way of understanding and inquiring into experience" (p. 13). In this view, narrative inquiry is not just a methodology, but also a phenomenon (Clandinin, 2007). Orienting around the theoretical background is of great importance in qualitative work (Clandinin, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Patton, 1999). Due to the theoretical positioning of narrative inquiry's view of experience, it is distinct from other research traditions (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). "The view of experience that underlies narrative inquiry is a narrative view" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 33) rooted in the epistemological and ontological assumptions of Dewey's view of experience.

Ontology deals with the assumptions that underly the nature of reality (Rowe et al., 2015). Narrative inquiry is based on a Deweyan view of experience, which is a pragmatic ontology of experience (Dewy, 1938). This ontological view identifies experience as the most

fundamental reality we have. This conceptualization of reality assumes that experience is temporal, it is continuous, and it is social. It also supposes that experience is transactional. That is, that experience is the continuous interaction of human thought with the personal, social, and material environment. This posits that the best way to understand reality is to consider experience through these interactions (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Another consideration is epistemology, which deals with the assumptions that underly knowledge (Rowe et al., 2015). The base assumptions guiding this study are that story telling is how we communicate and construct our experiences, therefore, storytelling is connected to knowing and knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Lived experiences are a source of knowledge, and storytelling is how that knowledge is accessed. Given the ontological and epistemological assumptions, narrative inquiry views experience as the most fundamental representation of reality. Experience is temporal, meaning stories are a representation of the experience as it unfolds over time. Experience is continuous, meaning experiences grow out of other experiences. Experience is social, meaning stories are the result of social influence on a person's environment and inner life. Given this, the present study used narrative approaches to explore social work educators' engagement with the current racial justice social movement.

This narrative approach is heavily influenced by Dewey's three-dimensional space narrative structure (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Dewey's structure was composed of Interaction, Continuity, and Situation. Based on this structure, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) provide a framework wherein they have identified three commonplaces: temporality, sociality, and place. They define commonplaces as "places that need to be explored in undertaking narrative inquiry" (p. 38). Temporality, originally represented by Dewey's continuity, in narrative inquiry temporality is composed of attention to past, present, and future. Sociality,

originally represented by Dewey's interaction, in narrative inquiry is a consideration of the personal and social. Place, originally represented by Dewey's situation, in narrative inquiry, place is the consideration of context. These commonplaces are given consideration at each step of the research process.

Rationale

This method is particularly useful for exploring the present research topic as these stories allow the experiences to be nested within the larger social structures within which the teller is situated. This methodology is highly relational and situated in relationships and community, a fitting method for exploring stories of social movement participation. Further, this method is in many ways aligned with a social work approach to research (Shaw, 2018). Throughout the design of the study, social work values are seen. For example, the value of human relationships (NASW, 2017) is reflected in the relational and participatory aspects of this methodology. Further, in the justifications described below, the values of social justice, dignity and worth of the person, and the importance of relationships, all core concepts of the NASW code of ethics (2017), can be seen. Additionally, the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space mirrors social work's person-in-environment perspective's (Kondrat, 2013) attention to both the individual and their environment (Reisch, 2007).

Study Design

Following the theoretical framework detailed above, the method chosen for this study is *narrative inquiry* (Clandinin, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 2000), which is conceptualized as both a method and a phenomenon. This method allows for the exploration of research puzzles, but also simultaneously generates new experiences (Clandinin, 2013). Participants share stories though which insight and understanding can be gleaned, as patterns surface in the narratives

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(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This method was formed within the realm of educational

research, exploring the experiences of teachers (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). While narrative

methods have been used in social work research (e.g., Larsson & Sjoblom, 2010), narrative

inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) has been used infrequently (Shaw, 2017). Narrative

Inquiry has been described as "situated in relationships and community, and it attends to notions

of expertise and knowing in relational and participatory ways" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 13). One

salient feature of this method is that it stresses the relational throughout, creating highly iterative

and relational processes (Clandinin, 2013). Narrative researchers view their research as a

relational process, interwoven in the experiences of *living*, *telling*, *reliving*, and *retelling* stories

(Clandinin & Connelly, 1998; Clandinin, 2013). The study design is presented below following

the phases set forth by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Clandinin (2013).

1- Narrative Beginnings

In narrative beginnings, prior to starting a narrative inquiry, there are three design

considerations to work through. Given the iterative process of narrative inquiry, these design

considerations will emerge and reemerge throughout the research process. "Each narrative

researcher needs to engage in … autobiographical narratives as [they] begin a new study. We call

these autobiographical narrative inquiries *narrative beginnings*. Through writing, each of us

comes to understand… our personal, practical, and social justifications" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 89).

This is the beginning phase of a narrative inquiry and is largely a reflective step, where the focus

is for the researcher to evaluate their narrative starting points through audience, justifications,

and ultimately the research puzzle (Clandinin, 2013).

Audience. One design consideration is the audience which will directly guide the final

written narrative (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000). In reconstructing and retelling the stories,

awareness of the intended audience is at the forefront of narrative inquiry. This study is being conducted as a dissertation. Therefore, the audience for the final research texts in this context will be social work educators, social work students, as well as other researchers.

Justifications. Justifications, or purpose, are important design elements across the social sciences, including in narrative inquiry. The research puzzle is justified using three interconnected categories: personal, practical, and social.

Personal. While personal justifications are not often included in the final published research texts in narrative inquiry, Clandinin (2013) stresses the importance of identifying personal justifications because these help the researcher think about who they are within the inquiry puzzle, what they bring to the research relationships, and how they attend to the experiences of the participants. During the reflection and writing of personal justifications, the researcher should consider their own experiences using the three dimensions of time, place, and interaction (Caine et al., 2013). The personal justifications in this study include the researcher's activist identity, pursuit of allyship, and personal tensions. These are further explored in the researcher's positionality statement below.

Practical. Researchers need to be concerned with how their narrative inquiry could shift practice (Clandinin, 2013). As established in the literature review, social workers are called to address social inequities, including by participating in social movements. This study aims to make visible the experiences of social work educators participating in social movements related to racial justice. These stories stand to expand the understanding of social action in social work education, how educators embrace and enact professional values, and the tensions social work educators are facing.

Social. The third justification is concerned with social justice (Clandinin, 2013). The social justification for this inquiry includes the perseverance of social issues perpetrated and perpetuated by the CJS, specifically racial injustices. This study aims to collect and investigate stories of social movement participation of social work educators which can provide an understanding of the methods of confronting injustice. It also serves to explore the collaborative and collective actions seen within social work departments as a response to high-profile injustices.

Positionality Statement. Narrative Inquiry requires researchers to commit to deep and critical self-reflection, exploring experiences, motivations, and hopes. Social justice has always been an interest and was a motivation for pursuing the profession of social work. I am a White, Queer, Cisgender woman in my 30s. I am nearing the end of my doctoral education with an upcoming transition into a social work faculty role. I have approached this project with humility and acknowledgment of the privileges that aspects of my identity have afforded me. The roots of this project are situated within my own tensions. In the years leading up to 2020, I had been on my own journey toward embracing anti-racism. I had been exposed to media, literature, and the lived experiences of Black individuals' interactions with the CJS, prompting my active pursuit of anti-racism. In May of 2020, I found myself strictly following COVID guidelines when the nation witnessed the murder of George Floyd. Despite the ongoing global pandemic, the response was immediate from communities across the country and a period of frequent protesting began. I began to navigate my own responses, questioning my role as it related to my identities, and profession. As time continued and the social movement ebbed and flowed, I wondered how responses were making substantial, lasting changes to the systems of oppression.

I watched as a countermovement vehemently rose in opposition and felt a whole new set of tensions. This place of wonder is where this project emerges.

Research Puzzle. One distinct way narrative inquiry differs from other methodologies is its approach to research questions. Narrative inquiry recognizes that research is organized around a "wonder" and framing this as a *research puzzle* creates "a sense of a search, a 're-search', a search again… a sense of continual reformulation" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 124). The wonder this study aims to explore is the experiences of social workers participating in the 2020 social movements to address racial justice. There are several questions included in the research puzzle: What social action do social workers do as part of this social movement?; How do their various identities impact these experiences?; and What tensions are expressed in their stories? Included in the puzzle are questions about how personal histories, institutional influences, and the high visibility of social movement impacted participation; additionally, the impact of the pandemic on activism helped direct this study.

2- Entering in the Midst

Once time has been spent reflecting and considering the justifications and research puzzles, narrative researchers move into the next phase, entering in the midst. A hallmark of narrative inquiry is that research relationships are "in the midst… in the midst of researchers' ongoing personal and professional lives…Our participants are also always in the midst of their lives" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 43). Each narrative inquiry includes negotiating entrance to the field and to the participants. The *field* is a relational space wherein narrative researchers negotiate with participants, where the stories are told and lived (Clandinin, 2013). Again, the stress on the relational is paramount.

Sampling and Recruitment. The sample size for qualitative research is challenging to set a priori, so this dissertation used saturation to guide data collection and sample size (Guest et al., 2006; Lindsay & Schwind, 2016). Saturation is defined "as the point in data collection and analysis when new information produces little or no change to the codebook" (Guest et al., 2006, p. 65). Purposive sampling was used with narrative inquiry (Lindsay & Schwind, 2016), and is a good fit for this study since it allowed for identification of participants who have the lived experiences being explored. Participants were identified through social work-specific email listservs, including CSWE's DEI listserv and national MSW and BSW directors' listservs. Additionally, snowball sampling was used via the researcher's contacts.

Recruitment took place between November 2022 and February 2023. Initially, the researcher's network was leveraged by sending recruitment emails to potential participants and asking them to forward the recruitment to other possible participants. Then, recruitment emails were distributed via multiple listservs. This process happened in November and resulted in one participant. This was repeated again in February in an attempt to secure more participants and resulted in the final four participants.

The criteria for participation in this study were: 1) being a current faculty member or a faculty member at the time of social movement participation; 2) being trained in social work and working within a social work department based in the US; and 3) self-identifying as having participated in the social movements and being willing to share. Participants were recruited and asked to participate in two sessions: the first to tell their story in a recorded narrative interview, and the second to work collaboratively with the researcher to further explore emergent threads.

Protection of Human Subjects. Prior to data collection, study approval was obtained from the Internal Review Board at The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). While the

stories are centered in aspects of time and place, care was taken to obscure any details that could

be used to identify the participants. Written, informed consent was voluntarily obtained from

each participant prior to their participation in research activities.

Sample. There were five participants in the present study. Four of the participants

identified as White, and one as Black. Four are tenured professors: two are full professors and

two are associate professors. One participant is a tenure-track assistant professor. Four of the

participants teach at public universities and one teaches at a private Catholic university. Three of

the participants live and teach in the south, one in the Midwest, and one on the east coast. Two of

the participants are in their 60s, two are in their 40s, and one in their 50s. Further details about

the participants characteristics are presented in their narratives in Chapter 4.

3- Telling Stories

This study will start with telling stories, which is the most common approach with this

method; stories are often told through interviews (Clandinin, 2013). Maintaining the focus on the

relational, less structured interviews are important as entering into the field with the participant is

a collaborative activity and should be open to input from both researcher and participant

(Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Clandinin, 2013). Based on this, the researcher presented the

participants with the research puzzle, which we collaboratively explored. See Appendix A for the

interview guide.

Data Collection. Data was collected via virtual interview over Microsoft Teams which

was audio recorded and then transcribed. Participants completed digital written informed consent

prior to data collection. Participants were invited to share their stories related to social movement

participation, guided by the research puzzle. Field notes were taken by the researcher for

reflexivity and included researcher reflections, notes taken during interviews, and throughout the

analysis process. In addition to the initial interview, three participants met with the researcher a second time. The data collection method was the same for these second meetings. The meeting took place via Microsoft Teams and was audio recorded and then transcribed. The initial interviews lasted 40, 45, 50, 65, and 70 minutes.

Data Management. Digital written informed consent was obtained via UTA's QuestionPro survey platform. Interview audio was recorded and transcribed via Microsoft Teams, the preferred platform offered by the University of Texas at Arlington. Transcripts were then revised to obscure participant identity (e.g., remove university names, remove city names). All study materials were stored in UTA's secure OneDrive and only accessible to the researcher and the dissertation chair. Once the transcripts were obscured, they were uploaded and analyzed using the qualitative software Dedoose.

4- Field to Field Texts

In narrative inquiry, the *field* is the ongoing relational space created by the researcher and participant and the *field texts* are the narrative inquiry term for *data* (Clandinin, 2013). For this study, the field texts are composed of transcripts created from the audio recordings of the interviews. Thus, this step is comprised of the transcription of the audio recordings. This was accomplished via listening to the audio recordings while modifying the initial transcripts produced within Teams. The transcripts were corrected for accuracy. The researcher also occasionally denoted the presentation of the participants (e.g., stress placed on certain words; visible emotions of the participants). Once the interim texts were created, these were used during the analysis phase. Additionally, due to the reflective and reflexive nature of the narrative inquiry, the researcher took field notes throughout the research process, and these also served as field texts, though these often do not appear within the final research text (Clandinin, 2013).

5- Field Texts to Interim Research Texts

Data analysis. The researcher started by transforming the data into field texts, then field texts into interim texts, then interim texts into the final research texts. During this phase, the researcher turned field texts into interim research texts. In narrative inquiry, the process of composing interim research texts involves reading, rereading, reflecting, dissecting, deconstructing, and interpreting the original field texts. In narrative inquiry, the focus is not on just identifying themes instead the aim is to understand experiences. It is stressed that this analysis process is not a neat, ordered, process of steps; instead, it is a layered, iterative process of visiting and revisiting the texts, writing and rewriting research texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The following are pieces of this layered research analysis presented in the order in which these were mainly undertaken; however, it is important to note that the iterative and reflective nature of narrative inquiry means that these phases were not simply visited once but were constantly returned to throughout the analysis process. The iterative analysis process continued through a review of the texts, a layering of the three dimensions, along with returning to the justifications and research puzzle (Clandinin & Caine, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Summary and Construction. One aspect of narrative analysis is the process of reading and rereading field texts to then summarize and construct an account of the participants' experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This was the first step the researcher took. The texts were reviewed, and the researcher began to construct individual narratives. During this phase, the focus was on becoming deeply familiar with the stories. The researcher took time to journal following each session spent with a story. These notes were added to and revisited throughout the analysis process.

The Commonplaces. While the whole of the narrative inquiry research process is nested

within this structure, this three-dimensional narrative inquiry space serves as a central piece of

the analysis. When analyzing the dimension of interaction, the experience of the storyteller and

their interactions with others in their story was the focus. When analyzing continuity, the

researcher focused on the storytellers' actions in the past and present, as well as likely future

actions. When analyzing the dimension of place, the focus was on the contexts and landscapes of

the stories.

Each story was individually considered within these three common places. Burrowing, or

diving deeply into the story and exploring the emotional and moral aspects (Connelly &

Clandinin, 1990), was used frequently during this phase of analysis. The researcher took notes

and composed tables for each participant listing attributes from their stories for the

commonplaces. This helped the researcher look across each individual story and identify

tensions. During this phase, the researcher also used the application of Dedoose codes to explore

what was emerging within each participant's story.

Meaning. This layer of analysis includes the investigation of "the patterns, narrative

threads, tensions, and themes either within or across an individual's experience" (Clandinin &

Connelly, 2004, p. 132). After considering each story individually, the researcher began to look

across the stories for threads that had appeared and common tensions the participants

experienced. This phase started with the exploration of codes created in Dedoose, looking for

similar codes and concepts. There was a brief period of re-application of codes or searching for

common phrases within the stories. Once initial threads appeared, strands also emerged. The

researcher began to organize threads while giving consideration to the commonplaces. This

helped organize the emerging threads and strands.

Justifications. Another piece of the analysis included a return to the justifications. This phase was highly reflective, returning to the justifications the researcher had previously established. There was also a consideration of how the narratives and the threads could contribute to each of the justifications. This included the process of storying and re-storying which is the reflection on present and future implications or how the story will impact the future of the participant in their journey to who they are becoming (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

6- Interim Research Texts to Final Research Texts

Before composing the final research texts, the researcher and participants met for a second time. Of the five participants, three were able to participate in these meetings, which lasted 35, 55, and 65 minutes. During this time, the researcher and participants discussed emergent threads and tensions. This also gave the researcher the opportunity to ask clarifying questions that came from the initial narratives. Given this study's initial presentation as a doctoral dissertation it will present two distinct, final research texts: one final research text will be the Results, presented in Chapter 5; due to the narrative methodology, participants' narratives will also be presented in Chapter 4.

Quality. Narrative inquiry does not stress the use of common qualitative concepts like validity, reliability, and generalizability (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), instead, narrative inquiry utilizes transferability, response communities, member checking, and narrative touchstones. Transferability refers to how the findings of the study also have meaning for others (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Another way to address quality is with member checking (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lindsay & Schwind, 2016) which took place during the second meeting between the researcher and the participants. This study also utilized a response community (Clandinin & Caine, 2013), which are people and places where the researcher can contemplate and discuss the

current research. One main piece of the response community was the dissertation chair. The researcher and chair met frequently to discuss the research. The researcher frequently journaled and discussed journals with friends that are also social work educators.

Another way of evaluating the quality of narrative inquiries is by considering how each touchstone of narrative inquiry was upheld (Clandinin, 2013). The narrative inquiry touchstones (Clandinin & Caine, 2013) are described and an explanation of their place in the current study is provided. First, relational responsibilities require that the researcher and participant develop and maintain a respectful, caring, and collaborative relationship. This was achieved through attentiveness, openness, and attention to the developing relational world between the researcher and participant. Second, entering the research relationships in the midst was achieved by attending to the temporality, sociality, and places of the participants' lives while also reflecting on these for the researcher. Third, the negotiation of relationships which included the agreement on the research puzzle to be explored, starting from the time the participants decided they would respond to the call for participants. Further, the researcher and participants discussed the research puzzle at the start of the interviews and continued to explore it together throughout the study. Fourth, the narrative beginnings wherein the researcher attends to their own common places and views their own experiences through the three-dimensional narrative structure. This was undertaken through continued self-reflections. Before beginning the study, the researcher deeply considered the common places and justifications for the present study. The fifth touchstone is negotiating entry to the field; in this study this was the virtual interviews between the researcher and participants. Sixth, moving from field to field texts and this included the transcription and obscuring of the data. Seventh is moving from field texts to interim texts and to final research texts. This touchstone was comprised of the analysis phase of the study, which was explained

above. The eighth touchstone is representing narratives of experience in ways that show temporality, sociality, and place. Regardless of the final representation of the narratives, it is important to attend to the three dimensions of the narrative inquiry space as well as the unfolding and iterative nature of the research process. This study made the narrative inquiry space visible through the presentation of the results. The ninth touchstone is relational response communities which consists of people the researcher trusts to engage in dialogue regarding the inquiry. Given this study is a dissertation, the dissertation chair was a large and consistent part of the response community. Tenth are the three justifications: personal, practical, and social. These justifications are relevant at the inception of the research project but also are used throughout. The researcher revisited the justifications multiple times throughout the study, including conception, data analysis, and construction of the final research texts. The eleventh touchstone is attending to the audience, including participants, academics, and possible public audiences. This touchstone contributed to the decision to present narratives in two distinct ways. Finally, the twelfth touchstone is the commitment to understanding lives in motion, which stresses the temporal unfolding of experience. The final research texts were organized in an attempt to convey the temporal unfolding of the participants' experiences.

Chapter 4: Participant Narratives

This chapter is comprised of short constructed narratives, each highlighting a tension that the participants encountered. This chapter also aims to make visible the participants' contributions to the present social movement. First, Sidney's story highlights her experience as a Black faculty member in two very different university contexts. Next, Patty's story highlights the self-journey toward anti-racism, reflecting on transformative moments. This piece of Patty's story highlights the tensions between her current self and her future self. Then Ira's story reflects protest participation and the tensions he faced. Camelbox's narrative includes the departmental responses and the subsequent tensions between their colleagues. Finally, Sven's narrative reflects the political tensions and countermovement against the pursuit of racial justice.

Sidney

Sidney is an African American associate professor in her 40s and is a mother to a young son. She is a full-time associate professor at a public Historically Black University (HBCU) in the south and adjuncts at a private, Christian, Predominantly White Institution (PWI) in the south. She maintains a clinical practice and engages in community-based social work. Early in her pursuit of education, Sidney committed to addressing the plight of Black men in the prison industrial complex. Her orientation to activism was radically impacted following the birth of her son. In discussing this, Sidney became emotional reflecting on her concern for her son's safety. Sidney's concern of her son's safety and his future opportunities pushed her to further her activism.

Sidney talked about the increased resources and attention that came with wider attention to racial injustice, comparing the responses she saw from her HBCU and from her PWI. Her colleagues at the HBCU had been deeply aware of the impacts of the CJS and the racial

injustices that persist; however, there seemed to be a new recognition of the problem by the PWI. While the HBCU social work program had previously implemented an additional competency to work from an Afro-Centric model (e.g., Schiele, 1996), the PWI responded by offering a few training courses for faculty and staff. Sidney observed that these were not well attended and were only offered in the initial semester following George Floyd's death. Further, though an adjunct, Sidney advocated for the incorporation of racial justice topics, but the administration felt they offered enough content in their diversity course. The PWI refused to augment the curriculum to address issues of racial justice which left Sidney feeling defeated and unsupported by this institution and her colleagues; however, she connected with students that wanted to engage with these topics. Sidney resolved to remain visible at a university that refused to acknowledge the challenges faced by its Black faculty and students.

Patty

Patty is a White heterosexual, cisgender female, who is nearing 60. She has been a long-time social worker, receiving her BSW at the age of 22, and is currently a full professor in social work in the mid-west. She teaches primarily macro- level classes and her scholarship centers around people with disabilities, in particular intellectual development disabilities, and sexual violence. She describes this work as concerned with systems and the failures of systems, as well as reframing the understanding of the problem and potential solutions. Patty is closely connected with the Disability Justice Movement, which is an intersectional movement of people with disabilities who are also Black, brown, queer, who recognize that they were not included in the traditional historic movements of people with disabilities and that their lived experiences aren't reflected and acknowledged in traditional disability services.

Patty is a community social worker and has always been acutely aware of the things happening in her local community. She reflected on times that she worked with community organizations, partnered with coalitions, and engaged in community diversity work. Throughout her story, Patty continually came back to intersectionality, stressing the importance of understanding the complexities of overlapping experiences of marginalization. This intersectionality also led Patty to be adamant about avoiding individual silos of social action.

Prior to 2020, Patty had been on a personal journey toward anti-racism, consuming literature, connecting with her community, and engaging in critical self-reflections. She came to recognize patterns in her thinking that reinforced oppressive systems. While at the state fair several years ago, there were protesters blocking the entrance to the fairgrounds. Patty found herself acknowledging the need for their demonstration, but questioning the methods of the protesters, "I don't know if that's such a good idea because you're going to just upset people who are kind of your allies anyway." Later, Patty found herself reflecting on those thoughts, having an epiphany that through this, she was enacting oppression "who am I to tell a group of people how they should protest their own oppression?" This was a transformative moment for Patty in recognizing ways in which she perpetuates oppression. Patty also shared a story of listening to a survivor of the Holocaust talk about bystanders and upstanders. She identified this as another transformative moment in her desire to stand up to systems of oppression.

During the summer of 2020, there were massive protests however, Patty shared that were no protests or marches in her small community, but that local organizations that were already working towards anti-racism further mobilized to provide opportunities for community engagement. She participated actively in these community projects, including attending anti-

racism dialogues. Patty reflected on the importance of community to address oppressive systems, sharing that with community comes resilience and hope.

Ira

Ira is a White, Jewish, gay, cisgender man in his 40s. He is a tenure-track assistant professor of social work. Ira has worked at public universities on the west coast and now works at a private Catholic university on the east coast. His work is related to the child welfare system, and he describes that confronting carceral logics is central to his work. Ira was first introduced to anti-racist work during his social work education, wherein an instructor modeled the critical-self-examination of identities that is core to anti-racism approaches. Moving forward, Ira is committed to showing up every day for this work.

In the summer of 2020, Ira lived on the west coast, in a city where protests were frequent. Ira attended these protests with social work peers, students, and his own friends. He lived close to campus and to the areas of the city where protests were happening, providing easy access for participating. Ira reflected on his personal values and willingness to attend protests, saying that it had always been a value of his but this time, he was also focused on having more integrity about the things he was teaching about social action, and the things he talked about in his personal life. Ira stressed that if he was going to be teaching about anti-racism, social action, and activism, then he needed to be actively participating himself. Later in the summer, Ira moved to another city on the west coast. While the first city maintained continued protests, he noted the silence in this second city, limiting his ability to attend protests. Ira was adamant about not becoming complacent and wanting to continue to be socially active by showing up to protests. He shared that participating in protests helped him stay connected to current issues. In addition to this form of continued participation, Ira talked about continuing the self-work toward anti-racism, sharing

that he continues to work to be conscious of how his biases manifest and how he can actualize his personal values. Ira stressed how his Jewish identity shaped his approach to counteracting systems of injustice.

Camelbox

Camelbox is a 50-year-old, White, gender queer, polysexual, associate professor at a southern public university. They appreciate their ability to merge activism with their job, as they have always had a social justice centered research and teaching agenda. Camelbox became more actively engaged in their personal journey toward anti-racism in 2020. Colleagues in their department began a faculty group aiming to embrace anti-racism. Following the murder of George Floyd, two of their colleagues initiated the development of this group. First, they assessed the interest of their fellow faculty members and then hosted an initial meeting, where all members of the department were invited. This group was intentional in creating a cross-racial collaboration, having one Black and one White facilitator. This group embarked on their journey, beginning with consuming relevant literature and attending to the needs of the community.

One point of tension for this group was related to the incorporation of students. While some members wanted to include students in the group, others felt too vulnerable to take this journey alongside students. While students were not included, Camelbox shared that it was through the learning in this group that they were able to explore their continued contribution to oppression. Camelbox recognized ways that they were "perpetuating White supremacy and taking up space," noting that defensiveness is a cue.

This departmental group encountered another interdepartmental tension. Camelbox described how some of their colleagues did not want to embrace anti-racism, and instead wished to rely on the existing "colorblind" approach. The group proposed department-wide trainings on

anti-racism which initially received administrative support. However, after raised vocality against anti-racism, those training opportunities were never fulfilled.

Camelbox noticed a shift in students in fall 2020; their students were wanting to talk about anti-racism, abolition, the prison industrial complex, and police brutality. These topics were integrated into the classroom, specifically abolition and mutual aid. Camelbox supplemented their courses to engage students with these topics. Another one of Camelbox's colleagues partnered with students that wanted to organize around the history of social work's contribution to social problems. This colleague supported the organizational efforts of the students' which resulted in them hosting an education series on this topic.

Sven

Sven is a White, Jewish, gay man in his 60s. He was born in Canada and taught social work there; however he has lived in the southern US for several decades and is now a US citizen. The first social work program Sven taught in had an anti-oppressive approach, though when he moved to the US anti-oppressive and anti-racism approaches were not present.

Following the protests of 2020, Sven's department implemented DEI efforts utilizing anti-racist and anti-oppressive approaches; however, Sven noted the impact of the countermovement against the advancement of racial justice. Initially, the use of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in K-12 education became a contentious political talking point. In addition to policies to restrict the use of CRT, this has broadened to include DEI initiatives, including the use of anti-racism and anti-oppressive approaches at public universities. Sven has seen his department retract social justice initiatives in response to these tensions and felt limited support from his university's administration. Sven did feel support from teachers' unions which were standing up against racism, against homophobia, and against policies that restrict academic

freedom. Despite the sense of increased risk, Sven remained resolute in his commitment to embrace anti-racism. To Sven, his personal values and the ethics of the social work profession call him to continue to speak up against these injustices even if there are personal risks. Sven has always been outspoken on issues of social justice and remains committed to advancing these causes. Sven reflected that this might not be an option available to everyone. He talked about the shift away from tenure, observing that his department now has fewer tenure and tenure track instructors, and instead has more adjunct instructors. Sven reflected on how tenure adds a layer of security that others may not experience given their positions.

Chapter 5: Results

The research puzzle guiding this study centered on the social movements for racial justice spurred from continued racial injustices of the CJS. It became clear, through the narrative inquiry process, that the participants were focused on the more broad implication of racial justice, not solely within the CJS but also in other contexts. The results of this study are presented here and attempt to portray the temporal unfolding of the participants' experiences. Qualitative results, and indeed narrative inquiry results are closely related and deeply intertwined. This chapter starts with the participants' introductions to anti-racism work, exploring their identities, values, and motivations. Then moves into the participants' conceptualizations of the role of social work in social movements and anti-racism work. Next, the responses to the surge of social movement activity and reflections on the formation of community around activism are presented. Subsequently, it moves into a discussion about risk and finally into reflections on the future of social work education.

Thread 1: Journey toward Anti-Racism

This thread begins with a discussion of the exposure to concepts of anti-racism and explores how the participants' identities situated them in relation to anti-racism and to social action. This thread includes strands that are situated in past, present, and future. Within this thread the participants explore the tension between their current-self and their future-self.

A. Introductions to anti-racism (past)

　　　　i. Social Work Education. Several of the participants noted that their introduction to anti-racism was through social work education. Camelbox and Sidney both shared that social work education was responsible for their first connection with anti-racism; Camelbox shared "I was first introduced to anti racism work during my MSW program and felt like I had a really

good introduction in that space". Ira also discussed his early exposures to anti-racism being facilitated through social work education. He shared a moment when a social work educator was transparent in their own journey toward anti-racism:

> I took this class called Racial Disparities; the professor was a White woman who had sort of built her career on talking about racial disparities and she had done some self-reflection on that…and she at one point said that she felt she needed to pass this class on to an instructor of color and that she was starting to contend with the fact that she, as a White woman, had built a career on anti-racist work.

This social work educator, Ira's teacher, was transparent in her own journey and in how she was continually exploring how her identity situates her in relation to anti-racist work.

Beyond exposure in the classroom, anti-racism has been used to guide social work education. Sven reflected on his early experiences as a social work educator while in Canada. He shared his long-standing connection to anti-racism and anti-oppressive work saying "…in terms of things like anti-racist social work and anti-oppressive social work that goes way back to my very first program that I taught at …it had an anti-oppressive framework".

Despite social work education being the platform for introducing and furthering the participants' anti-racist work, they also discussed times when the perspective of anti-racism was missing. Sven shared that there was a time when he first began teaching in the US in the early 2000s that anti-racism and anti-oppression were not recognized:

> But you know coming to a school… that was really focusing a lot on the clinical programs, especially for the MSW students, we weren't really doing a lot in the area of anti-oppressive social work. They weren't even words that a lot of people knew.

ii. Environmental Exposure. While many participants highlighted their exposure to anti-racism through social work education, the participants also discussed books and community events that served as introductions to anti-racism. Patty identified various books that supported her journey:

> I can tell you when I started to really do this thinking: This is 2015, Ta-Nehisi Coates' book *Between the World and Me* came out and that ignited my thinking about issues of racial justice and thinking about issues of racism in ways that I had never… Then I heard somebody speak about James Baldwin's writing… That ignited just this awakening.

Camelbox discussed their exposure to Kendi's *How to be Anti-Racist* and Sidney talked about reading works by Angela Davis. Other types of exposure included community engagement and participation. Patty and others talked about how they were involved in their communities. Patty shared her participation in a community dialogue:

> And then in my community there is a diversity group, and they started this two-year community conversation that centered on race. It was wonderful. We did journaling, we came together every three months and in between we did all this stuff.

Patty also reflected on a shift in her community toward the recognition of local history:

> This community here is the site of [a massive act of violence against indigenous populations] … Every year, there is a march in commemoration... As a whole, like as White settlers here, are talking about this, and starting to learn then about the history of this place. And the legacy of that tragedy in our community.

These community-based activities offered a connection to anti-racism and allowed reflection and exposure to historical violence and its present-day implications.

B. Looking Inward (*present*)

i. Ah-ha! Moments. The participants also shared pivotal moments on their own journeys. For Patty, recognizing her contribution to oppression served as an ah-ha moment, transforming her approach toward anti-racism:

> This one year there was protesting and at the State Fair, outside the gates, and they [BLM protesters] were blocking people from getting in… And I'm questioning this way they are protesting, and I can't tell you exactly the moment, but at one point though, and I don't know where it comes into reading this or that, and I had an epiphany- I wanna be on the right side of history. And so that was a very transformative moment around "who am I to tell a group of people how they should protest their own oppression". That's an act of oppression telling somebody that you can't do that because it would inconvenience me, or it doesn't fit the way that I think you should.

In this ah-ha moment, Patty took this opportunity to identify her own contributions and examine what she wanted for her future self.

Sidney shared that as a Black woman, she and her peers, have long been aware of the systematic oppression manifesting within the CJS, including police brutality and murder. Despite this lived experience, Sydney shared that her orientation to racial justice shifted again when she became a mom:

> But I think that where it started, I think it's when I had my son… it makes me wanna cry because he's not gonna have fair chance. It makes me really sad and it makes me want to advocate for like him… that he should have the same opportunities that everybody else… And so I think it changed with him… but that makes me really emotional thinking about my kid and [him] possibly getting shot.

For Sidney, the birth of her child was a pivotal point where she reflected on the reality of the challenges her son would face. This was a point of recommitment to furthering anti-racism.

ii. Ongoing Work. Here Camelbox highlights the continual process "I'm recommitted to realizing this is ongoing work and it has no arrival time. And I really try to catch myself when I do get defensive... It's ongoing and definitely I recommitted to it". This was echoed by Ira,

> I think something I've been working on, and I don't know if any of this is ever
>
> resolved… I don't think it can ever be resolved because historical context, right? It keeps
>
> evolving. So, like just when you think like you've figured it out or something is clicked ,
>
> it's kind of shifting in all of these ways… So continuing to participate helps me stay
>
> informed and aware and helps me evolve, helps me learn.

Camelbox reflected on how they have committed to the continual journey toward anti-racism: "I've learned ways that I'm still perpetuating White supremacy and taking up space". The participants were committed to continuing their journeys and being reflexive along the journey.

C- Future-Self & Motivation (future)

i. Values. Next, the participants explore how personal values motivate a commitment to activism and anti-racism. Sven and Ira both reflected on how their Jewish identities impacted their positioning to anti-racism. Ira shared how this impacts his understanding of the importance of anti-racist work:

> This work I do is informed by how I was raised and personally what I learned about
>
> being a Jew and what it means to be a Jew really informs a lot of this work. And so it
>
> feels fundamental in general being a human in the world like this is this is what we do.

Ira also shared his fear about a personal decrease in activism participation in the future. When asked if he thinks he will continue to participate in protests, he said:

I fucking hope so. Yeah, I mean, one of the things I'm most concerned about is

generational amnesia… And so one of the best ways I can think of to continue to remain

informed about what's going on in the world is to participate in what's going on in the

world. I don't wanna become complacent.

Patty shared reflections on her personal values and what that means for her continued

participation:

I want to be part of a force for transformation... It goes beyond me as a social worker or

professional it goes to me as a human being. And being a part of this as a community

member and as a human being and wanting to be part of transformational change.

Similarly, Camelbox reflected on their personal and professional values, saying "well it

definitely aligns with my personal values and my professional objectives. I've always had a

social justice research and teaching agenda. So, I feel lucky that I'm able to merge my activism

with my job". These personal and professional values serve as motivators for continued social

action participation for the participants.

ii. Bricks in the Same Building. The participants relayed the importance of anti-racism

work several ways, including the importance of an intersectional perspective. Interestingly,

nearly every participant mentioned the Holocaust. Sven and Ira reflected on their Jewish

identities, including the continued legacy of the Holocaust. Sven discussed the legacy of that

genocide:

Growing up Jewish, when so many relatives and friends' families were killed in the

Holocaust or are survivors of the Holocaust... When we say, "never again", that's a call to

action. That means we try to recognize these signs early before it develops into what

happened in Europe.

Ira reflected more on this saying,

> One of the things we say is "never again" … and for me, it means never again to
> anyone… like we won't let this happen to Black folks, we won't let this happen to trans
> folks, never again at all. We saw how this progressed and played out because it happened
> to us.

These participants were clear that their own experiences with historical oppression and genocide motivated their continued investment in pursuing racial justice. Similarly, the recognition of potential contributions to oppression centered Patty's reference of the Holocaust. She reflected on a guest speaker that had experienced the Holocaust and how he introduced the concept of bystander versus upstander. A bystander does not actively perpetrate violence, but perpetuates violence by not intervening, whereas an upstander commits to standing up against injustice (Padgett & Notar, 2013). Patty said "That's part of that reframing. Doing nothing is doing something".

Sidney and Ira also talked about the intersectionality of identities. Ira shared how this understanding of the breadth of oppression is a motivating factor for him:

> There is a level of investment that varies according to our identities and our intersection
> of identities. But maybe the way we avoid complacency is to understand how our
> experiences are so interconnected, right? And how oppression is so interconnected. Not
> that I need to make it self-referential to care, but if I can understand my own experiences
> and [the] overlap and interconnectedness with other experiences of oppression, maybe
> that can help us? I don't think I have to be a Black person or a trans person or a disabled
> person to care about transphobia, transmisogyny, ableism, racism, anti-Black racism. I

don't think I have to have those identities to care about those things because it's all connected…Like bricks in the same building.

iii. Identity as a Tool. Sidney shared how identity can be used as a tool. First, she shared reflections about her own areas of privilege. Sidney said: "if I see this, all this injustice… I do have some level of power because I am educated too. And so it's, it's up to me to use that to do good, to help others". She then discussed the importance of White voices to support the movement toward racial justice. Here, Sidney talked about a White colleague:

> She is out there and she sees the change and she's trying to make changes and she ends up being a part of like the solution rather than just like talking about it…. That''s so much for the students because they gonna be like she's not green… her eyes [are not] closed to what's really happening...

While Sidney talked about how the community activity of this colleague was important, she also talked about the silence:

> Everyone's silent or they have something to say but then they don't wanna say it because they are afraid. But you don't know how much your voice counts… I hate to say that it's not like that it that it's like that, but it is, you know we have we have so much power in your voice, the White person….

Sidney continued on and reflected on the race of the researcher:

> I saw who you were, I was like, man, she's gonna use her platform, and people are gonna listen to her, and it's gonna change that kind of stuff. And that speaks volumes. And you don't know how much that means to me. [it means] everything. It's big cause nobody's fighting for us, you know…. But think about when you get through with this project… how people could read this and they can change their perspective. The institutions can

read this and they can change their perspectives like. It's all a part of the change, like you know. So, some things you might not be able to fight in some ways with me and this is a way to fight.

This was a poignant call to action from Sidney. Ira also reflected on the ways he leverages his identities:

I really value opportunities to check my ego- continuing to sort of forefront shrinking my ego. Sort of working and continuously cultivating humility in whatever way I can. And knowing that''' I'm a White cis- guy. I'm not, like the voice of a generation. Knowing when it's really necessary for me to shut up. Knowing what I have to learn, being proactive about that, not just being like, "oh, I don't know that much about that", but consciously recognizing when I don't know something and making an effort to understand it better on an individual level. I think it's just remembering that like my positionality lies in my identities. And those, are tools, right? Like tools that I can leverage, tools that could enact oppression. But ultimately, I'm really sort of separate from that. And just sort of like using myself. To do this work, that is. Outside of me, it's way bigger than me.

Thread 2: Role of Social Work

This thread contains the participants' description of the role of the profession.

A. History of Oppression (past)

One of the findings that emerged from this study was the importance of social work in addressing social justice and participating in social movements. For the participants, the history of oppression was an important context within which to consider the contributions of social work. Here, Patty points to intersectionality as a method for understanding the complexity in

peoples' lives "the larger historical context, the discrimination, the ways in which people's lives are very are the layers of oppression right that intersect with whatever issue, whatever that you think you're dealing with, right, you've gotta understand that". Ira furthered this by sharing "Historical context is such a big part of the work that we do". In addition to stressing the importance of historical context, the participants discussed the need to be aware of the way social work had contributed to the perpetuation of oppression. Sven reflected:

> We even had discussions with our colleagues outside of social work, like in criminal justice. But you know some of these issues and there's a lot of reflection on how social work and criminal justice had been part of the systems of racism and oppression and that we weren't always on the right side of issues historically and even recently. And that extends to criminal justice and child protection and mental health as well.

Here Sven suggests critical reflection on the role of social work contributing to oppressive systems.

Participants also noted that it was important to understand the history of specific social movements. Here, the participants talked about the politicization of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. When asked about the politicization of BLM, Ira shared:

> I think one that's important to understand the history of these social movements, right? Like Black Lives Matter didn't just appear in 2020. Black Lives Matter had been around for a long time. And here's sort of the history of that movement

Patty furthered this by including a reflection on the ongoing violence:

> Black Lives Matter isn't going away. If it was, it would have gone away a long time ago… It has sustained itself and sadly, there are enough examples that continue to remind us of why Black Lives Matter initiated why people started speaking up and why people

were starting to organize around to raise awareness of the lived experiences of African

Americans, in particular in this country.

Participants thought that understanding the historical context that has resulted in the injustices

seen today was an early step in understanding how to respond or intervene.

B. Responsibility to Advance Justice (present)

Through the interviews, the participants highlighted the role of social work in advancing

racial justice. Specifically, they discussed the role of social work in advancing racial justice via

participating in social movements. Ira simply said, "I think that these things, activism,

confronting racism, confronting, anti-Black racism, I think that these are central to social work

and social work education". Other participants indicated that the role of social work included

participating in social movements. Camelbox shared:

> I think we should be involved. Absolutely. Yeah, 100%. Unless we are a member of the
>
> community directly affected, we should not be the leaders, but we should be supporters
>
> and we should be listening to the leaders. Bring our skills, like we have a holistic
>
> perspective, the person-in-environment.

Patty echoed the uniqueness of the person-in-environment perspective and highlighted the

importance of community connection,

> One of the things that makes social work social work is our is our lens, the person-in-
>
> environment, the social context, and we go back to our code of ethics … we have a dual
>
> mission, the individual and the larger community…So what that says is that we must be
>
> connected to these larger issues and the and the movements in our community.

Sven provided some roles that social workers could fill saying, "We're supposed to be

advocates and administrators and community organizers... and how we can empower

communities too, it's not us speaking for other people, but how do we bring other voices and people to the to the table". Ira furthered this importance of positioning and recognizing whose voices should be at the forefront of the conversation by sharing this piece of reflection, "Yes, we should be involved… participate in the popular social movements and understand when voices might be excluded from those movements". This was a poignant reminder that reflection and representation are important. Patty talked about contributing to participating in social movements, sharing:

> And there's lots of ways you can engage. And it's one of those things which I think is what's supposed to happen in social work, which is that you see yourself as being a part of impacting all system levels in some way, shape, or form and carrying with you that [person-in-environment] lens and that's the piece that I think that is so crucial.

Ira also spoke on this variety of opportunities to contribute to change:

> I'm thinking about sort of all the different ways define social work right? And so there's always kind of a group of people who come in who are like, I'm an activist, I'm a community activist and now I'm here in the social work program. There are people who are like, I wanna do clinical work. There are people who are like, policy advocacy, macrosocial work- that's my jam... I keep returning to this idea that activism is central to social work, and I also want to respect the different ways that can look.

Camelbox also shared their advancement of racial justice includes supporting organizations and movements that are working to combat racial injustice:

> Critiquing systems that are perpetuating really serious inequities and human rights abuses. I think that's our obligation as social workers too. I just think it's our ethical obligation to call that out. I mean if you see it, you have to call that out.

The participants agreed that working toward racial justice by participating in social movements was important to social work.

C. Walk the Walk: Social Worker Identity (future)

The participants reflected on the importance of walking the walk of a social work educator. The participants discussed how they perceived their identity as social workers. Sven shared:

> When I say I am a social worker, that is part of [my] identity. So, you carry that with you everywhere. I believe in our code of ethics. I believe in the value of social justice and respect for the dignity and worth of all people. So, I don't put that on the side.

> For the participants, their identity as social workers and social work educators served as motivation. Sidney put it simply, saying "Since I'm professor, I gotta walk that walk and just go out there and advocate". This was echoed when Patty shared: "I believe that when you teach something, you should be practicing it, or you should be engaged in it. And so, if I'm going to tell students to be engaged and stuff, [I] should probably be doing that too". Similarly, Ira reflected on how his personal values and his social work educator identity motivated his participation in social movements to advance racial justice, saying:

> It felt really important to show up and to walk the walk …I wanted to have more integrity about my values and about what I was teaching and what I was talking about in my relationships in my personal life and in the classroom. I didn't want to be upset about something and then not do anything about it.

Not only did the participants discuss the importance of the profession participating in social movements, but Patty shared that participation was a way of creating self-transformation:

We must be part of the transformation. But if, but it is also the only way that we will be

able to gain insight and perspective into how we must transform ourselves, recognize our

role in the systems... And the only way you do that is to be part of the movements. And

so, as a profession, we must be involved in that.

These participants highlighted the importance of activism to the social worker identity. Further,

they stressed that if they were going to espouse social work values, then they also needed to be

active in pursuing those values.

Thread 3: Immediate Responses

This thread is constructed of the responses to the murder of George Floyd and the

following protests for racial justice. The participants identified several main paths to

participation and methods of contributing to this social movement.

A. Personal Participation

One notable reaction was the large number of protests seen throughout the United States,

and globally. Despite being in the early days of a global pandemic, there were numerous protests.

Here, participants discussed their participation in local protests. Ira described his participation:

When George Floyd was murdered there was so much activity in [my city] around

protesting… I had students who lived near me, I lived [near] campus, and it was a [close

to] where a lot of protests were ending up and a lot of marches were ending up.

While Ira had an ease of access to protests and marches, others noted that protesting was not a

method of participation available in their geographic locations. Patty shared that her small

community did not have protests, marches, or rallies: "There wasn't necessarily a lot of

opportunity to be part of community marches, protests, and coming together collectively as a

community, unless you traveled to a large metropolis... It wasn't something that happened in this

community". Camelbox shared how the response in their area was beyond what they imagined it would be:

> So, it was the pandemic and there was a public announcement that went out in the city where I live saying there's going to be a protest downtown... I actually didn't think it would be a big just because of the pandemic. But it was huge! It was massive. I mean it just filled the streets. It was extraordinary, I mean, it was so moving to see that… I would say the community was really invested.

These descriptions highlight the ways personal context and geographic location impacts activism.

In addition to protesting, there were numerous descriptions of community responses as points of participation. Patty described how her community's organizations responded, "But aside from marches and protests, there were other things in the community… There were local organizations that had already been doing anti-racism work and continued to be a gathering point". Sidney pointed out that with the increased attention, there have been added resources.

B. Departmental Initiatives

Participants noted that their departments reacted to this social movement by beginning or furthering their anti-racism work. Sven presented an example with his department's incorporation of a new focus area in their curriculum:

> We started to talk about things that we could do differently and one of the things that I really advocated for was to hire more people who had more community development, policy, and macro backgrounds. And, you know, try to balance off our curriculum.

Sven further stressed the incorporation of anti-oppressive approaches, which was pursued by his department for a time. Camelbox participated in a departmental group that wanted to center anti-racism work. Here they detail the origins of this group:

> Two faculty members came forward and sent an e-mail out to the department saying "we are horrified by what's happening and as social workers, we have an ethical obligation to do something about this, so we would like to form a [group to focus on anti-racism] and anyone who's interested in being part of this building process, let's figure out a time to meet". I would say a good number of people showed up at that first meeting. And we invited all the people who work in the department to join. And we had a great mix of tenure track faculty, clinical faculty, and staff members as part of that first effort. And it was a great process. [We had] two facilitators. We had one person who identifies as White, one person who identifies as Black, creating this intentional cross racial collaboration and just being thoughtful about what we wanted to build.

Camelbox continued to share how this group moved to incorporate anti-racism at the departmental level:

> We had all this passion in the department with many stake holders wanting to focus on anti-racism. And so [we] went to the department chair and said we would love for part of our department meetings to focus on anti-racism, and the chair agreed.

> While departments initially appeared to be enthusiastically committing to antiracist approaches, the enthusiasm waned as it met resistance. Camelbox described how initiatives were not pursued. Here they discuss the prioritization around anti-racism in these meetings:

> Often that work was put until the very end of the meeting, and so a few times we just ran out of time and so never got around to doing the anti-racism work... It was like, oh, we

don't have time to do this work… And we also asked department leadership if we could

do a department wide training … just do some foundational work and just the department

leadership never got around to implementing that training.

While these could be viewed as disinterest, Camelbox further reflected on the overt resistance

within their department:

[a few] people were very reactive to the anti-racism focus. They were' just like "I kind of

wanted to take more of a color-blind approach to addressing the issue". They were

powerful people and had loud voices... After that, it was really brushed to the side, you

know, it just didn't matter to the powerful stakeholders.

While Camelbox's reflection provided an example of overt resistance to anti-racist work,

Sidney's department at the private PWI offered a few trainings at first but failed to incorporate

anti-racist work long-term. Sidney shared what she witnessed at her institutions: "The dean

wants to send out these emails like 'we're behind this, we can't believe that this is happening'.

But it's a standstill… there wasn't really any big movement." Sidney goes on to say that her

department ended up having several diversity trainings, but that "it was just like a cluster thing at

the beginning, but slowly going away." Sidney reflected on one training that had limited

attendance, saying "it was just so sad because they only had like two or three professors from

that school".

Sven provides a description of some of the things his institution did then follows with an

explanation of why these initiatives haven't been long lasting.

I think there was a lot of good faith efforts to address DEI and racism and oppression and

police brutality. We set up college and departmental DEI committees that were to serve

on an ongoing basis, not just ad hoc. And so, they did some things right away, they

brought in people to do some education on curriculum...

Sven continues and offers an explanation for this,

So, it seemed like it was going to be something that's maintained over a longer term, but

given the attacks on DEI, we're being told that we have to dismantle all DEI, including

all of these committees. So, you know, we'll see what perseveres and what doesn't.

C. Saving Face with a Token Face

Sidney shared her experiences of being tokenized as a response. At the time of George

Floyd's murder, Sidney had been doing clinical work in a health care setting and she shared how

they responded:

At that time, there were only White managers. He told them I want to hire a Black

person, and then he asked to hire me. I could have already been [in that role] for a long

time… Now he wants to hire me, not because I was qualified, it was not because of

anything that was about me, but because I was a Black woman. I said 'no'. I mean, why

would I agree with that? And you didn't want me before this incident and now?

While this happened in a health care setting, Sidney also shared experiences at her academic

institutions.

But now with the murder of George Floyd, now the schools are hyped up… let's do anti-

racism and let's do all this other stuff... but you never talked about it before. It was weird.

[I told] them about diversity class that I had wrote as part of African Americans in Social

Work curriculum… one of the deans was like, "we already have a diversity class, that

should be enough". Well, in both my worlds, it was like I'm screwed. Like in one world

I'm stuck because they see me as a statistic or something like it in this [social work education] world it's just like, let's just touch on it and that's enough.

Sidney continued to reflect on the reactive responses:

All of a sudden, it's important. But 'the way that they did it was a lot at one time. So, you knew it was kind of fake. You knew that it was kind of forced…I wish they would have just like just said 'hey, we don't have this; we need to be better at this' instead of just pushing this…

Further, Sidney provided some of her student's reflections, "even my students were saying that 'even though they're making the same changes, we still feel alone'". Similarly, Ira reflected on the apparent shallowness of responses he witnessed:

This is not like actual real DEI work. It's to show all of the state stakeholders, who they don't consider students or faculty stakeholders, but people who have sort of some financial power over the institution. It's to show them that we're doing the *good* work. It's to make us look good. It's not actual DEI work.

Ira reflected on tokenism that was appearing as he was conducting his own, ongoing research

So many faculty of color are getting pulled into DEI work right or are being saddled with all the DEI work and it's another way that we assume that people of color are monolithic, like 'ohh of course you would do DEI work, why would you ever teach [other topics]'.

Sven also discussed how in previous eras of strong DEI incorporation; he saw Black professors doing the majority of the work.

Thread 4: Community of Activism

Within this thread is the reflection on the importance of community, specifically as it relates to participation in activism. Patty reflected on the importance of tapping into community of activism:

[What] will empower you to do the work you're doing is to be connected to things that are larger than you and see that there's a community of people who share your passion, your vision, your value, that is doing this stuff, and so you are a part of something larger.

Patty continued to reflect on the strength of community in the face of oppression:

How do people survive some of the most horrific things? They survived it because of community and connection and a sense of hope that comes through that. You don't survive it by isolating and withdrawing inside of yourself. You survive it by connecting to something greater and larger, and that is what social movements are about.

Sven reflected on the various places he finds this community of activism, "part of it is finding allies, finding people who are like minded and who will be supportive and it's so not just within social work. 'There are people in other parts of the University or other organizations". Further, he goes on to talk about the unity he has seen in his community, "I think it's been really cool how … all these organizations are working together. I've never really seen it in quite that way before".

Given that all of the participants are full-time faculty members at various universities, they largely discussed the community they had established through their university. Camelbox stressed the importance of their community of colleagues: "You know, having colleagues who are also committed… I'm not doing this work alone, that would be difficult. So yeah, I think having this sense of community is the most important thing actually". Camelbox reflected that they were most engaged around activism with their colleagues:

It is colleagues and some students, alum, alumna, alumnae… I'm sad that I'm not

involved with the community like I have been. We had the pandemic and so and I haven't

jumped back into the community again and I missed that. But yeah, definitely colleagues.

You know, people associated with the university.

Though he didn't share the closeness with his colleagues, Ira also reflected on his challenges

with the pandemic: "It was a weird time because we were also isolated, I didn't have a ton of

connection with my colleagues [like] I had in previous years. I do know of a couple of colleagues

who were sort of participating".

Ira further reflected on his students' contributions, sharing: "My students were more

likely to participate than other faculty were… I did love that my students were doing some

organizing around this and I was more than happy to use our class time to talk about it".

In addition to finding a community of activism amongst colleagues, participants and their

colleagues contributed to the social movement alongside their students. Patty reflected on her

colleagues and the role the students had in motivating her engagement:

'We just happen to have around this time some students who are really more activism

oriented… I think for me, it's like, well, I've got it up my game… we started doing it

together and I have a few colleagues that started to do some of this together. Not

everybody, but that started to happen.

Camelbox shared how they saw colleagues and students participating together:

So, my colleague who, before becoming a faculty member, spent 20 years doing

diversity, equity, inclusion work just really jumped in and started organizing interested

students to do an education series for field instructors focused on the history of social

work and racial issues tied to social work and racial issues tied to large social problems.

The students organized it- they reached out to the speakers… it was amazing. It was all

student led, and my colleague really supported that effort.

While the university was a common place to find community of activism, some

participants discussed their personal communities outside of the university Sidney reflected on

the community she found when becoming active in NASW groups compared to the university:

It's a space where you are able to talk and say "this is happening and what can we do"? I

think maybe three or four of us are all professors, but some of them are organizers, so

they're out in the streets. So, I am able to have [community] with certain people. But if I

went to [PWI], I can't have that conversation with anybody.

Ira reflected on his connections with his peers:

Most of the spaces [of activism] that I was in were peer relationships. My friends, people

I had been friends with for a long time. I had one friend who was super involved, who is

an artist. I had another friend who's a mental health therapist and she was super involved.

I had other friends and various areas of the world, but that was who I was surrounded by

and interacting with in these protests. My peers, my friends, my buddies... I think I was

connected to other individuals who were participating in protesting just because of

personal values, right. And so I'm in relationship with people who have similar values…

but certainly like students, mostly friends, [a few] colleagues. [I was] connected kind of

on an individual level like most of the people I knew and was in relationship with were

like, yeah, 'this is fucking important. We need to show up'.

Thread 5: Assumption of Risk

This thread includes the discussion of risk associated with contributing to social

movements.

A. Personal Risk

Protesting was viewed as risky, a risk some elected not to take. Ira even shared his student's concerns for safety, "I got feedback from other students who were like 'I'm a Black woman. I don't feel safe going to protest. I'm not going to protest'". Sidney shared "I don't want to cause there were a lot of shootings... I don't wanna bring my kid and I would have to bring him, and that's like the only thing". Camelbox reflected on the impact the pandemic played on their perception of risk related to protesting, sharing, "personally, I didn't feel safe going because of the pandemic. I didn't want to be in a big crowd and a few colleagues were feeling similarly… [but] people were great-they wore masks. You know, they were careful". These reflections on the risks of participating in protests highlighted concerns for personal safety.

B. Job Risk

The participants of this study also described the risk associated with anti-racism work and ultimately DEI. There was reflection on how their institutions responded to the risk and continued emerging risk. Sven discussed the widespread and highly political attack on DEI, critical race theory and anti-racism:

> At first, they were attacking K to 12, not even universities, first for having CRT, critical race theory, which a lot of people don't even know. And we weren't really teaching specifically critical race theory, but we were teaching people about diversity, equity, inclusion. We were teaching people about how people are different and we learn about how we can make sure that people feel included and have equal opportunities to grow and to flourish. So, for social workers, and you think for all humanity, it's just respect for the dignity and worth of all people, common sense. You know, why should we get in trouble for that?

This thread includes the participants' discussion about their campus climate. Ira was able to compare two very different programs and his perception of risk at each:

> [While at the West Coast university] I had a lot of mentors who I knew would support me, and I had a lot of autonomy and academic freedom. And it's a it's a pretty liberal program in a pretty liberal university in a pretty liberal city. I didn't have as much fear around my job… I wasn't too worried about whether or not this would threaten my job, and I did feel like individual mentors supported a lot of this and participated themselves. I, now, associate dean was participating in protests… So, I now work at a private Catholic university on the East Coast, and I am hearing from a lot of people like, yeah, you can do these things… technically you're allowed to, but administration will make your life more difficult. And so, there's a need to sort of tread more lightly… I guess I'm a little more careful than I had to be at a liberal public university.

Several participants discussed the impact of unions. Patty shared that her unionized campus added to her sense of safety. Similarly, Sven shared that "what was most supportive institutionally is the [state teacher's union]; they're standing up for equality, they're standing up against racism, against homophobia, against policies that restrict academic freedom". Further, participants discussed how their positions impacted the feeling of risk they were assuming. Those with tenure indicated that tenure generally made them feel more secure. Camelbox shared:

> I definitely think being tenured made me feel way more comfortable speaking up and being part of all these initiatives. I think without tenure I still would have participated in all of these initiatives and supported them. But I think what tenure made the difference is really being vocal in department meetings. You know, saying something in college level meetings… I was on a university committee at the time and just, you know, saying why

aren't we using an intersectional lens? So, I think I think tenure did make me feel more

comfortable making suggestions in these situations and pushing back.

Sven echoed this saying

I do feel protected because I now have tenure, so that offers some security… I tried to

create my life in a way that if I don't have this job' I'll find something else and do

something else. And I know that's not so easy for other folks.

Despite the perceived risk, some participants were not concerned. Sven talked about

continuing to be outspoken in advancing racial justice, even if it could threaten his job.'

I've spoken out in the past and spoken out since I was an instructor and an assistant

professor, and I always had to have it in my mind that my life was not dependent on this

job. … I 'don't do things to put my job at risk just to put it at risk. Bu' I'm gonna speak

up. An' I'm gonna say what I need to say. And there's been times where there's been

retaliation and wanting to silence [me] and, overt pressure, not just covert pressure. It's

fall in line with what the laws are, what the rules are.

This sentiment was shared by Ira, along with a reflection on his own areas of privilege and

resources,

So my orientation to social work I think it probably comes from a more privileged

perspective. You know, I have a partner, he's financially, self-sufficient' I'm financially

self-sufficient' I'm not taking care of a family. I don't have children. So, I will continue

to be quite vocal. I will continue to leverage the platforms I have access to and right now

the greatest platform I have is my classroom because I have a lot of freedom to go in and

say, look, fuck this shit and we have to do everything we can to confront this. It's critical.

It's a crisis and I will continue to do that. Even if it starts to threaten my livelihood.

Because that's my understanding of social work' I'm not gonna not say anything. When

these things when these issues come up and if I become aware of them and something is

happening, 'I'll be vocal.' I'll be present. And I know that there is some risk there and the

risk for me is not as great as it might be for someone else, right? I feel I do feel a little bit

more protected because of my position abilities and also because of the department. I

mean because I have people who I know are looking out for me. I mean, we'll cross that

bridge when we get to it but', I wouldn't be able to sleep at night if I was like, I'm gonna

keep my mouth shut on this one.

Sven also acknowledged that this was not a position everyone was able to take:

'It's hard for people to put themselves on the line, especially when you know they are the

sole income earner for their family or one of the primary income earners for their

families. And when you know a lot of our people from minority or racialized

backgrounds. They are untenured instructors, as opposed to tenured professors. I 'don't

know that we were sharing the risks equitably. So, we still have stuff to work out

ourselves. And I guess acknowledging that as kind of a good thing. But we really need to

move beyond that. And there's a lot of hesitancy now for people to step forward for any

sort of committee that has to do with diversity and equity these days because it just feels

like you're gonna not get support to, you know, from the institution and your job could

really be on the line.

Similarly, Patty shared that she felt some security in her husband's job which made her less

concerned with negative consequences. Ira further reflected on the involvement of risk:

In doing this work, there is some personal risk involved, and you don't have to take that

risk and you don't have to do this work. You don't have to care, right? And if you don't

care, and if you don't wanna engage in some sort of risk. I think it's important to kind of examine why you're here then, and what you will do in these spaces.

C. Putting others at risk

Sven talked about who was willing to put themselves at risk, noting the lack of support he felt from administration:

> We're not getting the type of administrative support that we need there. It seems like nobody wants to put their job on the line. And they'll say they've got so much to lose as social workers. Sometimes we have to put ourselves out there, and we have to take some risks and why is it that the frontline social worker and the frontline instructor, professor, takes the risks, but not people hire up and they think that, well, if we speak up we will get attacked, we'll lose funding.

Camelbox reflected on how some of their colleagues were reluctant to learn amongst their students:

> One question that came up was do we involve students in this process, and what I found interesting is some many people were like, "yes, of course we do". But some people were like, 'no, I'm I feel too vulnerable doing this Work and I don't want students to see me make mistakes". So, w' didn't invite students into that into that initial aspect.

While social work educators seemed ready to engage in the complex work to integrate anti-racism and advance racial justice, they also reflected on the lack of administrative participation or risk.

Thread 6: Social Work Education- An Emerging Minefield

Participants discussed that despite the ethical, professional mandate to further social, including racial, justice, there are perils in social work education. This thread also describes the alterations the participants made to their approach to social work education.

A. Intertwine Micro and Macro- Otherwise, it's just a Band-Aid

The participants often reflected on the micro/macro divide that appears in social work education and discussed approaches that could re-merge these two areas of the profession. Patty reflected on the silos that can form within education:

Educators have to see themselves as being responsible for all of the work… So we cannot keep saying "ohh the policy person' that's your job". "Oh, the community person' that's your job", and nobody else shows up ... Figuring out how to make these connections in whatever you're teaching. And to me that that is the challenge for our education.

Continuing, Patty talks about this connection between micro and macro work:

This is what I tell students, especially students who are going to be doing work at the micro level, right, they're going to be working with individuals, families in their life struggles when so much of those life struggles are connected to the larger context, right. And i' you don't understand that context. I mean really, it's like Band-Aid stuff.

Further, Sven reflected on how it feels like there has been more interplay between micro and macro social work within social work education:

[Before] it was kind of like this week is micro, this is week is macro and this week is mezzo and groups and whatever and so I think there's more of a weaving [in]' you don't just learn about CBT in an individual's class and you don't just learn about structural racism in a macro class- it affects us all, it affects all areas.

Ira talked about how he works to close that gap by having his students define activism for themselves:

> One of the things that I have my students do is I have them talk about what activism looks like for them and to consider activism from sort of micro practice all the way to collective social action, policy advocacy, and advocacy within an organization to sort of expand the definition of activism, and to define it for oneself and to determine how you show up.

Sven talked about this integration in field education as well "I think having field experiences where students get the opportunities to bring the micro to the macro, or the macro to the micro is very helpful. Being able to embrace the generalist approach".

B. Teaching DEI: Walking on eggshells

Given the rising risks of teaching diversity content, the participants discussed how they approach teaching anti-racism and DEI content in their classrooms. Sven reflected:

> If I'm conversing with the student who wants to have a debate over 'what's the role of police in society, ' shouldn't feel like my job is gonna be put at risk when I'm stimulating critical thinking by asking them to look at things from another perspective. Or, you know, some people may have police or law enforcement in their families. And if I ask them to look at the history of police brutality, which is factual, could they say that, you know, I'm making them feel uncomfortable and I'm inhibiting their intellectual freedom?

To offset these concerns, the participants employed several methods. Commonly, the participants shared that they rely on the profession's guiding documents. Camelbox shared: "I always align it with social work values, social work ethics". Patty expanded further, also talking about how she attempts to bring in neutrality:

Well, I have to teach it in a nonpartisan way. My job is to teach students, and what I teach is connected to policy and politics and civic engagement. And so long as I do it in a way that is nonpartisan, even though I tell students you can look at platforms you can see and as long as I teach from social work speaks and we look at our policy statements and we say no, this isn't [me] saying it, it's what is our policy position of our profession. If I do that and I have my code of ethics and I ground things in that. If I ground my teaching in our profession, then I can say to students this isn't me, as me, this is where it's coming from.

Ira also talked about neutralizing his language, "the other thing is removing the political language, speaking about it sort of plainly and like really explicitly clear- term' that we're defining as we go". Similarly, Sven reflected on his neutral approach:

I am not going to impose my views on student', and we'll particularly stay away from partisan politics, but we will talk about these issues and current issues, police treatment of the Black community, we can look at racism and how it's been institutionalized. And actually, if you look historically' you can't say either party is completely innocent there. So, it's not picking on one party or the other, but it's focusing on facts, focusing on policies, and giving students the opportunity to debate things.

Camelbox reflected on the importance of considering the reality of existing inequalities:

I would love for them [students with conservative views] to speak up and have the opportunity for everyone to engage. I think where I struggle is when it's when we have so much evidence showing the inequities and the human rights abuses, like how do you, how do you counter that?

Ira furthered this by sharing what he does in the classroom:

I try to talk about these things as objectively as possible. I remove the language of politics and sort of say like, here's what some people say, and here's why this is misinformation. Because when it does become political, when it does become divisive, there's ultimately a side of this argument that's espousing nonfactual bullshit. And so, it's just a matter of being like, "well, actually, here's the reality of it, and here's what some people are saying, and here's why that is false".

The participants discussed the language neutrality they attempt to bring into the classroom and this language shrouding can also be seen in program level decisions. Camelbox shared that their university's approach to language: "I don't see any language around race, and certainly they might say things about racial justice, but certainly not anti-racism". Sven shared an example of a specialty program at his university where the focus was anti-oppression and anti-racism. The name of the program was altered and was not shared online to avoid negative attention.

In addition to approaching topics in a politically neutral way, some participants discussed how they approached the discomfort that can come with cultural humility. Sven discussed how embracing cultural humility can be uncomfortable,

Well, part of cultural humility is making people feel uncomfortable. We have to be aware of our own biases. And how do you help people to become aware of their own biases? So, you explore things like privilege and oppression, and what are some areas 'here you've benefited because of the color of their skin or your socioeconomic status or your ability to study social work.

When discussing with Sidney new laws that could restrict this kind of classroom interaction, she said:

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But I'm constantly uncomfortable, so what about me? What about the people that are like

'e and we're constantly uncomfortable? Why should you be comfortable? I'm

uncomfortable every single day. You know, I'm saying, why do we have to make it for

you to be comfortable? It's uncomfortable for everybody, you know.

Similarly, other participants stressed the importance of moving past discomfort and continuing to

do that critical self-exploration. Ira shared that he tries to be transparent with his students,

including with the discomfort that comes with exploring personal identities of privilege and

oppression:

And some of it is starting out with' here's what oppression is, here's what privilege is, and

here's how it plays out. Let's think about our own identities, and this idea of agent

identities versus target identities and where we might experience privilege or experience

oppression, or even just sort of passively enact oppression. So, part of it is kind of an

exploration.

Sidney talked about students confronting their own biases through field education:

People don't wanna say 'hat they're racist, but you had your prejudices and stuff like that

and you had things that you thought about Black people or people of color or

neighborhoods. Now you see that there is there's no access and even you see, the issues

and stuff. So, I think that, like, making them see it actually and make them have had more

hands-on experiences. It's better like for me as far as an educator.

Ira shared:

The other thing is, and I say this about all the work that I do, all the work that my

students are gonna do foundational to all of this work is relationship. I'm really

intentional about building relationship with individual students and building 'a learning

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community. And I think within the context of these relationships and within the context of this community that we all are sort of intentionally building, I don't need to make things palatable. Right? There's trust, there's respect, mutual respect. There's mutual learning that's happening. And then the context of. That trust, I can be honest, right? I can strip away the niceties and sort of say like. Yeah, this is uncomfortable. Yeah. These are things that people don't want to hear but, here's how we're complicit.

C. Ways students guide curriculum

The participants discussed ways in which they allow their students to guide and influence their classes. Ira was able to reflect on the differences he observed,

The work that I'm doing at this private university on the East Coast is very different than the work that I did at a public university on the West Coast… 'o, I guess I'm a little more careful than I had to be at a liberal public university. And also, my students at this university have different life experiences. Perhaps a bit more sheltered, I would say. And so there doesn't seem to be as much awareness around what's going on in the world. … I've started talking about what are your sources of learning about the world around you? Definitely different. Definitely have to be a little more intentional about the way I talk about these things.

Camelbox, often teaching policy courses, shared how they help their students link policy to lived experiences:

I have them do assignments and class around that where they choose topics that are important to them and link it to social policy. I make it very clear that 'I don't think you can separate social policy from the human experience at all.

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Here Ira also talked about how he frequently brings in other voices and further, how he let the students help guide the discussions, sharing:

> The way I talk about it now is to bring in other voices' here's an article, here's an editorial, here's an interview, here are the ways that people are talking about some of these things…I try to present information without speaking for someone else's experience, but that is also hard to do and so things kind of can operate from a theoretical lens. I do a bit of a flipped classroom and so I really depend on students to guide the conversation and I facilitate. I'm not saying I know I have any idea what it's like to be a person of color in this world, so I bring in a lot of media… And so. It feels really important for me to make sure that I'm not teaching social justice for White folks, right? And I know my knowledge around how to do that is really, really limited and there's only so much that I can do, so I really depend on I bring in other voices as much as possible and I really depend on [that] flipped classroom- having my students guide and determine the pace and determine the direction.

More specifically, some of the participants discussed how they follow students' lead when it comes to embracing cultural humility. Camelbox shared:

> I truly believe self-determination, right? And so just if a student is not open to or just not ready, frankly, I see as a readiness issue. And I this is my assumption that students who are struggling, they struggle with holding complexity, 'that it's possible to value, love, and appreciate people who think things different from us, who passionately believe things differently from us, and actually even work with these people too. And I think that's something they are going to have to work through overtime, as they go through their careers and maybe they won't, you know self-determination, maybe they won't.' I do not

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try to intervene too much on that one, I just I present the facts I present, the points of view.

D. Toward healing and liberation

In discussing anti-racism and institutional oppression with the participants, examples of ways social work education is still perpetuating oppression emerged. Sidney experienced many tensions with the private, PWI which she contrasted against the support she received from her experiences working at an HBCU. Sidney reflected on the support she felt at her HBCU institution:

I get more opportunities to be hands on and be a part of the curriculum a everything... I'm trying to be more proactive and like I've been writing articles because they really push you to write articles… write our articles around us so that we can have more information. So, it was just like, wow', they're really asking us to put our thoughts 'ut there. There's no information for us by us to help anybody. You know, we're just getting perspectives from the outside.

This was compared to the private PWI she works at, saying

They never asked me to write an article, never asked me do anything. Just teach that class-don't touch that syllabus. Like sometimes it's really hard for me to teach from their [PWI] perspective because it's not realistic to the people that we're serving, they're not gonna relate to it. …. Like the way that we see the world is different… the way we were taught, our values, and beliefs is different than what's in this article. So, when I'm presenting this information they [students] were like "did you pick this, these articles", like I did not and they [PWI] weren't really even open to changing it. They like don't

touch the syllabus. How can I teach it? I said "'I can't really relate to this, but this is what they want you to know".

Sven also talked about ways social work education may not be the most attuned to the needs of certain communities:

We do things like we would teach if there's a, you know, if there's a crisis situation, somebody has suicidal or homicidal ideation, what's the first thing you do? Call police? Well, doesn't work so well in communities where experience with police is not so positive, and so what are some other ways that you can, you know, deal with crisis situations.

Ira shared his observations of the lack of support of diverse students:

We do a really good job at recruiting underrepresented students, and then when th'y get there, 't's like we don't know how to support those students- first gen students, students of color, and so they feel isolated, excluded, completely lost.

Participants offered alternatives to the current approaches. Ira shared one possible direction: "moving away from like, a risk model and sort of an oppression model to sort of healing and liberation. So, focusing instead on healing and liberation." Sidney shared steps toward this one of her universities has taken: "They added a tenth 'competency], it's gonna be an Afro-Centric Model".

Chapter 6: Discussion and Implications

This dissertation aimed to narratively explore the experiences of social work educators participating in social movements aimed at addressing the racial injustices. The guiding bodies of social work have responded in varied ways to the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent protests for racial justice (Murray et al., 2023). From NASW's continued support for police and social work partnership (NASW, 2021b) and CSWE's development of an anti-racism taskforce (Murray-Lichtman et al., 2022), these varied foci of social work's commitment to racial justice highlight the difference in defining and enacting the ethics social justice.

Utilizing the three-dimensional narrative structure, educators' stories of participation were collected, analyzed, and presented. The social work educators in this study discussed the role of social work, concluding that they have a professional ethical duty to further racial justice via social movement participation and incorporation of anti-racism practices into social work education. Ample research echoes the participants' view that the advancement of racial justice is a central pillar of social work (Cherry, 2020) and can be accomplished via contributing to social movements (Jeypal, 2016). The social work educators in this study value varied contributions to social movements (Mondros, 2013; Swick et al., 2021) including protesting, departmental responses, and anti-racist modifications to social work education.

The results from this study indicate that the social work values of advancing justice frequently overlap with the personal values of social work educators. Specifically, the participants discussed their personal journey toward anti-racism, reflecting on their values, identities, and various motivations to engage in anti-racist work. Social work educators' identities impact their positioning and approach to enacting anti-racism. Anti-racist pedagogy necessitates critical thinking and self-reflection for students and instructors, requiring exploration

of identity and social positioning (Murray-Lichtman et al., 2022). Instructor self-reflection is one of the key pillars in calls to incorporate anti-racism into social work education (Crutchfield et al., 2022). Most of the present sample was comprised of White social workers, and for decades there have been calls for White social workers to critically examine their Whiteness and commit to antiracist principles (Bussey, 2020; Nylund, 2006). As the participants echoed, this process of exploring complicity in systems of oppression is uncomfortable but necessary (DiAngelo, 2018; Kishimoto, 2018). The participants in this study discussed this discomfort and reflected on their positionality, committing to leveraging power afforded to them by their social positioning.

For the participants of this study, their motivations for and methods of engaging with the present social justice movement were highly contingent on their personal identities. For the participants who are parents, their parenthood was a highly motivating feature, although the literature exploring parents' commitment to social movement participation is contradictory (Bunnage, 2014). Other individual factors impact participation, for example, social work students identifying as a sexual minority are more likely to have participated in social action (Dodd & Mizrahi 2017). Further, the development of collective identity, or a sense of "we-ness" stemming from shared attributes or values (Snow, 2001), contributes to social movement participation (Bunnage, 2014; Cobbina et al., 2019). The participants in this study offered differing views of access to protests and community demonstrations based on their geographic locations. The participants' description of their social movement participation being constrained by location has not as frequently been explored in the literature (Bunnage, 2014).

There are challenges to ensuring that social injustices are not perpetuated as the result of social movements (Shufutinsky, 2022), as good intentions do not nullify oppression (Freire, 1970; Reisch & Andrews, 2002). The participants of this study noticed the tokenized and

performative responses, also called superfluous social action (Shufutinsky, 2022). These shallow

actions often have little or no value to the communities impacted and are cosmetic and self-

promoting in nature. The participants discussed the initial responses of their departments but

lamented the lack of continued support especially considering the now contentious nature of DEI

and anti-racism work. The participants largely discussed risk as it related to their jobs. Advocacy

of social justice advocacy in social work has been discussed (Hoefer, 2019), though the

participants explored how tenure impacted participation in social movements. All of the

participants in this study were tenured or tenure-track faculty and indicated that tenure provided

them a sense of security when it came to their advocacy work.

From the participants' stories and the literature, eliminating the micro-macro divide is

vital in creating activism oriented social workers (Apgar, 2021). Included in this bridging, is the

incorporation of raising critical consciousness (Freire, 1970) to engage in social action (Bussey

2020; Jemal & Fraisier, 2021). Specifically tying macro issues to micro consequences offers the

opportunity of critical consciousness to confront White supremacy, anti-blackness, and the racial

oppression of BIPOC (Jemal, 2021). Additionally, closing the micro-macro divide can be

achieved through community engagement (Finn & Molloy, 2021; Knight, 2018), including

confronting carceral power through experiential learning opportunities (Jewell & Owens, 2017;

Lane et al., 2017).

Further, the participants reflected on the positioning of social work in relation to systems

that perpetuate oppression (Dettlaff et al., 2020; Santiago & Ivery, 2020). Where CJS is

concerned, social workers have turned to anti-carceral social work (Jacobs et al., 2021; Kim,

2020). Carceral social work is defined as "a form of social work that relies on logics of social

control and White supremacy and that uses coercive and punitive practice to manage BIPOC

[Black, Indigenous, People of Color] and poor communities" (Jacobs et al., 2021, p. 39). Jacobs et al. (2021) further describe the two arms of carceral social work practice, the first is the social work use of tactics rooted in the same White supremacist and coercive foundations as policing, and the second is the direct partnership between social work and law enforcement. While social work has a long history of collaboration with law enforcement (Patterson & Swan, 2019), it serves as a mechanism of social control (Bussey, 2020). To address this, critical, abolitionist, and anti-carceral approaches to social work have emerged (Jacobs et al., 2021). Anti-carceral social work is defined as "one that is life-affirming and supports the health, self-determination, and sustainability of all communities, particularly BIPOC, and others most oppressed and impacted by state violence" (Jacobs et al., 2021, p. 38). Further, there have been calls to incorporate anti-racism via anti-carceral approaches into social work education (Murray et al., 2023; Todic & Christensen, 2022). As social work continues to reckon with its perpetuation of oppression, remaining critical of potential problems with approaches and constantly striving to better the advancement of justice is paramount.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations that need to be considered for the present study. First, this study is comprised of a small sample size and is not intended to be generalized to the experiences of all social work educators. Due to the small sample, it is difficult to determine saturation. This study was conducted at a point which anti-racism, anti-oppression, and DEI are actively contended in national politics. In some states, those participating in DEI work are unsure of the risk associated with furthering DEI work. For example, Texas has adopted Senate Bill 17 which defunds DEI efforts in Texas public universities. The political contentiousness of the present topic is a limitation to the present study. Also, this study aimed to ask about social

movement participation during the time of a global pandemic, which increased the risk in participating in certain types of social action (i.e., protesting, attending in-person events).

The homogeneity of the current sample is a limitation. Regarding the demographic makeup of the participants, the majority of the present sample were White social work educators, with only one Black voice and no other BIPOC voices. Another limitation of this study's sample is that only tenured or tenure-track educators participated, leaving a continued gap in the understanding of adjunct and non-tenure track instructors' participation in social movements. The participants in this study did not focus on the area of social work and criminal justice, instead the participants had other areas of interest, like disability justice, clinical social work, and child welfare. Additionally, while the participants were able to discuss their observation of their administrators' responses, this study did not obtain any first-hand administrator stories.

Implications

There are a number of implications for the present study across research, policy, and education for participating in social movements and for moving toward further integration of anti-racism practices. As discussed in the methods, narrative inquiry requires consideration of several levels of justification at multiple points throughout the study.

Research

The first research implication is the indication that narrative inquiry is an ideal method for conducting social work research. The emergence of social work ethics and values in the methodology make it an excellent methodology for future social work studies. Further, the relational nature of this methodology makes it ideal for exploring social movements. The results of this study suggest that further exploration of institutional barriers to educators' social movement participation is needed. Social work participation in social movements remains under

researched (Murray et al., 2023). Future research is needed to further investigate the experiences of social work educators participating in social movements, including the uptake of anti-racism in social work education.

Policy

This study suggests that social work educators should be acutely aware of the ongoing policy initiatives related to higher education and DEI. There have already been states that have defunded public university DEI programs and it remains a contested political talking point. The risk associated with pursuing racial justice can be ameliorated by further exploration into the policy protections of anti-racist approaches. Further, social work organizations, like NASW and CSWE should be prepared to advocate for the continued embrace of our professional values of social justice in higher education and practice.

Education and Practice

The results from this study identify several ways in which social work education can contribute to social movements and move toward the integration of anti-racism in social work education. First, there is a need to create an environment for our educators to explore their identities, learn about themselves, and implement appropriate support for colleagues, facilitating the development of transformative consciousness as part of the professional social work identity. This critical self-reflection could be incorporated into each of the current social work education competencies. Further, the results suggest that embeddedness in the communities within which social work education programs are housed present opportunities to confront oppression in those individual communities. Next, it suggests that there should be further exploration into the ways that anti-racism and anti-oppression can be integrated into social work curriculum and schools of social work. Not only does the curriculum need to be rooted in anti-oppressive and anti-racist

values, but so does the whole of social work programs as educators and students continue to face oppression within academia. Additionally, these perspectives help reconnect the social work profession with the actualization of the mission toward social justice.

Conclusion

Social work educators are committed to activism for racial justice through social movement participation and incorporation of anti-racist practice. Social work is a profession of change, and the present context offers a pivotal turning point for the profession. In response to the continued systemic oppression, it is time that social work more widely commits to anti-racist practice and pedagogy. This begins with critical self-reflection and subsequent mobilization to action.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

1. What is your age?

2. What is your gender?

3. What is your ethnicity?

4. What is your current professional level?

5. What school are you employed at? (*this will be used to assign a regional code then obscured*)

6. Can you tell me your story of participating in social movements to address racial inequities within the US criminal justice system?

   a. How did you participate? What did you do?

   b. Were there things you considered doing but decided not to do?

   c. What contributed to your desire to participate?

   d. Are there social movements you have participated with before?

7. Did you experience any tension with your decision to participate?

   a. Were there any internal conflicts you faced?

   b. Were there barriers to your ability to participate?

   c. How did the highly politicized nature of BLM protests impact your decision to participate?

8. What is the place of social work in the current social movement?