ASSESSING HOW HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS OF COLOR NAVIGATE SPACES OF ADVOCACY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

by

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how senior administrators of color in higher education navigate spaces of advocacy for social justice. The low representation of persons of color in administrative positions combined with persisting racial gaps and inequities create a need for greater understanding of leadership for social justice in higher education. This document centers the voices of nine higher education senior administrators of color concerning their perceptions of identity, advocacy, and administration. Through a Critical Race Methodological framework, and constant analysis of participant interviews and institutional documents, a number of significant findings emerged.

Participants' responses suggested that they, as administrators of color, faced a series of negotiation variables. The first of these negotiation areas included tensions associated with the question, "Who is responsible for diversity?" Participants felt: they had to constantly educate others; responsible for diversity but criticized for addressing diversity; conflicting expectations from various constituents about their roles; and alone in their advocacy, but obligated to advocate for students of color.

The second area of negotiation concerned authenticity of identity. Participants felt that their sense of authenticity was directly affected by: their efforts to be seen as credible by white peers; the criticism they received by communities of color who thought they were acting too "white"; and their need for preservation of identity and self.

Third, participants faced a negotiation of voice in their leadership positions. They believed that their presence was a form of advocacy and that they brought unique perspectives about racial inequities to their administrative positions due to their race and

ethnicity. Participants felt they had to negotiate the ways they represented their institutions and communities of color and spoke out about issues of social justice in light of professional risks for doing so.

Finally, participants felt that they had to negotiate a sense of hope for change amidst daunting racial realities and inequities. They were simultaneously hopeful and discouraged by fellow advocates for social justice who were few in numbers, the effectiveness of building alliances with white colleagues even while reinforcing a white powerbase, and their inclusive leadership styles in systems and institutions that were often exclusionary.

This dissertation is dedicated to: Michele Reyes, my best friend, constant support, and eternal companion; to my children who have been patient with me and who, I hope, will benefit from this research endeavor; and to my parents and siblings who have all left indelible examples of hard work, optimism, and support.

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can share not only my voice but the voices of our ancestors who are looking upon us, expecting us to be great. I am proud to give a greater portion of support to my children in their pursuit of education and in their pursuit to find and share their voices.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I faced the mirror and straightened my tie, intent on ignoring the price tag. I had worn suits before, but now, not only was it expected of me every day, it symbolized a new step in my career—a step into new spaces of power and privilege.

For 6 years, I had worked at the university in outreach programs for underrepresented students (low-income, first-generation, students of color, etc.). My office spaces transitioned from a corner space (of a conference room), to a closet, to a small office and then to a bigger closet. It was in that larger utility closet that I directed the university Latino Initiative—a set of educational programs, events, and services designed to improve access for Latino students and families. I dressed how I wanted, for the most part, rotating between Aloha shirts, guayaveras, hoodies, and collared shirts. I spent days and nights interacting with students, families, and social organizations to expand opportunities and resources for our current and future Latino students. My closet-office was the only place on campus where students told me that they felt comfortable enough to discuss issues related to their citizenship status. In 3 years, I visited hundreds of students and families, from underrepresented communities, in their homes, discussing life plans and educational maps. I sought sponsorships and scholarships for the growing population of Latino students[1] who were in need of financial assistance. I joined various boards of community organizations that focused services towards the Latino community. I wrote letters to legislators and other influential people to garner support for the Latino community in areas of educational access, citizenship, small business development, language assistance, and cultural preservation. I taught service-learning courses (Interpersonal Communications) for bilingual students

[1] The UVU Latino student population grew from 980 students to 2,480 between 2007-2011.

to become mentors to younger Latino students in local K-12 schools. I worked with private organizations and donors to host conferences, celebrations, and banquets that developed leadership and honored success among our Latino youth. I worked with deans on campus to develop programs targeting Latino students to gain greater representation in certain disciplines. I was connected and I felt like a strong advocate for Latino students as well as other underrepresented communities.

Now, here I was trying on suits for my new position. I had just moved into my new office with a beautiful view of campus. Standing in the store one week after my first day on the job as Assistant to the President, I turned my sleeve over to look at the price tag and realized that nice suits weren't cheap. Not only did I have to purchase suits, but I had to get new shirts, ties, and shoes as well…after all, I had to look like an administrator, right?

Once the suits were selected, I proceeded to get measured for a custom fitting—for the first time in my life. It felt like I was being sized up for more than a suit. Was I ready to move from my closet into an office ten feet away from the president? What was this new job going to be like? Would I have to sit in meetings all day? Could I still teach? How often would I get to interact with students at the multicultural center or work with community organizations? How much influence would I really have on the university and the president? As the only person of color on the cabinet, what was expected of me concerning advocacy for social justice—a cause I had become so passionate about and intimately familiar with?

My narrative only begins to illustrate the unique inner dialogue that takes place within higher education administrators of color concerning career transitions, advocacy, leadership, and identity. Numerous experiences affect the ways this dialogue takes shape including the lenses through which administrators of color interpret our ever-changing roles, expectations, and identities. It is in these experiences where one begins to understand the depth and breadth of complexity associated with leadership, and more specifically, advocacy for social justice, from the perspectives of persons of color.

Educational achievement gaps between historically underrepresented students of color[2] and white[3] students (Bensimón, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2006), combined with the lack of representation of higher education administrators[4] of color in predominantly white institutions (PWI), can lead to a labyrinth of navigational circumstances for administrators of color—especially if we[5] wish to advocate for underrepresented students. How then, do the relatively few and underrepresented administrators navigate this terrain (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2008)? What are the social, political, and cultural factors that influence the assimilation of racial/cultural identity into a predominantly white institutional narrative? Schein (2004) asserted the importance of leadership in shaping and influencing institutional culture yet recognized the difficulty for minority voices to change the culture. Additionally, Valverde (2003) observed:

> There have been and still are very few people of color in higher education who have been successful in moving into executive roles. Postsecondary institutions are very effective in eliminating such change agents, the advocates for people of color and their agendas. (p. 8)

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[2] When referring to students of color as "historically underrepresented" or on the lower end of 'opportunity, access, and achievement gaps", I am referring to students who racially or ethnically self-identify as African American or Black; Hispanic, Chican@, or Latin@; Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; and/or American Indian or Native American. Multiple studies have shown that Asian students (as an aggregate) perform as well or better than white students in educational achievement however, when one disaggregates (i.e., Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, etc.), we find that some Asian or Asian American students face the same barriers and challenges as other communities of color. The @ symbol is used in the most recent literature on Latino success to represent both the Latina and Latino gender distinctions.

[3] Throughout the document, the term "white" will represent persons who self-identify by the national distinction of "white/Non Hispanic." Also, "white" has been left in the lowercase format throughout the document in an effort to diminish any reinforcement of the white narrative as the central narrative. While I do not capitalize the word "color" as in persons of color or communities of color, I do capitalize the word "Black" when referring to the African American or Black community. These decisions are consistent with a Critical Race approach of centering the voices and narratives of persons of color.

[4] At times, when referring to higher education administrators of color, I will simply use the term administrators.

[5] When referring to administrators of color, I will use the first person plurals of "we" and "us" to constantly remind readers that I am actively engaged in the dialogue both as researcher and higher education administrator of color.

For higher education administrators,[6] advocacy for racial equity can be a tense and therefore, often avoided, endeavor. Within higher education institutions, assumptions, values, and beliefs develop a traditional or normed institutional narrative (Schein, 2004). If such a narrative is adopted by the majority of stakeholders or constituents (i.e., predominantly white institutions), new perspectives become positioned against, and counter to, dominant value orientations. Social change, then, is seen as radical and therefore disrupts institutional fit (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). In assessing the spaces of power within an institutional culture, a leader quickly finds that counter narratives often face resistance and are ultimately pushed to the margins (Kivel, 2004; Riley, 1989). In addition, leaders with the inclination to create change become aware of the professional risks associated with such efforts.

Reframing Gaps and Leadership in Education

Ladson-Billings (2006) argued that the "historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral decisions and policies that characterize our society have created an education debt" (p. 5). This debt is the result of compounded deficits that, over time, have created a system of inequality. Ladson-Billings acknowledged emerging critical discussions of achievement gaps including classroom cultural and linguistic mismatches (Au, 1980; Brice Heath, 1983; Delpit, 1995; Lee, 2004), the nature of the curriculum and school (Banks, 2004; Grant, 2003; Popkewitz, 1998), and pedagogical practices of teachers (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sleeter, 2001). She called, however, for a focus on larger contexts that situate education within sociopolitical, historical, economic, and moral spaces. Her call for

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[6] The term *administrator(s)* refers to individual(s) in higher education who are classified as *Executive* when referring to salary scale. Although nonexecutives can be considered administrators (i.e. directors of departments or divisions), my use of the term assumes that *administrators* have significant positional responsibility often associated with "senior" leadership. Whether or not the person is perceived to be respected or competent in his or her role does not affect the fact that he or she has a title of positional authority.

contextual understanding is critical; not only for future research, but for the ways educational and political leaders situate systemic reforms to address achievement gaps.

Systemic or institutional changes require those who hold positions of interest and privilege to exercise their power and influence to reframe, recenter, and recalibrate the status quo or, in other words, demonstrate leadership for social change. Torres, Howard-Hamilton and Cooper (2003) argued that administrators affect the learning environment for, and identity development of, diverse populations because administrators "are more likely to create the policies that govern behavior…and they are the ones that enforce those policies" (p. 82). If the decisions about higher education institutional policies, procedures, and structures (e.g., hiring, faculty rank and advancement, resource allocation, and admissions) lie with senior administrators, we can reasonably infer that achievement and opportunity gaps in higher education are influenced by a lack of awareness and understanding of, and/or commitment to, issues of equity and diversity by those in positions of administrative power. It is also reasonable to infer that the majority of administrators may not understand the narratives and perspectives of those communities who have historically been on the lower end of the achievement gaps—more specifically, communities of color. This, in large part, is directly related to the fact that the majority of administrators are not persons of color. If one agrees with Schein's (2004) argument that leadership makes a difference in educational reform, and if changes are to be made to close these gaps, leadership for equity, or advocacy, becomes an extremely relevant and vital area of study.

Alemán and Rorrer (2006) recently documented educational achievement gaps in the state of Utah. The authors highlighted significant gaps between Latina/o[7] and white

[7] Throughout this paper, the term "Latino" will be used when referring to individuals or groups who self-identify as: Latina/o, Hispanic, Chicana/o, Mexican American, Latin American, or any other specific identifier

students in K-16 educational achievement in the areas of: criterion-referenced tests (CRTs), Utah Basic Skills Competency Tests (UBSCT), Advanced Placement (AP) participation, and higher education enrollment. Table 1 captures some of the gaps identified in their study.

These gaps underscore a need to address the disparities in educational opportunities, access, and achievement between historically underrepresented students of color and white students. In an effort to reframe such gaps from traditionally deficit views of communities of color, Alemán and Rorrer (2006) invited leaders to take responsibility in drawing attention to educational disparities and engage in dialogues that address the harsh realities of inequity. They stated, "When environments are hostile, unwelcoming, or belittling to those not of the dominant group, educational achievement gaps percolate and grow" (p. 34). Alemán and Rorrer also cautioned leaders against shying away from difficult discussions of social justice in the name of "decorum" simply to avoid contention. Their caution sheds light once again on the tendency for leaders who represent the dominant narrative to reify feelings of comfort and "fit" with their positions and perspectives of power (Aguirre & Martinez, 2006).

Research Problem

Gaps in access to, and achievement in, higher education are still prevalent (and growing in some areas) between students of color and white students (Bensimón, 2003 & 2005, Kipp, Price & Wohlford, 2002; Price & Wohlford, 2005). Gaps in representation of higher education administrators of color and white administrators also persist (Eckel & Hartley, 2011; Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009). Although studies (primarily of faculty) have shown a positive correlation between representation of educators of color and representation of

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according to country of Latin origin in North, Central, and South America (e.g., Colombian, Mexican, Peruvian, etc.).

Table 1

Achievement Gap Percentages (White and Latino Students in Utah)

Year	Measurement	Gap in percentage
2001	High school completion rates	24%
2004	Proficiency in language arts (CRT)	31%
	Proficiency in mathematics (CRT)	27%
	Proficiency in science (CRT)	37%
2007	Senior level pass rates – reading (UBSCT)	38%
	Senior level pass rates – writing (UBSCT)	33%
	Senior level pass rates – math (UBSCT)	35%
2008	College enrollment for 18-25 year olds	29%

(Adapted from Alemán & Rorrer, 2006)

students of color (Turner, Gonzalez & Wood, 2008), simply increasing the number of administrators of color does not necessarily produce social change (Alemán, 2009). This speaks to the need for systemic or institutional changes that explicitly demonstrate commitment to issues of inequity and social justice (AASCU, Report on Hispanic Student Success, 2007; Pollard, 2004). Espoused institutional commitments can usually be found in guiding documents such as mission, vision, and values statements, policies, marketing materials, agenda items, curriculum, and hiring practices. While nearly every institution states commitments to diversity, multiculturalism, access, inclusion, and opportunity, the achievement and representation gaps continue to be significant.

This disconnected dynamic highlights another gap—a critical leadership gap. This is the gap between what leaders espouse concerning equity, diversity, and inclusion, and what is operationalized as an extension of those values. In order to address this critical leadership gap, I sought to understand the socio-cultural-political experiences of higher education administrators of color and their notions of advocacy for racial equity and social justice. My choice in participant demographics addresses a weakness in the literature on social change leadership within higher education—the lack of voice of those who are underrepresented in positions of administrative authority and who might bring different lenses of leadership and advocacy due to their race, ethnicity, culture or other marginalized identity.

Study Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to understand how higher education administrators of color negotiate the role of advocacy for social justice from positions of institutional power or authority. Born out of my own racial narrative and career movement into new spaces of power, the study explores if, why, and how higher education administrators of color perceive the need for and demonstrate advocacy for students of color at predominantly white

institutions (PWIs). By exploring administrative narratives, I gained insights about the ways participants responded to what Herbert (1974) identified as potentially conflicting role expectations for administrators of color. I also sought to understand the extent to which administrators of color conceptualize and mobilize advocacy for social justice in an administrative position. Through this study, I seek greater understanding of leadership and advocacy that may lead to increased attention to, and therefore a closing of, gaps in achievement, access, and representation.

Drawing from Creswell's (2007) model of central and subquestions, I used the following questions to guide my study:

1. (Central) How do higher education administrators of color navigate advocacy for racial equity as they move into positions of power;
2. (Subquestion) How do higher education administrators of color perceive/identify/locate their racial/ethnic/cultural (and other) identities and how have those identities framed their approach to advocacy; and
3. (Subquestion) What are the environmental, institutional, and political factors that affect the way participants think about, talk about, and mobilize to address, inequities in their institutions?

Significance

This study is significant for a number of reasons. First, many studies have captured qualitative perspectives of higher education faculty of color concerning issues of racism, diversity, and social justice (Contreras, 1998; Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998; Smith, 2004; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002) but few have focused on senior level administrators of color. Those studies that have assessed the experiences of higher education administrators of color (Harvey, 1999; Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009; Valverde, 2003), have not specifically

addressed the location of participant identity, leadership, and advocacy. Other studies have discussed a leader's role in creating climates for inclusion and diversity but have not focused on the voices of administrators of color (Astin & Astin, 2000; Birnbaum, 1988; Borkowski, 1988; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen & Allen, 1999).

Second, this study provides new insights into institutional roadblocks for the progress of underrepresented students and educators (faculty, staff, and administrators) of color. As leaders discussed their notions of advocacy and the contexts in which they did or did not exercise such advocacy, I gleaned an understanding of larger systemic issues that affect individuals of color concerning educational or administrative opportunities. Such insights added a new lens of narrative analysis to other studies that focused on administrators of color from an observational perspective (Gutierrez, Castaneda, & Katsinas, 2002).

Finally, the data gathered were analyzed through the lens of Critical Race Theory, an analytical tool that counters the ways traditional research formulates and norms perceptions of equity, merit, and fairness. The study extends the discussion around Alemán's (2009) notion of "Critical Raced Leadership" or leadership that actively problematizes issues of race, power, and privilege and seeks to forefront historically marginalized experiences into policy discussions and other important leadership decisions. By validating and centering the personal and professional experiences of educational leaders of color, I continued the exploration of leadership towards social justice and created a discursive space in which people of color could guide the dialogue concerning our own lived experiences.

Conceptual Framework

I have grounded this study in a Critical Race Methodological framework (Parker & Lynn, 2002; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). This framework centers issues of race and values

the experiential knowledge of people of color (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Yosso, 2005)—especially as it relates to perspectives from positions of power. I also employed a multidisciplinary approach to understand both personal and environmental contexts of administrators of color. I focused on the histories and experiences of the participants of color rather than focusing on the low representation data itself (Pizarro, 1998). Drawing on theoretical foundations of leadership for equity and social justice, and through the lens of Critical Race Theory, this study provides new and valuable perspectives concerning the social, cultural, and political contexts of leading for social change in higher education.

Road Map

This dissertation serves as an inquiry into the experiences of individuals of color. Specifically, I engage both the literature on, and narratives of persons of color regarding the journey of administration and advocacy. In this introductory chapter, I frame gaps in achievement and representation as worthwhile pursuits for study. In Chapter II, I enter into the scholarly space of past research and highlight holes in the literature concerning administration and social justice advocacy. In Chapter III, I outline my approach to the research endeavor and present information concerning my role as researcher. Chapter IV and Chapter V contain the study findings. Chapter IV focuses on context and narratives of the participants and site of the study. Chapter V outlines the most significant findings concerning the ways administrators of color navigate and negotiate spaces of power and advocacy for social justice. Finally, Chapter VI contains a discussion and analysis of the study's impact on existing literature and implications for educational research, practice, and policy.

CHAPTER II

ENGAGING THE LITERATURE

I situate my study as a response to three primary bodies of literature: (1) experiences and role identities of leaders/administrators of color in higher education and other organizations; (2) Critical Race Theory (CRT) as an analytical lens in the assessment of higher education issues and educational research; and (3) leadership for change (with specific attention to equity and social justice in higher education). My literature queries included various combinations of terms including: higher education, leadership, administration, advocacy, critical race theory, achievement gaps, identity, diversity, authenticity, power, politics, racism, etc. I included scholarly works that are most relevant and significant to my research questions.

To open this literature review, I explore the experiences and role identities of leaders of color in higher education and other organizations. I draw from discussions of leaders/administrators of color in higher education (Harvey, 1999; Jackson & Flowers, 2003; Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009; Valverde, 2003), K-12 education (Alemán, 2009; Lynn, 2002), and public administration (Herbert, 1974). These articles informed my understanding of both macro and micro organizational influences and contexts for leaders of color. It was through this exploration of context that my study shifted from an initial focus on leadership to a more narrative-based inquiry on the negotiation of advocacy spaces.

I focus the next section of my review on the analytical lens and epistemology of Critical Race Theory and the ways in which CRT can reframe views of higher education

issues concerning achievement gaps and racial equity. A quick glance at the history of literature on higher education administration confirms that such scholarship has been discussed, trained, and researched from a primarily majoritarian, or white, male lens (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009). The lens of CRT invites researchers to center studies on the experiences of communities of color—or in this case, administrators of color—for perspectives on educational issues, structures, and policies that have not been adequately represented. A CRT perspective provides insights into the opportunities and challenges, for leaders of color, in advocating for social justice from positions of administrative power. I did not assume that all administrators of color offered a narrative or perspective that is counter to majoritarian ideologies of meritocracy, objectivity, race-neutrality, and colorblindness. In fact, it is because of this variation in experience and narrative that I sought to understand how different leaders of color perceived the need for social justice and worked towards accomplishing such.

Finally, I close my literature review by focusing on the connection between leadership and advocacy. Advocacy, as a form of leadership, can play an important role in addressing and reforming educational inequities. It is important to understand how higher education leadership for social justice has historically been, and is currently being, discussed. By focusing on narratives and experiences of senior administrators, I do not suggest that leadership for social justice is position-bound. In fact, history reveals that some of the most effective advocacy efforts began as grassroots endeavors. Through the literature, however, I sought to capture the dialogic strands as well as holes in the research regarding higher education leadership for social change at the administrative level—a vital level for organization-wide changes or cultural shifts.

Experiences and Role Identities of Administrators of Color

At the heart of my study, I sought to understand how administrators of color negotiate spaces of advocacy. While I recognize the unique circumstances, backgrounds and experiences found within and among various cultural and racial communities, I explore the literature to find some commonalities that might explain the low representation of administrators of color at institutions of higher education. I also delve into the psychosocial literature that informs how persons of color experience Western administration. In this section, I organize the literature into two primary bodies: (1) barriers to representation of administrators of color and (2) negotiation of role identities and expectations.

Barriers to Representation and Success

Although greater numbers of students of color have been able to access higher education opportunities, the percentage of students of color has not matched the racial demographic representation that exists in our greater community (Bauman, Bustillos, Bensimón, Brown II, & Bartee, 2005). In much the same way, administrators of color in higher education have been, and continue to be, underrepresented in senior levels of administration and decision-making positions (Benjamin, 1997; Harvey, 1999; Jackson, 2003; Jackson, 2004; Valverde, 2003). In a recent publication commissioned by the American Council on Education (ACE), Eckel and Hartley (2011) reported that women hold only 23% of college and university presidencies while 14% of presidencies are held by persons of color. The representation of persons of color in presidencies drops to 10% when excluding those at the helm of minority-serving institutions. Eckel and Hartley noted, "increasingly diverse campuses have not had increasingly diverse leaders" (p. 1). This reality of representation begs an analysis of barriers that influence not only the points of access to

administrative positions but also the ways administrators of color view their own ability to be successful once hired.

A number of studies have focused on the workplace challenges for faculty of color but few have focused on administrators. I borrow from, and extend the work of, Jackson and O'Callaghan (2009), who stated in their monograph entitled *Ethnic and Racial Administrative Diversity*, "Research on the experiences of administrators of color, while emerging, is limited but essential to gaining a fuller and more balanced understanding of the increasingly diverse academic workforce" (p. vii). Although their analyses are primarily derived from studies of African American female administrators in higher education, I found their summary of barriers to be a solid starting point for discussion and analysis. The authors noted barriers encountered by administrators of color and summarized their findings into three sections: social, organizational/institutional, and internal/individual. They argued that each set of barriers is nested within a larger context (i.e., internal nested within organizational which is nested within social).

Social barriers emanate from larger sociohistorical influences concerning racism, sexism, and other deeply rooted societal forms of oppression (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009). For example, a number of studies focusing on Black women administrators reveal residual and lingering prejudices that view a certain gender (female) and race (Black) as a conflict with societal notions of an administrator role (Green, 1997; Harvard, 1986; Howard-Hamilton & Williams, 1996; Watson, 2001). Carbado and Gulati (2003) argued that the demands for organizational efficiency drive the "homogeneity incentive" or the incentive for employers to screen candidates for homogeneity and organizational fit. Through the lens of CRT, we notice that for non-white candidates to be employed, they have to demonstrate the ability to assimilate to the homogenous PWI environment. This behavior acculturation

speaks to a larger societal climate that values the dominant narrative over others. Bell and Nkomo (2001) found that African American women faced barriers that their white counterparts felt to a lesser extent or not at all including daily racist interactions, being held to a higher standard, invisibility, exclusion from informal networks, challenges to authority, and lack of company follow through on commitments to the advancement of people of color.

Social barriers also emerge from the reinforcement of stereotypes perpetuated by various societal dynamics. If Native American or African American girls do not see examples of Native American and African American women in positions of authority and administration, not only do they begin to create a script of their place in society, other communities construct the same deficit script. These societal scripts are reinforced by media outlets and historical texts that reduce communities of color to memorable sound bites, exotic stories, or pitiful images (Cortes, 1995; Lintner, 2004). If the majority community, or the middle-to-upper-class white community, does not think critically about such stories and images, prejudices can become easily cemented. To be sure, racism is not unidirectional. Every person is capable of and culpable for prejudicial judgment and behavior that results from their lived experiences. The issue, however, is not the sophomoric acknowledgment of multidirectional prejudice but rather the societal scripting of expectations according to race. Subtly then, racism becomes a socially constructed barrier for persons of color who seek to be, but are not expected to be, administrators (Carbado & Gulati, 2003).

As persons of color move into new spaces of power, we must not assume that such positions, status, and authority protect communities of color from discrimination. Joe Feagin (1991) found that middle-class African Americans still faced many of the same discriminations as low-income African Americans. Ladson-Billings and Donner (2005)

argued that educational leaders of color are consistently pushed to legitimize themselves in academic arenas either overtly or covertly through the "call". "The call is that moment at which, regardless of one's stature and/or accomplishments, race (and other categories of otherness) is recruited to remind one that he or she still remains locked in the racial construction" (p. 279). These experiences can cause administrators of color to "act white," or conform to majoritarian behaviors in an effort to avoid negative treatment. How then, do administrators of color work through their "calls" in an attempt to create equitable educational opportunities for students of color? How do we, as leaders, internalize our roles as advocates for communities of color? What needs to be negotiated as we traverse historically competing cultural, political, and sociohistorical narratives? How we respond to these demands speaks to our unique views of advocacy and the need to address prevailing and growing educational achievement and opportunity gaps.

People of color also face a set of institutional or organizational barriers in their professional journeys. Jackson and O'Callaghan (2009) identified such barriers to include:

> Lack of access to professional networks for particular racial groups, a lack of appropriate role models, segregated networks of professionals, a lack of mentors for individuals of specific racial and ethnic groups, the lack of a postgraduate or terminal degree, the lack of fluency in a foreign language, and work in academic departments or settings in which individuals are unwilling to reorganize their work or priorities around issues of cultural diversity. (p. 42)

Howard-Hamilton and Williams (1996) viewed lack of organizational fit and connectedness as additional institutional barriers for administrators of color. These barriers, along with a lack of representation, create an outsider status for administrators of color that can be difficult to overcome.

One of the primary higher education institutional barriers is found in the academic traditions of advancement through the tenure process. In academia, the majority of

administrators come from the academic arm of the institution (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009). The traditional ascension into administrative ranks includes variations of the following sequence: junior faculty, tenured faculty, department chair, associate dean, dean, associate vice president/provost, and academic affairs vice president or provost. The barriers outlined in the studies of faculty of color have relevancy then, to the lack of their representation in administration (Haro, 1995; Haro & Lara, 2003). Through a CRT lens, we further understand that much of the scholarship of faculty of color has not been valued or validated as "legitimate knowledge" and has created a gap in academic advancement (Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002; Washington & Harvey, 1989).

This deficit perception of professionals of color can carry over into basic hiring practices for administrative positions. Aside from the existing homogeneity of administration within PWIs, persons of color are also significantly underrepresented on higher education governing boards (e.g., Boards of Regents, Boards of Trustees). According to Haro (2002), a correlation exists between the number of persons of color on a board of trustees and the board's propensity to hire a woman or person of color into the office of a president. Carbado and Gulati (2003) suggested the following: "under current antidiscrimination law and the dominant paradigms for understanding racism, it is both legal and normatively desirable for employers to pursue workplace homogeneity by *engaging* in racial discrimination" (p. 1762). This research sheds light on the cyclical nature of representation and power. Consider the following quote found in Haro's (2002) study of a chairman of the board when asked if he would ever hire a Latino or female to be president. The chairman pointed to pictures of previous college presidents (all white males) on the wall and said, "We have a tradition of excellence at this campus, and our choice for the person to

maintain those high standards will coincide with the qualities of those who went before" (p. 165). Couple this sentiment with the fact that many governing boards are filled with former administrators and the desire to maintain legacy and status quo becomes fixed. Of this, Valverde (2003) noted that studies on the selection of CEOs by governing boards "show that board members select, either consciously or unconsciously, persons who have similar backgrounds and belief systems, not to mention who look and act like them" (p. 33). Thus, institutional fit becomes code for reinforcing the norm. He continued:

> The old excuse commonly stated, "We can't find qualified minority candidates," was interpreted by person of color as meaning, "Our network can generate numerous white candidates, and we know they are good persons because they have been recommended to us by persons we trust, other white males." (p. 47)

Valverde's observation highlights the impact of privileged networks of power.

The third and final set of barriers posed by Jackson and O'Callaghan (2009) are categorized as internal barriers. These more psychological barriers impede the advancement of educators of color due to what Jones (2000) referred to as "internalized racism." Jones described her theory of internalized racism as "acceptance by members of the stigmatized races of negative messages about their own abilities and intrinsic worth" (p. 1213). She continued:

> It manifests as an embracing of "whiteness" (use of hair straighteners and bleaching creams); self-devaluation (racial slurs as nicknames, rejection of ancestral culture, and fratricide); and resignation, helplessness, and hopelessness (dropping out of school, failing to vote, and engaging in risky health practices). (p. 1213)

Such internal barriers for educators of color and evidence of internalized racism include "fear of failure, low self-esteem, role conflict, fear of success, the perceived consequences of career advancement, and lack of an advanced degree" (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009, p. 42).

For administrators of color, evidences of internalized racism arise from observations of society and their place in it.

Some persons of color may adopt dominant discourses of race neutrality and color blindness and view their own and other communities of color as deficit (Huber, Johnson & Kohli, 2006). This presents a slightly varied form of internalized racism. Not only does it create internalized scripts of social expectations based on race, but persons of color perceive, in their assimilation of dominant norms, that they have somehow disconnected themselves from the stereotypes of the community of color. Such a dynamic can be a hidden barrier for administrators of color who are trying to advance issues of social justice. They might assume or perceive that their colleagues of color are sympathetic to the cause of social justice, when in reality, some colleagues of color do not see a need, or feel responsibility, to advocate for students and communities of color.

Communities of color construct scripts of who they are and how they will be received in their social environment at a very early age. This racial socialization is "the developmental processes by which children acquire the behaviors, perceptions, values, and attitudes of an ethnic group, and come to see themselves and others as members of this group" (Rotherman & Phinney, 1987, p. 11). Some scholars believe the racial socialization process is a positive one for children of color due to assimilation to majoritarian behavior, or behavior that has proven to be successful (Coard, Wallace, Stevenson & Brotman, 2004). This presents some challenges, however, as persons of color develop a critical understanding of the ways their race and racial histories affect their psychosocial behavior. This struggle can be a psychologically, emotionally, and physically taxing one for persons of color often leaving them to question the costs of their efforts to maintain their racial identities (Carbado & Gulati, 2003; Smith, 2004).

According to Smith (2004), this psychological struggle is commonplace for persons of color in the academy. He refers to the collective psychological, emotional, and physiological challenges for persons of color as "racial battle fatigue." Valverde's (2003) findings also suggest that administrators of color face a series of challenges that affect confidence, comfort, and a sense of competency. These challenges include "lack of respect" from white colleagues; "betrayal" from those who professed to provide support; an internalization of a "conquered mentality" or belief that women and persons of color are "less than" males and whites; and a lack of "second chances to fill administrative roles" (Valverde, 2003, pp. 139-143).

The discussion of barriers for administrators of color is not complete without acknowledgement of the intersection between race and gender, which Jackson and O'Callaghan (2009) referred to as the "double burden." They noted that internal barriers disproportionately affect women. This was primarily attributed to a greater sense of family responsibilities as a barrier to positions of leadership (Howard-Hamilton & Williams, 1996), the dual responsibility of family and career (Mosley, 1980), and the "extended family ethnic" or the proclivity for African American women to care for three generations of family (grandparents, parents, children) (Wolfman, 1997). Although not the focus of my study, I acknowledge the historical lack of representation of women of color in senior administrative positions in higher education (Clark King, 1999). Reflecting upon her first days as the first Black female president of a public university in Minnesota, Reatha Clark King described the following:

> I came into the situation realizing that the combination of my being Black and a woman in those days meant for me double the amount of glory if I succeeded and double the potential pitfalls that existed because of race and gender. There was strong public consciousness of my race and gender. To some, I was different because of my being a Black president, and to others, I was different because I was a woman president....This situation, coupled with

> the generally open Minnesota environment for government and addressing public issues, presented a real fishbowl for my work. (p. 11)

Clark King's reflections are consistent with the experiences of a number of African American female administrators who expressed similar feelings of double burdens (Watson, 2001).

I also acknowledge the multiple layers of marginalized identity that have not been adequately addressed in the higher education administration literature. These identities include but are not limited to: LGBTQI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Queer, Intersex); religious or spiritual; class or SES (the assumption is that senior administrators have left behind any vestiges of low-income SES or class culture); country or region of origin, language or accent; age; ability; and/or parental make-up and education. These identities are important to the holistic understanding of a person's narrative and were included in this study as they arose in the research process. My focus, however, is the negotiation of professional identity as it relates to race or ethnicity.

Negotiation of Role Identities

In 1974, public administration scholar Adam Herbert proposed a theory for the demands on minority[8] public administrators by outlining six role determinants including system demands, traditional role expectations, colleague pressure, community accountability, personal commitment to community, and personal ambition. Herbert, the first African American president of the University of North Florida, the first African American chancellor of the State University System of Florida, and the first African American president of

[8] Herbert (1974) uses the term "minority" to describe persons of color. Although I prefer not to use the term "minority" as it frames communities of color as deficit and reinforces the centrality of whiteness as the norm, I use it in this article during Herbert's discussion to signal his thoughts, reflections, and theories. If the term "minority" is used in other sections of this article, it is only found in a direct quote or when referencing Herbert's research.

Indiana University presented an early and compelling thesis on the complexity of administration for persons of color. I discuss in detail each of the forces, role determinants and demands that Herbert proposed as well as responses from scholars since his 1974 study. The literature reveals a wide range of responses to Herbert, most of which are in the field of public administration. Too few, however, pay significant attention to Herbert's thesis as it relates to the nuances of higher education. I respond to this literature relative to connections in educational administration. I then offer observations about what I have witnessed and experienced concerning these role tensions for administrators of color.

The first of Herbert's (1974) role determinants, "system demands," suggests that minority administrators conform to formal bureaucratic role requirements. If, for some reason, the minority administrator decides to act outside of such role requirements, negative consequences can and will take place. It is in this role as societal and institutional soldier that the minority administrator must often negotiate between challenging authority and job security. Often, advocacy for minority communities becomes secondary to workplace harmony. Many administrators of color have already traversed complicated roads to arrive in their position and are not quick to jeopardize that. Moreover, some administrators of color may believe that workplace harmony might open doors for advocacy at a later time.

In their response to Herbert's study 20 years later, Murray, Terry, Washington, and Keller (1994)[9] found that minority administrators perceived a dual organizational pressure to both maintain institutional patterns and act as change agents. How then do minority administrators respond to such conflicting expectations? Murray et al. found that the

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[9] Murray, Terry, Washington, and Keller developed a 51-item questionnaire that was mailed to 525 participants in the Conference of Minority Public Administrators in 1992. Their sample size was 160 (response rate of 30.5%) with ethnic composition of 134 African Americans, 10 Hispanics, 7 White / Non Hispanic, 1 Asian, and 1 Native American. Although the sample of respondents did not reflect a diversity of representation within minority communities, the findings provided interesting data points that I have expounded upon in my study.

majority of minority administrators sought compromise strategies rather than either wholly aligning themselves with organizational norms or leaving the situation (i.e., quitting, asking for new assignments, or rejecting the assignment). One of my fears in moving to administration has always been the possibility of playing the "fit" game long enough to the point where I actually adopt the majoritarian narrative as my own, or, as mentioned earlier, view communities of color as deficit. Oliva and Anderson (2006) noted this process as a dangerous one for professionals of color:

> The process of professional socialization in the workplace is so powerful that even the most critical among us often find ourselves engaging in practices in direct contradiction to our espoused theories. We rationalize that we must pick our battles or that we don't have tenure yet or that we won't be promoted or the boss will retaliate. Before long, we find ourselves comfortable in a system that, in theory, we find indefensible. (p. 297)

Chang-Lin Tien (1998), Chancellor at the University of California at Berkeley from 1990-1997, and the first Asian to head a major university in the United States, argued that senior administrators of color should both "draw from the wisdom of their traditional culture and the range of experiences in their lives," and "commit to working collaboratively to achieve shared missions and goals of the institution" (p. 32). Tien's recommendation speaks to the reality of walking in both our racial/cultural *and* institutional narratives.

The use of positional power to address achievement gaps can be a complicated road for leaders of color whose personal narrative can be at odds with the culture or narrative of American higher education administration. Harris Canul (2003) argued that a number of tensions existed between her Latina/o[10] cultural values and the administrative work style she was expected to navigate: collectivism versus individualism; personalismo; respeto;

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[10] I used the term Latina/o when referring to Harris Canul's research. This usage is an attempt to recognize the unique gendered experiences within the Latina/o culture. In Spanish, the word "Latino" refers to Latin males and "Latina" refers to Latin females. When males and females are combined in the plural, the word retains its masculine label of "Latinos." In most critical literature, the terms Latinas/os or Latina/o will be used. In some cases, it is demonstrated by the "@" symbol to represent both as in "Latin@" or "Latin@s".

marianismo; and religion, spirituality, and fatalismo. Harris Canul experienced the tension between collectivism and individualism as she situated her own Latina/o cultural values of family, community, and interdependence against the dominant cultural values of independence, individualism, and competition. Personalismo, or the "value placed on building and maintaining personal relationships" (p. 170), is often secondary to the task-driven culture of higher education administration. Even worse, tensions can heighten when personal and even family connection is denied because of deadlines, tasks, and workloads. Harris Canul's concept of "Respeto" (or respect) highlights her navigation as institutional ombudsman (that sometimes required her to challenge authority) with her upbringing (and Latina/o value) of not challenging authority. The perception that Latina women are associated with "passivity and superlative femininity," or marianismo, can often hinder a Latina's ascension in administration or can cause her to be overlooked due to the assumption that administrators are supposed to be strong, opinionated, nonsubmissive leaders (p. 172). Finally, Harris Canul noted her difficulty in meshing the finality of religion and the Latina/o overconfidence in God's will ("Si Dios quiere" / "If God permits"), or fatalismo, from the innovative and proactive nature of administration (p. 173). Each of these tensions adds layers of complexity to the rough terrain facing administrators of color.

Consider another example of a university project concerning indigenous community members with a project administrator self-identifying as an American Indian man who was raised on American Indian lands. His cultural narrative might conflict with his administrative narrative in terms of one or more of the following: time and timeline of project, collaboration, power sharing, co-creation of vision, ownership, discussion facilitation, community voice, resources, trust, jargon, location and transportation, respect of elders, spiritual considerations, food, dress, time of day, number of participants, end product,

etc. This leader must decide how to negotiate[11] each of these variables in ways that do not alienate his community members or his institution from the partnership.

Consistent with Herbert's (1974) first role determinant of "system demands" is the notion of racial risk. Racial risk suggests that persons of color have a greater risk of being scrutinized simply due to their low representation in positions of great power (López, González & Fierro, 2006). Due to their ethnicity, people of color tend to be hyper-stereotyped in a negative light the moment they step into behavior, voice, and appearance that counters or is simply different from stakeholders from the majority population. Anderson-Thompkins (2009) recently studied the politics of race, research and risk in the academy and found that scholars of color who study race are at risk of losing credibility within their departments and being alienated by their peers. Anderson-Thompkins also found that scholars of color studying racial issues encountered fewer job opportunities, and were denied tenure more, than their white counterparts. Valverde (2003) asserted:

> Where there is conflict, struggles produce winners and losers. Change agents, even if they are successful in winning some battles, lose the war; in the end, they typically lose a great deal, either in the short term, losing their job, or in the long term, hurting their upward mobility and ultimately their careers. (p. 8)

Herbert's (1974) second role demand on minority administrators was the idea of "traditional role expectations." This is the expectation for minority administrators to fill positions that tend to be in social agencies and/or minority-affairs-oriented settings. Herbert described these as "flak-catching" positions that tend to be highly visible but at

[11] I recognize that not all persons of color self-identify with narratives that are conflicting with the dominant culture. In some cases, administrators of color may not feel a sense of duty or responsibility to voice the perspectives of their racial/ethnic community if they have not been largely exposed to such a community throughout their lives or if they relate more comfortably with the dominant narrative. This dynamic can further complicate the puzzle presented to leaders of color who do feel the need to represent their racial/cultural/ethnic perspectives primarily because the assumption or perception of affinity, or common experiences, values, and beliefs, based on race does not hold true.

lower decision-making levels (p. 560). These roles become tokens or symbols of institutional commitment to marginalized issues yet are seen as less important and less worthy of attention by central administration. Murray et al. (1994) contended that minority public administrators have dramatically increased representation in "nontraditional areas"[12] such as the Department of the Treasury (an increase from 2.1% to 16% from 1974-1989), the Department of Defense (1.1% to 11.54%), and the Department of the Interior (3.2% to 19.81%). In higher education, however, minority academic leaders continue to be disproportionately represented in certain fields. A glance at Table 2 reveals that a greater percentage of African Americans and Hispanics are academic administrators in the humanities and social science disciplines. Asian leaders are disproportionately overrepresented in engineering compared to every other race.

Concerning higher education administration, Valverde (2003) proposed that persons of color are found in two types of administrative tracks: mainline and sidetracked (Table 3). Mainline positions include traditional "power" positions of president, vice president or dean. Sidetracked roles, that tend to be less powerful, include stereotypical roles for persons of color like director of affirmative action, chair of ethnic studies, or associate vice president for minority recruitment. Valverde (2003) argued that many people perceive administrative positions for persons of color as nothing more than "window dressing" (p. 44). This is evident when administrators of color realize that they have no staff, no budget, and no institutional power.

Murray et al. (1994) noted that no matter the position, the majority of minority administrators in their study were willing to advocate on behalf of underrepresented

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[12] Nontraditional jobs/areas refer to positions that have historically not been represented by minority persons.

Table 2

Percentage Distribution of Full-Time Academic Leaders by Race/Ethnicity and Degree

Program Area: Fall 1998

	All Races / Ethnicities	Black / African American	Hispanic	Asian / Pacific Islander	American Indian / Alaska Native	White, Non-Hispanic
Agriculture / Home Economics	1.8	1.8	1.4	0.0	*	1.9
Business	5.6	1.8	4.4	4.7	*	6.0
Education	12.9	27.3	25.9	7.2	*	11.7
Engineering	4.2	4.0	4.5	17.4	*	3.6
Fine Arts	4.7	1.1	5.8	7.0	*	4.8
Health Sciences	13.1	15.6	10.6	7.7	*	13.3
Humanities	14.5	11.9	17.9	2.8	*	15.1
Natural Sciences	13.8	5.6	6.4	18.1	*	14.4
Social Sciences	11.4	14.6	14.1	14.7	*	10.9
All Other fields	17.9	16.4	9.1	20.4	*	18.2

Adapted from Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009; * Sample too small; Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2002; National Study of Postsecondary Faculty: 1999.

Table 3

Administrative Tracks and Roles

Track	Traditional Role	Stereotypical Role for Persons of Color
Mainline	• President • Dean	• Chair of Ethnic Studies • Associate Vice President for Minority Students
Sidetracked	• Assistant Vice President • Associate Dean	• Special Assistant • Director of Affirmative Action • Chief Diversity Officer

Adapted from Valverde, 2003.

minority populations and that they viewed such advocacy as part of their job. However, these findings are incomplete in that participants were not given an opportunity to discuss how they advocated on behalf of communities of color, a vital component to my study. I believe that a majority of administrators of color are willing to advocate for underrepresented communities but I am skeptical about the extent to which advocacy takes place. As I experience the demands of an administrator in higher education, I understand that unless it is a consciously central and active part of my role, advocacy can quickly be scheduled out of my life. Many administrators of color, who do not want to endure competing and sometimes conflicting role demands, seek positions that align advocacy passions with administrative responsibilities (e.g., chief diversity officer, associate vice president for outreach, access, and equity, multicultural center director, equity center officer, etc.) (Williams & Wade-Golden, 2008).

The next role determinant discussed by Herbert (1974) is "colleague pressure" to accept deficit models to explain minority community problems, rather than questioning systemic influences on such issues. Herbert viewed the efforts of minority administrators to be team players as a basis for peer acceptance. Stereotypes and prejudices become allowable due to the silence, or even participation of the minority administrator. These administrators conform to dominant cultural norms of the institution lest they be alienated and access to power be diminished. Valverde (2003) contended that upon assuming decision-making positions, administrators of color must immediately navigate the pressures of an "us versus them" mentality or the notion that "you're either with us or against us" often projected by white colleagues (p. 34).

In the Murray et al. study (1994), minority administrators reported that colleagues did not expect them to "maintain stable institutional patterns but felt some pressure both to

change and maintain" (p. 414). I have observed that in predominantly white institutions, the discourse (and thus, pressure) from colleagues is to assume that the system is fair and objective. Under this assumption, achievement gaps are framed as a symbol of differentiated intelligence, expectations, work ethic, desire, and responsibility. Often, colleague pressures arise in the form of quantitative data viewed as emotion- and anecdote- free and, therefore, the only valid data (Carbado & Gulati, 2003). Although I have seen increased attention to addressing the needs of students of color in culturally sensitive ways, the prevailing discourse in the state of Utah still demonstrates deficit perceptions of communities of color.

The fourth of Herbert's (1974) role demands is "community accountability" or the call from minority communities for representation by minority administrators who advocate for and address their concerns. Herbert (1974) stated that because minority administrators are "of the community" they are expected to be "responsive to the needs of their people" (p. 561). Valverde (2003) validated this assertion:

> Persons of color hired into professional staff slots, faculty positions, or administrative roles are expected to assume more responsibility and held to a greater accountability level than their white counterparts. Nationally, persons of color are required by the university to perform the responsibilities of their job. But persons of color are also expected to serve their own people—namely, students of color and external communities of color. (p. 49)

Furthermore, minority administrators are not only held to expectations of social justice by communities of color but by white community members who are dedicated to social justice, equity, diversity, and minority issues. A recent personal experience demonstrated this. In early 2011, I sat in a legislative meeting concerning higher education funding and noted that, of the 130 people in the room, there were five persons of color. A discussion of underprepared students, changing demographics, and achievement gaps framed students of color as not adequately ready for higher education. I quickly looked around in disbelief at this comment and noted that about eight of my white colleagues were looking at me as if to

say, "Kyle, doesn't this make you upset? What are you going to do about it? Say something." No matter where the expectation originates, the assumption is that marginalized communities have a representative at the decision making table who, by no other requirement than race, is expected to carry the voice of justice.

This expectation also creates a dual role for the minority administrator as spokesperson for communities of color while simultaneously countering an essentialized approach to discrimination. Carbado and Gulati (2003) argued that "to essentialize about race is to assume that a particular racial identity has a certain essence" (p. 1774). In other words, based on our interactions with a Black male, we assume that all Black people have certain characteristics and we diminish the unique intersectionality of identities found within each Black person (i.e., gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.). One of the criticisms of Critical Race Theory is that the CRT movement both rejects (for the reasons above) and embraces essentialism by "asserting that there is something different and special about race" (Carbado & Gulati, 2003, p. 1775). For administrators of color, this tension grows even more acute as they negotiate their roles as both representative voice and unique advocate. Murray et al. (1994) illustrated the tension, stating:

> The key to this force [community accountability] is whether the minority public administrator sees her or his role as a buffer between the organization and the minority community or as a facilitator of minority participation…these forces are often antithetical and may be difficult if not impossible to pursue simultaneously. (p. 415)

In response to this tension, Murray et al. found that 94% of participants in their study perceived a role to "actively advocate on behalf of, or provide leadership to bring about, increased minority community participation and input…" (p. 415). I argue that this finding is incomplete without considering rich, contextual data that can be gathered through follow

up questions concerning the ifs, whys and hows of advocacy. Such questions are the heart of this study.

Directly connected to a minority administrator's context of advocacy is another of Herbert's (1974) role determinants, "personal commitment to community". Personal commitment causes minority administrators to feel a personal obligation to express, represent, and/or advocate for minority community interests. This is an important factor in role identity if administrators of color want to make significant, positive changes for their communities. Murray et al. (1994) noted that a majority (94%) of participants agreed with the statement that active advocacy for policies that address the needs and concerns of minority communities is part of their role. Participants (76%) also felt that their organization expected them "to support and hold views consistent with established policies" (p. 415). Strategic compromises were once again pursued as a means to meet these often-competing role demands.

In my own practice, I have varied in my interpretation of my commitment to community. Part of the reframing of perspective has come in the discussions around, and internal/external perceptions of, authenticity. My personal commitment to minority issues has grown from immersion in minority households (my own), literature, dialogues, and most importantly, communities. Authenticity is seen then as a symbol of immersion. The more time I spend with minority communities and issues, the more authentic I become as a representative of minority voices not only to others but to myself. It would be difficult to advocate for something about which I know little or nothing. Authenticity can also be perceived by symbols including clothing, language, and hair. In my introductory story, I illustrated how the purchase of a new suit was potentially damaging to perceptions of cultural authenticity by those who viewed the "suit" as a symbol of embracing the dominant

western narrative and moving into administrative bureaucracy. However, I knew that my professional authenticity needed validation as well to influence other senior administrators. Herein lies the tension between competing interpretations of commitment to community.

Finally, Herbert (1974) suggested that "personal ambition" weighs on the minds and hearts of minority administrators. This factor causes minority administrators to act in ways that allow for advancement within the institution. Ambition itself, Herbert argued, should not be viewed in the pejorative but we need to acknowledge that advocacy for minority community issues may close the door on future opportunities for promotion and political power. Once again, the element of racial/diversity risk is present for administrators of color who care about both advocacy for social justice and professional advancement (Marshall & Young, 2006). Murray et al. (1994) reported that 71% of their respondents felt that their organizations expected them to pursue personal and professional goals within and outside the organization. No significant data were provided to show the extent to which organizations created mechanisms or structures for such advancement. Ambition is a characteristic connected to the access of power to influence others. Minority administrators who want to make the largest-reaching, systemic impact for communities of color need to be aware of the ways in which their advocacy can help or hinder their access to high-level decision-making power.

Carbado and Gulati (2003) suggested the notion of race as a performative identity. "The concept of race as performative suggests that people of color are not simply acted on. They have some agency to structure the terms upon which they are experienced" (p. 1772). This suggests that persons of color do not simply receive the treatment of their surroundings

but are active contributors to the ways they can and want to be treated.[13] Carbado and Gulati further explained performative identity:

> The social meaning of a Black person's racial identity is a function of the way in which that person performs (presents) her Blackness.…the intelligibility of a Black person's racial identity derives at least in part from (1) the "picture" of Blackness she projects and (2) how that racial projection is seen, (p. 1771)

This is to say that I, as an administrator of color, have the ability to influence my colleagues' conceptions of my racialized identities. How I choose to dress, express myself, talk, decorate my office, or interact with others, all shape how my coworkers experience me as a Hawaiian, Japanese, Filipino, Spaniard male. I have also learned that my performance both responds to, and frames, the ways people interact with me. In some cases, I might be a more palatable or acceptable colleague if I act less Hawaiian, or act in ways that align with western administrative behavior (Carbado & Gulati). By being less Hawaiian, I am less vulnerable to discrimination but I am exposed to critique of inauthenticity. By recognizing the concept of performative identity, leaders of color are also aware of the ways in which we "strategically compromise" to have the most impact or influence possible; we become better navigators of personal ambition.

Carbado and Gulati's (2003) concept of performative identity is consistent with the work of Lacy (2007), who argued that middle-class Blacks strategically use "public identities" that buffer them from discriminatory behaviors. Lacy stated:

> While middle class Blacks assert status-based identities primarily as a means of justifying their own attitudes toward other groups (the Black poor, the white middle class, and the white upper class), they assert public identities in order to convince others—social strangers such as store clerks, workplace subordinates, and real estate-agents—that they are legitimate members of the middle class. (p. 73)

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[13] The concept of performative identity does not discount the influence of the dominant narrative in forcing persons of color to feel the need to perform any racial identity.

She further contended that "Public identities constitute a form of cultural capital in which Blacks with the knowledge and skills valorized by the American mainstream are in a position to manipulate public interactions to their advantage" (p. 112). Lacy's analysis suggests that persons of color can employ multiple identities as a strategic tool to manage their personal ambition and others' perceptions of them.

Murray et al. (1994) illustrated Herbert's (1974) six role determinants/forces along with their countervailing pressures within each force in Table 4. Herbert argued that "every minority administrator must consciously or otherwise respond to two basic and difficult questions: (1) what responsibility do I have to minority group peoples; and (2) what role should I attempt to play in making government more responsive to the needs of all people?" (1974, p. 560). While some could argue that Herbert's role demands are present for all administrators regardless of race, the arguments above clearly show the heightened level of tension between role demands for administrators of color.

Table 4

Herbert's Role Determinants (Forces) and Countervailing Pressures

Herbert's Forces and Tensions					
System Demands	Traditional Role Expectations	Colleague Pressure	Community Accountability	Personal Commitment to Community	Personal Ambition
Conform to norms v. create discord as change agent	Promote merit v. promote equity	Institutional and team fit v. diverse perspectives for change	Act as minority community buffer v. facilitate minority participation	Support status quo v. act as minority representative	Pursue personal development v. organizational development

Adapted from Murray, Terry, Washington and Keller (1994).

Summary – Experiences and Role Identities of Administrators of Color

Persons of color are underrepresented in higher education administration and face a number of social, institutional, and internal barriers to closing this gap. Traditional societal perceptions of white males as administrators and decision makers create a perceived role conflict with any other person who might be eligible to fill positions of authority (i.e., women and persons of color). These barriers trickle down into the institutional culture of homogeneity in the hiring of new administrators. Often, communities of color accept the majoritarian narrative when administrators of color are few or nonexistent. This majoritarian script begins to create internal barriers of fear and low self-esteem for educators of color who consider pursuing administration.

In addition to the barriers to ascension to administrative positions for people of color, a number of tensions exist for those who get there. Herbert's (1974) thesis, as well as the subsequent study by Murray et al. (1994), provided foundational insights into the complexity of roles of, and demands on, administrators of color. These studies fell short, however, in providing greater contextual understanding of and depth into the narratives of administrators of color, especially within higher education. Valverde (2003) filled in some of these gaps with his analysis of the experiences of leaders of color in higher education. This study continues this dialogue by addressing how leaders of color navigate spaces of advocacy from a Critical Race perspective.

Critical Race Theory and Higher Education

One of the theories that informs the analysis of gaps in student achievement and professional representation between persons of color and white persons is Critical Race Theory (CRT). In this section of the literature review, I explore the following: (1) a description and history of CRT; (2) a discussion of CRT in education concerning key

concepts of voice, identity, and counter-stories as they relate to educational leaders of color; and (3) the intersection of CRT and educational praxis. This review informs the discussion of leadership for change by reframing the social, political, and cultural contexts traditionally discussed in higher education leadership.

Critical Race Theory: Legal History and Tenets

In their book introducing Critical Race Theory (CRT) to an audience broader than the legal discourse community from which it was born, Delgado and Stefancic (2001) defined the CRT movement as a "collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power" (p. 2). Influenced by civil rights movements, Critical Legal Studies (CLS), feminist movements, and other theoretical traditions that criticized the status quo, CRT took shape in the work of legal scholars including Derrick Bell, Charles Lawrence, Richard Delgado, Lani Guinier, and Kimberle Crenshaw who were frustrated with the "slow pace of racial reform within the liberal civil rights tradition in the United States" (Sleeter & Delgado Bernal, 2004, p. 245). Professors like Bell demonstrate their commitment to social justice not only in their scholarship, but in their practice. Bell was the first African American to be tenured at Harvard's School of law but resigned in protest "over the failure of Harvard's law school to hire women of color faculty…" (Taylor, Gilborn, & Ladson-Billings, 2009, pp. 2-3). This led his former students, along with Critical Race Scholars, to meet and generate discussions about race, racism and American Law.

One of the initial assumptions upon which most of their conversations centered was the observation that racism was a normal part of American society. Bell (1992), recognized for his notion of "racial realism," argued that racism was permanent:

> Black people will never gain full equality in this country, even those Herculean efforts we hail as successful will produce no more than temporary 'peaks of progress', short-lived victories that slide into irrelevance as racial patterns adapt in ways that maintain white dominance. (pp. 373-374)

He also, however, argued that the fight against racism was both necessary and meaningful. How could the fight against racism be meaningful if racism itself would always exist? Taylor (2004) argued that this seeming paradox is actually consistent with Niebuhr's protestant theology, one that Bell adopted, that "social action is both necessary and meaningful despite the inextricable presence of human sin" (p. 268). As a moral/theological basis for the development of CRT then, Bell acknowledged the fallen state and nature of human behavior while calling for critical action and thought to counter such behavior. It is a message of reality and hope: hope that within the realities of human fault and prejudice, efforts for equality and equity remain worthwhile.

Another of Bell's early contributions was the development of the notion of "interest convergence," or the observation that the "interests of Blacks in gaining racial equality have been accommodated only when they have converged with interests of powerful Whites" (Taylor et al., p. 5). Bell's (1980) seminal piece on reframing societal perceptions of the true impact of *Brown v. Board of Education* on segregation and oppression served as a launching point for Critical Racial Analysis and the intersection of law and education. His analysis of the *Brown* case suggested that the Supreme Court supported desegregation because it was seen as advantageous for the United States' international agenda of supporting human rights. Thus the noble legislation was only supported once the majority saw that they benefited. In a 2008 article, law professor Alfred Brophy, compared Bell's interest convergence theory with the fear that faced American founder James Madison concerning majority factions. Brophy argued that both Bell and Madison worked from the premise that "the will of the majority tends in the direction of its self-interest" (p.1). The Niebuhr and Madison examples

show that Bell's concepts of racial realism and interest convergence were not entirely novel ideas. However, due to Bell's use of these ideas, he and fellow CRT scholars face scrutiny for fore fronting such ideas as they relate to race, racism, and power.

By the early 1990s, scholars established the assumptions that guide the CRT movement. Central to Critical Race Theory are six themes or tenets outlined in the book *Words that Wound* by Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, and Crenshaw (1993).

1. *Racism is endemic to American life.* CRT scholars challenge a number of prevailing perspectives about racial oppression including beliefs that: (1) race blindness or color blindness will eliminate racism; (2) racism exists within individuals and not in systems; and (3) racism can be dealt with independent of other forms of oppression or injustice (i.e., sexism, heterosexism and economic exploitation) (Valdes, McCristal Culp & Harris, 2002). CRT scholarship emerged from Critical Legal Studies as a way to foreground race and racism as the primary point of analysis. Many acknowledge the existence of racism in America yet distance themselves from ownership of racist views (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). Race and racism are socially constructed phenomena. "Race and ethnicity…do not exist until one is socially acknowledged as possessing socially coded racial or ethnic markers, whether they are fixed physical features, voluntary appearance choices, or behaviors" (Gear Rich, 2004, p. 2). This suggests that wherever a society exists, so too does the social reality of racism.
2. *Skepticism of dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness and meritocracy.* Racism and other forms of prejudice can be found in hidden or coded words (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). Some of these words stem from a belief in an inherently fair and equal system and society. Claims of race-neutrality and objectivity attempt to

separate communities from their histories, experiences, narratives, and unique points of view (Harris, 1994; Morfin, Peréz, Parker, Lynn, & Arrona, 2006; Solórzano, Villalpando & Oseguera, 2005). This is done in an effort to reify the notion that all people start with the same inputs and have an equal chance at life's opportunities. By neutralizing the unique qualities of race, culture, and gender, and valuing merit as the only measure of worth, dominant communities can feel satisfied with and justified in a system that perpetuates privilege. Overconfidence in the concept of the American Dream (the belief that America offers everyone the opportunity to do or be whatever might be dreamed) as a meritocratic endeavor suggests that communities of color are lacking if they cannot rise to the same achievement levels as the dominant community.

3. *CRT challenges ahistoricism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of the law.* This is an extension of the previous tenet as it situates all experiences within a contextual or historical framework. Critical race theorists "adopt a stance that presumes that racism has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage" (Matsuda, et. al. 1993, p. 6). Viewing laws, policies, and achievement through historical lenses of racial oppression weakens traditional claims of colorblindness and objectivity. Ladson-Billings' (2006) notion of an "education debt," which explains the compounded nature of educational deficits or achievement gaps, speaks to the value of historical lenses that capture dismissed elements of a particular issue, law, or policy (p. 5). The recognition of histories also acknowledges different experiences, perspectives, and worldviews, thus inviting people to explore their own subjectivity, prejudices, and biases.

4. *CRT recognizes the experiential knowledge of people of color and communities of origin in analyzing law and society.* Histories have been traditionally recounted through the voices and narratives of Euro-Americans or those who have colonized communities of color. Over time, these traditions have been woven together into a master or dominant narrative that permeates society in overt and covert ways. In the research platforms of law and education, the dominant community has framed what is and what should be considered legitimate scholarly work—that is, work centered on objectivity. CRT scholars value and validate the histories and experiences of communities of color and promote these silenced stories as a means of challenging often ignored systemic inequities.
5. *CRT is interdisciplinary.* Critical Race Theory draws on, and encourages connections to, various disciplines including: legal studies, education, gender studies, history, anthropology, sociology, languages, and communication. By utilizing an interdisciplinary approach, Critical Race Theorists recognize the intersection of lenses for greater understanding of context and analysis. This tenet also reveals an assumption that issues of racial oppression, power, and privilege exist in all aspects of our lives.
6. *CRT works toward the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression.* An important component of CRT work is an active approach to emancipation for communities of color. In 1953, Cohen presented the following analogy: "Like the miner's canary, the Indian marks the shift from fresh air to poison gas in our political atmosphere, and our treatment of the Indian…marks the rise and fall in our democratic faith" (p. 390). Guinier and Torres (2002) extended Cohen's analogy by proposing the notion of "political race" or the movement that is both

diagnostic in nature (the canary either survives or does not survive) and socially conscious in action (the canary's feedback, perspective, and voice matter in obtaining a better reading and moving towards informed decisions). Guinier and Torres further argued, "Political race as a concept encompasses the view that race still matters because racialized communities provide the early warning signs of poison in the social atmosphere. And then it encourages us to do something different from what has been done in the past with that understanding" (p. 12). This speaks to the emancipatory call of Critical Race Theory scholarship.

Although born out of legal studies, the interdisciplinary focus of the CRT movement provided an important analytical lens for all aspects of society. Some of the most significant sites of analysis for the ways racism, power, and privilege were manifested are institutions and systems of education.

CRT in Education: Validation of Voice and Identity

Critical Race Theory began to take root in the education arena around the mid 1990s. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), in their assessment of the role of CRT in education, argued that for full and effective analysis of the educational system, the voices of persons of color are required. They further contended that issues of race and racism (among other forms of oppression) remain evident and significant in schools, school policies, and school systems. Ladson-Billings and Tate examined the connection between property values and school quality and, from a CRT lens, argued that inequities in access to high-valued property for persons of color translate to inequitable circumstances in schooling. Ten years later, Dixson and Rousseau (2005) summarized the development of the CRT movement in education by highlighting one of the key ways CRT has helped reframe the discussion around educational equity, social justice, racism, diversity, power, and privilege—"Voice," or the recognition of

the experiential knowledge of people of color (p. 10). This brought a new lens to the way society has historically viewed the experiences and voices of people of color, moving from a deficit-based view to an asset-based perspective.

Critical Race Theory frames a number of studies within education. Some studies address pedagogy in the classroom and the role of teachers in advancing social justice suggesting that educators and educational leaders can be change agents for equity (Ladson-Billings, 1998, 1999; Lynn, 1999; Tate, 1997). Other studies analyze affirmative action not as a means of new preference, quota filling or reverse racism but rather as a response to the systemic inequalities that exist for students of color in higher education (Aguirre, 2000; Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller & Thomas, 1995). Through a CRT lens, Morfin, Perez, Parker, Lynn and Arrona (2006) analyzed the movement of higher education institutions to embrace the affirmative action opportunities held in the reversal of *Grutter v. Bollinger*.[14]

CRT was also used to analyze data collected around the experiences of educators of color, including faculty of color, who face racial, social, political, and psychological barriers in their professions (Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002; Feagin, 2000; Pierce, 1970; Smith, 2004; Smith, Yosso, & Solórzano, 2006; Solórzano, 1997, 1998; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002). A CRT psychological analysis yielded affirmation of the notion of *racial microaggressions* which Smith, Yosso, and Solórzano (2007) defined from Chester Pierce's (1970, 1980, 1995) earlier work as: "(1) subtle verbal and nonverbal insults directed at people of color, often automatically or unconsciously; (2) layered insults, based on one's race, gender, class, sexuality, language, immigration status, phenotype, accent, or surname; and (3)

[14] The *Grutter v. Bollinger* case was brought forward by Barbara Grutter, a white student applying to the University of Michigan's law school. Grutter claimed that the university used race as an evaluative measure for admissions and that she was the victim of reverse discrimination. The district court favored Grutter but the Federal 6th Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the decision. The U.S. Supreme Court held "that diversity was a compelling interest and that the University of Michigan Law School's admissions policy was indeed narrowly tailored to further this interest" (Morfin, Perez, Parker, Lynn, & Arrona, 2006, p. 256).

cumulative insults, which cause unnecessary stress to people of color while privileging whites" (p. 300). Smith, Yosso, and Solórzano resurfaced the concept of racial microaggressions to validate the challenges communities of color face and to invite critical thinking about the ways behavior and language perpetuate oppressive and inequitable circumstances.

Too often, communities of color are viewed from a deficit point of view with an educational interpretation that students of color are lacking or are inherently low-achievers (Valencia & Solórzano, 1997). By centering their studies on the experiences and narratives of people of color, CRT scholars sought to locate and validate voices, identities, and stories not historically present in the creation of social and institutional policies. The acknowledgment and validation of the unique narratives of communities of color (students, parents, faculty, staff, administrators) is a vital component for understanding how to address educational inequities (Delgado Bernal, 2002). Solórzano and Yosso (2000) called CRT in education "an interdisciplinary attempt to approach educational problems and questions from the perspectives of women and men of color" (p. 37).

In the validation of marginalized voices and perspectives, CRT scholars also acknowledge the differences within and among such communities. The six CRT tenets (Matsuda, et al. 1993, p. 6) serve as the foundation for branches of the CRT movement including LatCrit (Alemán, 2009; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001) and TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2005) that highlight unique Chicana(o)/Latina(o) and American Indian analyses of the intersections of race, power, and identity. These extensions of CRT recognize unique histories and narratives of different communities of color and provide new lenses for framing the experiences of particular racial/cultural groups.

Counter-stories

In an effort to acknowledge racial realities and understand the historical context from which they emerge, counter-storytelling was introduced (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, 2002). These personal narratives counter majoritarian stories that permeate our educational system in curriculum, pedagogy, class rules, and school environment and became a method to debunk assumptions and validate personal histories (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Yosso (2006) stated that "Critical Race counter-storytelling is a method of recounting the experiences and perspectives of racially and socially marginalized people. Counter-stories reflect on the lived experiences of People of Color to raise critical consciousness about social and racial injustice" (p. 10). Rooted in the call for storytelling as valid evidence in the legal arena (Bell, 1992; Delgado, 1989, 1993), counter-stories allow for professionals of color to label or name their own experiences as opposed to being "othered" by white scholars.

Counter-stories not only provide the scholarly and discursive space for persons of color to contribute valuable perspectives, they can inform leadership for change efforts. This is evident in organizational dialogues concerning issues related to the success of students of color. A university cabinet (traditionally comprised of the President and Vice Presidents), discussing the growing achievement gap between students of color and white students on their campus, could approach the data and initiatives to resolve the gap in a number of ways. If the collective analysis was based primarily on numbers from the institutional research office, and if the collective voice represented a majoritarian perception of race-neutrality, objectivity, and meritocracy, achievement gaps would likely be attributed to a lack of inputs, resources, parental support, navigational understanding, or social capital on the part of communities and students of color or, in other words, a focus on the perceived deficiencies of communities of color (Yosso, 2005). As a result of this assumption, Yosso (2005)

contended, "schooling efforts usually aim to fill up supposedly passive students with forms of cultural knowledge deemed valuable by dominant society" (p. 75). Now imagine a counter-story, or better yet, a series of counter-stories, introduced to the discussion, narrating the lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators of color. The experiences and stories shared shed light on institutional, systemic, political, and bureaucratic barriers for students of color. If a member of the cabinet is willing to bring forth such voices and stories, that administrator endeavors towards leadership for change or social justice leadership. This speaks to the significance of the make-up and narratives of the administrators at the table.

If faculty of color are more likely to introduce diversity-related content into their curriculum than white instructors (Astin, 1993; Chang & Astin, 1997; Milem, 1999), one can infer that educational leaders of color are more likely to introduce issues of diversity, equity, and social justice into administrative discussions. Such an inference assumes that people tend to focus on, and dialogue about, areas they are most familiar with or that most naturally emanate from their personal narrative. A person whose paradigm stems from a majoritarian experience or power-based perspective often does not recognize his or her own experience of power. This is to say that administrators can have racial/cultural blind spots that inhibit their awareness of the narratives and experiences of other communities. King (1995) referred to this dynamic as "dysconscious racism" or "an uncritical habit of mind (including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions and beliefs)" that "justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given" (p. 135). On its face, this would speak to the need for more representation of administrators of color if issues of diversity, equity, and access are to become focal points for administration and if communities of color are to have their voice at the decision making tables. Until then, the ability to bring forward discussions

of diversity for the few or lone administrators of color can be difficult lest they are pegged and pigeon-holed as "diversity" voices only and other competencies become silenced or delegitimized (Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002; Ladson-Billings & Donner, 2005).

In many cases, the silencing happens long before the cabinet meeting takes place. In my observations, I have noted that educators of color who might demonstrate a strong advocacy voice and who seek to move into administrative positions often have to temper such passion. As part of this study, I sought to understand how participants' personal/cultural narratives are tempered by the culture and politics of administration. I also assessed the extent to which educational leaders of color used meritocratic or colorblind language, thus symbolizing a subscription to the majoritarian narrative. Alemán's (2009) interviews with eight Latino Superintendents in South Texas revealed a slight change in advocacy voice. Some superintendents used language that suggested a belief in the American Dream or meritocracy, even after describing a marginalized history and narrative. Alemán's study revealed the systemic socialization of communities of color to change and succeed only when they "act" white or when their actions mostly benefit the white community.

Alemán (2009) drew upon Harris' (1995) notion of whiteness as property and cautioned persons of color against viewing "whiteness" as something of value to be obtained. Harris first introduced the notion of "whiteness as property" in her connection between racial identity and property rights stating that the "origins of property rights in the United States are rooted in racial domination" (p. 277). Fordham and Ogbu (1986) contended that some Black students perform poorly in school because they equate high academic performance with "acting white" and they do not want to give up their identity. A CRT analysis of this finding would suggest that the schooling system and narrative is centered on a majoritarian, white experience and therefore, forces students of color to obtain

whiteness, or act white, to succeed. Alemán (2009) warned against perceiving "whiteness as property" or the view that whiteness is an object, behavior or trait that can somehow be obtained.

Based on interviews with Mexican youth in Texas, Valenzuela (1999) argued that when students of color[15] are forced to check their racial/cultural identities and narratives at the institutional door, their presence becomes mere tokenism and they will not succeed. If, however, these same students are allowed to bring their culture, narrative, and voice to the institution, and leaders have the courage to create an additive, inclusive environment, then student success will increase. Leaders of color also face pressure to check parts of their voice, identity, and culture at the administrative door. CRT invites educational leaders to listen to and validate the voices and personal narratives that have not had a place at the tables of power.

Criticism of CRT

In a world that equates objectivity with fairness, storytelling and personal narratives are not without their criticisms. Critics of CRT caution against the proclivity of storytelling to draw on emotions and to shun conventional analytic methods (Farber & Sherry, 1993; Litowitz, 1997). Litowitz (1997) proposed the possibility of critical elitism or narcissism that can emerge in proclaiming uniqueness of perspective. As Sleeter and Delgado Bernal (2004) pointed out, most criticisms ignore the historic centrality of Eurocentric ideologies that are not as objective as many would like to believe. Ladner (1996) addressed the tension between narrative and traditional assumptions of legitimate research, "Scholars who try to link their subjective experiences with the objective knowledge base of their disciplines often run the

[15] Angela Valenzuela's study focused on Mexican youth in American schools.

risk of having their work devalued and being accused of having violated the sacred code of "objective" scientific inquiry" (p. 16).

The CRT concept of storytelling as a legitimate analytic strategy is one that resonates with me personally. As I discuss in my Researcher Biography section, my ethnic heritage is Hawaiian, Japanese, Filipino, and Spaniard. Much of who I am and what is important to me has stemmed from the stories, traditions, and narratives passed down to me by my parents, grandparents, and other ancestors. According to my native Hawaiian grandmother, Lokelani Pilipi Maeda, the stories and lessons passed from one generation to the other are the truly legitimate treasures of knowledge.

CRT critics, Farber and Sherry (2009), suggested that all cultures (including white, dominant, European cultures) have traditions of storytelling and should, therefore, be counted as legitimate sources of stories and perspectives. I agree. The issue in the United States, however, is that historically the stories of communities of color have not received the same attention and exposure as the dominant narrative. One only has to turn to classroom books on history, literature, science, etc., to see the lack of authorship from marginalized perspectives. This study is designed to introduce new stories and voices to a dialogue that has been dominated by a Euro-American perspective. In the dialogue on achievement and representation gaps, it is not only appropriate, but necessary, to recognize such stories and voices.

While they applauded the CRT emphasis on counter perspectives, Carbado and Gulati (2003) highlighted two primary deficiencies with the CRT literature. First, they argued that CRT research "has paid little attention to the workplace as a site of racial construction" primarily due to the well-warranted focus on professional access and entry barriers for persons of color (p. 1759). They attributed this emphasis, in large part, to the

history of a "closed-door" labor market for Black people and other communities of color. Second, due to the belief in societal inequities, CRT scholars have focused their energies at the macro level of systems. According to Carbado and Gulati:

> [The CRT community] has not paid attention to the interpersonal ways in which race is produced. That is, CRT often ignores the racial productivity of the "choices" people of color make about how to present themselves as racialized persons….CRT's race-as-social-construction thesis does not include an analysis of the race-producing practices reflected in the daily negotiations people of color perform in an attempt to shape how (especially white) people interpret their nonwhite identities. (p. 1760)

I respond to these scholars by pursuing a study in the workplace that assesses the ways administrators of color perceive, interpret and construct how race influences their roles and identities.

CRT and Leadership Praxis

Another criticism of CRT is its perceived lack of application or praxis. In other words, critics have questioned whether or not the tenets of CRT could be used as some sort of guiding rubric for decision-making, action, and implementation. In this section, I briefly explore how Critical Race Scholars have defined and employed a Critical Race Praxis.

While few studies have explicitly explored CRT praxis, Yamamoto (1997) and Williams (1997) helped underscore the complexities of forefronting race in the legal arena. Yamamoto (1997) explored the notion of Critical Race Praxis in the legal arena by arguing that much of the post 9-11 legal literature fails to recognize the racial complexity and context of the situation. He further argued that critical or political lawyering practice was a means of centering the complexity of race in legal proceedings. This suggests a conscious attempt to use critical lenses in the practice of law. Williams (1997) labeled his proactive efforts to bring the indigenous lens to law and tribal government as "Critical Race Practice" (p. 762). Williams discussed the tension between what needed to be done to fit into the culture of the

law professoriate (illustrating how joining the faculty was like becoming a vampire in many ways) and what was required to be authentic. Williams reflected about the lack of connection between the CRT research he engaged in and the action he felt compelled to initiate:

> What these Arizona Indians really wanted me to do was to get off my critical race theory ass and do some serious Critical Race Practice. They didn't give a damn about the relationship between hegemony and false consciousness. They wanted help for their problems, and I was a resource. That's why they were so tough on me. See, to be a leader in an Indian community means going off the res to bring in resources to help the community. That meant that all these people asking me for help were assuming the responsibility of being Indian leaders which meant they could get right in my face and tell me to "act like an Indian" and give something back, rather than take, take, take. (p. 10)

Williams' (1997) words speak to the need for Critical Race Theorists to operationalize their critical senses into actions that create equitable experiences for communities of color. What the theory does for critical consciousness, the action will do to bringing about racially equitable situations and spaces.

Williams (1997) was not the only scholar to wrestle with the concept of employing leadership guided by critical racial sensitivities. Alemán (2009) used the terms "LatCrit educational leadership" and "advocacy" in his assessment of how Latino superintendents did or did not create change within a CRT framework. Alemán contended that LatCrit educational leadership is "foundationally political." He continued to discuss the framework as one that "centers the permanence of racism, values multiple voices, understands and utilizes the histories of Latina/o peoples, and endorses activism to achieve social transformation" (p. 195). Alemán's article is the only available article using the term "critical raced leadership" (found only in his abstract).[16] In his CRT analysis of the data, he

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[16] Upon completion of this study, the term "Critical Race Leadership" was used in one more paper presentation. The presentation, entitled *Toward a Critical Race Leadership Across the P-20 Pipeline* was given by

concluded that the superintendents did not "make significant advances toward a socially just and equitable system…" because they centered the majoritarian perspective as their negotiating strategy, thus reifying the dominant paradigm. He agreed with Dixson and Rousseau (2005) who stated that the stories of people of color must "move us to action" (p. 13).

One of the areas of social justice leadership explored by Dantley and Tillman (2006) was the practice of research. Su and Yamamoto (2002) contend that a stronger connection must be had between "scholars and front-line activists" (p. 387). They asked, "How can scholars connect with, learn from, translate our work for, and assist progressive lawyers, teachers, social workers, therapists, politicians, clergy, and community organizers?" (p. 387). Parker and Lynn (2002) cautioned qualitative researchers, who wish to employ a CRT framework, about the conservative nature of institutions like law and education: "…the future of CRT and its place in qualitative research will partially depend on the efforts made by researchers and scholars to explore its possible connections to life in schools and communities of color" (p. 17). Parker and Lynn refuted criticism of CRT that highlights a lack of connections to praxis or applicability, by arguing that "linking CRT to education can indeed foster the connections of theory to practice and activism on issues related to race" (p. 17). Critical Race Theory, as a framework for research, can provide valuable and necessary data to change educational policy and practice (Villenas, Deyhle & Parker, 1999).

While Critical Race scholarship is growing, few studies have focused on CRT praxis within educational administration. In their introduction to a series in *Educational Administration Quarterly* focusing on the connection between CRT and educational administration, Parker and Villalpando (2007) argued that racial disconnects occur between

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Knaus, C., Marsh, T., Jain, D. and Amah, I. A. at the 2010 University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Conference in New Orleans, LA.

communities of color and school representatives (i.e. teachers and administrators) due to administrative race-neutral reflexes embedded in beliefs that educational systems are inherently fair, objective, and colorblind. The articles that follow in the series all highlight ways that CRT can influence and inform educational administrative policies, practices, and procedures. Alemán (2007) explored inequities in Texas school finance and the role of Latino superintendents as advocates for equity. Iverson (2007) revealed the deficit representation of communities of color in diversity action plans created by higher education institutions. Smith, Yosso, and Solórzano (2007) explored the negative affects of racial harassment on students and educational professionals of color. These articles provided tremendous insights into the applicability of CRT and demonstrate, even more so, the need for critical race praxis in education.

I argue that my study is a demonstration of Critical Race praxis. In selecting my topic, I recognized that the use of CRT could produce narratives and results that would be uncomfortable for many who subscribe to the majoritarian narrative. Kincheloe and McLaren (2003) spoke to the potentially incendiary results of a CRT study like mine:

> Indeed, qualitative research that frames its purpose in the context of critical theoretical concerns still produces, in our view, undeniably dangerous knowledge, the kind of information and insight that upsets institutions and threatens to overturn sovereign regimes of truth. (p. 433)

While research is necessary to increase critical consciousness, educators must be willing to further develop policy and practice that address issues of racial equity.

By focusing this study on current educational leaders of color in higher education, I do not assume that leadership from a Critical Race paradigm cannot happen from other positions on, and areas of, the campus (i.e., positions without high levels of authority or decision-making power). Indeed, I believe in advocacy at all levels. However, my exploration of narratives of senior administrators assumes that those who are in positions of

power should utilize such power for social justice advocacy purposes. It is in these spaces of administrative influence that systemic and institutional changes for social justice can and should occur.

CRT Summary

Critical Race Theory is an analytical lens that: (1) acknowledges racism as endemic to American society; (2) is skeptical of traditional notions of objectivity, meritocracy, colorblindness, and race-neutrality; (3) challenges ahistoricism and recognizes the importance of histories and narratives of marginalized communities; (4) values the voices of persons of color as legitimate forms of knowledge; (5) is interdisciplinary in nature; and (6) produces liberatory or emancipatory solutions for oppressed communities.

Scholars have used CRT to reframe and reevaluate the causes, conditions, and factors surrounding legal and educational inequities. Specifically, CRT helps reframe traditionally held assumptions concerning achievement gaps between students of color and white students, to focus on systemic influences on such gaps. The movement of CRT scholarship is to invite educators, policy and lawmakers, and administrators to develop a greater sense of critical consciousness about racial equity and social justice issues. Scholars and practitioners need to continue exploring how Critical Race Theory as an epistemology and approach to analysis that can move towards greater connections to practice and decision-making.

Leadership for Social Justice in Higher Education

The third body of literature framing the study is leadership for social justice. Implicit in this discourse community is an examination of how leaders bring about change in their organizations. Since my study focuses on senior leaders in higher education, I assume that

administrators regard the exercise of leadership as an important component of their responsibilities. I also assume that leadership for social justice change, or advocacy, can be perceived as positive or negative depending on the observer. In this section, I explore: (1) leadership, power, and organizational culture; (2) leadership for change; and (3) leadership for social justice. In selecting this body of literature, I concur with Valverde's (2003) belief that "it is through the leader's efforts that colleges and universities move society's agenda" (p. 6).

Leadership, Power, and Organizational Culture

Leadership and organizational culture, as areas of study, overlap in significant ways. Schein (1991; 2004) studied a leader's ability to influence, embed, and create organizational culture. He argued that leaders must understand organizational culture to be effective in moving forward a vision, and especially if the vision contains changes. This is important if the new leader is to navigate the political landscape, opportunities, and limitations of his or her own leadership style and personal values. At the root of an organization's culture are the basic assumptions and beliefs held by those who are in authority (for a new organization) or by the majority of the group (for a more established organization) (Schein, 1985). These basic assumptions are reflected in the values of the organization and are often demonstrated in the allocation of resources and areas of accountability. A new leader can influence or transmit culture by paying attention to, rewarding, controlling, and/or measuring areas that are consistent with his or her values, but this is often easier said than done.

Not only do higher education institutions carry deeply rooted histories, which can make organizational culture difficult to change (Kezar & Eckel, 2002), but they also contain layers of hierarchy that exacerbate such differences. Weick (1976) proposed a notion of educational organizations as loosely coupled systems—subgroups that are loosely connected

in terms of core tasks and functions. In a large university setting, independent departments create their own subcultures within larger divisional subcultures within the larger university culture. These layers of culture pose challenges for senior administrators who wish to change institutional culture but are separated from influencing the granular characteristics of subcultures.

New leaders, entering into positions of authority, face a socialization process; also referred to as assimilation or acculturation. Leaders promoted from within are obviously more familiar with institutional culture than external candidates but each must face leadership socialization nonetheless. This includes learning the written (policies, procedures, handbooks, etc.), and most importantly, unwritten rules of the game (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Unwritten rules are the normed and coded behaviors that the majority of people deem appropriate within the institutional culture. Critical scholars might refer to such rules as part of a majoritarian culture. If these rules are ignored or devalued, new leaders are alienated and face roadblocks in the pursuit of their goals and agendas. According to Kivel (2004), a leader needs to take stock and assess the culture of power within the organization by asking key questions (i.e. who is in authority, who has credibility or full respect, who makes decisions, whose voice is heard, and whose experience is valued?). The combination of institutional tradition, loosely coupled systems, hierarchy, and socialization create a socio-political labyrinth for new leaders. If new leaders share the values, basic assumptions and beliefs of the institution and the majority of the stakeholders, the socialization process is facilitated. What happens then, if a leader does not share what Schein (2004) referred to as the "dominant value orientations" (p. 30) or the basic assumptions that ultimately guide the institutional culture? How does a leader affect deeper change at the core assumptive level in

what Hanson (2003) called a second-order[17] change; change that is more paradigmatic in nature rather than cosmetic?

Schein (1985) contended that people often are not aware that their assumptions affect organizational culture. This can create difficulty for a new leader who hopes to draw attention to new perspectives. Kuh and Whitt (1988) called attention to the divisive power of organizational culture suggesting that behavior is either categorized as normal (acceptable) or abnormal (unacceptable). Cultural changes for social justice within a predominantly white institution are often difficult to achieve because they are seen as radical, abnormal, and culturally unacceptable not only by the institution, but often by the surrounding community (Kezar, 2001).

It is widely accepted that in predominantly white higher education institutions (PWIs) the prevailing dominant narrative or value orientation is that of white males (Aguirre & Martinez, 2007). This is most evident in the makeup or representation of senior executive entities (i.e., presidential cabinet, board of trustees, board of regents, and other governing or influential boards). Critical theorists argue that traditional institutions do not problematize issues of status quo because of the notion of privilege. In his self-reflection of his privileged, white, male position, Kivel (2004) describes his assessment of the culture of power:

> The problem with a culture of power is that it reinforces the prevailing hierarchy. When we are inside a culture of power we expect to have things our way, the way with which we are most comfortable. We may go through life complacent in our monoculturalism, not even aware of the limits of our perspectives, the gaps in our knowledge, the inadequacy of our understanding. We remain unaware of the superior status and opportunities we have simply because we're white, or male, or able-bodied, or heterosexual. Of course a culture of power also dramatically limits the ability of those on the margins to participate in an event, a situation, or an organization. Those marginalized are only able to participate on unfavorable terms, at others'

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[17] Hanson (2003) argues that a first-order change is cosmetic in nature—a change to language and image. A second-order change addresses core values, beliefs, and assumptions usually demonstrated in structure, resources, priorities, etc.

> discretion, which puts them at a big disadvantage. They often must give up or hide much of who they are to participate in the dominant culture. And if there are any problems it becomes very easy to identify the people on the margins as the source of those problems and blame or attack them rather than the problems themselves. (p. 28)

The majoritarian or dominant power narrative that Kivel (2004) speaks of can be found in nearly all areas of academia as evidenced in: positional power (representation of faculty, administration and trustees), naming of buildings, curriculum and course texts, programs of study, and campus socialization. In higher education, individuals of color are "othered" or outsiders, rarely feeling like their different perspectives and narratives are valued (Aguirre & Martinez, 2007; Chesler, Lewis, & Crowfoot, 2005; Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998). Aguirre and Martinez elaborated:

> As is the case in every organization, the dominant group seeks to maintain its position in the organization by protecting the culture that provides it with status and privilege. The result is a constant, though not always overt, struggle over organizational change between racial and ethnic minorities on the one hand and dominant group members on the other. These lines of struggle are permeable, and members of the different groups sometimes cross back and forth, depending on specific issues at any particular time. (p. 41)

The study of leadership for social justice change begins with a recognition of existing power structures and historical disparities of power and influence in the political nature of administration.

Leadership for Change

The call for social justice in education assumes the need for institutional and systemic changes that reframe the ways education is delivered to historically underrepresented students. Schein (2004) argued that in order for true (organizational) change to occur, the leader needs to unfreeze traditionally bound ideologies and paradigms by creating spaces for dialogue even if the discussions become uncomfortable and lengthy.

The dialogue allows for fresh perspectives, an interrogation of assumptions, and a critical analysis of previously normed issues. This process then leads to joint decisions and brainstorming about solving the issue at hand and concludes with refreezing of the new ideas as the new culture. Like Tierney (1989), Schein's approach values deeper critical change in the organization but requires the collectivity to embrace a new process for change. This can be difficult and time consuming. In my short time as an administrator, I have seen that when efficiency is situated against critical self-reflection, leadership almost always gravitates towards efficiency. This is primarily due to the volume of tasks we are expected to manage, the demands of constituents and stakeholders, results-oriented evaluation systems in education, and the competitive desire to outperform peer institutions. It is also easy to understand that critical self-reflection, or the development of critical consciousness, is a difficult endeavor because it requires one in power to humbly acknowledge his or her own privileges and prejudices, as well as inequities in a system that rewards dominant behaviors and characteristics. The process also requires time and, more often than not, administrators do not set aside time to engage in critical dialogues.

Lacking from many of the leadership for change models and theories is the creation of spaces where experiences of communities of color are heard and validated. Many of today's leaders of color in the academy "define themselves as change agents" (Valverde, 2003, p.7). Various models seek multiple perspectives but treat this as merely a strategy to bring people on board with a cause (Cox, 2001; Kotter, 1995, 2002) rather than for the purpose of understanding how the historically voiceless can contribute to, and effectively lead the change effort. In addition to the lack of voice for communities of color, much of the change literature fails to explicitly acknowledge race, racism, and privilege within organizations. If educators are to close achievement gaps between students of color and

white students, leading for change must include greater critical analysis of covert and overt manifestations of racism, power, and privilege as realities in higher education institutions.

Considering (a) the culture of higher education organizations, (b) the challenges new leaders face in navigating the politics and power dynamics of organizations, (c) the limitations of change models, and (d) the history of hierarchical power structures, how can leadership be reframed to bring about second-order, emancipatory, organizational and cultural change for social justice? In order to address this question, I briefly highlight two leadership theories born from a desire to reframe the existing dominant power dynamics in higher education organizations: inclusive leadership (Ryan, 2006), and diversity leadership (Aguirre & Martinez, 2007). I then examine Dantley and Tillman's (2006) research on leadership and their three components of social justice: (1) leadership for social justice, (2) moral transformative leadership, and (3) social justice praxis.

Reframing Leadership Lenses

In 2006, Ryan described inclusive leadership as a "collective process in which everyone is included or fairly represented" (p. 16). This notion of leadership is inclusive in both process (bringing multiple voices to the table in decision making) and product (initiatives, practices, resources, etc.). In both process and product, the focus is on establishing an atmosphere and culture of participation, representation, and inclusion. Much like Tierney's (1989) democratic and critical leadership lenses, Ryan argued that traditional discussions of leadership as individual characteristics and traits need to move towards assessing collective group leadership to reverse trends of educational exclusion. He noted that educators are accustomed to segregating students according to language, ability, race and gender. School choice, magnet schools, specialized charter schools, AP programs, sports,

parent teacher associations, standardized testing, ESL/ELL instruction, and Special Education all reveal a culture of exclusion.

Inclusive leadership focuses on the structure and process of leadership (Ryan, 2006). It is rooted in critical and emancipatory ideals of participation, flattening organizational structure, distribution of power, representation of voice, and inclusion—all of which are important to the movement towards racial equity and change. Higher education leaders may espouse such theories but the realities they face to bring these ideas to fruition can be difficult. In a PWI, even if more constituents participate in the decision-making process the additional voices will likely add to the majority voice. While this lens of leadership does not provide administrators of color with navigational tools for leading social justice change, its attention to representative voice, alliance building, and collective 'buy-in' provides powerful principles to facilitate deeper cultural change.

One of the leadership theories that more concretely addresses the influence of leadership on social justice-based change is the concept of diversity leadership discussed by Aguirre and Martinez (2007). Diversity leadership focuses on bringing about awareness and representation of diversity and diverse communities in an effort to change existing higher education culture. Diversity leadership calls for the deliberate inclusion of individuals and communities who "have been excluded from full participation" (Aguirre & Martinez, 2007, p. 88) in organizational positions, dialogue, and influence (Chen & Vilsor, 1996; Winston, 2001). Aguirre and Martinez argued that this type of leadership embraces diversity as a, if not the, core value of the institution in response to changing demographics as well as community and global competition demands for future graduates. Increasingly, organizations must adapt to an ever-changing society and leadership plays a vital role in creating a culture of adaptability (Aguirre & Martinez, 2007; Astin & Astin, 2000; Tierney,

1999). Now, more than ever, educational leaders (especially college presidents) face challenges of brokering various perspectives on the values of, and commitment to, diversity (Borkowski, 1988). Aguirre and Martinez proposed that proficient diversity leadership exhibits the following characteristics:

1. Promoting personal awareness and recognition of cultural and social differences in leadership practices;
2. Promoting leadership practices that encourage diversity as a challenge to traditional, static organizational structures;
3. Developing leadership capacity in organizational members (staff, students, and faculty) who work effectively with diversity;
4. Identifying and exploring the use of leadership strategies to challenge obstacles associated with diversity in the organizational culture and climate;
5. Incorporating innovation in leadership practices that transform traditional leadership styles into ones that bring diversity from the periphery to the core of the institution's mission (p. 85).

Even if a leader were to espouse the characteristics and goals above, this type of leadership can be difficult to operationalize due to the tendency for the dominant group to preserve and protect an institutional culture that rewards them (Dunham, 2002; Hays, 2000; Wood, 2000). Because of this, educational leaders often co-opt or manage diversity efforts in a way that tokenizes underrepresented individuals. This is evident in the promotion of campus cultural events, cultural clubs, stories of successful students of color, and marketing materials that demonstrate a diverse student body. While useful in many ways, these efforts symbolically show a commitment to diversity without challenging structures, practices, positions, and the overall institutional culture (Aguirre & Martinez, 2002). How difficult is it

for a leader of color to promote diversity leadership without being seen as a token voice or representative of minority voices? I also wonder how often leaders of color retreat from speaking too much about diversity so they do not become niched, pigeonholed, or valued only for their diversity-related knowledge.

Inherent in both inclusive and diversity leadership are the following common themes: (1) traditional educational leadership is deeply rooted in narratives of majoritarian power; (2) a more effective approach to leadership in a changing, diverse society, is an approach that mirrors the democratic ideals (participation, representation, equality) espoused by many; and (3) true critical leadership requires the courage to challenge and change the status quo with the purpose of equity and social justice.

Leadership for Social Justice

In an effort to more explicitly engage the literature on "leadership for social justice", I draw on the work of Dantley and Tillman (2006). Although the study of "leadership for social justice" in education is relatively young (approximately 15 years), the emerging body of literature on this issue is already vast. Primarily utilized in research at the K-12 level, a number of scholars and teachers have explored leadership for social justice (Grogan, 2002; hooks, 1994; Kumashiro, 2000; Marshall, 2004; Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Marshall & Ward; 2004; Riester, Pursch & Skrla, 2002; Rusch, 2003; Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia & Nolly, 2006; Tillman, Lopez, Larson, Capper, Scheurich, and Marshall, 2003).

In reference to the work of Larson and Murtadha (2002), Dantley and Tillman (2006) discussed three strands of focus where most of the leadership for social justice work is done: (1) the deconstruction of existing logics of leadership, (2) the portrayal of alternative perspectives of leadership, and (3) the construction of theories, systems, and processes for

social justice. The first two strands focus on theoretical analyses of leadership (present and potential). The final strand resurfaces the discussion of critical theory and practice:

> It is in this strand that researchers will have to go beyond theorizing about social justice leadership to making recommendations for practice; in constructing theories, systems, and processes, researchers must do more than articulate theories that can contribute to change in schools. According to Larson and Murtadha, it is the third strand that is the least developed but that holds the greatest possibility for impacting positive change in educational administration. (p. 19)

According to Dantley and Tillman (2006), leadership for social justice "interrogates the policies and procedures that shape schools and at the same time perpetuate social inequalities and marginalization due to race, class, gender, and other markers of otherness" (p. 19). Theoharis (2007), in his study of principals who self-identified as social justice advocates, defined social justice leadership to mean "that these principals make issues of race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and other historically and currently marginalizing conditions in the United States central to their advocacy, leadership, practice, and vision" (p. 223). These definitions and others speak to the intentionality of educational leaders to use their positions of interest and authority to disrupt, reframe, interrogate, alter, and/or subvert the systemic and institutional norms that have produced inequities in opportunity, access, and achievement (Bogotch, 2002; Gewirtz, 1998; Goldfarb & Grinberg, 2002). Courage to address inequities is required of leaders who wish to demonstrate leadership for social justice.

The second component discussed by Dantley and Tillman (2006) is that of moral transformative leadership. They outlined the three elements of moral transformative leadership:

> First…moral transformative leadership focuses on the use as well as the abuse of power in institutional settings. Second, moral transformative leadership deconstructs the work of school administration in order to unearth how leadership practices generate and perpetuate inequities and the

> marginalization of members of the learning community who are outside of the dominant culture. Finally, moral transformative leadership sees schools as sites that not only engage in academic pursuits, but also as locations that help to create activists to bring about the democratic reconstruction of society. (p. 19)

Most educational change efforts are intended to ameliorate some aspect of the institution—calling attention to the presence of morals and values that guide conceptions of what is good. Trow (1985) suggested that leadership in higher education "is the taking of effective action to shape the character and direction of a college or university, presumably for the better" (p. 45, as cited in Aguirre & Martinez, 2007). Aguirre and Martinez (2007) used data from the Ford Foundation campus diversity initiative to suggest that people generally believe in fairness, equality, and justice as moral goods but do not critically question the moral correctness of existing structures of power—especially if they are active holders of power. In fact, to the majority in power, a call for equality becomes morally skewed when it is perceived that difference allows for benefits or resources to be displaced from those who have traditionally held them to those who have had limited access.

In modern political rhetoric, the perception of this moral dynamic is crudely divided. In 1958, Michael Young (reprinted 2002) warned against the rising affinity for meritocracy. In his satirical treatment of elitism, education, and equality, he noted growing confidence in the belief that fairness and equality are based on the principle of meritocracy and that individuals who earn power (based on IQ and effort) have a moral right to keep it. Such individuals argue that any measurement other than merit is grounds for discrimination and therefore becomes a subjective process that counters notions of fairness. They situate their opponents as people who believe in immoral notions of entitlements and socialism. A counter perspective proposes that fairness and equality emerge from an evaluation of starting points, histories, norms, and traditions that have denied certain communities access

to power (Takaki, 1993). Through this lens, moral correctness is found in a holistic assessment of context. For example, achievement gaps between students of color and white students are data points. From the meritocratic moral perspective, those who are on the higher end of the achievement gap must have: worked the hardest, been smarter, earned and deserved their position, demonstrated interest in subjects, and cared about their education. From the same perspective, those who were on the lower end of the achievement gap must have: worked the least, been dumber, earned and deserved their lower position, demonstrated little to no interest in subjects, and not cared about their education. Through this lens, those in power justify and rationalize inequity and achievement gaps as a result of a morally good principle like meritocracy.

Giroux (1986) offered the concept of transformative or public intellectuals; those who "work toward a realization regarding their views of community, social justice, empowerment, and transformation" (p. 3). Public intellectuals also view the educational process as one that should be guided by moral discourses of equity.

Transformative leadership is not only demonstrated through critical self-reflection but in the interrogation of the systemic and institutional oppression of certain groups. It also speaks to the emancipatory promise of a freshly framed leadership lens that might address issues of inequity differently from traditional leadership models. Aguirre and Martinez (2007) offered the following analysis of both "transformation" and "transformational leadership":

> Transformation, unlike social change in general, is radical fundamental change that is the result of deliberate efforts by leaders and followers. As a result, transformational leadership is conceived as a type of leadership needed by organizations to respond and adapt to environmental change, that is, demographic and cultural diversity. (p. 36)

Birnbaum (1988) criticized the notion of transformational leadership for its dependency on charisma and argued that although morally based, the heroic leader reifies traditional concepts of power and authority. Bensimón, Neumann, and Birnbaum (1989) contended that transformational leadership in higher education is difficult because: (1) it assumes leadership as a single role-related function; (2) followers are affinity bound to their departments more than the greater organization; and (3) it requires radical change—a type of change that does not occur in structurally conservative systems like higher education. Although cautious of transformational leadership, these same scholars recognize that if leaders are to move social justice forward, they must be guided by a sense of morals or ethics. While these leadership theories focus on the relationship between leader and follower, power distinctions still exist with the western traditional assumption that the leader is the moral voice (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Whether named transformative, moral, or transformational, leadership that centers issues of inequality, social justice, and equity is needed at senior administrative levels of higher education. This is easier said than done, particularly at institutions where transformative voices are vastly underrepresented in leadership positions.

Finally, Dantley and Tillman (2006) proposed that three areas form the praxis of leadership for social justice: research and scholarship, conference presentations, and teaching. They argued that these approaches are tangible and influence a direct audience (students, participants, discourse community, fellow scholars, etc.). While these three practical approaches (primarily found in faculty) are undoubtedly important to reframe the discourse and understanding of social justice issues, there is an aspect of this praxis of leadership that is missing—that of explicit administration. While connected to teaching (I do not assume that teaching only happens in the classroom), the praxis of leadership for

social justice is manifest in using one's position of authority to influence and affect issues of equity and inclusion in a larger institutional context (Sanders-Lawson, Smith-Campbell & Benham, 2006).

A number of studies have focused on the implementation of K-12 social justice leadership (Theoharis, 2007) but few are found within higher education. The absence of in-depth studies concerning the social justice advocacy and experiences of administrators of color is due, in large part, to the unique and complex structural, hierarchical, and political elements of higher educations institutions (Harvey, 1999). While K-12 schools are surely rife with political struggles, leadership is primarily an understood hierarchy. New principals and superintendents, while accountable to school boards and parents in a peripheral manner, can, for the most part, implement their leadership in a top-down approach. After all, in many respects, K-12 educational leaders are responding to external expectations of school grades, Adequate Yearly Progress, and standardized testing. Such factors create the need for greater transactional leadership or leadership that produces results based on prescribed processes or tasks.

Higher education leaders, on the other hand, work in systems that are more contested in terms of issues such as shared governance, definitions of intended outcomes, tenure, budgets, student recruitment and persistence, and adult learning. The city-like dynamic of diverse subcultures within higher education poses a palpable challenge to any leaders who wish to change the overarching institutional culture. These challenges from an administrative standpoint are precisely why Dantley and Tillman (2006) propose an approach to social justice leadership from a faculty role. The role of faculty as a primary engine for change within higher education has historical roots.

From 1960-1969, American higher education was influenced by a number of social

and scholarly departures from the mainstream. Thompson (2010) documented dozens of examples of protest and activism in the 1960s and 1970s regarding different: regions (Alcatraz, Illinois, southern states, New York); racial groups (African American, Chicano, Asian American, Native American); social groups (prison rights, animal rights, students, labor groups, environmental, LGBT, disability); and women's rights. These grassroots movements dramatically shifted the discourse regarding the purposes and complexity of higher education as a social institution.

The 1960s also produced three new scholarly venues for academic contribution and consumption: "a higher education book series from Jossey-Bass publishers; a weekly "trade" newspaper devoted exclusively to higher education issues, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*; and *Change* magazine, a monthly journal that brought to mind higher education's version of *The Atlantic Monthly* or *Harper's Magazine*" (Forest & Kinser, 2002, p. 9). These three publications opened the conversation about a more diverse approach to higher education and higher education leadership. Seminal texts about changing higher education emerged such as Jencks and Riesman's (1968) book, *The Academic Revolution.* This, and other, 1960s texts helped highlight and perpetuate a growing reputation of faculty as holders of prestige and power on a campus. Such momentum has led to a debate that continues today about the differences in impact when advocating for change from positions of administrator or faculty. This study does not attempt to address this debate but rather adds to the layers of complexity regarding advocacy for change from positions of administration within higher education.

Summary – Leadership for Social Justice Change in Higher Education

The literature on leadership for change is important to my study for a number of reasons. First, it is evident that leadership in higher education is a complex endeavor. Not

only do leaders/administrators work within loosely coupled systems, they have to negotiate and navigate a complex web of constituent demands and expectations, institutional culture, external changes, limited resources, personal values and beliefs, and the moving target of desired and measurable student outcomes. The concept of good leadership is contested and multidefined. For new leaders, an assessment of power and political dynamics is vital to a successful leadership experience.

Second, there are various approaches to, and theories on, leadership for change. These theories seek to challenge traditional structures of leadership towards collective and emancipatory access to power. Inherent in these theories is the notion that there exist dominant and marginalized communities who have had unequal access to spaces of leadership, privilege and power. Leaders must begin to assess how to strategically lead for social justice. Such leadership for social change assumes a commitment to action and praxis.

Summary of Literature Review

This literature review has highlighted three primary discourse communities: (1) experiences and role identities of administrators of color; (2) Critical Race Theory in educational systems, institutions, and leadership; and (3) leadership for social justice change or critical leadership. Many studies defined and explored the role identities of administrators of color, yet the rich text of inner-negotiation between competing role demands is found in too few. Absent from the literature is an assessment of how administrators of color have responded to role demands and expectations in various positions of power.

Critical Race Theory is a valuable analytical lens that centers race in discussions about, and an understanding of, society, education, and the law. The CRT scholarly community calls for voice and narrative from marginalized communities in education reform. There is a great need for work that pushes existing educators of color to articulate

our stories as members of historically silenced communities while serving as leaders and administrators. However, I have not found a CRT study that assesses how higher education senior administrators of color negotiate and navigate mixed conceptions of identity, advocacy, and leadership for social justice.

The leadership for change literature provides theories and models useful for strategizing about organizational change. Consistent within most of the change models is the view that leadership efforts should focus on changing traditional and dominant norms of power and privilege. Few, however, have explored the issues for administrators of color to create such change in PWIs.

The combination of literature from these discourse communities presents a unique road for research—an assessment of roles, advocacy, identity, and leadership through the lens of CRT and from the perspectives of administrators of color in higher education. This study extends, informs, and addresses some of the research gaps highlighted above by engaging current administrators of color in higher education about social justice advocacy from a Critical Race analytical lens.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2006), in his book entitled *Racism without Racists*, argued that contemporary Americans are quick to acknowledge racism as a social ill yet deny any ownership of racist attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors. In short, our country is full of racism without racists. This prevailing attitude makes it difficult to move beyond superficial discussions about race. If I cannot accept my own prejudicial views (based on race, gender, religion, age, and SES), my attempt at meaningful dialogue is limited. It is for this reason that I embraced a qualitative approach for this scholarly exploration. I cannot, nor do I want to, separate myself from my research to satisfy the call for objectivity as the only measure of validity.

In this chapter, I discuss the following: (1) my approach to the research and overall rationale for selection of research methods; (2) the selection of site and participants for the study; (3) data gathering methods; (4) data analysis procedures; (5) my researcher biography, epistemology, and positionality; (6) study trustworthiness issues; (7) ethical and political considerations; (8) participant representation; and (9) limitations of the study.

Approach and Rationale

This study was designed to understand how higher education administrators of color navigate and negotiate spaces of identity, position, advocacy, and leadership. It is a study that highlights an often underrepresented voice in the traditionally race-neutral tone of scholarship on leadership in higher education—thus providing new, or counter, approaches

to addressing race-based inequities and historical shortfalls in opportunity for communities of color (Lopez & Parker, 2003). This research responds to questions about why we advocate rather than simply what we advocate. Inquiries into personal stories and reflections beg for qualitative approaches and analyses. With this study I sought to capture an understanding of personal story, journey, reflection, and narrative rather than focus on static, quantitative data as the primary points for analysis. As Marshall and Rossman (2006) noted, a qualitative methodology is most appropriate with

> research that elicits multiple constructed realities, studied holistically… research that elicits tacit knowledge and subjective understandings and interpretations.…Because thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptive worlds are involved, the researcher needs to understand the deeper perspectives that can be captured through face-to-face interaction. (p. 53)

Scheurich and Young (1997) noted that one of the most covert, yet dangerous forms of racism is epistemological racism. While individual (overt and covert), institutional, societal, and civilizational forms of racism exist, epistemological racism is the most discreet in that it blindly frames realities for people about what is good, right, acceptable, and normal. They warn researchers to recognize what is considered a legitimate epistemology:

> Different social groups, races, cultures, societies, or civilizations evolve different epistemologies, each of which reflects the social history of that group, race, culture, society, or civilization; that is, no epistemology is context-free. Yet, all of the epistemologies currently legitimated in education arise exclusively out of the social history of the dominant White race. They do not arise out of the social history of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, or other racial/cultural groups—social histories that are much different than that of the dominant race. (p. 8)

While there were a number of qualitative approaches I could have employed, I responded to Scheurich and Young (1997) in selecting to conduct a combined narrative analysis and autoethnography under the overall framework of critical race methodology. Not only do these approaches most appropriately address my research question but they provide unique

and valuable lenses in the analysis of equity issues. I also sought to employ culturally appropriate methods of investigation and exploration (Parker & Lynn, 2002).

Critical Race Methodology

In 1999, Lynn (2002) conducted a study of Black male teachers in the Los Angeles Unified School District. He "was interested in finding out about the extent to which Black men acknowledged and were critical of structures that impeded the academic progress of African American students" (p. 124). Lynn acknowledged CRT as a guiding "methodological framework" for his study and noted that it provided an "important alternative to outmoded research models that inadequately explain the conditions of people of color" (p. 123). The lens of CRT affected his sample, the questions he asked, and his analysis presentation of data. I intentionally borrowed from Lynn in his attempt to blend theory with method and utilize a critical race methodological framework to guide this study. Research that is conducted through this methodology:

1. Foregrounds race and racism in all aspects of the research process.
2. Challenges traditional research methods and theories that normalize whiteness and present communities of color as othered individuals (Parker & Lynn, 2002).
3. Produces a liberatory solution for racialized, gendered, and classed experiences of suppression.
4. Recognizes the social, cultural, historical and personal experiences and stories of people of color as sources of strength (Delgado, 1995; Smith, Yosso, & Solórzano, 2006 & 2007; Yosso, 2006).
5. Employs an interdisciplinary approach to research drawing on history, sociology, anthropology, and other disciplines. (Parker, 2003; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 24)

The development of a critical race methodology was founded on the tenets of critical race theory. Parker and Lynn (2002) noted: "critical race methodology…recognizes the intersections and conflicts that can emerge from data narratives and seeks to place those narratives at the center of legal and political social change and justice" (p. 16). By utilizing a critical race methodology, I deliberately situated my study concerning higher education to: (1) center race as an explanatory lens to view educational inequities; (2) challenge the notions of objectivity, neutrality, and colorblindness (López, 2003; Morfin, et al., 2006) as desired guiding principles for a legitimate study; (3) explore advocacy and movement towards social justice in educational systems; (4) center the perspectives of students, faculty, staff and administrators of color and foreground racial identity as an important element of cultural, political, and social navigation; and (5) draw upon rich contextual data and narratives that include historical, sociological, and political lenses. I agree with Parker's (1998) assessment concerning the use of racialized experiences in the research process:

> The critical centering of race (together with social class, gender, sexual orientation, and other areas of difference) at the locations where the research is conducted and discussions are held can serve as a major link between fully understanding the historical vestiges of discrimination and the present-day racial manifestations of that discrimination. (p. 46)

Critical race methodology is an approach that responds to racism, white privilege, and the master or majoritarian story. Solórzano and Yosso (2002) asserted that "the ideology of racism creates, maintains, and justifies the use of a 'master narrative' in storytelling" (p. 27). Majoritarian stories are the historical narratives and assumptions of those who have enjoyed privileges based on race, sex, class and other factors. One form of storytelling throughout history is the type of, and approach to, research that centers the master narrative. Such research centers privileged voices as authorities on truth, reality, and social status. To "counter" the master narrative or majoritarian story, Solórzano and Yosso

suggested the use of counter-narratives and/or stories as one approach within a critical race methodology. Concerning counter-storytelling, Solórzano and Yosso said:

> We define the counter-story as a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told (i.e., those on the margins of society). The counter-story is also a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege. Counter-stories can shatter complacency, challenge the dominant discourse on race, and further the struggle for racial reform. (p. 32)

Counter-stories have been presented by critical race scholars primarily in three forms: (1) personal stories or narratives; (2) other people's stories or narratives; and (3) composite stories or narratives. Personal stories are shared from the author's experiences with some form of oppression. Such stories are usually situated "within the context of a larger sociopolitical critique" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32). Some CRT researchers have presented stories and experiences of another person, or persons, concerning racial or gender oppression; also situated within a sociohistorical and political context. Finally, a composite counter-story draws on the racialized experiences of persons of color where authors "create composite characters and place them in social, historical, and political situations to discuss racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of subordination" (p. 33). It is important to recognize that counter-storytelling is not fiction. Characters are grounded in real life experiences and actual empirical data stemming from real social, political, and cultural situations (Solórzano & Yosso). No matter the form, the process of counter-storytelling is rigorous and informed by multiple data points (Villalpando, 2003).

This study utilizes and slightly modifies the first two forms of counter-storytelling. I shared both my experiences and those of fellow administrators of color but did not focus on one particular story throughout the presentation of my findings. In Chapter IV, I present data and responses that demonstrate a perspective that counters the master narrative but, in my attempt to mask participant identities, I do not weave in the historical context for each

individual. Initially, I intended to use a composite counter-story, but I felt that participants provided unique responses that needed to be shared, which might have been lost in the re-creation of a larger collective story.

Critical Race Theory influenced my approach to nearly every aspect of this study. My research problem, research questions, selection of participants, literature review, and lens of analysis all center racial inequity, advocacy, and the validation of voices and identities of persons of color. I believe my study is a counter-approach in terms of structure, sample, methods, questions, and presentation of data. I also agree with Solórzano and Yosso (2002) who argued that "counter-stories need not be created only as a direct response to majoritarian stories" (p. 32). There is great value and power in understanding the experiences, narratives, and stories of persons who have been poorly represented or ignored in the larger societal discourse. The more these stories are shared, the greater the opportunity to disrupt the normed assumptions and behaviors of decision-makers.

CRM, Narrative Analysis and Autoethnography

The Critical Race Methodological (CRM) framework allowed me to extend the valuable approaches of narratology/narrative analysis (Creswell, 2007; Denzin, 1989; Riessman, 1993) and autoethnography (Cole & Knowles, 2001), both of which address experiences, narratives, and the living texts of individuals. The narrative approach was useful for gleaning the richness and chronology of participant experiences that are vital contextual markers in a study of this nature. Most narrative studies utilize a number of in-depth interviews as well as a collection of artifacts from the person's life to arrive, in the end, at a life story of one, or a few, individual(s) (Creswell, 2007). Traditional narrative approaches are limited, however, in that they aim to capture life histories without explicit attention to issues of race, power, privilege, and inequities. Narrative analysis is a

methodology used primarily to describe rather than create a liberatory possibility for disenfranchised persons. Even with this limitation, a narrative approach is valuable for the way it centers participant stories (Creswell, 2007).

As an administrator of color, it was important that I remained self-reflexive throughout the entire research process. One qualitative method that allowed me to step into the research in a reflexive context is an approach known as autoethnography (Cole & Knowles, 2001). Autoethnography is a personal narrative that describes the author's subjective experiences. Bochner and Ellis (2006) stated that autoethnography shows "people in the process of figuring out what to do, how to live, and the meaning of their struggles" (p. 111). Tierney (1998) suggested that "autoethnography is a necessary methodological device to move us toward a newer understanding of reality, ourselves and truth" (p. 56). Theoharis (2007) used autoethnography to place himself in the research along with other principals in his study of social justice leadership. I share his sentiments when he stated, "Studying social justice principals and hiding my experience by not including myself in the study would have felt disingenuous and would not have provided the authenticity I sought" (p. 225). In his study, Theoharis referred to his responses in third person because he wanted to ensure that he did not place his own voice over the voices of others. This strategy recognizes the historical positionality of researcher as power holder and seeks to restructure the vertical, researcher-centered traditions of ethnography into a more horizontal partnership.

The commitment to represent my voice as a participant voice in this study is not an easy task. I heeded the caution proposed by Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) in their recognition of researcher power even in their co-constructive research method of portraiture:

> We see the researcher's imprint in the selection of the research question, in the design of the study, in the data collection strategies, and in the

> interpretation of data. There is no voice, no soul, in traditional quantitative forms of inquiry, but the researcher's hand—revealed in the conceptual orientation, the disciplinary lens, the methods and design (and probably personal disposition)—is certainly present and shaping the work. (p. 87)

This passage constantly reminds me to recognize my role and filters as researcher, especially as I present and represent the voices of others. If participant voices, responses, and experiences are filtered too much, the more my study mirrors traditional majoritarian ethnographic research.

The combination of narrative and autoethnographic approaches within a Critical Race Methodological Framework allows me to critically and constantly interrogate individual and common experiences of all participants involved. I sought both unique and collective perspectives in my representation and analysis of the data. Any effort to capture collective voice should not be viewed as an attempt to frame generalizations but rather to strengthen often ignored or dismissed voices. The approaches above were chosen in an effort to cover participant depth and breadth (narrative) as well as researcher transparency (autoethnography)—the combination of which has the potential of yielding rich and meaningful data.

Delgado Bernal (2002) shared that educational leaders of color need to utilize and realize their unique and collective experiences, stories, and perspectives in educational and policy leadership. With this in mind, some of my guiding research questions were geared towards collecting data that will assist educators of color in higher education, who wish to be advocates for social justice, to understand the landscape of such.

My overall approach was to situate this study in the cultural, historical, social, and political contexts of all involved including study participants, myself as researcher, and readers (Creswell, 2007). Although I self identify in some ways with my participants, I sought to more fully understand the complex roles, narratives, motives, perceptions, and

expectations of fellow administrators of color by asking them to narrate their own stories. As an advocate for students of color and an administrator, I employed interview questions that moved and challenged me (as researcher) and the study participants to explore our assumptions and perceptions of core philosophies concerning, and motives for addressing, issues of equity.

Site and Participant Selection

Utah

The state of Utah was chosen as the site for this study for a variety of reasons. First, as a researcher engaged in self-reflexivity, I drew upon my own professional experiences that have occurred in Utah. My current administrative position grants access to spaces and discourse circles such as Board of Trustees, President's Council, President's Cabinet, legislative meetings, and other higher education networks. These connections are a part of my contextual narrative for this study.

Second, while I hold an outsider positionality to the majority of Utahns in terms of racial identity (as a person of color in a predominantly white state), I self-identify as an insider with the dominant religious group in the state—the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormons. Utah is a conservative, predominantly Republican state with a large percentage of residents who are Mormon. In 2008, the Associated Press reported that Mormons make up 60% of the state's population according to membership records[18] ("Percentage of Mormons," 2008). In a January 2010 Gallup poll, Mormons were identified as the most conservative religious group with 59% self-identifying as conservative, 31% as moderate, and only 8% as liberal ("Mormons Most Conservative," 2010). It is important to

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[18] It is important to note that within the LDS faith community, there are varying degrees of "activity" of those officially on the rolls as members.

acknowledge the representation of conservatism in Utah as I situate the study in a larger cultural, political and sociological context. In this chapter, I discuss my overlapping and often competing insider/outsider identities (Chavez, 2008). If I were not transparent, I would not represent my true narrative, and participants, as well as readers, would be limited in their consumption and interpretation of my study.

Third, Utah faces tremendous demographic shifts. According to Utah demographer, Dr. Pamela Perlich (2010), Utah's minority[19] share has increased from 1.9% to 18.3% over the past 50 years compared to the United States showing an increase from 11.4% to 34.4% over that same time period. In Salt Lake County, the increase has gone from 1% to 27% over that same time span with projected growth of minority share percentage to reach 41% by 2050. Over the past 20 years, Utah's foreign-born population has grown from 3.4% of the population to 8.3% or an increase of nearly 200,000 individuals. Currently, the minority percentage in Salt Lake County is 33% for elementary- and 25% for high school-age students. These shifts in Utah's racial composition, combined with the previously mentioned race-based achievement gaps (Alemán & Rorrer, 2006), have created new spaces for discussions around equity, access, inclusion, diversity, and multiculturalism.

Finally, Utah is an ideal site for a study of this nature because all higher education institutions within the state are considered predominantly white institutions (PWIs) and the vast majority of administrators and faculty are white. Consistent with national trends, Utah's one community college has the highest representation of students of color at 18% (USHE Enrollments Data Book 2009, p. 8, Table 6). Of all students of color in the Utah System of Higher Education, 50% self identify as Hispanic yet none of the institutions are recognized

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[19] Dr. Pam Perlich uses the term "minority" to refer to any individual who does not self-identify as white.

as Hispanic Serving Institutions[20] (HSIs). There is one junior college, one community college, one state college, one private college, one private university[21] and five public universities. All presidents are white and 17 of the 18 members of the State Board of Regents are white. It was reported[22] that there was not one person of color who worked in the Commissioner's office. Yet, upon further investigation, I found that one Asian male has been working there for nearly 2 years.

Predominantly white institutions of higher education, low representation of administrators of color, and conservative communities are not unique to Utah yet the state presents a unique opportunity for race-based studies, which have been inadequate, or practically nonexistent, in Utah's history. Studies of the experiences of higher education administrators of color have been few nationally with none conducted in the state of Utah. Moreover, discussions about the future of Utah education in light of rapidly changing demographics has created a space for marginalized perspectives to emerge not only as relevant but necessary to inform decisions about statewide and institutional research, policy, and practice concerning achievement and representation gaps. This study was designed to increase such a space.

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[20] To be considered an official Hispanic Serving Institution from the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), the institutions must reflect a student body with at least 25% Hispanic enrolled.

[21] The two largest private institutions in the state are not included in this study due to the closed nature of their records, processes (e.g. Board of Trustee meetings), and unique criteria for selection of students and hiring of personnel. I note that the influence of these institutions on the statewide dialogue of higher education is not insignificant yet my lack of access to institutional data creates a set of inconsistencies when compared to other institutions.

[22] In November, 2010, I emailed and called three people at the Utah System of Higher Education Commissioner's office. All three told me that not one person of color worked in their office. They did point me to an Asian woman who worked in a partnering office but made no mention of the Asian male in their office.

Participant Selection

The participants in this study included nine senior administrators of color, each of whom works at a public institution of higher education in the state of Utah.[23] I included myself as one of the nine participants and discuss this approach in greater detail later. The eight other participants were selected through a purposive sampling method based on a set of unique characteristic(s) (Merriam, 1988). This sampling method may not have yielded the type of validity necessary for overarching generalizations but was appropriate for my study for a number of reasons: (1) participants needed to fit a certain criteria; (2) I sought variation in participant identity; and (3) I compared participant responses to documents from their institutions as a means of triangulation. I now explore the rationale and strategies associated with each of these three sampling purposes.

First, people of color are underrepresented in administration in Utah higher education institutions (see Table 5). To explore the experiences and navigational processes of administrators of color, I focused on identifying participants who self-identified as such. Patton (1990) refers to this strategy as a "criterion" case where the intended participants need to fit some unified criteria (p. 45). In this case, the criteria required that participants self-identified as senior administrators of color within one of the eight Utah public higher education institutions.

In October 2010, I sent a series of emails to colleagues from around the state to help me gather data about leadership positions at each of their institutions (provost, vice president, dean, associate vice president, associate provost, associate dean, assistant vice president, assistant dean, executive director, special assistant to the president, and other high

[23] Only six of the eight public institutions of higher education had senior administrators of color.

Table 5

Total administrators of color by rank, ethnicity (White and Non-white), and gender for USHE institutions[24]

Senior Executive Administrators in the Utah System of Higher Education (eight institutions)				
Position (Total #)	Administrators of Color		White Administrators	
	M	F	M	F
President (8)			6	2
Provost / Vice President (49)	1		39	9
Dean (68)	2	1	48	17
Associate Provost or VP (53)	2	1	36	14
Associate Dean (47)	3		29	15
Assistant VP (26)		2	13	11
Executive Directors / Chief Officers (44)	1	1	31	11
Special Assistants & (Presidential Reports) (11)	2		4	5
Total Senior Administrators (305)	**10**	**5**	**205**	**84**
Board of Trustees & Regents (99)	4		64	31
Total w/Board of Trustees (404)	14	5	269	115

[24] In an effort to protect the participants' identities, I do not include a breakdown of this table by institution.

level or executive salaried leadership positions as designated by the institution). I asked them to put me in contact with someone at their institution who would be able to complete the table below. Most data were retrieved by the offices of institutional research at each college or university and in many cases, follow-up phone calls were required to clarify and verify the data. Although many titles were common, each institution differed in its classification of executives or senior administrators. I recognize that some individuals who do not necessarily have positional authority are "power holders" within the campus in terms of their access to the President and other leaders as well as respect among their colleagues. However, since this variable was not consistent across campuses, I did not pursue the informal designations of power players. The results in Table 5 were based on institutional data gathered before December 31, 2010.[25]

At the time of data retrieval, the total number of senior administrators in the USHE system was 305 with 99 members of the combined Boards of Trustees and Board of Regents. This brought the total of institutional positional power holders to 404. Of the administrators, 290 (95.1%) self-identified as white and 15 (4.9%) self-identified as persons of color (three of whom are international or foreign born). Of the trustee members, 95 (96%) self-identified as white with four (4%) persons of color (two of whom are international or foreign-born). Of the combined total (administrators and trustees/regents = 404), 385 (95.3%) were white and 19 (4.7%) were persons of color. Of the 19 persons of color, 14 were male. This means that five (only 1.2%) out of 404 power holders (administrators, trustees, and regents) were women of color. With respect to the top

[25] A few institutions have acknowledged that they have recently hired an administrator of color since January 1, 2011 or have had an administrator of color step down since January 1, 2011. In an effort to keep data consistent, I chose December 31, 2010 as a cut-off date because most institutions delivered their data before that date.

leadership (president, provost and vice president), 56 out of 57 administrators were white with 45 as white males. It is important to note here that I did not assume all administrators hold the same amount of "power" or ability to influence. Sadly, out of the 19 persons of color (administrators and trustees) identified in the data above, some of them may not have had "power" to influence fellow institutional leaders, university policies, or other reforms necessary to close gaps in representation, opportunity, and achievement (Valverde, 2003, p.44). Two of the 15 administrators of color are on my dissertation committee. I asked these administrators to join my committee both for their scholarly areas of expertise as well their positions and insider perspectives. By doing so, I recognize that they were excluded from participating in the study but I felt that their experiences and lenses of analysis as committee members were extremely valuable. Since I, too, participated in the study, the number of senior administrators of color eligible to participate fell to 12. In the end, 8 of the 12 participated with two more agreeing to participate after I had already finished interviews and begun my analysis.

Second, it was important to purposefully select a diverse group of individuals even within the relatively small population of educational administrators of color in Utah. Patton (1990) called this "maximum variation," or purposefully picking a wide range of variation on dimensions of interest (p. 45). Such diversity included identifiers such as: race, gender, years of experience in higher education, institution type, position/role, and spiritual affiliation. Due to the network of communities of color within the state of Utah and the even closer association between the low number of administrators of color, it was critical to purposefully select voices that represented diverse experiences, so as not to over-represent a particular paradigm or perspective. In assessing the data in Table 5, I saw that women of color were vastly underrepresented in administrative positions. It was important for me to target the

four[26] eligible women of color as participants of the study. Three of the four women participated in the study and one more agreed to participate in future research efforts. I was fortunate to have, within my participant group, a diversity of administrators in terms of gender, race, position, and years of experience.

Finally, a purposive sampling method was used because of what Patton (1990) called a "combination" or "mixed purposive" case where triangulation and flexibility meet multiple interests and needs (p. 46). I heeded Morse's invitation to employ a "deliberate selection of participants who have information about or experience of the topic being researched" (Morse, 2007, p. 235; Patton, 1990). The purposive sampling method allowed me to select participants according to institutional diversity. This was helpful as I contextualized participant responses with institutional documents. The intentional diversity of participants facilitated triangulation and understanding of data from both institutional and statewide perspectives. Triangulation of data is also an important component of research validity or trustworthiness.

The criteria I set up for participation in this study did not exclude any of the 12 eligible participants. Eligible participants: (1) self-identified as having an ethnicity other than white; (2) currently held a position of executive administration at their higher education institution; (3) have worked at a Utah institution for at least 1 year; and (4) have held other positions within higher education before assuming an executive administrative position. The first criterion of ethnic identity was key to identifying participants. Individuals who are mixed-race sometimes identify with one racial/ethnic narrative over another (or others). If someone self-identifies as white, the Critical Race Theory lens suggests that they might have internalized a majoritarian narrative and therefore cannot offer the counter narrative that is

[26] I have not included one of the female administrators of color due to her participation as a member of my committee.

at the heart of the study (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Each participant self-identified on institutional records as an ethnicity other than *white/non-Hispanic*. Criterion two was a specific attempt to reach individuals of color in positions of authority and power at an institution. The final two criteria were based on the desire for participants to respond in the context of their experiences in a Utah institution, and at multiple levels of higher education.

Each participant was a high-ranking administrator at his or her institution. Because of this, I heeded Marshall and Rossman's (2006) advice for "Interviewing Elites" (p. 106). The authors outlined a few advantages of interviewing important people: (1) valuable insights might be gained due to the political and administrative influence; (2) their institutional knowledge and overall breadth of understanding; and (3) they can provide expertise on institution-wide influencers (i.e., finances, structure, legalities, etc.). There were also a few disadvantages that I kept in mind as I interviewed these administrators. Elites are busy people, often fully scheduled with travel, meetings, and other commitments deemed more important than this study. I was afraid that this would affect the initial contact and return of participant consent forms but found the participants to be very responsive. Most participants responded within the first 2 weeks of my initial email. Another challenge I anticipated was participants' "polish" and professional experience, which may have led them to be diplomatic or neutral in their responses due to practice with the press on controversial issues. I tried to address this tendency for administrators to shy away from controversial subjects by clearly explaining my study, the confidentiality of data, and my investment as a fellow participant. I also expressed my desire for them to be candid in their responses to maintain the integrity of the study. I felt that they were candid and many participants expressed a high sense of trust and comfort in talking with me. Finally, I was aware that elites bring the potential of "turning the interview around" or taking "charge of the

discussion" (p. 106). After all, these are people accustomed to steering the conversation. I often recentered the flow of the interview if I observed the participant veering too far off topic, but, in some cases, their tangents provided insights into their narrative.

The rationale for site and participant selection in this study was grounded in my desire to: (1) make personal and relevant connections in the context of my experiences as a higher education administrator of color; (2) uncover Utah systemic and cultural influences missing from the national literature on the educational success of communities of color; and (3) understand how administrators of color approached advocacy for social justice in predominantly white institutions.

Data Gathering Methods

I employed two primary data collection methods: in-depth interviews and document analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). After I received IRB approval, I reached out to all 12 potential participants through an electronic letter (Appendix A) clearly articulating the purposes of my study, my background and the expected time commitment. I offered to answer any questions by phone, or, if need be, to drive to their office to meet with them in person to introduce myself and discuss the study. The letter explained that they were simply expressing interest in participating in the study, and they might not be chosen. I assured them of every precaution to maintain confidentiality (i.e., pseudonyms, password protected data, masked institutional data), and I let them know that I would follow up in the next couple of weeks via email. Attached to the e-letter was a letter of consent (Appendix B). Within 2 weeks of my initial emails, I received responses from eight administrators consenting to participate in the study. I exchanged emails and spoke with a few to answer their questions. I sent a follow up email to the four administrators who did not respond to the first e-letter. I received consent from two more administrators and stopped pursuing the

final two because I had exceeded my target participation number and the nine participants (including me) represented a satisfactory diversity of demographic, gender, and institution. I felt fortunate to have met my participation goal of at least seven participants.

Before I began interviewing, I conducted a pilot interview with a colleague of color at my institution. This colleague of color was hired after January 1, 2011 and was not a potential candidate in the study according to the criteria I had established. This pilot interview was used to gauge the practicality, appropriateness, flow, and tone of the questions. I was also able to assess observer bias in the interview process and took note of the fact that I needed to be careful not to lead participants with my inquiries (Sampson, 2004). I sought feedback from my colleague about various interview components including: level of comfort with my approach; feelings of tension with any questions; understanding of how questions were asked; and other potential questions that I had not thought of. His feedback helped me refine the interviewing process to create a more open and trusting atmosphere for those participating in the study and was helpful in constructing the interview protocol (Appendix C) (Lynn, 1999).

I conducted two in-depth, semistructured, open-ended interviews with each of eight administrators of color (someone else interviewed me as the ninth participant) for a total of 18 recorded interviews. Each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. All participants consented to in-person interviews and all interviews took place in participants' offices or rooms nearby. I traveled to the site of their choice (their offices) not only for their convenience, but to ensure that they selected a physical environment that was comfortable for them; a factor I felt was important for trust and openness of responses. In-person interviews allowed me to: observe body language or physical cues; see the setting and decor of their office or their attire which provided contextual data; pick up on candid responses,

reactions, or expressions; and develop a connection or relationship of trust with participants for greater comfort in responding to difficult questions.

The first interview focused on situating the participants culturally, socially, and politically (Alemán, 2009). For this interview, questions were broken into three sections: (1) background and personal historical context; (2) status of equity, race, and diversity in American society and higher education; and (3) positional power and leadership for equity in higher education. I subscribed to Riessman's (1993) preference for "less structure in interview instruments, in the interest of giving greater control to respondents" (p. 55). All questions were designed to draw out contextual elements and key aspects from the narrative of each participant. Interviews were audio-recorded and I also took live observation notes concerning: description of interview setting, physical cues, notes for follow-up questions, self-reflections about responses, and other data not captured on the recording device. The audio recorder was an important tool as it not only recorded what was said, but how it was said. There are unique and important data points to note when participants pause, raise their voice, laugh, cry, or place emphasis on a word or phrase (Millet, 1971). Immediately after each interview, I wrote notes adding to descriptions of the context, direct observations, and setting of the interview.

I began to personally transcribe the interviews no more than a few days after each visit. Although I employed a graduate assistant to transcribe a portion of the interviews, I transcribed the majority of them (14 of 18) because I felt that I needed to hear the data and begin analysis as I processed them. I reviewed the interviews that I did not transcribe with the recording and made any necessary corrections.

Within a week or two after initial interviews, I returned for a second visit with each participant to explore questions concerning advocacy and leadership. I began the second

interview by briefly summarizing some of what I captured during the first interview in an effort to situate the new questions in the context of participants' previous responses. In addition to questions concerning participants' sense of responsibility for advocacy and leadership for social justice, I presented a series of race-based scenarios to which they responded (Appendix B[27]). The scenarios allowed participants to talk about advocacy without feeling like they could not be authentic in sharing their advocacy strategies. This method also allowed for discussion of actual situations related to equity, access, and diversity and thus moved towards a closer examination of leadership in action.

Some time after the second interview, I spoke with each participant by phone to engage in member checking (Creswell, 2007). The purpose of this contact was to verify with participants how accurately I captured and analyzed the data gleaned during the two interviews as well as themes that emerged. These phone calls lasted between 30 and 45 minutes and allowed participants to provide feedback on my analysis and representation of their responses. Member checking was an important part of the study's trustworthiness.

Another deliberate aspect of my research design was to situate myself in the study to minimize the temptation to representing participants' voices as 'othered' (Theoharis, 2007). In order to accomplish this, I borrowed from Theoharis' (2007) study in which another person interviewed him as a participant. My interviewer was someone who understood the research I was conducting and who was able to facilitate the interview in a way similar to my approach. The data from my interviews were examined alongside those of other participants.

Finally, I gathered data from institutional documents including mission, goals, and values statements. Other documents analyzed included higher education articles from local and national periodicals and minutes from Board of Regents meetings. These documents

[27] After reviewing samples of diversity scenarios from various authors (Garcia & Hoelscher, 2008; Robbins, 2008), I created the scenarios found in Appendix B.

provided a contextual backdrop against which I placed and analyzed participant responses. This systemic or institutional narrative for the state of Utah revealed a number of important data points including: the language used to describe the status of people of color in higher education; the political forces that affect issues of diversity, equity, multiculturalism, and access; and the variables that might help me more clearly understand why participants respond the way they do. These documents and texts were critical to the process of triangulating the data (Crowson, 1993). The documents provided new layers of interpretation and context as the interview data were analyzed.

Data Analysis Procedures

In qualitative research, data analysis is a continuous and iterative process. In my contact with administrators, every piece of information gathered (interviews, observations) was analyzed real-time and was reanalyzed repeatedly. Before the interview process, I recognized the importance of establishing certain analysis criteria that would help me remain focused on the purpose and intent of my study. A study rich in narrative texts offers a number of avenues for analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Texts can be treated as the objects of analysis or can be viewed as the vehicle for narrative understanding (Tesch, 1990). This study centered voices of persons of color in the CRT framework and therefore called for an analysis of words, codes, narratives, and meanings within that framework. Some of the criteria/questions I established and utilized as I engaged in the analysis included:

- Does the statement, response, or finding address the research question?
- How are the data interpreted through the Critical Race Theoretical lens or how do they respond to the six tenets of CRT?

- Is the finding challenged or validated by the literature and does it provide new knowledge?

My analysis approach was influenced primarily by Creswell's (2007) assertion that "data analysis is not off-the-shelf; rather, it is custom-built, revised, and "choreographed" (p. 150). He continued, "The process of data collection, data analysis, and report writing are not distinct steps in the process—they are interrelated and often go on simultaneously in a research project" (p. 150). I found Creswell's observation to be true of my own processes for data analysis. That being said, the process I describe below does not veer too far from traditional approaches to qualitative data analysis including: narrative analysis, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study (Creswell).

1st Reading: Transcribing – I recorded and transcribed participant interviews and then created and organized files for data (Creswell, 2007). I transcribed 14 of the 18 interviews and reviewed the four transcriptions completed by a graduate student. Two of the four interviews transcribed by the graduate student were those conducted with me as the participant. Not only was I able to analyze the transcripts of eight other participants but reviewing my own responses gave me a chance to enhance reflexivity and limit the potential of treating analysis of participants as "other" or "exotic" entities (Tierney, 1998, p. 58).

2nd Reading: Chunking – I read through the transcriptions for the second time and created chunked paragraphs with summary statements at the beginning of each paragraph as well as notes to the side of the paragraphs. This helped me organize my analysis of each section of a participant's responses into initial codes where I noted emerging themes (Creswell, 2007).

3rd Reading: Broad Themes/Nodes – I then developed a list of six broad categories that emerged both from the data and from my initial vetting of the literature on such issues (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). These categories were: identity; leadership for social justice; political dynamics of higher education; competing tensions and roles for administrators of color; educational issues for students/communities of color; and discrimination and injustice. I assigned each of these broad themes a color and read through the transcriptions highlighting by color phrases, sentences, and paragraphs that corresponded with one of the six broad themes/nodes. In other words, I sought "patterned regularities" (Creswell, 2007, p. 156).

4th Reading: Sub-Noding – For my fourth reading, I uploaded transcripts to the NVivo 9 software program and developed a listing of subnodes within each of the six larger nodes (Appendix D). I then cut and pasted (within NVivo) the highlighted phrases, sentences, and paragraphs into the most appropriate subnodes. The subnodes emerged as I saw patterns within the larger nodes (e.g., The large node of "Identity" contained a number of subnodes including "changing or shifting identities" and "racial, ethnic, gender, and cultural identities"). This process resulted in a list of participant responses that aligned with one or more of 31 subnodes.

5th Reading: Node-Mapping – I then took the printed list of participant responses relevant to subnodes and engaged in a visual node-mapping exercise to find connections and overlaps between the various data points. This was an extremely important part of my analysis and revealed new interpretations of, and relationships between, nodes and subnodes. Through this process, I was

able to move out of the constraints of mere lists (Silverman, 2003), to the step where truly significant findings began to emerge as I not only saw the connections between responses but the frequency of responses related to a particular issue. This is where I began to make sense of the findings.

6th Reading: Finding the Findings – During this reading of participant responses, I sought particular quotes that addressed the significant findings gleaned from the node-map. Over 300 quotes were read again and reorganized under emerging findings.

In addition to the analysis of participant interviews described above, I examined documents and observation notes according to the same guiding analysis criteria and questions. These documents and notes were examined against the set of nodes, sub-nodes, and findings that emerged from the interviews. Meaningful statements were drawn from documents to understand the sociopolitical context and landscape of racial diversity issues in Utah.

I will also note that between the fifth and sixth readings of participant responses, I contacted each of the participants to engage in member checking. I pulled a few examples of quotes and described my interpretation. In nearly all cases, participants felt that my interpretation was "right," "appropriate," "correct," or "fine." A few times, participants added comments to the issue being discussed. Participants were also comfortable with the way I masked their, and their institutions', identities.

Data analysis and data representation are difficult processes for any qualitative researcher because our lenses are constantly changing. Dey (1993) said that qualitative researchers often "learn by doing" data analysis (p. 6). My data analysis process mirrored what Creswell (2007) described as the "data analysis spiral" (p. 150). This process is not

linear but rather circles back around again and again through various analytic levels. On each pass, new lenses and interpretations surfaced. Throughout my analysis, I constantly revisited Polkinghorne's (1989) argument that the "reader of the report should come away with the feeling that I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that" (p. 46).

One of the factors that significantly influences data analysis and presentation is the researcher's background. In order for readers to understand the multiple layers of my analysis, it is important to understand my background, the development of my epistemology or way of knowing, and my researcher positionality. By being explicit with what I, as the researcher, brought to the table, I hope readers can understand my lens as another layer of contextual analysis.

Researcher Biography, Epistemology, and Positionality

My interest in this research topic stems from my own journey to understand identity, culture, and context as I navigate various personal, educational, spiritual, and professional spaces. In a study like this, it is important for me to be transparent with readers and self-reflexive about my history, upbringing, biases, assumptions, and lenses of subjectivity. Just as I sought to place and understand participant responses in the context of their surroundings and life experiences, I hope that readers could situate this study in the context of inquiry from which it was born. By: (1) outlining key navigational experiences from my past; (2) highlighting the significant influencers (people, experiences, dialogue) in my life; and (3) situating my various lenses and identities relative to my position as researcher, I believe readers of this study will be able to understand more clearly how I have approached my research.

My Search for Identity

The journey to understand my own racial and ethnic backgrounds has primarily been an exploration of identity. I have been exposed to diverse influences (cultural, racial, educational, religious, geographical) that have not only impacted my personal narrative but have constantly caused me to refine conceptions of my identity(ies). In this exploration of identity, I have found my voice and have also been empowered to articulate and label my experiences in ways that are authentic to me.

I grew up in southern California with supportive parents who valued religion, education, discipline, hard work, and the development of talents. My mother is a strong Hawaiian/Japanese woman from the small farming town of Kohala, on the big island of Hawaii. Her father is Japanese and lived in Hawaii during the infamous Pearl Harbor attacks. He and my grandmother did not want their children to "waste time" learning cultural performance traditions (song and dance) but rather focused on developing a strong work ethic in the taro patch (a marshland where the taro root grows). My mother was raised as member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS). This upbringing in a strictly defined religious environment, coupled with the discipline of Hawaiian/Japanese culture caused my mother to fixate on family image in her parenting. This is to say that she was often more concerned with how we were perceived as children (according to behavior, grades, respect) than connecting with us on a personal level (a style that she wishes she had changed as she reflects on her parenting now). After completing her master's degree in education counseling, she started working in the Los Angeles Unified School District where she remained for over 30 years (as a counselor, dean, and principal). She was an administrator in her professional life as well as her personal life.

My father (Filipino/Spaniard) immigrated to the United States when he was 24 and painted his way across the United States with his artist visa. He created artwork, then sold

his paintings to buy new art supplies and earn travel money. He won over my mother in Los Angeles with his renaissance abilities in architecture, fine art painting, singing, guitar, public speaking and a host of other charismatic qualities. With my mother the realist and disciplinarian, my father was the dreamer, often encouraging his three children to dream big, network, and build an array of talents so that the doors of opportunity would never close. With most of his family impoverished in the Philippines, my father made sure to take the downtrodden into our home. Throughout my childhood, we housed a number of "aunties" and "uncles" or people my dad met who needed a place to stay, some food, money or other provisions that would get them back on their feet. He communicated his ideologies of hope stemming from both a belief in the American Dream and Reagan conservatism. He promoted meritocracy but with an eye towards compassion and service. He often whispered motivational messages to my siblings and me as he tucked us in to bed. While my mother worked, my father stayed at home, painted and helped us develop artistic talents. He sometimes attended LDS church with us but would then attend Catholic mass with his own congregation.

My siblings and I always felt a bit like outsiders when we gathered with our extended families. Although my parents made no attempt to teach us either Hawaiian or Tagalog, they did try to expose us to our cultural heritages. During a number of summers in our youth, we traveled to Hawaii to spend time with our relatives on the big island and Oahu. We gathered with our Filipino relatives every holiday. We often felt that we were not Hawaiian enough for our cousins in Hawaii and we could not laugh at the jokes in Tagalog with our cousins from the Philippines who had moved to Los Angeles. Already, at a young age, I was wrestling with issues of authenticity, identity, and not feeling like I had a cultural place.

This exploration of identity was influenced by my schooling and social experiences as well. I attended a predominantly white and Jewish middle school for 3 years. After attending 21 Bat Mitzvahs (girls), Bar Mitzvahs (boys), and B'nai Mitzvahs (twin boy and girl), I decided that I wanted to be a Jewish white boy. Even though my motives were purely financial (my peers received a lot of money at their coming of age parties), there was something developing in my mind associating riches, power, and prestige with the white community. While all my friends moved on to the higher achieving, richer high school, I attended the "ghetto" high school because my mother wanted to follow the school boundary rules. My high school had about 2,000 students with students of color representing 93% of the student body. I navigated the conversations of not being Latino, or being too friendly to be "urban" or "Flip" (Filipino). Most of my friends self-identified as Chicana/o. I played sports, got involved in graffiti art and hung out with friends. Once again, I found myself wearing multiple hats as I attended club meetings, AP and honors classes, and sports practices. I bounced from clique to clique and group to group without ever fully feeling membership in any one group with the exception of three friends (one from India and two Filipino-Americans). We were the only four to play sports, go to parties, and be in Honors classes our senior year.

After attending a multicultural summer program at Brigham Young University (BYU), where I made friends with nearly 100 potential students of color, my mother heavily encouraged me to enroll and she submitted my application for me. She wanted me to attend for religious reasons and I wanted to attend to see my summer program friends. My siblings had attended BYU; a large, private, LDS religious institution in Utah with few students of color. I was surprised to receive scholarships both for my art as well as my racial status. In

many spaces, I was treated as the exotic one and the spokesperson for people with my same racial identities.

I stopped my university studies to serve a 2-year religious mission in Barranquilla, Colombia. Aside from the spiritual and life maturity gained, the exposure to, and immersion in, a new cultural lens and language helped formulate my first desires to advocate for people in a way that validated their unique cultural narratives. Through a newly acquired language, I learned new ways of expressing my thoughts and viewing the world. I gained insights into new histories, Colombian national pride, and the perceptions of American life. I also wrestled with new perspectives on power, privilege, and poverty.

Upon returning to university studies, I began immersing myself in cultural spaces, circles, and experiences. I joined a multicultural performing group, cultural clubs and began volunteering with projects involving the Latino community and neighboring Native American reservations. I worked as a student employee in the multicultural center assisting students of color with educational issues including financial support, mentoring, tutoring, and university involvement. Throughout my undergraduate years, these cultural activities continued to influence my inner dialogue concerning career, life work, and identity.

My wife and children have also been major influences on my exploration of authentic identities. My wife grew up on the Navajo reservation with a single mother who is Diné (Navajo). Her father, who left while she and her twin brother were in the womb, is Evenk (an indigenous tribe in Siberia) and currently resides in Mongolia. Ever since our early dating, my wife and I discussed the importance of preserving culture. We have entertained the thought of being immersed in Hawaii or the Navajo nation for a sustained period of time, but we currently count Utah as home and seek opportunities for cultural connections whenever possible. We travel to her hometown on Navajo lands at least once a

year and attend a Native American LDS congregation 25 miles from our home (a deliberate departure from the traditional geographical boundary congregation across the street from our home). I participate in a Polynesian performing group and gather with Pacific Islander friends to talk story, kanikapila (play music), and most importantly, eat good food. My boys are in hoop dance lessons while my wife continues the traditional Navajo art of weaving on her loom in our home. We feel it is important for our children to connect with their relatives and understand their own histories so that they can be proud of their heritages, learn to be navigators of new spaces, and approach difference as an asset rather than a tool to divide. Each of our children have Hawaiian first names and Navajo middle names. We talk to them about the meanings and origins of their names. Through the lenses of both father and husband, I constantly visit and revisit my role as an advocate for the narratives, stories, perspectives, and experiences of individuals and communities of color. This, in part, is to buttress my children against any societal scripts that tell them they do not belong: scripts that force my children to choose to be a pilgrim or an Indian for Thanksgiving; scripts that paint other communities of color as deficit or negative such as immigration dialogues; and scripts that do not show many leaders of various industries who look like them. I want my children to not only succeed in their pursuit of happiness but to be aware of the privileges and inequities in our society and to feel a sense of responsibility to advocate for underserved communities.

For the first 6 years of my professional life at Utah Valley University, I worked in the development and delivery of services for underrepresented students and communities (primarily low-income, first-generation college bound students and students of color) through federal programs such as Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, and GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs). I developed a

passion for working with students and parents who: did not believe they deserved to go to college; could not afford college; and/or could not see the direct benefit or relevancy of college. I began to take note of how certain student communities were framed, tracked, and treated. During this same time, I pursued and completed a Masters of Education degree in Education Leadership and Foundations. While I valued the overall education, I was not drawn to any strong intellectual or scholarly perspective or discourse community. Upon being hired to develop and implement the university's Latino Initiative, I began my PhD program at the University of Utah. It is here that I not only received the language to label and name my experiences but learned to articulate the way I viewed the world—or, in other words, my budding epistemology.

Developing Epistemologies

I echo the argument made by Ladson-Billings (2003) when she reaffirmed her conception of epistemology as a "system of knowing" rather than the traditional view that it is simply a "way of knowing" (p. 399). To strengthen her analysis, she suggested that a historical distinction is made between the literary genres emerging from different cultural roots. Some literary works are recognized as literature while others are deemed folklore. Of this distinction, Ladson-Billings stated, "Not surprisingly, the literature of peoples of color is more likely to fall into the folklore category. As a consequence, folklore is seen as less rigorous, less scholarly, and, perhaps, less culturally valuable than literature" (p. 399).

Epistemologies, then, have a more complex genealogy than the extent of one's own experiences. Our worldview, or how we individually view the world, is influenced not only by what we consciously experience but how the dominant system, in which we live, views the world. Ladson-Billings (2003) further argued:

> The process of developing a worldview that differs from the dominant worldview requires active intellectual work on the part of the knower, because schools, society, and the structure and production of knowledge are designed to create individuals who internalize the dominant worldview and knowledge production and acquisition processes. The hegemony of the dominant paradigm makes it more than just another way to view the world—it claims to be the only legitimate way to view the world. (p. 399)

This important foundation and insight presented by Ladson-Billings (2003) helps persons and communities of color understand the complexity of and disconnect between our unique perspectives and the dominant paradigm many of us have grown up with.

As I have read more about the experiences of persons of color, I have had moments of connection with narratives that I thought were unique to me, not acceptable, and therefore, hidden. These moments have been empowering. I have, in turn, shared my experiences and perspectives and have had other individuals of color express personal connection with the way I viewed things that might counter the dominant discourse or worldview. With new language and affirmation of narrative, I have also looked back and interpreted life experiences in ways that made me understand why I believe what I do and why I reacted in the ways that I did.

In this particular phase of my journey to understand identity, authenticity, and epistemology, I appreciate the early work by W. E. B. Du Bois (1953), who proposed the notion of double consciousness or the feeling of the divided self between two worlds. This introduction to critical theories challenged the norms and accepted truths of the dominant paradigm. It also gave way to later development of more or multiple perspectives than the Black/white binary. Gloria Anzaldúa (2007) explored her "Borderland" identities as a *mestiza*, or someone with indigenous Aztec blood roots who has moved from a Mexican space to an American one. She described her conflict as an inner war:

> Cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all three cultures and their value systems, *la mestiza* undergoes a struggle of flesh, a

> struggle of borders, an inner war…Like others having or living in more than one culture, we get multiple, often opposing messages. The coming together of two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference causes *un choque*, a cultural collision. (p. 100)

Meyers Bahr (2003) discussed the experiences of Viola Martinez as a "California Piute" and the "converging paths" of culture and space she found herself in while growing up. Such experiences included shedding her native culture at an Indian boarding school, pursuing a college degree, and working at a Japanese American internment camp during World War II. These experiences, and others, caused Viola to constantly reframe her identities, loyalties, and realities.

Turner (2002) argued that these explorations of the space in-between are examples of liminality or *rites de passage* (transition rites). Turner suggested that persons pass through three phases as they transition to new experiences: separation, margin, and reaggregation. He continued:

> The first phase, separation, comprises symbolic behavior signifying the detachment of the individual or the group from an earlier fixed point in the social structure or from an established set of cultural conditions. During the intervening liminal period, the state of the ritual subject becomes ambiguous, neither here nor there, betwixt and between all fixed points of classification; he passes through a symbolic domain that has few or none of the attributes of this past or coming state. In the third phase the passage is consummated and the initiant re-enters the social structure, often, but not always at a higher status level. (p. 96)

The concepts of "dual consciousness" and "liminality," while born from different disciplines (social psychology and anthropology respectively), inform the exploration and complexity of identity.

As a person of mixed racial and cultural heritages, I find tremendous value in "multiple consciousness" or the recognition that each person brings unique and valuable perspectives to the discourse of society (Ladson-Billings, 2003). I find my epistemological

lens in this exploration of multiple consciousness and my study stems from my recognition of such in others.

Among the many factors that have influenced my epistemological research lens, I highlight four that have directly impacted my approach to this study: (1) my professional experiences as educator and advocate; (2) my introduction to, and engagement with the CRT discourse community; (3) the influence of my faith on my commitment to advocacy; and (4) my cultural and family traditions of storytelling. Although I have touched upon each of these briefly, in the following I more explicitly outline how they influence my approach to research.

First, most of my professional work has focused on providing greater access, opportunities, and support for students from underrepresented communities (students of color, first-generation, low-income) to higher education. Through this work, I have had the privilege of visiting and talking with thousands of underrepresented students and their parents or guardians, most of whom are persons of color, about educational and life goals as well as cultural, social, and financial barriers to higher education. In these conversations, I often heard students and parents of color express (in English, Spanish, or Pidgin—a Hawaiian-based style of English) that they were trying to "learn" how to "fit" in the classroom, school, school system, community, parental committee, etc. This suggested that they recognized a difference between their racial/cultural narrative and the dominant narrative. This also suggested some desire to successfully walk in both/multiple cultural worlds or an exploration of multiple consciousness. Over the years, I developed a distaste for the ways many educators use deficit language when referring to students of color. These same educators talk about achievement gaps by framing them from a dominant, meritocratic perspective. I also developed an admiration for educators who recognize multiple

perspectives in their leadership, and actively seek to reframe traditional (dominant) approaches to addressing achievement and opportunity gaps.

Another major influence in the development of my epistemological researcher lens was my introduction to Critical Race Theory. The tenets of CRT resonated with my observations, experiences, and feelings about the racial realities for communities of color. CRT scholars provided language and a framework for understanding my life experiences in a way that I either had not explored previously or had thought about but quickly pushed aside due to my fear of being overly sensitive. As I reflect upon the experiences with and influences of family, faith, and friends through a CRT lens, I recognize certain assumptions, biases, and privileges I bring to the table that have been personally challenging. I have had to wrestle with certain disconnects between my own privileged experiences and an increased social consciousness. Such inner dialogues have included honest assessments of my father's perception of the American Dream and Reagan Conservatism, religious underpinnings of a search for truth and a religious culture that can be exclusionary, my association of wealth and prestige with the white community, and the superficial romanticizing of non-white culture in a predominantly white space.

In my approach to this study, I utilize a CRT perspective that views racism, privilege, and power as present in our societal institutions, including higher education, leading to inequities for students and professionals of color. I assume that achievement gaps in higher education between students of color and white students are due, in part, to a lack of administrators of color in positions of interest and authority and who are committed to creating campuses that are equitable for all students.

Third, much of my identity has been, and continues to be, influenced by my faith and my declaration as a Christian. From the time I was very young, I remember learning

about, and trying to live according to, Christian virtues, values and principles (e.g., charity, service, honesty, etc.). The Mormon faith I claim, or that which comes with membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is a rooted in Christianity. That said, there are doctrines, practices, and worship behaviors that are unique to the LDS faith. Juxtaposed against the tenets of CRT, LDS doctrine and the structure of the religious practices present some perceived tensions for Latter-day Saint women and persons of color. For example, in the LDS church, only males may hold and actively participate in the use of the priesthood, or authority of God. Until 1978, males of color were not allowed to hold such priesthood. A glimpse of the history of leaders (prophets and apostles) will show that few males of color have been called to such a capacity. I will not use this academic paper to justify harmony within the apparent tensions between the examples above and Critical Race Theory. I will offer, however, my own exploration and wrestle with the tenets of CRT and their congruency with the basic Christian beliefs housed within my faith. I stress here, that this is not an academic pursuit to argue the merits of my faith or some perfect alignment between it and the Critical Race Theoretical perspective. I simply offer such an analysis to reveal another layer of my worldview and to demonstrate a critical self-reflection of all aspects of my life, not just those that might be most academically expedient, convenient or harmless.

One of the primary beliefs that has influenced my worldview is the idea that we are all created equal. Not equal in life circumstances, wealth, health, or opportunities but equal in worth. I believe that one of the fundamental drivers of the CRT movement is to create a sense of equality or combat inequalities because of this basic assumption. Derrick Bell's (2002) own religious exploration of deep seating faith, Godly love, and guiding belief influenced his approach to fighting racial inequities. Many faiths espouse this equality of worth doctrine and some believe in the doctrine that we are children of a God who has a

perfect, or whole love for each of us. My attraction to the CRT discourse community is due to my Christian faith and the desire to validate, listen to, and create opportunities for, those who have historically not been heard or not been valued as being of worth. I also feel a sense of calling to use the privileged experiences I have, and spaces of power I enter, to create opportunities for marginalized communities whom I consider my brothers and sisters, including low-income and first-generation white communities. As I approach my profession, parenthood, neighborhood, education, and research, I try to follow Christian philosophies of inclusion, love, and empathy. This approach is an extension of what I would call my gospel epistemology or the way I view the world through spiritual lenses. However, I recognize that any declaration of an organized religious affiliation may suggest a more dogmatic approach to life than simply living by a personal code of spirituality or ethics. I understand that my simple declaration as a Mormon may discredit my approach to inclusion, access, and social justice if the term itself symbolizes for many, a white, male-dominated, oppressive institution. I would hope that readers recognize my openness and honesty concerning the many layers of identity I hold and understand that I continue to wrestle with issues of privilege, power, whiteness, and marginality associated with such layers. (See Appendix F.)

The fourth influence on my researcher epistemology is the cultural and familial traditions of storytelling. I deliberately chose to begin my dissertation with a part of my story in an effort to forefront the power of stories. Storytelling is an important part of CRT work (Ladson-Billings, 1998) and is also consistent with my Hawaiian heritage. As is the case with many indigenous communities, Hawaiian traditions and histories are passed from generation to generation orally. Even the very speech pattern when Hawaiians gather together is referred to as "Talk Story," or the pattern of talking over each other in a

communal way (Au, 1993; Gay, 2000). It is important to recognize that I perceive the process of storytelling not only as a historical and cultural connecting point, but as a valid research endeavor. As I pass information to another through storytelling, I not only recognize the historical absence of my voice and the voices of my communities of color, but I achieve authenticity as far as presenting data in a way that is most comfortable with my cultural narratives. The process of storytelling is not only employed as a means of preserving history but to communicate truths that are important to certain peoples and cultures.

Insider and Outsider

In qualitative studies, researcher positionality is vital to understand how data is gathered, interpreted, and represented. Lincoln (1995) offered this analysis of researcher positionality:

> Positionality, or standpoint epistemology, recognizes the poststructural, postmodern argument that texts, any texts, are always partial and incomplete; socially, culturally, historically, racially, and sexually located; and can therefore never represent any truth except those truths that exhibit the same characteristics….Detachment and author objectivity are barriers to quality, not insurance of having achieved it. (p. 280)

Lincoln's words affirm the need to acknowledge situational and contextual lenses of research and challenge the positivist assumption that objectivity defines rigor and quality. By investing in an exploration of my positionality, I augment not only the transparency of subjectivity, but the rigor and trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln, 1995; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). This exploration, while valuable to my study, can be a complicated process—especially with the added dimension of engaging as a participant as well as researcher.

I found Ladson-Billings' (2000) examination of researcher positionality to capture how I have situated myself within this study:

> Thus CRT asks the critical qualitative researcher to operate in a self-revelatory mode, to acknowledge the double (or multiple) consciousness in which she is operating. My decision to deploy a critical race theoretical framework in my scholarship is intimately linked to my understanding of the political and personal stake I have in the education of Black children. All of my "selves" are invested in this work—the self that is a researcher, the self that is a parent, the self that is a community member, the self that is a Black woman. (p. 272)

I, too, share this investment of my multiple "selves" in this work. It is the only way I can feel authentic in research that addresses the education of students of color. I do recognize, however that my transparent and self-reflective investment can also present some challenges due to similarities I share with participants, or, in other words, my insider/outsider positionality.

Like the participants, I am an administrator of color in a Utah higher education institution. I recognize the complexity that exists with insider positionality (Chavez, 2008; Merriam et al., 2001). Insider positionality is a lens of caution to those researchers who share characteristics, cultural nuances, language, symbolic meanings, affiliations, and beliefs with participants in the study. Some characteristics of insider positionality include: an assumption of cooperation; finishing participants' sentences; avoiding asking penetrating and challenging questions; and assumed understanding of jargon and politics without exploration (Merriam et al., 2001). Due to my own identity as a senior administrator of color at a Utah higher education institution, I sought opportunities to ask the participants follow-up and clarifying questions to guard against the assumption that I understood what they were talking about or that we shared a common understanding of certain jargon.

One of the ways I explicitly problematized certain assumptions was in the types of questions I asked concerning participant definitions of race, racism, social justice, and

advocacy. I approached questions with genuine inquiry and tried to not lead participants towards answers that I believed or hoped they would give. This was demonstrated when I asked a combination of questions regarding advocacy after participants' spoke of race-based achievement gaps: (1) do you believe there is a need for race-based advocacy; (2) can you define what advocacy means to you; and (3) according to your definition of advocacy, would you consider yourself an advocate for students of color?

Another issue that could have affected my insider/outsider positionality was the assumption that participants would provide me with open and authentic answers because I was a fellow administrator of color and experienced many of the same pressures they did. At the beginning of each interview, I discussed my background and the purpose of the study and engaged them in a discussion about the importance of being candid and open. I believe these preinterview conversations helped create spaces that were comfortable and safe for open responses. Participants told me after the interviews that they felt very comfortable with me; enough to be quite candid in their responses to my questions.

Just as I constantly gauged my insider status, I was cognizant of my outsider positionality as well. I did not have long histories of trust with most participants and needed to monitor the atmosphere of familiarity that was created. Although we are all administrators of color, I did not assume that I understood their unique experiences and perspectives. I recognized that I was younger than all of the participants in the study; thus creating an outsider status based on perceived experience and maturity. A few participants mentioned my relative youth but my age did not seem to create any barriers for participant engagement and openness. Where I may not have fully understood participants' early life experiences, I asked questions to clarify context of the situation.

As an insider and outsider, I recognize my racialized experiences, biases, and assumptions that are manifested as part of this study. I wrestle with memories of leaders of color, whom I have admired in the past for their advocacy, voice, passion, and work, and who left me disappointed as they climbed the administrative ladder. I have also seen instances where advocates for social justice, decided not to advance in their careers in order to maintain the integrity of their advocacy. I define a person with integrity in this case as someone who did not compromise their value of advocacy to move into positions of greater authority and influence. I admire such people for their decisions and yet I believe that their influence on greater societal changes for equity has been limited because of the decisions they made to stay true to their definitions of advocacy.

Finally, my insider/outsider status was intensified by bringing myself more fully into the study with what Tierney (1998) and Theoharis (2007) called a more authentic approach of autoethnography. In autoethnography, the researcher acts as participant and gains insights into the way his or her story gets interpreted, analyzed and negotiated. This was a valuable lens and approach for me to employ as I sought to be sensitized to the perspectives of participants by becoming one. Theoharis stated that he could not consider leaving his own experience out of the study since his was a shared and valued voice. I also appreciated Chris Suurtamm's (1999) recognition of his subjectivity as qualitative researcher:

> Being aware of my subjective self means being aware of the qualities that will enhance my research as well as the beliefs I have about mathematics education that could skew my interpretation of the data if I were not aware of them…the way in which we see and respond to a situation, and how we interpret what we see, will bear our own signature. This unique signature is not a liability but a way of providing individual insight into a situation. (p. 34)

I have explored my researcher biography, epistemology, and positionality in a deliberate effort to frame the subjectivity with which I approach this study. In doing so, I hope readers connect with the authenticity of my narratives, lenses, and research agendas.

More importantly, I hope to represent participant responses in a way that communicates both the common, collective similarities and the unique, individual differences. I have also stated my passions towards, fears of, and commitment to, engaging in this social justice scholarship.

Trustworthiness

An important aspect of qualitative research is the expectation of rigor or strategies that establish trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative researchers must address questions regarding constructs such as validity, credibility, dependability, confirmability, and reliability, thus enhancing trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba). In order to accomplish this, Lincoln and Guba proposed a number of procedures that have since been expanded by other scholars (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maxwell, 2005): triangulation; engaging in reflexivity; member checking; prolonged engagement in the field; collaboration; peer debriefing; searching for alternative explanations; and soliciting feedback from those familiar with the setting.

In an effort to demonstrate the trustworthiness of my research endeavor, I briefly discuss three processes I employed: (1) triangulation; (2) member checking; and (3) researcher reflexivity. I also explore Lincoln's (1995) notion of "community as [an] arbiter of quality" (p. 280) or as an emerging measure of trustworthiness. By doing this, I hope to not only demonstrate the rigor and validity of my research but its usefulness as well (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Triangulation of data is defined as "an attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint" (Cohen & Manion, 2000, p. 286). By utilizing multiple data sources and cross analyzing multiple texts (transcriptions, documents, observer notes), I arrived at interpretations and

representations of data that I felt were richer and more complete than the use of only one research method or source could produce. Triangulation has enhanced the depth of insights gained by providing greater layers of context, analysis, and narrative. This improved the rigor and depth of findings of my research.

Another strategy I utilized to increase research trustworthiness is the process of member checking. After I conducted interviews, I followed up by checking in with each participant concerning my representation and analysis of their responses. This process enhanced research by: allowing participants to clarify responses or correct errors in representation; providing an opportunity to summarize findings; and allowing participants to provide additional information that might be useful to the study (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). I communicated my effort to appropriately represent participant voices while masking their identities. The process was time consuming, especially for the elite participants I interviewed. To encourage participant comfort and open and honest responses, I shared my commitment to masking identifying information (i.e., institutional and participant descriptions, pseudonyms) with participants before, during, and after the interviews. Member checking demonstrated a commitment to thorough and rigorous research that, although more time intensive, provided a greater sense of comfort (for participants and researcher) with the way participants were represented.

The third way I tried to enhance trustworthiness was in my researcher reflexivity. Nightingale and Cromby (1999) defined researcher reflexivity by stating that it:

> Requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgment of the impossibility of remaining outside of one's subject matter while conducting research. Reflexivity then, urges us to explore the ways in which a researcher's involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such research. (p. 228)

In my approach to this study, I was committed to demonstrating reflexivity on the influence of my researcher experiences and lenses to the research process. Early reflection is evident in the previous section outlining my biography, epistemology, and positionality. I then break from explicit self-reflection in chapters four and five in my attempt to present participant responses without centering my voice. In Chapter VI, I close with a reflection about the research process, findings, and my goals moving forward. I hope it is apparent to readers that I have been rigorously engaged with, and critically self-conscious of, my role as researcher.

Finally, I am aware of the emerging notion of research as "communitarian" (Lincoln, 1995, p. 280). This is the idea that the evaluation of research quality should measure the extent to which the research takes place in, is addressed to, and serves the purposes of a certain community. Savage (1988) argued that quality research is that which "integrates research, critical reflection, and action" (p. 13). Palmer (1987) challenged the desire for objectivity in research as a primary reason for the growing disconnect between the academy and the community and the desire for "objectification of our social relations" (p. 22). Lincoln, Savage, and Palmer all recognized the importance of critical research to incite people to action towards the benefit of communities. The communities I hope to move to action include higher education administrators, faculty, policy makers, and communities marginalized in higher education environments. The actions I seek to inspire are focused on closing achievement, opportunity, and representation gaps for students and educators of color. This focus on connecting my research with a community need strengthens the usefulness, and therefore, trustworthiness, of my study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Triangulation, member checking, reflexivity, and community action are all aspects of my study deliberately included to strengthen the trustworthiness of the research. If findings

reflect the reality of the experience, the strategies I use should move my research towards that end. The more invested I am in the processes above, the greater the validity of the data gathered, analyzed, and represented and the greater the match between presented findings and reality, another reflection of trustworthiness (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Ethical and Political Considerations

One of my primary goals in the research process was to create an atmosphere and environment where participants felt that they could give authentic and candid responses. In addition to obtaining approval for the study from the University of Utah IRB, and due to the potentially sensitive topics addressed in the study, I took into account a number of ethical and political considerations to achieve this goal: (1) researcher transparency or honesty with participants concerning the purposes of the study; (2) participant position, status, and anonymity; and (3) reciprocity between researcher and participants. All of these factors overlap in that they address the relationship between me and participants. I recognized that this study was not without its risks (mostly social and professional) for participants. Following each consideration, I discuss my efforts to minimize such risks.

Marshall and Rossman (2006) suggested that researchers often vary in their levels of "*revealedness* or the extent to which the participants know that there is a study going on" (p. 73). While some researchers view secrecy and deceit as necessary tools to achieve complete authenticity (see discussion of complete secrecy vs. complete disclosure in Taylor and Bogdan, 1984), I agreed with Patton's (2002) advice to employ "full and complete disclosure" (p. 273). Patton continued, "People are seldom deceived or reassured by false or partial explanations—at least not for long" (p. 273). As a researcher-participant, I sought honesty and openness, and I felt I needed to deliver the same. Throughout the study, I

answered any questions participants had concerning the purposes, analysis, and presentation of the study.

Another ethical and political consideration was participants' position as power holders and senior administrators. Since the population for this study was small and distinguishable due to racial description, there was potential for participants to not be completely honest in their responses for fear of retaliation or other political and career threatening reactions. One of the guiding philosophies of this study was to "do no harm". Some participants demonstrated political polish or savvy in their responses due to habits of diplomacy stemming from their position and status. To guide his study, Theoharis (2007) argued that researchers should use "certain care for research subjects when the research examines deeply personal experiences and when the work impinges on people in power" (p. 227). One way I alleviated participant anxiety was to conduct the research in a way that enhanced participant anonymity. This was demonstrated by making sure that participant names were not recorded and that all identifying information was deleted from transcriptions. I kept all recordings and transcripts coded and password protected on my computer. I informed participants that in the analysis and writing of the report, I would use pseudonyms for their names and make every effort to mask identities and institutions without sacrificing the richness of experience and data.

Member checking was another way to alleviate participants' questions and concerns about how they were represented. When revisiting the transcribed and analyzed data with participants, we discussed and determined whether or not I captured their responses accurately and in a way that masked their identity. In some cases, I made adjustments, but in most cases participants felt that I masked their identities and represented their responses well.

The third ethical consideration I highlight is "reciprocity," which Creswell (2007) described as "giving back to participants for their time and efforts in our projects" (p. 44). Creswell's definition suggests some form of reimbursement for participation. For my study, I preferred Lincoln's (1995) focus on reciprocity between researcher and those being researched as one of trust, sharing and mutuality. In their assessment of research with communities of color, CRT scholars Yosso and Solórzano (2005) advised researchers to "take the responsibility to build reciprocity in to our research, teaching, and policy so that we do not attempt to disrespectfully 'mine' these culturally wealthy communities" (p. 127). The sense of reciprocity I brought to this research process was an attempt to provide a space for, and represent, participants' voices accurately and appropriately. By validating their narratives, stories, and experiences, I offered an opportunity to inform and enrich the literature with the valuable perspectives of participants in an effort to create better educational and life opportunities for our communities of color. Through this research process, I hope participants view me as an advocate for them as administrators of color.

Participant Representation

The issue of representation is, and should be, a complex journey within every qualitative research process. Riessman (1993) invited researchers to recognize the difficulty and sensitivity of representing another's experiences. "Investigators do not have direct access to another's experiences. We deal with ambiguous representations of it—talk, text, interaction, and interpretation" (p. 8).

I found the difficulty and tensions associated with representation especially acute with this study. One of its most complex components was the effort to represent participant voices in a way that was authentic to them, yet protected their identities. This was complicated by the small study sample size. The question of identity protection came up in

nearly every interview with responses reflecting a range of comfort with using identifying information. One participant said, "I think it's important that you use my ethnic identity so that people know where I'm coming from." Another stated, "I'm not sure how you're going to mask our identities, that's going to be very difficult." One said, "I've been very blunt with you and I trust that you're gonna know what to do with the information and treat it with respect and confidence…although you can—I mean, you know, you'll figure out how to write about it." A few others expressed concern but said that they "trusted" me to use the data wisely.

Throughout this research endeavor, I wrestled with the process of representation more than any other aspect of the study. It was extremely important for me to gain insights into, and understand some of the historical background of each participant to better contextualize their responses. What I found were rich narratives full of experiences that shaped not only how participants viewed the world and self-identified, but how they internalized their roles as senior administrators.

On one hand, I wanted to fully describe participants' backgrounds to provide greater understanding for readers as to how each participant experienced his/her life. I thought this thick description of each participant (without using their names) would be most authentic in representing their voices—the primary motive for centering senior administrators of color in this study in the first place. On the other hand, participants are high profile, high positioned individuals who responded frankly in the interview process and are somewhat easy to identify since there are only 15 senior administrators of color found in the eight USHE institutions. I explored the possibility of creating a composite counter-story but found the process somewhat limiting in presenting the findings most clearly.

It is interesting to note that the difficulty with representation speaks to the very heart of my study; that being a sense of voice and freedom to express perspectives from communities of color and the political or social ramifications that might accompany a counter narrative to the majoritarian story. In light of this tension and out of respect for my colleagues of color, I have provided a collective participant profile. I ask the reader to forgive my omission of many rich details of participant backgrounds and experiences. I have selected a pseudonym for each participant to use with some direct quotes. At times, I have used quotes that include unique participant descriptors but I have made every effort to exclude descriptors if I feel the information would put a participant at risk. When I see that the quote or response has the potential of negative backlash, I will simply refer to the speaker as one of the "participants."

I also use brackets in quotes when I replace a specific or identifying proper noun with a generic noun. For example, I have replaced institutional names found in participant responses with the generic use of [institution]. When participants refer to their colleagues by name or specific positions, I use the terms [administrator] or [administrative position]. I do this to protect participant identity and represent participant responses in a way that was acceptable to participants.[28] It is my hope that readers, and especially participants, will feel the authenticity and richness of responses and experiences shared.

Limitations

Limitations are present in every research project. Patton (2002) stated, "There are no perfect research designs" (p. 223). This study had a number of limitations: (1) content limitations or literature communities I did not engage; (2) participant response limitations

[28] During my member checking phone calls, all participants felt comfortable with my use of brackets and general terms to replace identifying words.

due to the sensitive nature of the issues discussed; and (3) researcher positionality limitations. Through the following explanation of limitations, readers can see that I recognize the parameters of my own research as well as its complexity.

First, the parameters of this study were set around participants who fit certain criteria. I interviewed senior administrators of color in Utah higher education institutions. These criteria focused my study according to race, position, location, and institution-type. Alone, each of these criteria have been researched extensively; however, collectively they presented opportunities for new perspectives and data. I chose the combination of criteria based on holes in the literature, my current professional situation, and interest in local higher education reform.

The content limitation also extends to the lens I have chosen to analyze my findings. Although one of a number of critical theories Critical Race Theory focuses primarily on the racialized experiences of individuals and communities. Critical Race Theorists recognize the intersectionality of identities, yet do not center the tenets of analysis on gender or sexuality in the same way feminist or queer theorists do. I recognize the ever changing and evolving nature of critical theories (Kinlechoe & McLaren, 2003) but believe that CRT is an appropriate and necessary lens to assess the racialized experiences of administrators of color.

Second, there existed a number of potential process limitations due to the sensitivities associated with issues of race, position, and advocacy. For example, participants may not have provided authentic answers if they felt that their responses might have hurt their careers, relationships, or reputations. If a Native American female administrator was asked about her experiences related to advocacy, she might have declined from providing the true data because of a fear that she would be easily identified by descriptions in the final report. This was also an issue for those who were closely associated with the dialogue on

immigration legislation. They might not have wanted to reveal certain advocacy strategies for fear of retaliation or the potential for counter-strategies that might have emerged if data was transparent. This study also challenged the dominant narrative, deficit language, color-blind ideology, and meritocratic philosophy. There might have been some administrators of color who subscribed to these dominant discourses. The process limitation to the research was that participants might have shut down if they were tired of, or apathetic to discussing the issues of the study. As the researcher, I sought to be sensitive to the way I asked questions and to be prepared for those who might have wanted to deviate from the topic. In asking questions, I balanced between digging for rich information and not offending or interrogating participants. This is why the in-person interview was so important for monitoring participants' reactions and subtle informal cues as they responded to questions.

Finally, as I discussed in the researcher positionality section, my insider/outsider status presented a number of potential limitations (Weis & Fine, 2000). The insider commonalities I shared with participants might have dulled my researcher sharpness due to a temptation to fill in the gaps of participant responses. With this in mind, I maintained some level of insider comfort with participants so that they would be open about socially and professionally sensitive issues. Also, after I established some trust and comfort with participants, I may not have pushed them deeper if I saw that they were uncomfortable with any specific questions. My insider/outsider status may have also been a limitation because I might have assumed that I shared the same understanding about terms as participants. For example, I engaged the participants in a discussion about the terms "advocacy" and "activism" but there are a number of other phrases and terms (some connected to higher education jargon) that I assumed to be mutually understood but may not have been (i.e. social justice, inequities, achievement gaps, and leadership). My young age and relatively

short time in administration was also noted by two participants. At first, their comments seemed to present potential limitations of trust due to the possible belief that they did not want to divulge personal and candid experiences to someone who had not demonstrated years of seasoned administrative or scholarly maturity. As the first interviews continued, however, participants talked about feeling more comfortable with my approach and eventually shared what I perceived to be open and honest responses.

The primary limitations of this study (content, topic sensitivity, and researcher positionality) have been identified not to reveal weaknesses but to help readers understand the intentional scope and parameters I set for the study. By so doing, I hope to enhance readers' understanding of what my study is by explaining what it is not, or where it is limited. It is also an extension of my commitment to improve clarity, transparency, rigor, and reflexivity that, in turn, strengthened my study.

CHAPTER IV

CONTEXT AND NARRATIVES

The purpose of this study was to explore how higher education administrators of color negotiate advocacy for social justice from positions of power and institutional representation. While the interviews revealed numerous interesting data, the primary focus of the findings presented responds directly to my overarching research question and is analyzed from a critical race theoretical lens. As I analyzed data, I: (1) foregrounded issues of race and racism; (2) challenged claims of race neutrality, colorblindness, and meritocracy; (3) drew on contextual and historical data; (4) centered perspectives and voices of persons of color as valid data; and (5) sought information that could lead to liberatory solutions for historically marginalized people.

I present the findings in two chapters. This chapter is focused on the site and participant contexts of the study. Chapter V is where I present the most significant findings as areas of negotiation that face administrators of color who wish to advocate for racial equity. I have chosen to present the findings in this format as a means to situate participant negotiation tensions in the larger contexts of participant narratives and the social landscapes of Utah.

The first section of this chapter is a collective profile of the nine participants. This section is intentionally brief because of my effort to mask participant identities. Each time I sought to add layers of personal context to individual participant profiles, participant anonymity was weakened. I recognize that valuable participant information is hidden by

presenting data in this manner, but my commitment to participants' trust is critical in this study. Next, I present findings that shed light on the legislative and religious contexts within the study site of Utah. I explore legislative rhetoric and analyze participant responses concerning the influence of politics and religion on the statewide discourse of diversity. I conclude this chapter by presenting participant responses as counter-narratives to majoritarian perspectives of race and equity. I did not create counter-stories but rather shared responses that, collectively, presented counter-perspectives to the majoritarian discourse. The significance of these findings is not found in their novelty but rather in the ways they buttress the CRT literature on counter-perspectives of education and society.

Participant Context

Background, Family, and Demographics

Nine senior administrators of color participated in the study. There were three female participants and six male participants. This gender ratio mirrored the overall representation of senior administrators of color (5 female and 10 male). Participants expressed pride in their racial identity and self-identified with various ethnic backgrounds including: African American or Black, Latino or Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and international or foreign-born. Most participants also declared their pride in being American. All participants migrated into Utah and most participants were quick to share that they were "not from Utah." Three of the participants learned English as a second language. Seven out of nine grew up in poor neighborhoods and/or were raised in poverty. In most cases, participants' parents did not attend college but were very supportive of education. Five either had mixed-racial backgrounds or have entered into a mixed-race marriage. Six participants are, or have been, married and the same six all have children. Five of the participants with children expressed a deliberate desire to preserve culture and racial heritage.

Two participants, however, did share that because of their negative childhood experiences with accents, they have not pushed their first language onto their children but have rather promoted English as the language "to be successful."

Out of the nine participants, four self-identified with the Mormon faith or being members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) with three participants self-identifying with other religious or spiritual denominations (Greek orthodox, protestant, catholic) and two participants identifying no religious affiliation. All four of the LDS participants shared that religion influenced their move to Utah. Four of the five participants whose religious persuasions are different from LDS reported being aware of the large LDS population in Utah before they arrived.

Education and Profession

Six of the nine participants hold doctoral degrees while the other three hold master's degrees. All came to Utah for either educational or professional opportunities. All participants work at one of the public higher education institutions in the state of Utah. Participants hold various positions within their institutions of higher education including: vice president, vice provost, dean, assistant vice president, associate dean, executive director, and assistant to the president. They have worked in Utah higher education between eight and 36 years. Four of the participants worked in another industry before working in higher education while five have been in higher education for their entire careers. At some point in their careers, all participants have worked on, or been assigned to, issues of diversity, equity, and/or multiculturalism. At the time of the interviews, only one participant had, as primary responsibility, diversity issues. All participants consider themselves advocates for students and communities of color but varied in the ways they reported such commitment. All

participants believe that their colleagues would consider them advocates for students of color.

The collective profile above provides additional context to understand the group of participants. In Table 6, I list the nine participants with their pseudonyms, gender, and race. During member checking, each participant expressed comfort with their pseudonym and the disclosure of gender and race as the only distinguishing information tied to their pseudonym. Table 6 contains participant pseudonyms as well as their actual gender and race/ethnicity.

International and Domestic Perspectives

One of the glaring variances in the data stemmed from the backgrounds of international participants of color and domestic participants of color. Some international participant responses were similar to their counterparts' but, most of the time, international participants used language that reflected a majoritarian perspective more than domestic participants. The international participants revealed a greater level of subscription to the principles of meritocracy, colorblindness, "treating everyone the same," and the American Dream.

Both international participants expressed an adoption of an American identity. Upon first contact, Sonia stated her ethnicity as white. After I discussed her official university designation as non-white, she reported that she was in fact from another country but had been so used to saying white over the past 30 years that it was a natural response for her. She spoke, with reverence, about her journey to the United States and arrival in a country that "provided so many opportunities for everyone." She said that although she will never stop being [from another country], she feels very "American." Joshua, the other international participant also said, "I may tend to be more American right now instead of

Table 6

Participant Pseudonym, Gender and Ethnicity

Name	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Anthony	Male	Latino/Hispanic
Barbara	Female	Latina/Hispanic
Howard	Male	Black/African American
Irving	Male	Black/African American
Joshua	Male	International
Luke	Male	Pacific Islander
Samantha	Female	African American
Sonia	Female	International
Weston	Male	Black/African American

typical [foreigner]. I think if you're talking about my nationality now and my affinity, then I would say I'm American." He too spoke of the "opportunities" America has to offer that differed from his home country. While sentiments of American pride were not exclusive to international participants, their responses did reveal a sense of reverence for a country that "gives everyone the same opportunities." This view translated into responses that reflected a colorblind or race-neutral view of American education and society.

While a number of similarities exist between the perspectives of international and domestic participants, the findings and follow up phone calls verified subtle and significant differences in the ways they perceived the need for advocacy to address racial inequities. Throughout the presentation of findings, I draw attention to instances where the international and domestic perspectives differ.

Social Justice Advocacy in Higher Education: National Context

Diversity and inclusion are among the hottest topics in the national higher education discourse today. While nearly every institution of higher education can point to a few campus initiatives, offices, or departments as symbolic commitments to diversity, few institutions (and implicitly, institutional leaders) have implemented dramatic changes from habits, policies, and systemic structures found in traditional American academia that often reinforce a narrative of whiteness. Administrators of color find themselves locked in these social and institutional realities and therefore, find any major departures from the norm to be risky endeavors (Harvey, 1999).

While educational administrators work primarily within the scope and purview of their institutions, nationwide rankings and strict accreditation standards often stifle innovation—especially as it relates to inclusion and access. Over the past 10 years, national organizations like the American Council on Education (ACE), the American Association of

Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the College Board, and a host of other think tanks and policy centers have dedicated more attention to issues of diversity. While some recommendations from such studies have been implemented in pockets (departmentally and institutionally), most have remained on the administrative shelves and have not received significant attention from educational leaders. According to Harvey (1999), this avoidance of deliberate administrative advocacy is a product of the nature and systemic traditions of higher education institutions in the United States.

Fisher v. Texas

One of the most contested topics related to diversity in higher education is affirmative action. In 1978, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the University of California at Davis medical school could not hold seats for "Blacks," "Chicanos," "Asians," and "American Indians" as part of their admissions process. This landmark *California v. Bakke* case found such processes to be unconstitutional and affirmed claims of "reverse discrimination" against white individuals.

Twenty-five years later, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the University of Michigan Law School had a compelling interest in promoting class diversity through their admissions processes. The Justices in the *Grutter v. Bollinger* case ruled that these race-conscious admissions process used race as one of many variables considered for admissions and therefore, did not constitute the quota system associated with the *Bakke* case, nor did they award "race" points for automatic entry in undergraduate admissions found in the *Gratz v. Bollinger* ruling.

Now, affirmative action proponents face another suit that could change the landscape of race-conscious admissions processes. In 2008, Abigail Fisher brought a suit

seeking a high court overruling of *Grutter v. Bollinger* or a declaration that the University of Texas admissions policies are not consistent with the *Grutter* decision. Fisher was not admitted to the University of Texas at Austin and felt that Texas' ten percent plan favored minority candidates who were not as "qualified" to be admitted. The Texas Ten-Percent (TTP) plan, created in 1997, guaranteed acceptance into the University of Texas system if students graduated in the top ten percent of their high school graduating class. This innovative admission plan was controversial because of the high numbers of students of color (specifically Black and Latino) who would benefit from being in the top 10% of schools that were perceived to be less competitive and rigorous and had a majority population of students of color. The University of Texas' admissions policy was upheld in the United State District Court (2009) as well as the Fifth Circuit appeal. However, in February 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear the case and did so on October 12, 2012.

Experts believe that the current group of Supreme Court Justices is more conservative and "more skeptical in the use of race admissions" than was the 2003 group (Dervarics, 2012). In his New York Times article, Liptak (2011) stated:

> There is little question that diversity as a legal justification for preferences is at risk. Grutter was decided by a 5-to-4 vote. The author of the majority decision, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, announced her retirement in 2005. Her replacement, Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr., has consistently voted with the court's more conservative justices in major decisions hostile to the use of racial classifications by the government.

Opponents of the *Grutter* decision call for more objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy in admissions processes. Their arguments contend that race-conscious admissions programs are not fair to white students who have "earned" a spot, usually at a prestigious university (Liptak, 2011). This limited view of the need for diversity in higher education adds to the

already tense situation for persons of color who wish to advocate for holistic processes and policies that take into account historical and social factors.

Lee Bollinger, president of Columbia University and the primary defendant for both the *Grutter* and *Gratz* cases while he was president of the University of Michigan, has written and spoken extensively on the importance of race-conscious admissions as a vital step for campus diversity and representation of persons of color in higher education (Bollinger, 2002; 2003; 2007). He contended that as people discuss affirmative action policies and implications, a number of myths or misconceptions permeate the dialogue throughout higher education: (1) race is no longer a significant factor in American life; (2) diversity is good but is optional, not essential; (3) self-segregation hinders all efforts to integrate campuses; (4) race is only considered after the credible criteria are ranked and therefore, nonqualified students of color are admitted; (5) the plus factor given to students of color in the admissions process is too large or too big; (6) we can achieve diversity using other means; and (7) these processes are inherently unfair to white students (2002). These myths stem from a majoritarian backlash against race-recognition in American society and a dismissal of the inherent value and worth of a diverse university community. Bollinger noted, "encountering differences rather than one's mirror image, is an essential part of a good education" (Bollinger, 2002, p. 2).

If national higher education policies recognize historical inequities and create greater access for underrepresented communities, administrators of color can promote policy and passion simultaneously and safely. If such policies do not acknowledge the need for greater diversity and representation in higher education, advocate administrators of color can be seen as, yet again, outsiders and radicals opposed to the dominant narrative. In addition, a concept that is inherently good for a higher education environment, like diversity, will

continue to be framed as an outsider's agenda. In my study, participants were asked to consider their advocacy for social justice against this national backdrop. This chapter and chapter five contain some of their responses.

Site Context: Utah

Political theorist Murray Edelman (1985) asserted that the study of political behavior is, in large part, a study of political speech. Edelman's thesis is that political rhetoric is replete with objective and subjective symbols intended to shape collective thought. Utah has proven to be a sound space to observe Edelman's theory. A glance at Utah legislative activity concerning diversity issues over the past 2 years highlights the use of rhetorical symbols to both affirm the objectivity of Utah systems and create uneasiness within Utah's citizenry concerning growing communities of color.

2011 Legislative Session in Utah

When asked about the current Utah climate regarding issues of diversity, most participants discussed the discouraging legislative rhetoric concerning immigration and anti-affirmative action. In my review of Utah periodicals over the past 2 years, I found numerous articles about immigration, in-state tuition for undocumented students, the DREAM Act, and national "entitlement" programs. While these debates have been replete with racial innuendo, racial slurs, and racially oppressive efforts, I focus on Utah's anti-affirmative action discussion as one example of racial rhetoric that participants noted.

In February 2010, a member of the Utah House of Representatives proposed a bill that would have amended the Utah Constitution to prohibit any preferential treatment in Utah state agencies based on race, gender or ethnicity. The proposal was part of a larger national anti-affirmative action movement led by Ward Connerly. Connerly is a former

California Regent who is most recently known for founding the American Civil Rights Institute, a national organization that opposes affirmative action. For many, he has become the face and leader of the movement against any race-based benefits because of his multiracial background. Ward Connerly shared the following regarding his anti-affirmative action rationale: "Regardless of whence you came, you have a pretty good shot. Skin color is not one of the impediments that stand in people's way" (Smith, 2010, para. 9). He then stated that the goal is to create a "color blind" rather than "diverse" government. One Utah State Senator said that Connerly was "a great crusader fighting against affirmative action, quotas and discrimination" (Smith, 2010, para. 12). The rhetoric of these individuals frames equality and fairness as color blind and gender blind. Connerly's words, specifically, reveal an assumption that our society is beyond racial discrimination and oppression.

The focal point of the legislation was the impact it might have on admission to higher education institutions. What received little attention was that no Utah institution of higher education admits students based on race or gender. The Representative who sponsored the bill said that he knew of two white applicants to one of Utah's law schools who were denied admission in favor of less-qualified minority applicants (Gehrke, 2010a). He used rhetoric that forefronted the "reverse discrimination" fear in majoritarian constituents (Edelman's symbolic rhetoric). One of my study participants, Irving, spoke of the danger of affirmative action as it is presently defined. He said:

> You know, affirmative action is quite frankly a dirty word on the national stage because it even means quotas or entitlements. Personally, I'm an old school affirmative action guy where to me, [it] means opportunity and fairness.

Many Utah constituents did not realize that the bill would also remove vital campus services including women's resource centers, multicultural service centers, and a host of

programs and initiatives geared towards addressing social and educational inequities. Concerning the bill, Samantha said:

> What message do we want to send people who might want to invest in Utah? That we don't value diversity? Obviously, Utah is not diverse. Hello? (sarcastically) So by doing away with these things, I think you're sending a clear message to the world that just continues the stereotype of Utah that already exists. I don't think that's the message that you want students [of color] to come away with. That it's probably not a good thing for you to stay in Utah to get your education. You probably want to go somewhere else where your diversity is more valuable.

Samantha went on to explain the stereotype that Utah is a racially, religiously, and culturally homogenous place. This view of Utah homogeneity was shared by most of the participants.

One State Senator, when asked about the perception that discrimination against minorities and women still exists, responded:

> Sometimes when I get business magazines that come to my mailbox here at the capitol, I'm always a little surprised at the attention…for example that says, 'these are minority owned businesses' or 'women-owned businesses' or whatever. I think if we said, 'these are white men owned businesses' that somebody might say, 'are we being unfair because we're focusing on white men but somehow, it's ok to have a special section and attention to women-owned businesses and minority-owned businesses. ("Affirmative Action", 2010).

The Senator's words reveal an assumption that the system is inherently fair and that efforts to challenge inequities actually counter equal rights. The rhetoric also denies any existing preferential treatment for white men within the systems of government, business and education. A review of Utah Business Magazine archives reveals that over the past eight years, persons of color have been featured on the cover a total of three times with women on the cover 14 times (out of nearly 60 issues).[29] This senator does not recognize that "white-men owned" businesses do not need to be called out because they are already framed as the norm. A review of leadership in educational, health care, business, governmental,

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[29] About half of the covers of Utah Business Magazine are editorial photos or artwork and do not feature any people. This magazine has earlier circulation but does not feature the covers on their website archives.

legal, religious, and financial institutions in Utah all reveal high representation from white males.

On March 11, 2010, the House defeated the anti-affirmative action, or "fair treatment" bill.[30] Post-legislative information confirmed that proponents of the bill "rushed" it before two committees for hearings not providing much time to study the issue (Bernick, 2010). By the next fall, legislators discussed bringing forth the bill for the 2011 legislative session. One State Representative said: "I would say it's very safe to assume that the bill will be brought back this session. There's no reason we shouldn't bring it back up and push it forward. I think an overwhelming majority of the public would support it" (Gehrke, 2010b, para. 2). Ward Connerly again shared his belief that we are past racial inequity: "The reality is we do not try to compensate in our public policy for things that were done 400 years ago. The rationale for using race is diversity, not to compensate for the sins of history" (Gehrke, 2010a, para 21). These arguments of reverse discrimination and ahistoricism are a part of the majoritarian story that overtly and covertly frames systems as race neutral, objective, fair, and just.

The 2011 anti-affirmative action bill (SJR-2) was sponsored in the Senate as a strategy to gain momentum with a more conservative body. In February, 2011, Paul Rolly reported in the Salt Lake Tribune that the bill's sponsoring Senator did not have enough votes. It is important to draw attention to the fact that the bill was defeated and had strong opponents; many of whom were white males. However, it is also important to note why the bill might not have received enough energy. Rolly's sources reported that "because of the attempt in the Legislature to pass a strict enforcement-only, illegal-immigration bill, some senators are worried about overkill when it comes to laws aimed at minorities" (para. 8).

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[30] To amend the Utah Constitution, a bill needs to receive two-thirds vote in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to be placed on the ballot for voter approval.

The bill was never filed but the same legislators are expected to bring it forward for the 2012 session with the goal of passing it in time for the November 2012 general election, where voter approval is needed to amend the constitution.

As part of the anti-affirmative action movement, one participant, Howard, noted that the State Office of Ethnic Affairs (OEA) had been dismantled. The OEA was a branch under the Executive Director for the Department of Community and Culture within the Utah Governor's cabinet. In the March 2011 legislative session, the legislature cut $750,000 in funding that the OEA had received each year as base budget and then back filled the budget with $250,000. This cut eliminated six of seven full-time positions and numerous programs, projects, and initiatives that were designed to help Utah's communities of color feel included and have representation in government discussions. This reduction in budget and staff came at a time when Utah's communities of color are growing. One reporter stated, "The OEA's problem is that it was formed under executive orders from recent governors, including Mike Leavitt and Jon Huntsman Jr. — which means it's under the microscope in a struggling economy" (McEntee, 2011, para. 10). McEntee's observation is a chilling reminder that under economic challenges, people tend to: (1) look for a scapegoat for their financial and work situation (i.e., blaming their lack of employment on undocumented immigrants); and (2) cut back on "nonvital" initiatives (i.e., diversity and multicultural initiatives and services) (Squires, 2008).

These examples of Utah legislative activity highlight the rhetoric of a majoritarian narrative. The issues of anti-affirmative action and specialized services for marginalized communities, combined with the negative rhetoric regarding immigration, have created a polarizing Utah environment around issues of racial diversity.

Religious Influence

One of the consistent points of discussion concerning Utah dynamics was the influence of the Latter-day Saint[31] (LDS) religion on the discourse of inclusion. Most participants acknowledged a strong presence of the LDS church and community. One participant who was not LDS spoke highly of her friends who are: "We have a mutual respect. I admire them in a lot of ways. I think they do good things and are good people." Another participant, referring to his LDS friends, said that he is a spiritual person and can appreciate other people who live their faith.

Although most participants expressed some level of comfort with understanding the reality of an LDS-dominant community, there existed evidences of exclusion, religious microaggressions, and LDS privilege. LDS participants expressed an easier sense of connection with the Utah community, or a sense of religious insiderness, but have also been the outsider when working in other states. An LDS participant shared why diversity and inclusion can be difficult to fully embrace with such high representation of LDS members in senior administration of their institution.

> You sit around the executive committee and you have stake presidents[32] and former mission presidents. There are little insider things. We have [senior administrators] who are not LDS, and then we have people who are at different levels of living the LDS faith. I would say the bigger challenge of diversity is not so much the ethnicity, the bigger challenge is the religion.

Another participant who self-identified as a "believer" not of the LDS faith shared an experience where he felt like an outsider in his community. He referred to his neighborhood as a place where most persons are married, LDS, and white. One day, a couple strolled

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[31] The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a Christian-based faith. Members of this Church, otherwise known as Mormons, believe in the restoration Christ's church in the latter-days by a prophet, Joseph Smith. Through this prophet, Mormons believe that new revelations and new scriptures were brought forth in the form of the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ (www.lds.org).

[32] The terms "Stake President" and "Mission President" refer to men in leadership positions within the LDS church organization.

down the sidewalk with their children while he was in the front of his yard. They stopped to be friendly:

> And they said, "Welcome to the neighborhood. We knew you were new because we hadn't seen you here before. We've been living here for ten years." I said, "I'm doing fine, thank you." They says, "Is your wife home?" It was a Saturday afternoon. I say, "I'm not married." They said, "Are your children with you then?" I said, "I don't have any children." They said, "You're here on your own?" I says, "yes." They says, "Why are you living alone in this big house?" I said, "because I like the big houses, that's why." They said, "oh, that's a nice reason, thank you." And I can see that the conversation was shifting. They wanted to ask, probably, "are you in fact LDS?" But I wasn't married. I'm Black. And look at the variables that they can add up so we don't want to ask this question to this guy. He's already answered a few questions and we don't like his answers.

Another participant who was not of the LDS faith spoke of some of the ways the LDS religion influences the Utah culture and how that culture has permeated her institution.

> At this University, when I started, almost everybody [in senior administration] was LDS. While people say that doesn't matter, it does matter. I've met different LDS people….There is a certain value system and a certain mentality….Like here I can't tell you how many women I run across who put their husbands through college and it was never their turn. I think that there is that mentality that is specific to Utah and very, very concrete here.

This participant, and others, spoke of the overwhelming dominance of the LDS white male perspective and representation in most institutions including politics, education, law and business. I recognize that some participants might not have shared certain opinions about the LDS community because they knew that I self-identified as an LDS person and did not want to offend me. I did feel, however, that participants were fairly candid with their thoughts about the LDS influence on the broader community.

Participants pointed out that just as with other dominant religious communities, the LDS culture or privilege allows the LDS community to use religious code words and jargon freely without thought to who might be excluded from such discussions. They also spoke of the LDS church influencing other aspects of the institution including: changing activities

scheduled for Monday evenings due to LDS family night; the lack of availability of coffee in routine meetings because LDS members do not drink coffee; library closures on Sunday or the Sabbath (Holy) day for the LDS church; academic freedom in sharing views in the classroom that might counter LDS beliefs; and subtle hiring practices that favor connections developed within LDS networks. One LDS participant shared an experience of sitting on a hiring committee and the assumptions made by the applicant that their LDS church-related service translated to the specific job for hire.

> One of the applicants had only ever held [LDS] church-related jobs and positions. And someone said, "Well, he has all this experience working with people at church and he wrote his resume very much like, "I've done all this stuff with the church." And I just spoke up and I said, "You know, that's great, but what does it have to do with [our institution]?" I'm very, very sensitive to that because we have a lot of students who are not LDS.

It is important to note that the centrality of the LDS religion in the state of Utah is so pervasive that nearly all participants referred to it as "the church" as if to suggest that such a reference could only be accepted as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. When asked if their religion played into whether or not they, as administrators, were accepted by their peers or by the community, participants expressed varying opinions. One participant believed that the community was much more accepting than his colleagues of the fact that he was not LDS. The combination of his "Blackness" and being "non-LDS" was a stumbling block to some of his colleagues who disagreed with his lifestyle. Another participant felt that being an LDS administrator of color lent itself to bridge building opportunities where some communities of color associated the LDS church with whiteness. One LDS participant said:

> [If I were not LDS] I probably wouldn't have the level of success that I have with meeting people and relating to them because, you know, the church plays such a huge role in the community. So, yes, I think that in the community, I'm much more accepted because I am LDS. At work, I think that if I wasn't LDS, I'd be just as accepted.

One LDS participant noted that discussions of race, racism, or sexism do not occur in LDS dominated communities because of some fundamental scriptural beliefs. He referenced LDS scripture to explain this dynamic:

> What some people don't understand is that from the time we are in primary[33], we are taught that contention is a bad thing…or not of God. It says so in the scriptures. So that avoidance of contention influences….or creates a sort of, avoidance to any topic that might be contentious…including issues of diversity, abuse, drug use…sex education… and there's this feeling that if we can ignore the discussion, it won't affect us or, even more, that it won't happen.

This reflection extends into an overall aversion to change within various religious institutions. It is not uncommon for leaders of organized religions to seek consensus from their believers. With many sacred practices and traditions deeply rooted in scripture or inspired text, it is the doctrine of religions that can often create a belief in a singular truth. If religious institutions advocate for consensus concerning beliefs and practice, it is no wonder that such institutions avoid any notions of multiple truths or differing points of view. This creates what one participant referred to as "religious privilege" or the assumption that one's "religious beliefs are the norm that everyone else should subscribe to." It is in this space of privilege or as one participant referred to as a "bubble" mentality, that conversations about difference, social justice, diversity, multiculturalism, and equity begin to threaten the feelings of comfort and peace that are associated with a "good spirit." Another participant shared how LDS scriptures teach that believers should "have no divisions" and should be "one people", once again drawing attention to the desire for uniformity. These views provide valuable insights into the discourse of racial difference and the propensity to avoid discussions of difference. It also sheds light on the propensity for the Utah majoritarian culture to preach a commitment to colorblindness and race-neutrality.

[33] The term "primary" refers to Sunday instruction for children ages 3-11 in the LDS church.

A few LDS participants wrestled with their commitment to diversity and their religious convictions. One participant spoke of his frustration with other LDS people who "don't get it" when it comes to a Christian theological tenet of loving one's neighbor:

> I sometimes think, are you really Mormon? A Christian? Do you realize what just came out of your mouth? I mean, It's no wonder people have such a bad image of what Mormons are when it comes to diversity. Some of the most racist and sexist people I have met are Mormon. I have a hard time with it sometimes.

This participant continued by saying that he has also met "some of the most generous, inclusive, compassionate, and kind-hearted individuals in the LDS church" who "get the importance of diversity."

As both a person of color and a member of the LDS faith community, I recognize my role as a racial outsider and religious insider within the state of Utah. Although religion was not central to my research inquiry, the data above were part of the contextual narrative that I grapple with as I step into both marginalized and privileged spaces. I have reflected countless times on the disconnects between a spiritual tradition I hold dear and the social justice sensitivity that is at the heart of my spirituality.

For the purpose of this study, these religious data reveal a common contextual thread for all study participants. The site of Utah is unique in that a dominant religious narrative permeates and is felt by all institutions and individuals in a way that is extremely palpable. Couple this with an existing predominantly white narrative and the voices of marginalized communities who seek social justice are needed but silenced. (See Appendix F.)

Counter-stories

Counter-stories have been used in Critical Race Theory research as a way to disrupt or challenge traditional master narratives and majoritarian stories as well as forefront the stories, experiences and histories of communities of color. Inherent in the presentation of

counter-stories is the assumption that persons of color experience the world around them differently from their white counterparts, those who have traditionally framed the master narrative in societal discourse. In this section, I present a number of findings that collectively challenge majoritarian stories and rhetoric concerning the realities of race and racism in educational systems and society at large. I do not create a singular unique counter-story but present participant responses as counter-story data. I do this to validate unique perspectives and to forefront the rich narratives of individuals in their own words.

The findings suggest that participants were aware of, and concerned with: (1) the proliferation of inequities and gaps in education between communities of color and white communities; (2) a lack of institutional and systemic (educational and societal) commitment to issues of diversity; (3) the dearth of role models of color in positions of power; (4) the existence and persistence of racism and sexism; and (5) the prevailing narrative that views communities of color through a deficit lens. Participants acknowledged that these challenges called for increased attention, awareness, and advocacy. In the discussion of each counter-story finding, I include a summary table[34] positioning the majoritarian story or narrative that permeates our societal discourse against the counter-stories developed from participant responses.

Inequities and Gaps

Participants acknowledged, and were concerned about, current and historical racial inequities and gaps between communities of color and white communities in education.

[34] These summary tables are meant to represent the data in the most accessible way possible and are not formatted to be APA tables.

The Majoritarian Story	The Counter Story
Gaps in achievement and representation have closed significantly	Gaps in achievement and representation persist
The educational system is fair	Educators need to recognize inequities built into the educational processes and system

One of the immediate consistencies among participant responses was the recognition of educational and societal inequities between white communities and communities of color. Most participants spoke of the persisting achievement gaps amidst the prevailing rhetoric that representation and achievement of communities of color has improved tremendously. Weston said:

> I think that one entity might hold a conservative view and say that we've significantly closed the numbers of underrepresentation and so, an achievement gap becomes relative to those who feel like…we've made significant improvements, you know. But, I would say that achievement gaps still exist…there are still major deficits to overcome.

A few participants pointed to pockets of improvement in an area they were familiar with at their institution. Irving spoke of the efforts made in a particular college that was showing results of greater student representation and diversity. Luke spoke about certain campus initiatives that had produced visible results concerning the achievement of students of color. Most, however, acknowledged that despite such efforts, gaps in opportunity and achievement are present and need greater attention.

Nearly every participant recognized the gross gaps between communities of color and white communities in positions of administration and power. They pointed to a number of administrative councils that lack representation from persons of color including: statewide higher education committees, regents, trustee boards, political representatives, school boards, PTAs, and institutional leadership councils. When I presented the data that out of 305 senior administrators in Utah public higher education institutions, 15 were persons of

color, participants were not surprised. Howard commented, "I'm surprised there's that many…cause I surely don't see them."

There was also consensus about the need for more attention to, and advocacy for, students of color in terms of educational opportunities. Samantha emotionally articulated her frustration with the traditional administrative treatment of achievement gap data.

> We have to get beyond the rhetoric. We have to get beyond just looking (said with emphasis) at the data. Because there are people behind that data, there are kids who will never, (beginning to cry), I'm sorry….who will never have the opportunity that I've had. Because they're just a kid in the ghetto. Because they have a single parent who's working 70 hours a week to put food on the table. There's a clear disadvantage here in Utah, if you look at the statistics for minority students.

Samantha continued, "When you feel marginalized, it's really hard to overcome that." Her words address the difficulty of achieving academically when students perceive themselves to be on the margins or not cared for.

Another achievement gap reality that participants discussed was the structural and systemic inequities within and across educational institutions. A few recognized and argued that schools are not created equal. Luke expressed fear of the wave of private and charter schools that grows daily. He argued that such models exacerbate educational gaps between students of color and white students. This argument is consistent with research on the effects of school choice on racial achievement gaps (Lee, 2002). Samantha believed that the school she attended, "which was predominantly Black" did not provide the quality of education that some of her peers received at other schools. One participant spoke of historical inequities and the multigenerational gaps in social and cultural capital:

> You gotta understand that there is a history of inequity in education. White students can go with their families to social gatherings and hear things about college from the time they are five…and so you talk about social capital…white students, by osmosis gather informal learning that adds to their social capital. Many students of color have the same potential for

> learning capacity but their social capital has not been developed or their cultural or racial capital is not valued.

A few administrators discussed the majoritarian belief that the educational system is fair and just. This belief extends to the tools and instruments used in the educational system to measure intelligence and student aptitude. Howard used an analysis of standardized testing to illustrate the systemic nature of the majoritarian narrative. Tests, he argued, are designed by a certain set of people who are homogenous in how they think and how they look at data. He noted that the creators of the tests:

> subscribe and develop processes that create measures for other people and so culturally, Hispanics, Native Americans, African Americans have had some similar challenges in their lives. And so I say a lot of these tests need to be revisited so that they are more applicable to the communities to whom they are giving these to.

He discussed a cultural disconnect between the creators of the test and the students taking the test as an important factor when assessing achievement gaps. If the creators of tests do not build exams that are reflective of the community locally or nationally, inherent gaps are created. Howard also argued that cultural sensitivity should be considered in the classroom and curriculum designs.

Howard then shifted to the second part of his analysis as a means of illustrating the dynamics of culturally-specific and culturally-biased assessments:

> It's just like if I were to give you a chitlin[35] test. I can pass the chitlin test because I'm familiar with a lot of the subscriptions of that test. You on the other hand, aren't. So if I give that to you, there's a higher probability that you'll get a low score. And I can take this chitlin test into the urban communities of African Americans right here in Utah and they would pass this test. So that's goin' tell someone who is more intelligent than the other because they got a higher score. So therefore, they get entrée into the chitlin social club, and so I'll go in and you can't because I got a higher score, and so there's a gap.

[35] The word chitlin is an abbreviated version of chitterling, which refers to pig intestines that are fried or steamed as part of the U.S. African American and southern culinary tradition.

Howard's example challenges the cultural normativity and traditional notions of a standardized test. It also calls attention to the way we use tests as rites of passage or markers for social mobility. He contends that achievement gaps found in standardized testing are partially the result of a majoritarian academic architecture of testing.

Samantha argued that traditional views of the gaps in educational opportunities need to be refocused. She suggested that we approach gaps with the mindset that if "that student [of color] is failing, we're all failing." She continued, "I think our perspectives would be totally different if we looked at our educational system as failing all of our students." Samantha's perspective was shared by many participants; achievement gaps should be addressed at a systemic, or at least institutional, level. They recognized, however, that very few institutions are willing to demonstrate a sincere and high level of commitment to diversity and social justice.

Institutional Commitment to Diversity and Social Justice

Participants expressed concern about the lack of collective institutional commitment to issues of diversity and social justice.

The Majoritarian Story	The Counter Story
Educational institutions are committed to diversity and inclusion	Educational institutions are lacking in the ways they operationalize espoused commitment to diversity
Diversity is not critical enough to warrant high-level diversity-focused positions, offices, or substantial investment	Institutions should invest more in diversity-related positions, offices, and services for the benefit of everyone

Institutional commitment to diversity can be difficult to measure. Services, courses, programs, and trainings on topics related to diversity range in size, intensity and scope. Each of the institutions in the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) has expressed and espoused a commitment to diversity, inclusion, opportunity, and/or access in one of its

various mission, vision, and values statements. Table 7 outlines the various statements declaring such commitments.

As evidenced in Table 7, each of the eight public institutions in the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) declares a commitment to at least one of the following: diversity, inclusion, access, opportunity, and culture. This declaration of commitment to such issues is consistent with the majority, if not, all, of the institutions of higher education in the nation.

Participants spoke of some of the improvements that needed to take place at their, and other state institutions if leaders are to make good on their espoused commitment to diversity and inclusion. Barbara observed that most PWIs, in her experience, make token contributions to appease those concerned about diversity but that institutions lack "real commitment." She felt that most institutions make cosmetic commitments to diversity so that when asked, the administrators can point to tokenized symbols of commitment. Barbara spoke of her institution having "rhetoric and no commitment." She also spoke about not feeling supported by her superiors concerning diversity initiatives. Sonia felt that her institution did well concerning gender equity but felt that it lacked commitment to racial diversity, noting "As far as people of color, I don't think we are doing enough."

Participants believed that their institutions should make greater financial commitments to recruiting, hiring, and retaining faculty, staff, administrators, and students of color. Most participants noted that their supervisors, all of whom are white, are supportive allies for diversity but that the institution as a whole lacks commitment to bringing in more persons of color. This investment in racial diversity was an important symbol of commitment for participants. Barbara suggested hiring a diversity officer who would have "some authority, some power, and some major budget." Irving was told that his institution did not need a Vice President for Diversity. He feared that the lack of

Table 7

USHE institutional statements concerning diversity, inclusion, and access.

H.Ed. Inst.	Quote	Doc.
A	"…enhances its campus climate by promoting cultural and demographic diversity"; "open door"	Mission
	"Access and Opportunity"; "reaching out to under-represented populations"	Core Values
	"…will promote diversity among its employees and student body to enrich the teaching and learning environment….will provide diverse educational, economic, cultural, and recreational activities."	Core Values
B	"…open-access"; "provide quality higher education and lifelong learning to people of diverse cultures, abilities, and ages"; value cultural enrichment	Mission
C	"…welcomes all…including individuals with diverse backgrounds and perspectives."	Roles
D	"… is committed to providing an excellent education through a diverse…learning environment."	Mission
	"Essential to the educational process is a sense of "community," wherein collaboration, diversity, respect for all people, civility and shared governance are cultivated"; "encourages the discussion and exploration of differing views…"	Core Values
E	"promote diversity and equal opportunity, and respect individual beliefs."	Mission
F	"cultivating diversity of thought and culture…"	Mission
	"enhanced by the diversity of its faculty, staff, and students."	Goals
G	"provides opportunity"	Mission
	"Inclusive:… provides opportunity for individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds and perspectives…"	Core Themes
	"Diversity:… values a welcoming and diverse learning environment that embraces all people and transcends differences. Diversity enriches the intellectual and social engagement of the learning community. We support a student and workforce community that reflects the entire population."	Values
	"provides cultural experiences…"	Roles
H	"an environment that encourages freedom of expression while valuing diversity."	Mission
	"has an inclusive campus environment that meets the needs of a growing, diverse student body..."	2030 Vision

commitment to diversity and social justice was deliberate due to the political risks, and potential community backlash, associated with such commitments.

Weston also expressed disappointment in his institution's lack of commitment to diversity. He argued that diversity should be articulated as a core value and as such, should permeate all aspects of his work, in university life, policy making, outreach, commemorative events, and student government:

> I don't necessarily see that at [my institution]. Diversity is a link in the chain, it's not the chain. That if they see these kinds of issues of opportunity and access when you talk about it, they want everybody to have opportunity and access…And so diversity for them becomes just a part of one little piece of an overall operation that's going on at that level.

Implicit in Weston's thoughts is his belief that diversity is not an item to check off but rather a paradigm or a way of looking at everything we do.

Weston cautioned fellow administrators not to assume that institutional efforts for inclusion and access are widely understood. As we connect with communities that have not historically engaged with higher education institutions, we need to recognize that communities of color do not receive and consume information in the same ways that the majority community does:

> It may not be evident what [our institution] has done to make adjustments…so if we say, we're doing a heck of a job of providing access… then I go to a minority parent meeting and they say, [your institution] ain't doin' shit. The question is are we doing a good job of articulating how we are allowing for better access? Kids can see it and feel it when they are engaged in the system and parents can see it and feel it when they see how responsive the system is.

Weston's words reveal the need for institutional leaders to fully engage with communities of color if these communities are to recognize administrative commitment to their children.

Utah higher education institutions are wrestling with two messages. One message from the Commissioner's Office (from the Utah System of Higher Education) states that

more students need access higher education opportunities (Utah System of Higher Education, 2010). This message is consistent with goals and priorities set forth by Utah's Governor Gary Herbert and U.S. President Barack Obama. The other message is that higher education is not valued by the state legislature as evidenced by the declining level of state tax fund support. With few funds and declining resources, many educators react by shutting down efforts for diversity because they require additional investments.

In harsh economic times, efficiency, "bang for the buck" attitudes, and program reputation outweigh the desire for greater diversity in thought and representation (Hastings, 2009). This dynamic illustrates the need for administrative commitments to diversity at every level of the educational system. When asked if he and his administrative colleagues discussed diversity, Joshua said, "We do talk about students of color from time to time, but some of the issues that we have for some of our programs…we are full to the brim." His response reveals greater attention to capacity constraints than to the specific benefits of diversity. Some participants described institutional commitment as the allocation of resources and determined that while their institutions have given some resources to address gaps, the amounts and efforts have been "minimal," "nonexistent," and "not enough." Barbara noted that her institution spoke of commitment to diversity but made "measly" financial contributions to diversity efforts; none of which focused on hiring diverse employees. Diversity efforts, while constrained by a lack of resources, are more constrained by a lack of commitment.

Irving suggested that each institution re-evaluate the motives and commitment behind diversity initiatives or programs. Too often, diversity discussions lead to a treatment of diversity from a purely quantitative lens; focused on achieving certain numbers or percentages of underrepresented students rather than interrogating the deeper issues

associated with race, racism, and inequity (Yosso, Parker, Solórzano & Lynn, 2004). Irving challenged administrators to discuss their vision and approach to diversity:

> We need to figure out, does diversity mean something more to us than simply reflecting the overall demographic? You know, one of our measurable diversity goals is that enrollment and completion rates will mimic the general population. And I mean, that's good, that's a good start. But is that simply it? Are there certain kinds of intentionality? You know, I guess in other words, I think each institution in higher-ed in general and in Utah has to engage the notion of what is it that drives our diversity vision.

Irving then spoke of an experience where students at his institution talked to a campus leadership group about the importance of approaching diversity initiatives from the lens of critical race theory. He thought it was a great step but wanted to make sure that the effort was meaningful and not just symbolic.

> After it was all done I said, "This is really great. I just have a question. Will the lessons in critical race theory make their way into the culture at [our institution]?" I had to repeat that question. If we're talking about sustaining critical race theory we are talking about certain kinds of change in culture. And certain types of risk that people have to engender. It's not enough for people to be proud enough to just say something.

Irving's question about CRT affecting the culture of his institution is one that challenges his colleagues to move beyond a shallow and dismissive treatment of diversity issues. He understood that a deeper, paradigmatic shift in the way his institution addressed issues of diversity needed to start with individual "risks" to unpack issues of racism, privilege, and inequity.

Finally, Irving shared his opinion about the ways higher education institutions often leverage rhetoric concerning diversity.

> There's always a tendency to look at race, class, and gender issues as sort of a management issue. Like, if you get an African American woman administrator, you get the trifecta in one person, you know so to speak, and an institution will showcase that in a multitude of ways you know? Well how are you on race? Hey have you met? How are you in class? You know this is a fine person, do you know what part of town she lives in? Or the gender

> thing, well we happen to have this female that is just outstanding you know. You get three times the rhetoric for one investment.

A few participants affirmed that their institutions took opportunities to boast about diversity initiatives and hires without making financial commitments to such efforts. A CRT perspective that explains this dynamic is Bell's (1980) notion of interest convergence or the argument that the white community only actively participates in social justice efforts when they see a clear benefit for them. This lens provides a valuable perspective for some participants who questioned the sporadic nature of institutional support for diversity. A few participants discussed pockets of commitment but all participants confirmed that overall institutional commitment to equity and social justice needed to improve.

Dearth of Role Models

Participants were deeply concerned about the lack of role models and mentors of color for students of color in the educational system.

The Majoritarian Story	The Counter Story
Parents of color are not role models because they do not value education as evidenced by their lack of parental involvement	Parents of color can be strong voices and examples if given the opportunity in schools
Communities of color lack role models because there is not a sufficient pool of qualified persons of color	Communities of color lack role models because their communities have not been given equal opportunities, support, and motivation to assume role model positions

Various studies have shown that many educators believe that parents of color are not involved in their children's education (Ramirez, 2003). Such studies reveal the assumption that parent involvement is defined by attendance at parent teacher conferences, participation on the parent teacher association board, or volunteering in the classroom. These assumptions discount parents' focus on work so that their children can have basic nourishment and materials to survive in school. Educators also often assume that all parents

have the same opportunities for involvement and the lack of participation on the part of some parents somehow signals a lack of investment in, and care for the child's education.

One of the ways participants countered assumptions about parents of color was by highlighting the need to involve parents of color more deliberately and explicitly in the school environment. They acknowledged that most role models in school systems are white, which leads students of color to formulate scripts in their minds about the racial makeup of teachers and those who are not only knowledge holders but authority figures. One participant spoke of the importance for educators to view parents of color as important resources and valuable voices:

> To me, one way to bridge issues of diversity, equity and multiculturalism is through family connection where parents are brought in the classroom, to both strengthen the parent connection to the schools and also give students diverse teachers and authority figures to look at. So if you have a class, and you're a white teacher and you have 15 Latino students and that whole year, you never bring in one Latino parent to talk to the kids about what it's like to be a Latino professional, you've done those kids a disservice. Both the Latino kids and the white kids who also don't see Latino role models.

Participants also shared frustrations with the vicious cyclical nature of low representation of persons of color in role model positions. A few shared the opinion that a lack of role models and mentors of color also affected the "potential pipeline" and development of future leaders of color thus reinforcing for all young people a certain social order of power. Weston suggested that institutional leaders not only evaluate the low representation of senior administrators of color but also discuss ways they validate or "support the scholarship of faculty of color." His comments echo well-documented counter-stories from faculty of color whose scholarship, some of which focuses on racial issues, is questioned and delegitimized (Anderson-Thompkins, 2009; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002). One participant cautioned educators to not lose sight of the importance of representation in student leadership:

> I don't know if you have ever been to our Senate chambers. We have photographs of each of the student leader classes over the years. White. White. White. White. White. White. Wouldn't it be great if we start seeing salt-and-pepper here? We need more student leaders to come from these areas. We need more minority student leaders.

This story of the pictured and patterned history of white student leaders and therefore, inherent absence of student leaders of color, is yet another example of a solidified message of power and place. Social psychologist, Robbins (2008), spoke of patterns leaving indelible imprints on children's minds by solidifying synapses in their brains. Robbins argued that most prejudices about others and ourselves comes from repeated images, rhetoric, words, and sound bites that become solid synapses of truth in our minds.

As a society, our collective social brain also forms synapses and therefore, it is tempting and easy to buy into the majoritarian belief (Robbins, 2008). Joshua shared his thoughts about achievement gaps and the lack of family support or role models:

> Some of them don't have that expectation at home that they need to get a bachelor's degree. And so their parents probably don't put enough emphasis into pursuing education. We need to solve the fundamental issue from the family, and actually see if they come from a family history that does not value education….Depending on how many resources we have we try to provide mentors for younger students who don't know anything about college. But then they still require our resources to organize it. If we can spare the resources I think that we should probably do as much as we can to help them.

Much of this passage reflects a traditional majoritarian narrative. In this quote, communities of color are framed as deficit in two ways. First, Joshua suggests that parents of color might not value education or that the student of color comes from a family history where education is not valued. Although discussed earlier, it is worth noting again that this deficit view of parents of color is grounded in the assumption that all parents demonstrate valuing education in the same traditional ways (e.g., parent teacher conferences). The concept of parent or guardian responsibility for the education of their child is one that resonates with

me culturally and religiously and yet I recognize the danger in suggesting that parents do not value education if they do not exhibit participation in the same ways I would. Second, Joshua uses the phrase, "If we can spare the resources…" This racial microaggression implies that students of color are only worth leftover resources and not worth reallocation of committed resources. Once again, in environments with limited resources, diversity is seen as an afterthought (Hastings, 2009).

According to participants, higher education institutions are lacking in their efforts to not only hire more role models and mentors of color into faculty, staff, and administrative positions, but also to work with and validate parents of color as people who value education and are worth investing in. Participants reported that "financial commitments" to increase diversity in various positions of influence have been inadequate. Joshua opined that communities of color might not value education. This sentiment reflects a larger majoritarian perspective that views of communities of color as deficient.

Deficit View

Participants believed that their communities of color have historically been, and are continuing to be, framed in a deficit light.

The Majoritarian Story	The Counter Story
Students of color cannot handle high academic rigor	Students of color are competent and can achieve in a highly rigorous academic environment if given the chance.
Students of color need to 'try harder' to assimilate	Educational institutions need to recognize the benefits and richness of diversity.

I have observed many discussions concerning educational achievement gaps where communities of color are perceived as lacking in a number of areas: social inputs, parental investment in education, navigation of the educational system, language mastery, and

confidence. Often, deficit language is found in educators' attempts to help students of color. Villenas (2001) refers to this as benevolent racism, or actions that tend to reinforce the hope for people to conform or assimilate to norms through seemingly supportive or encouraging actions.

Participants found deficit language and microaggressions disturbing. Barbara recalled one parent whose eighth grade child had been placed in ESL classes since the first grade. She found that he was still in ESL classes and she asked his mother, "Why is he in ESL classes? I've talked to your son, he speaks perfect English." The mother responded by saying, "Well the teacher said this was best." Barbara countered, "Well the teacher is wrong." Barbara continued reflecting on the experience, "Because they're in the ESL classes, they weren't getting the best education, they were getting the marginalized education." Barbara also spoke of her observation that very few Latino kids and other students of color participated in honors and other academically rigorous classes. She recalled an experience when she asked a colleague why there were so few Latino kids in the algebra class:

> I've never forgotten this, she said, "Oh, [Barbara] Algebra is so hard. Why would we subject them to it? They're just gonna pick apples." And so that kind of racism that is no longer legal, I have no doubt, no doubt goes on in many, many, many schools where the teachers and the counselors stereotype the kids and say, "This is where you go, so you're not gonna take that class."

One assumption that drives the deficit perception of students of color is the belief that gaps in achievement can be remedied if students of color simply try harder. Howard explained that the invitation to "try harder" was a coded message to assimilate to a set of normed variables. He argued that assimilation can be difficult if it means to "live, think, and act like I do":

> That "try harder" sometimes is a very steep hill to climb because that level of assimilation has a lot of economic implications and your values are steeped in

> that economic place where you reside…Try harder means that "You need to have a lifestyle that's similar to mine. Academically, you have underachieved so you need to try harder." "Well, I need to understand your tests better is what you're telling me. You want me to assimilate. Well, unless you give me some resources to do that, it's going to be hard for me to do that."

The invitation to "try harder" is also an encouragement for students of color to behave in a way that matches the majoritarian narrative (sometimes at the expense of their own). This language communicates a lack of validation of the cultural narratives of communities of color.

Nearly all participants shared experiences where they have heard people say, "We're in America, why are they speaking that language?" This question can be interpreted as "why can't people act more like me" or "I feel like an outsider when they speak that language and I don't like that feeling." Sonia shared her frustration with those who are intolerant of other languages in America:

> I've had friends, my friends, saying, "well why are you speaking [that language] to your mom? We're in America." "Well, my mom understands [this language] better than English, but I'm speaking with her...you don't have to listen." Yeah…it has come up several times.

Rather than valuing the richness of cultural diversity, many people feel uncomfortable with languages, behaviors, and narratives that are not their own. These feelings of discomfort can cause those from the majoritarian narrative to view people of color as persons to be fixed, remedied, or normed. This view demonstrates a deficit view of communities of color.

Another form of deficit perceptions towards communities of color was what Irving referred to as "benign neglect." He argued that people did not need to express overt racism because their prejudices are evident in the privileged ways they carry on their lives while ignoring other cultures, communities and people:

> The culture and the demographics were such that it could be an issue of sustained benign neglect. Minority cultures can be invisible because there is not any real reason to force dominant cultures to make them visible. In a

> school of about 1300 people, at times the Black population was as small as six students. It was small enough sometimes just to be an issue of more benign neglect rather than racism. Just more of the ignorance and not enough of a critical mass for people to move beyond their ignorance.

Benign neglect can quickly move to scapegoating when there exists a scarcity of resources and people seek to blame problems on communities they do not understand. Luke remembered hearing people speak about demographic changes in Utah. He said, "The community at large believes that if an area becomes more diverse, that somehow it's getting dumber or that somehow, there goes the neighborhood because more brown people are moving in. I've heard so many people say, 'that school was performing so well before the change in demographics.'"

Deficit language is a form of covert racism or racism that is evidenced in subtle ways. In educational settings, it is usually couched in an effort to explain inequities as a function of the student's cultural deficiencies rather than systemic problems. Although covert, such language is racist nonetheless and must be discussed as such in educational institutions. Barbara, Howard, and Sonia noted that deficit views are found in our schools through comments like: "why would we subject them to rigor"; students of color need to just "try harder"; and "why are you speaking that language, we're in America." Irving called attention to "benign neglect" or the majoritarian privilege of ignoring or neglecting to acknowledge persons of color due to their lack of representation, voice, and "critical mass."

Racism

Participants experienced and witnessed varying degrees of racism throughout their lives and rejected post-racism arguments.

The Majoritarian Story	The Counter Story
We live in a post-racist society, everybody has freedoms, we need to move forward, not dwell in the past	Racism is alive in America today in both overt and covert ways, racist experiences have shaped and continue to shape how persons of color experience the world
Real inequity is the reverse discrimination against white males	White communities continue to benefit from white privilege
Racism exists but "I'm not racist"	Every person carries racial prejudices

Many participants shared stories of experiencing or witnessing racism and racial microaggressions. Howard spoke of his experience of being passed over for leadership opportunities in the military due to his African American identity. He also witnessed a number of housing disparities between white communities and communities of color in terms of preferential treatment. Samantha recalled the first time she was called the "N" word in college and her shock that people still used such hateful language. Anthony remembered being a smart kid at the top of his class and still receiving no encouragement from counselors because he was Mexican. Barbara recounted an experience when she was made aware that she was "colored":

> One time I went to a new school because we got changed a lot and uh my previous school hadn't had separate drinking fountains and this one did. But I didn't understand, I was too young to understand what white and colored meant and I drank from the wrong fountain and the kids beat the crap outta me. So I went home bloody and understood that I was colored. It was my first time I learned about being colored.

Barbara continued, "One of the things that became very clear to me was that what I experienced as a child, with the racism even though it's not overt and legal anymore, is still happening."

These early experiences of racism affected the way participants viewed the world. Anthony recalled the feelings that arose when he experienced childhood racism from multiple communities:

> There were a lot of Blacks, a lot of whites, very few Mexicans. So we were the ultra minority there and neither the Blacks, nor the whites liked Mexicans. Both disliked us very much. So I was in the middle. And I remember feeling this…the persecution if you will. The taunting from both sides and I thought, can I just disappear, can I just get away from this? Maybe I could be white, or maybe I could be Black, maybe I could…you know feeling that tension that I wanted to get away from this identity that they saw me as.

Weston recounted his early experiences of accompanying his parents to city meetings and the treatment of other communities of color:

> I mean, as a kid, you could see that they didn't care and that they were very dismissive of the minority communities there. I could remember the American Indian community coming in and feeling like they were marginalized by the lack of resources and support that they were getting, you know, and so you were not able to articulate it as a kid but you saw that they didn't care and that's one of the vivid memories I have in my mind is that we couldn't say that they didn't care but you could see that they didn't care.

Samantha shared an experience where her son was playing around with some kids at school and was called the "N" word. This was followed by pushing and shoving, but she did not hear anything from his school. She only delved into the issue because her son complained about his back being hurt. Upon further questioning, she found out that her son had been pushed against the wall and called the "N" word. Samantha went to the school the next day and told the principal she needed to talk with him about the incident:

> And he was like, "this isn't a big deal, you know, kids do these sorts of things" and I go, "I don't think you understand. My family's probably the first Black family to move into this area and I want other people who come here to feel good about coming here because this is my home now, I own a home, I pay taxes, I want them to feel good about coming here and unless we teach kids that they have to be accepting and that they need to recognize that everybody doesn't look like them, but they need to respect that fact, and unless it starts with you guys, it's never going to happen." And I don't think anyone had ever said those words to him before.

A few participants raised the issues of discrimination specifically towards Hispanic or Latino communities. Sonia and Luke both shared experiences where people openly spoke of the Latino communities in derogatory or discriminatory ways. They both expressed anger at

hearing such opinions mostly concerning issues of immigration. Luke said, "When people think about immigration, they think…you know, it's only about Latinos. And because immigration is such an uncomfortable topic, people begin feeling uncomfortable with the growing number of Latinos in our community."

Joshua and Sonia differed from the other seven participants in the ways they reported experiences or feelings of racial oppression. Both of these international participants expressed that racism existed but when asked if they had ever experienced discrimination, they reported, "No". However, both participants discussed the difficulties of transitioning to the American culture primarily due to language challenges. Joshua recalled only one "bad" experience related to culture. After his first 2 weeks of university studies in the United States, he went home and told his wife, "we should just pack our bags and go home. For the last 2 days in classes, I could only understand 30%." His wife encouraged him to not "get frustrated" and to keep trying. Joshua also reported feeling the need to connect with people from his Asian culture through his religious affiliation and attended services in an Asian congregation. This, once again, was language-related and helped him "transition" to American life. Sonia reported feeling like she "dropped in from Mars" upon arrival to her high school in the United States. She attributed this feeling to her "short hair," "accent" and being placed in "remedial English" even though she was a "top student" in her home country. After sharing these experiences, her responses shifted to her determination and hard work to overcome any obstacles or challenges she faced. When asked if this determination was an extension of her culture, she replied, "yah…maybe...but that's just me…I was determined from the time I was young." Her responses revealed a diminishment of any challenge that may have confronted her over the years leading to an international narrative of "American appreciation." She reported recognition of disparities and inequities

in American society but would rather not dwell on them and would hope to one day be "beyond diversity." In speaking of marginalized communities of color, Sonia argued:

> They have not had the same opportunities as before. We're remedying what they were missing all these years. Until you can show me equity…equality, I would not have diversity. I would not even use the word diversity. We're all the same. Doesn't matter if we're people of color. Everybody's the same. We're not there. But I would love us to be there. I don't even want us to say we're all different. It would be nice to say…it would be nice not to even notice we have someone who is blue and purple, and Black and white and red. If you can show me…give me statistics that 20 years ago everybody was the same. 50 years ago everybody was the same. Then I can say…we're there. But we're not.

Sonia's message reflects both a recognition of historical inequities and a majoritarian lens of colorblindness and race-neutrality. The responses from Joshua and Sonia demonstrate an international-American perspective focused on the "American Dream" as a reality that affords "everyone equal opportunities" even if they do not come from "equal circumstances."

A recurring theme among participants was the rejection of post-racial attitudes manifested through arguments like, "aren't we past that" or "isn't it about time that we stop entitling people?" These responses emerged when I presented them with the following scenario in the second interview:

> During an administrative discussion about Diversity-required courses, the topic of an American Cultural Studies class emerges. One fellow academic administrator begins a heated discussion about the impact of slavery on families. Monica, an African American colleague, reacts by saying, "You don't understand. My family lives with the legacy of our family being broken up against our own will. We don't have your privileged experience of having a traceable family tree." Another colleague on the committee responds by saying, "Monica, that is in the past and dwelling on anger and bitterness is not good for anyone." You are the only other person of color in the room. You recognize that Monica has a reputation on campus for being outspoken on issues of race and diversity. After the comment to Monica, you notice that she looks directly at you. What would you say or do?

Irving said that he would address the colleague who asked Monica to move on by saying, "You have to acknowledge that your privilege puts blinders on you and out of respect and

basic human dignity you know you don't have the right to caricature or trivialize her present pain because you haven't experienced it." Anthony said he would challenge the notion of "it's in the past" by pointing out that, "You only have to go into certain parts of our country and you see organizations, you see symbols, you see structures still that reflect the institution of slavery." Barbara took a more direct approach with her response:

> That's an argument that's made a lot by some people, "all that's in the past. It's not about me. I can't help what my ancestors did." People who can't stomach the idea of white privilege. What I've done in those situations is say, "You're right. We've made a lot of progress in this country. And I'm proud to be an American. But we still don't live up to our potential or even to the values of our Constitution. We are still not there. Monica has a point about the vestiges of slavery, and the vestiges of Jim Crow, and the vestiges of De jure discrimination over legal discrimination are still with us. We've made a lot of progress but we haven't really moved past it as a society.

The two international participants recognized that Monica's feelings needed to be heard and understood but also questioned the approach she took. Joshua said, "she needs to find a better outlet for those feelings." Sonia said that after telling her other colleagues to show some respect, she would counsel Monica to "Simmer down. If we could talk about it as history and not get on our soapbox, it would be more effective." These responses reflect a majoritarian response to passion when discussing issues of race and racial history. As I will discuss later, administrators of color are forced to negotiate passions even when such passions are tied to a deeply emotional and personal past. One way that post racism conversations are controlled is the creation of an environment where everyone withholds their personal experiences.

Another aspect of the post racial argument is the argument that the social justice efforts have swung the pendulum too far, and now the white community is discriminated against. Irving said,

> There's this little trick, the reverse discrimination trick that people like to do. They like to mix the aggregate and the particular together. Aggregate-wise

> there is still disparages, but when it comes down to that particular person, it's reverse discrimination.

One participant shared a powerful story that highlights the persistence of racism in everyday lives. This participant spoke of a Black man who threatened to kill people on campus. The man was mentally ill and was angry about some of the institutional processes and sent threatening emails that identified who he was. The study participant recounted:

> We ended up telling all the [administrators]. So in this meeting, which included all the staff, one of the women said, "I saw this Black man…" It started to be about Black men. Not this man, but Black men. And I shifted back, "wait a minute. It's not Black men, but it's this particular mentally ill person who happens to be Black." As word got out people would call the police every time they saw a Black man. "Oh, I saw him. I'm sure it was him. He had a particular look." And at first the police were actually stopping and questioning like every Black guy on this campus was being questioned. It was horrible. Thank goodness the guy eventually got caught. I felt sorry for every Black man on this campus.

This story, along with several others shared by participants, serves as a reminder of the hidden and not-so-hidden prejudices people carry. Luke recalled asking a group of colleagues whether racism persists in America. In the spirit of Bonilla-Silva (2006), he followed that inquiry by asking colleagues to raise their hand if they were racist. The raising of all hands for the first question was quickly followed by no hands raised for the second. He then asked how many of them (most of whom were white) would feel comfortable with their child being in a romantic relationship or marriage with someone from a different race, religion, or same gender. Some hands went up and colleagues began to explain that "it depends." Most persons in the room took some issue with the different religion or same gender but said that they would be open to a different race. Luke then explored different races and asked, "What about someone from the Middle East? A country in Africa? Korea? They were uncomfortably silent." Luke followed the discussion with a question:

> I told them I would state a label…and asked people to describe in their minds what this person would look like. You know… Race, gender,

> clothing, age, whatever. I told them not to actually share their answers but just to think about the descriptors. I then asked, "What does a terrorist look like?" I didn't even need to continue. You could just see it on their faces….It was like, "Oh crap…. I have prejudice."

Luke then shared how he continued the dialogue about the origins of prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination. He recounted that "most people blamed the media" and also "denied, for the most part, being influenced at home and in schools" on racial topics. This example simultaneously illustrates the subtle ways that prejudice can creep into our collective minds through media but also the aversion to ownership of racist or prejudicial views as an extension of other, more intimate, influencers of our lives (family, religion, school).

Participants have experienced and witnessed varying degrees of racism, prejudice, and being "othered" due to their race, culture, or language. This has influenced the ways they approach their advocacy for social justice. International participants differ from domestic participants by subscribing to majoritarian views of colorblindness and race-neutrality. Nearly all participants reject the belief that we are "past racism" in contemporary America and that each person needs to take ownership of, and be reflective about, their racist or prejudicial perspectives.

Discussions of prejudice often move directly to the topic of race. While important, educators need to be sensitive to the intersections of gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, age, and education level. Participants' responses did not include significant references to class, sexuality, ability, age or education level; however, gender discrimination was discussed primarily by the female participants.

Sexism

<u>Female participants experienced and witnessed sexism in their personal and professional lives.</u>

The Majoritarian Story	The Counter Story
We live in a post-sexist society, in fact women have more opportunities than men	Sexism is alive in America today in overt and covert ways
Gender, race, and class are all separate issues	Women of color face a double burden of discrimination

Critical Race Theorists recognize the intersectionalities of oppression between race, gender, class, sexual preference, etc. In much the same way that people do not recognize their own racial prejudices, it can be difficult for individuals to recognize gender biases. Barbara and Samantha both addressed the subtleties of sexism in Utah. Samantha said, "I don't even think that the men think about it, they're just so used to it." She reported feeling like men did not take her seriously as a result of the prevailing LDS Utah culture:

> There's some people who are on the same level with me in the organization but I think, in my conversations with some of them, they feel a sense of superiority because they are male and because we are in this predominantly LDS community, where there are certain males who think that puts them above women. I think that outside of the workplace, these men hold positions of authority in church and I think some people don't make the break from who they are at church to who they are in the work place. I don't think some people can make that distinction, that for them, if I'm a bishop, then I'm a bishop at work too.

Samantha admitted that not every male exhibited sexist behavior but that the behavior was frequent enough to be noticed by her and other female colleagues. Samantha also spoke of male faculty, even male faculty of color, who "get into their tribe and tribe." She explained this to mean that men still communicate, in various ways, that women do not belong. She also felt that in many cases, when men invite women to the table, it is not sincere or substantive in nature:

> I think that based on my conversations with some of the other female faculty, African American, Filipino, Hispanic that there was a certain amount of exclusion of women from the core group of decision-making and so forth. There was an idea to kind of throw in the token female every now and then but it wasn't necessarily because it was the right thing to do…it was because it was the politically correct thing to do, and that's frustrating.

The "good ole' boy" network, which a number of participants mentioned, is not just a reference to the white color of the network members but to their male gender as well.

Barbara reported being treated fairly well but she experienced racism and sexism at her current institution. Speaking of a former boss, Barbara said, "He does not like strong women and I can only be who I am, you know." Barbara spoke of an experience where she was reminded of gender inequities:

> I worked for a corporation and even there, I started as a receptionist and within six months, they had put me on the management track. But even there, some of the sexism was…like, they hired somebody who I trained and he made almost double what I made. And when I went to the supervisor, the supervisor said, "well he's a man, he's gotta support his family, you're just a girl."

Barbara also argued that women of color face a double challenge of being the recipients of both racism and sexism; a challenge that adds to the complexity of administrative navigation. She said, "women of color are having a real hard time in academia. And men of color are as well, but to a lesser extent, because the women of color have the extra…the sexism and the racism to deal with."

While a few male participants mentioned gender inequity, Irving spoke specifically about the efforts to advocate for racial, class, or gender equality, "gender always trumps race, always." He talked about how the majority culture plays race, class, and gender against each other. He did acknowledge that women go through struggles in the workplace due to their gender but he does see a distinct and important need in addressing the issues separately:

> Yes I'm an African American male, but if I'm going to comment on race, class, and gender you have that going on at the same time that gender is moving in a big way. This is with all due respect to what woman go through, what they go through in the work place. When I talked about race issues, I have a colleague comment to me, "you sound like an honorary woman". I know she meant well, but that comment is offensive because it reflects this lack of differentiation between race issues, class issues, and gender issues. Where it becomes well…we'll kinda manage all of them simultaneously, and

> as long as one of them is working then the others we'll get to as we get to them. Or if the others are too hard, at least we have this. So, you have to understand how race, class and gender not only work together in a coalition sense, but how they work against each other in certain political contexts, and the fact of the matter is they do.

Irving's argument does not counter the existence of sexism that Samantha and Barbara articulated but warns against the ways gender and racial equality are treated as one advocacy movement; not recognizing the unique characteristics of each movement. He does recognize, however, that in advocacy, such movements can work together and can strengthen one another against the majoritarian perspective that tends to separate and address types of oppression and inequities that are most politically safe (Marshall & Oliva, 2006).

Two of the three female participants shared feelings and experiences of sexism or being treated unfairly due to their status as women. Samantha noted the subtle ways that the LDS religion and culture influence a man's sense of authority and the "good ole boy" network in the fluid spaces of church and work in Utah. Barbara felt the dual-burden of racism and sexism as a woman of color. Finally, Irving cautioned administrators to be reflective about the ways race, gender, class, and other identifiers of marginalization, can work with or against each other concerning equality.

Summary of Contexts and Counter-stories

The study findings thus far have been presented as counter-data or counter-stories to the majoritarian and traditional rhetorical stories that dominate societal discourse. It is important to note that most (and in some cases, all) participants: (1) recognized inequities in educational opportunities between students of color and white students; (2) called for greater institutional commitment to issues of diversity, equity, and social justice; (3) understood the

importance of role models and mentors for students of color; (4) recognized the damage of deficit lenses and language when referring to communities of color; and (5) acknowledged the realities of racism, sexism, and prejudice that influence societal behavior.

The focus of this chapter was to provide contextual findings as entrée to the navigational findings presented in Chapter V. Before I presented how participants experienced their roles as senior administrators of color and the landscape of advocacy, it was important for me to provide a backdrop of participant and site contexts against which readers could lay the negotiated experiences explored in the next chapter.

As I conclude this chapter, I reiterate a number of disconnections and tensions found in the analysis of context to highlight the rough terrain administrators of color must navigate in Utah. The combination of context data and participant responses revealed a disconnect between:

1. What higher education institutions are expected to provide in terms of access (for underrepresented students) and the investment state leaders are willing to make to enhance such access;
2. How politicians in Utah rhetorically value diversity and what they legislate and act upon that stifles, or communicates an aversion to, diversity;
3. The Utah religious rhetoric of love, service, and acceptance and the exclusionary behavior of many from the dominant LDS religion;
4. What Utah higher education institutions espouse concerning a commitment to diversity and how they operationalize such a commitment; and
5. The existence of racism, sexism, and prejudice, and the ownership of such views by individuals, organizations, and the system as a whole.

My aim was to present the participant context through a collective description of their profiles. I then provided insights into the Utah context and rhetorical discourse or story related to diversity in the arenas of politics and religion. I concluded this chapter with a presentation of participant thoughts and responses as counter-stories to the prevailing discourse in Utah. Understanding this context, I move to the next chapter to describe how these participants negotiate the road of administration, positional power, and advocacy for racial equity.

CHAPTER V

AREAS OF NEGOTATION

> At this moment, it's fair to say that the social justice agenda in schools is a hard sell. It's considerably easier to do what you're told. Going "against the grain" is not received with accolades of achievement. In sum, school administrators with a social justice agenda find themselves immersed in the balancing act of meeting the needs of students, while resisting mandated "drill-and-kill" policies that only measure how well a student takes a test. (Stovall, 2004, p.8)

David Stovall (2004) articulated the tensions facing administrators who wish to promote social justice in schools (his focus was on K-12). He argued that "because schools are contested spaces, principals and administrators are often easy targets" (p.8). His article, entitled *School Leader as Negotiator*, underscores the realities and difficulties associated with the praxis of CRT and advocacy for social justice that centers race and racism. Stovall's work illustrates the complexities of leading within educational systems that are politically and racially charged.

One overarching finding from this study was that administrators of color, who advocated for social justice, constantly lived in a world of negotiation. All administrators, no matter the race or gender, face organizational, political, and administrative challenges that must be negotiated but the findings from this study suggest that administrators of color who advocate for social justice face unique role negotiation challenges due to their race.

Inherent in the term negotiation is the assumption that competing demands or tensions exist between or within individuals. If someone does not perceive the need for, or

demonstrate any commitment to, advocacy for racial equity then the need to negotiate between the majoritarian narrative and social justice diminishes. If, however, an administrator of color self-identifies as an advocate for social justice, that individual faces a number of competing interests and variables within the social structure of higher education that must be negotiated.

Although not all data are captured in this format, it is apparent that a majority of significant findings can be presented in four areas of negotiation: (1) negotiation of responsibility; (2) negotiation of authenticity; (3) negotiation of voice; and (4) negotiation of hope (see Table 8). All four areas are a part of the larger negotiation area of advocacy for social justice from positions of power. Nearly all of the tensions that lie within the four areas speak to the issues associated with, and the roles of administrators to engage in, advocacy for marginalized students and communities of color. By presenting the findings as areas of negotiation, I intentionally focus on the fluidity of experience and the constancy of competing tensions administrators of color face in their efforts to lead or advocate for social justice.

Table 8

Areas of Negotiation for Administrators of Color

Negotiation of Responsibility	Negotiation of Authenticity	Negotiation of Voice	Negotiation of Hope
• Educating Others • Responsibility for Diversity • Roles and Expectations • Alone but Obligated	• Credibility • Selling Out • Preservation of Self and Identity	• Power of presence • Experience and empathy • Representation • Position, Risk, and Silence	• Unity of Advocates • Ally Building • Inclusive Leadership

Negotiation of Responsibility

Who is responsible for social justice work? Whether explicit or implicit, this question surfaces when discussions about race, racism, diversity, and inequity arise. In this section, I outline findings that suggest that senior administrators of color constantly negotiate the questions of responsibility for social justice progress. Who should champion diversity efforts on a campus? What is expected of an administrator of color concerning advocacy? How do white colleagues and community members factor into the movement for race-based equity? Participant responses and experiences address these questions and illustrate the negotiation of responsibility in four constructs:

Construct / Issue	Competing Tensions That Require Negotiation	
1. Educating Others	Helping others develop critical consciousness about inequities	Feelings of frustration when others do not want to engage in critical self-reflection about inequities
2. Responsibility for Diversity	Expectations from white peers to be responsible for diversity	Receiving criticism from white peers for advocacy efforts
3. Roles and Expectations	Professional world expectations from colleagues, system, and position	Identity-connection expectations from community, family, and students of color
4. Alone but Obligated	Feelings of fatigue resulting from being alone in advocacy efforts	Sense of obligation to advocate because they are the "only one"

I now turn to a deeper explanation and analysis of these findings.

Educating Others

Participants felt: (1) the need to help others develop critical consciousness as part of advocacy efforts; and (2) frustration with those who refused to engage in dialogues about diversity and inequities.

Most participants expressed the need to educate others about the benefits of diversity. This was done to help others develop critical consciousness and to sensitize them

to issues of racial inequity. Samantha discussed her efforts to share stories with her white colleagues to encourage and engage them in reflection about inequities. She also spoke about the need for a deeper education or change of heart:

> I think it's about changing minds and changing hearts. It's easier to change minds, I think, but the changing the heart piece is what's going to be critical to helping our communities of color…not until people say, I'm not going to do well unless [students of color] are doing well.

The "change of hearts" that Samantha calls for implies a perceived lack of personal investment from educators into racial inequities.

Weston believed that advocacy for equity almost always requires an educational component to help people understand the larger contextual picture. He discussed the necessary relationship between advocacy and educational efforts:

> One of the major challenges is in making a person understand what the needs are to advance diversity. As part of your activism, you have to not only advocate, but you also have to teach them about how social justice fits into that outreach construct. And so, I'm always doing both. On one end of the continuum you're educating, you're giving context, you're challenging their assumptions, and on the other end, you're saying, we need this money for the program. So it's always sort of a dualistic atmosphere for your advocacy, because advocacy involves educating.

When asked what they did to educate their colleagues, participants spoke of diverse methods. Weston said, "It's my job to help people be educated and to understand that there's these margins of differences that is keeping us from where we need to get to." Howard invited students of color to share their stories with his colleagues. He felt that the more his colleagues could be exposed to, and invested in, diverse stories, the more understanding, care, and appreciation they would have when diversity and multiculturalism were addressed. Howard also "educated others" by confronting them when they made discriminatory, oppressive, or racist remarks. He noted that this sometimes made "folks uncomfortable" and he followed, "I think it's important that [the person] understands 'I

want you to be uncomfortable'…with the idea of being more comfortable." He continued to share the logic that persons cannot develop critical senses without a deep self-reflection that causes them to question why they feel so uncomfortable when discussing diversity or racial issues. In Howard's view, initial discomfort eventually leads to greater sensitivity to, understanding of, and comfort with difference.

Most participants' offices were decorated with cultural artifacts that acted as cultural pride symbols, conversation starters and cultural-educational opportunities. As I interviewed participants, I noted pictures of Martin Luther King, Jr., Cesár Chavez and Bobby Kennedy, as well as pictures of African American, Latino, and Pacific Islander ancestors or leaders. When asked what such decorations meant or were intended for, participants shared that their primary purposes were to: surround themselves with images of, and quotes from, people they admire; remind them why they do what they do; and provide an environment where they could connect with their visitors in some way. Three participants stated that they were proud of certain items and wanted people to know what they valued[36]. In a few cases, these decorations served as subtle tools to educate others who entered these offices. Sonia spoke of the numerous cultural items that adorned her office, "I want people to know that this is not a typical [administrator's] office. Things might look a little different in here. I needed to make my office non-threatening and inviting." This comment implies the normalcy of a perceived typical administrative office void of cultural artifacts from historically marginalized communities.

The second component of the *Educating Others* construct was the frustration participants felt with colleagues who did not want to engage in issues of diversity or turned

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[36] In addition to the cultural and racial artifacts, each participant displayed quite a few books (part of the academic culture), personal interest pieces, and diplomas, awards, and certificates. Most participants had photographs of members of their family somewhere in their office.

away when an opportunity arose. Participants cited multiple reasons why they felt colleagues did not engage. Howard felt his colleagues did not want to feel uncomfortable or bad about inequities. Barbara called out colleagues who spoke about valuing diversity but did not wrestle with, or invest in, diversity-related issues. Luke explained his perception of why people do not engage in critical self-reflection about diversity:

> I think part of it is this perception that somebody has to lose. That whenever you talk about diversity somebody's got to lose. Because I have to unpack all this stuff and then well maybe you do unpack it, but my goal is that we're both journeying, we're both improving our critical senses.

Luke's opinion provides a valuable lens of analysis when assessing why colleagues avoid discussions on diversity. If people feel guilty, uncomfortable, or threatened by discussions on privilege, power, and racial inequity, it is easy to see why they might be averse to critical self-reflection. It was evident that some participants wanted to share specifics about their frustration but hesitated when they realized that it might be risky to share details that could hinder their anonymity. One participant even started, "For example…" and then continued after a short pause, "Nope…no, I won't go there." Participants understood that frustration with their colleagues was part of the reality that needed to be negotiated.

The education of white peers about racial issues was a responsibility that participants felt was important in the long-term effects of their advocacy efforts. Although not explicit, some participants alluded to their hesitation to seize every "education" moment lest their peers tire of hearing the "diversity message" and tune them out. Participants' efforts to educate their peers varied in approach and time commitment but the education itself was a significant part of the negotiation when addressing responsibility for diversity.

Responsibility for Diversity

Participants experienced: (1) pressure from white colleagues to be responsible for students of color and diversity issues; (2) frustration that diversity would not be addressed if they were not present; and (3) criticisms from white peers for giving special attention to diversity issues.

Another example of the complex negotiation of responsibility was how participants responded to competing perceptions from their white peers. First, participants perceived an expectation from their white peers to be primarily responsible for issues of diversity and the first responder to serving students of color. This expectation stemmed from both a perception that white professionals felt inadequate to address the needs of students of color as well as a sheer subconscious effort to push off perceived "at-risk" students from their responsibility. Weston challenged his white peers to take responsibility for students of color but was met with consistent hesitation. They basically told him, "I'm white and I ain't from that community, and you are the closest thing to it, so I'm gonna send 'em to you." Other peers pushed off diversity issues to Weston saying, "let him deal with that….that's kind of his arena." He expounded on this issue:

> They didn't see minority issues belonging to them and so that was a frustrating part for me. Thinking, well hell, why isn't that your responsibility? Why do I have 15 different minority students lined up at my door and then the white counselor, I look down the hall and they might have two white kids lining up at they door. And it was because, they was referring all the minorities to me to have to address these issues. It wasn't an issue that I didn't want to work with the minority kids that needed support and help and that kind of thing…but I was like "This is bullshit." You know, these kids belonged to them down the hall just like they belonged to me.

Barbara, Anthony, and Luke expressed similar feelings stating that students of color are seen as their "students," their "responsibility," and their "expertise."

Second, the pressure to be responsible for diversity issues and students of color caused participants to ask, "Would diversity be addressed if I'm not in the room?" Most participants conceded that it would not be addressed or would be in a superficial way; often focusing on the numerical or quantitative treatment of diversity. A number of participants noted that whenever issues of multiculturalism, diversity, or inclusion arose, their white peers in leadership meetings would naturally glance in the direction of, or gesture to, them as the lone administrators of color. Some discussed their efforts to redirect the conversation and reframe diversity as an issue that the whole leadership group was responsible for. Weston shared how the eyes always shift to him whenever there is a mention of the word "diversity":

> The eyes will shift to me but does that mean that I have to carry that burden because part of what I've tried to do in my professional evolution is to shift it back to the them. That's important, what are *we* going to do? In other words, the way that I view that, it's an indicator to me that we've not arrived at the place where when I show up, we're talking about addressing issues of diversity to hire someone, that I shouldn't have to be the one to articulate those issues. That somebody else ought to be the ones speaking up whether I'm there or not.

Once again, these words illustrate the projected expectation from white educators to their peers of color to take responsibility for students of color.

One participant expressed that some white peers who might actually be sensitive to diversity issues are careful not to "take over" diversity discussions for fear of imposing their white lens. "Out of respect" for their colleagues of color, these white administrators take a back seat to "let the experts talk about their own communities." The participant responded to such actions of deferment by his white peers by inviting them to become knowledgeable about the issues and then speak up about them.

Third, participants discussed the criticism they received from white peers for helping students of color or advocating for diversity issues because of perceived "favoritism." Irving said that he never had to justify helping a white student but when he helped a student of

color, he heard comments from people suggesting preferential treatment. Howard also spoke of this dynamic when advocating for students:

> If it happens to be an African American student, and I happen to be, and I am, an African American [administrator], one can say you subscribed to do something because you're Black and that student's Black. No that's not the reason… the reason is that student deserves an opportunity to achieve his or her goals. He could be a white student but if there's some problems here because of his race or her race or culture or mannerisms that seem to cause you some problems then we need to get beyond that.

This tension is not only found in administration, but as Barbara observed, can also occur with competing expectations of faculty of color:

> A young man, actually a Mexican-American, who they hired as an assistant professor…they were trying to get him to the system and make sure that he got tenure. At the same time he had been tokenized. Right away he was put on diversity committees, and then there were people at the leadership level in that department that dinged him for being so community oriented and not publishing more when they had assigned him to do those things.

A few participants shared experiences where they, like the man in the example above, had been encouraged to be involved in, and take leadership on, a number of diversity initiatives only to be "creatively criticized" for spending too much time on diversity issues.

Much like Herbert's (1974) notion that colleague-pressures can present difficult circumstances for administrators of color, participant responses suggest a host of competing expectations to negotiate. When advocacy for diversity and racial equity are added to the equation, the competing expectations increase in depth and breadth of complexity.

Roles and Expectations

Participants discussed: (1) feeling a greater level of expectations for social justice advocacy than their white peers; (2) the ways they demonstrate advocacy for social justice beyond their job descriptions; and (3) their responsibility as role models for students and communities of color.

Many participants' responses confirmed Herbert's (1974) thesis that senior administrators of color face greater role tensions and therefore, navigational complexity than their white counterparts. They experienced these competing tensions in terms of the roles they were supposed to play: team player vs. independent voice; minority buffer vs. facilitator of minority participation; and professional vs. passionate. Irving spoke of the role demands in terms of service. He said, "How do you construct service? How do you construct serving you know, your educational institution, serving the broader community, serving your people?" Irving's question was one that participants seemed to wrestle with on a daily basis.

Participants discussed the principles of white privilege when comparing their role tensions to those of their white peers. One noted that although he is now in a position of administrative power, he still felt a "minority status." In reference to the tensions of competing expectations, another participant stated, "the competing tensions are like no other, white people just don't experience it." Weston added:

> When I go to President's Council, I'm very aware of my ethnicity…I'm very keenly aware of the conversation of the dynamics and my identity and my role in it and my language that I use in it. I'm very aware of all these things where I think that the average white administrator that walks into these meetings don't think about that stuff. You know, they don't have to think about it. And so, in that kind of setting is that you bring with you this connected part of your identity that may or may not be important to them or may or may not be validated in any kinda way.

Weston's constant self-reflection and recognition of his racial identity is a process that, he argues, white peers do not have to deal with or have the privilege of ignoring.

Participants discussed feeling pressure to advocate for communities of color. Participants were asked to share any advice they might give to a young educator of color aspiring to "make a difference" for social justice. Barbara's advice speaks to the heart of the tensions surrounding her gender and racial identities and constituents:

> Be cognizant of the constituents that look to you. We have constituents based on our gender because people have certain expectations of us to which we may or may not agree. For instance, let's say a group of women want a women's studies program and they tell you that they want you to go to the president because you are an administrator and you have voice. You may not agree with it for several reasons. You may know that this is not the time for us to do that. You believe in it, but maybe in the future. Your constituents are not going to buy that. They are going to say, "if not you, who is going to fight for us? We need you. You have to fight for women's studies." The same, too, with the Latina aspect, but now you have constituents in the community who also come to you and demand that you take a stand on certain things. Or they just want your help or attention. But there are pressures from constituents who have issues that my white colleagues are not going to share. Because there are enough white[s] that if there is an issue, they can go to somebody else. But there are few of us. So when I say no it is taken as a slap in the face. I've had people say, "if not you, then who? And you are not going to help us?"

Nearly every participant related stories similar to Barbara's. Irving was told by a Black community member, "you are an [administrator] and you're Black. You should be on the front lines for the brothers and the sisters." Irving also expressed that his white peers did not have the same set of cultural and community demands or expectations.

Howard recounted similar experiences concerning students in the Black student union who wanted him to speak on behalf of their concerns to senior administration. He said that if he felt that they were using his "Blackness to promote their agenda," he saw that as an educational moment and spoke with them about where he stood on the issue. In some cases, he recognized that he didn't "represent in the way they felt [he] should." It was like they were telling him, "You're a power broker, I have an issue, we look alike, handle this on behalf of me because you're Black." Luke's advice to his younger self also addressed this tension:

> There are many people who are going to want you to be the spokesperson for their communities or your communities so if you're [a certain culture], you will have people who will say, as you climb with more perceived power or influence, you will have people say, "Now that you are in those positions, you can do this or this for me."

Some participants also commented on receiving gratitude and praise from communities of color. Community members tell participants that they are grateful to have one of “their own” in a powerful position. Students and community members thank participants for being good role models, earning a PhD and working hard to gain a good reputation. Some participants are told that they are an inspiration to students of color who also want to make a difference. However, people also approach them and say things like, “my kid was hurt because this didn’t happen and you could have helped with that, why didn’t you?” Or “I thought if anyone at this school would understand what we’re going through, it would be you.” Participants argued that the “reality” of their position does not allow them to satisfy all requests and demands of their communities.

The tension and negotiation of responsibility is further complicated when an administrator of color seeks to reach beyond his or her job description to address social justice. Some administrators of color face tremendous tensions because while they advocate for communities of color, they also feel the charge to protect the institution. Anthony pointed out that administrators of color need to find congruity with what they are passionate about and their job. If they are “hired as a career counselor,” the supervisor “does not want them advocating for students of color.” The supervisor “wants them career counseling.”

Each participant was asked about their primary job responsibilities and portfolio in their positions of senior administration. Only one participant described his position as one that was dedicated to issues of diversity; however, seven of the remaining eight participants reported going beyond their job description to advocate for students of color in specific ways. Luke discussed a number of inclusion initiatives and advocacy efforts he participated in outside his job description. These efforts included speaking up in cabinet meeting to fund diverse student programming and recruitment; discussing diversity initiatives with each of

the academic deans for support; advocating policy revisions that recognize the LGBT community; proposing the use of a diversity or inclusion assessment across campus; and creating positions that sustain access and diversity programs. Samantha described ways she extended her primary responsibilities to deliberately connect with students of color:

> I'm the advisor to our Black Student Association. I get involved in as much of the multicultural stuff as I can and I feel that it's important that the students see that there's someone who looks like them in the administration who cares about them… and is involved. That is important to me. And one of the fun things I like to do is when it's move in day for the students. I like to go out and meet the parents and carry boxes and things like that because to me that's just one more exposure to someone that's different. That people can go back to wherever their homes are and say, hey, there's a Black female at [our institution]. That's important to me for people to know that.

A few participants sit on community diversity boards and participate in community partnership programs to address issues related to societal inequities. Some participants recognized that they were expected to engage in these types of activities and service by some persons of color. Most participants expressed that they wished they could do more but that the demands of administration limited their advocacy activities.

Not all participants expressed details about how they advocated for social justice. A few participants mentioned that if they shared certain advocacy efforts, they would be too easily identified. In other cases, participants seemed a bit careful with their responses as if there was a fear that specifics would not only hinder their anonymity but might bring light to strategies that they preferred to keep hidden to remain effective. This dynamic reveals the pervasive nature of the dominant narrative in Utah and highlights the gross underrepresentation of administrators of color in Utah higher education institutions.

Participants also talked about making concerted efforts to reach out to students of color. Luke and Anthony both sought mentoring moments with students of color in a number of student activities, committees, and informal interactions. Sonia, in her role as

faculty and administrator, saw the importance of providing role models for young children and took students of color to visit elementary schools, middle schools and high schools so younger students of color can see people who look like them being successful in college. Barbara felt strongly about her role in mentoring as a form of advocacy. She shared that since becoming an administrator, she has shifted from mentoring students to mentoring faculty, especially women of color. She spoke about seeing her role as helping [faculty and students of color] "see what they do not see maybe because of the myths they've been told about what women are or what a Mexican is, what an Indian is, that they've internalized these stereotypes."

Samantha also shared a story that constantly reminded her of her responsibility as a role model. She was moving in to her new home when a neighbor showed up to help. Her neighbor is a white female with a bi-racial daughter. Samantha shared:

> Until [my neighbor's] daughter met me, she had never really had any interaction with another African American woman. And her self-esteem was just terrible. Her hair didn't look like the other kids, her skin didn't look like the other kids and now, she has me in her life and she feels good about who she is. She knows that she can go to college and she can do all these things and she can be something pretty phenomenal. And my thing in life is that if this little girl now has hope, I've done what I was here to do. If I can make her life better and therefore make her childrens' lives better, I can feel good about that.

Samantha's story highlights the power, for students of color, of seeing someone who is successful, and who looks like them. Samantha's presence, and subsequent interaction, introduced a new horizon for that young girl. Samantha's ability to be a role model was enhanced by her opportunities to assume positions of administrative authority at an institution of higher education. However, her position also brings additional layers of expectations from communities of color, especially when she is the only person of color in a senior administrative position.

Alone but Obligated

Participants felt: (1) fatigued due to status as the only (or one of the only) senior administrator of color; and (2) a sense of obligation to advocate for racial equity and diversity because they are the only senior administrators of color at their institutions.

All participants acknowledged that they were either the only, or one of the only, senior administrators of color at their institutions. Throughout the interview process, the phrase, "Why do I have to be the only one to…." surfaced repeatedly. Weston said that he feels conflicted because while he simultaneously feels an obligation to advocate for students of color, he is somewhat burdened by being the only one to speak out on diversity all the time. He echoed earlier sentiments that diversity, at his institution, would not be addressed were he not present in the meetings. Diversity, he said, is "always a second thought" and only when he brings it up. Barbara said, "Hey, just because I'm the person of color doesn't mean that I'm the only one who should speak up on [diversity]." Weston shared an experience where he felt a conflict of loyalty when invited to speak to a group of African American students at a local church. He thought, "what if I would have said, 'No'?" He could not picture himself saying that but he then spoke of carrying a conflicted loyalty:

> This conflicting loyalty about staying obligated and connected to your community but at the same time, you can say, you know don't you have a right to say no, you don't want to do it? You know and so it's an interesting dilemma and yes, I do feel a sense of obligation that on occasion, I have to admit that it gets to be burdensome because I always ask myself why do I have to be the one…you know? Why do [my colleagues of color] have to be the only ones? So you sort of, as a professional, you get into that self-reflection about why me but also you get into a reflection about well, why not me?

Weston's reflection is an example of Smith, Allen, and Dantley's (2007) notion of racial battle fatigue. Racial battle fatigue is the collective psychological stress responses that result from fighting minority status. Smith, et al. identified such stresses as "frustration,

shock, anger, disappointment, resentment, anxiety, helplessness, hopelessness, and fear" (p.551). Luke, Howard, Weston and Barbara reported feeling "tired" or "frustrated" as one of the only advocates for social justice at their institutions. One participant reported, "I hate it. I get so tired of putting on a good face…like I'm good with what they're sayin' but inside…I'm dying. I want to scream. I want to tell them [my colleagues] that they have no clue."

One of the purposes of this study was to assess the extent to which senior administrators perceived the need for race-based advocacy. Nearly all participants expressed their belief that race-based advocacy is needed. A few suggested that such advocacy is "necessary at all levels of the organization." Weston shared his frustration with colleagues of color who do not share his passion or even his belief that communities and students of color needed advocates. In Weston's view, these colleagues do not want to identify strongly with their ethnicity or their cultural community:

> They don't see themselves as activists, you know….They say, "all I want to do is just do my job." And they identify in terms of demographically as that particular group, as that particular individual but you ain't going to get them to do shit in that particular arena…it's almost like if they get found out, that in some kind of way, it depletes that quote "important" role they have as the whatever leader. So, you have that dimension of identity that's clearly operative where you have ethnic minorities who don't want to embrace and own it. And I'm thinking of like six cases (laughing) where it's tough….quite frankly, they drive me up the damn wall but that is who they are. And I don't call them out on that or anything. It's just who they are. Cause I look at it from the perspective like, "C'mon man I need some help here."

Participants felt a sense of obligation to advocate because of low numbers of voices of color in senior administration but they also subscribed to a greater philosophical perspective concerning spaces of power and privilege. Howard addressed what he saw as an inherent responsibility of those in power. He said that his administrative responsibility is to try to do something about achievement gaps. He continued:

> And if we don't, in the circles that we sit in, then we doin' a disservice to those folks who have less power. And so where students are being marginalized, I think I have an inherent responsibility to help identify that and it is for, the African American male and female to have voice at this college. But it also is for other ethnic minorities who are marginalized to have voice and so I feel a responsibility to all of that. And that's my job as well as my charge as a person.

Howard also shared that he speaks out for persons of color in his leadership role whenever there is opportunity.

Barbara believed strongly that the more power one has, the more one should do for those who do not have power. She noted that if we do not advocate for the powerless, "it is an abdication of our own responsibility." Anthony discussed his sense of responsibility due to his position:

> I'm helping bring those barriers down, and that's a really important job that I have to do because I am a high profile person. And if I shy away from those opportunities, who is going to do it? Who is going to talk about the fact that African-American students find it hard to come here because they don't find their hair products in certain stores. If I don't, then students are going to continue to bump up against those challenges. And they will always be marginalized. They will always be outsiders. I think that's one of the most important things that I can do. I've got the position. People will listen to me.

Anthony's response highlights his sense of obligation to advocate for students of color because of his position of power and because there are not other senior administrators of color to speak out.

Samantha and Luke both shared their arrival at a sense of a greater responsibility or calling to advocate for marginalized communities. Samantha became quite emotional as she discussed her role in helping underrepresented students and students of color feel loved, validated, and valued. A number of participants attributed their commitment to social justice to people in their lives who have had the same commitment. Irving's sense of obligation was derived from his pursuit of ensuring fairness among populations. Others, he acknowledged, might perceive his actions as favoritism but the "numbers show that it is an

imperative for fairness." He is not apologetic about his targeted outreach to communities of color:

> I think that I am supposed to be here in Utah, and I'm supposed to be helping all people looking particularly to encourage minorities…a clear obligation to underrepresented communities so I can look my mother in the eye. The obligation to the communities, and I'm not sure how many people would bring this up, but it's not just to the people in the community… you have an obligation to communities of color.

Howard spoke of the obligation to act when we see injustices:

> When you experience or view an imbalanced or unjust situation that you try to understand the context and the nature of that…you try to absorb all of the information that you can and you try to get as much information as you can, but then at some point you have to make a move…you have to do something about it.

Overall, participants wanted to advocate for students of color and felt the simultaneous sentiments of fatigue and obligation. Participants reported feeling "alone" and "tired" in their advocacy for students of color and the promotion of diversity. They also reported a sense of "obligation" or "responsibility" to advocate because of their position and status as the only administrator of color.

Negotiation of Responsibility Summary

In their evaluation of roles and expectations, participants realized that their racial and other identities presented numerous points of negotiation. Participants felt both a sense of responsibility and obligation to advocate for communities of color due to their administrative positions. This advocacy includes educating their white peers about inequities and inviting them to take more ownership of diversity issues. Participants felt pressure from their white peers to be responsible for students of color but also faced criticism from white colleagues for "paying too much attention to diversity issues." While this advocacy is taxing

participants do what they can to reach beyond their job descriptions to engage with students and communities of color.

Negotiation of Authenticity

Many of the participants' responses revolved around the idea and negotiation of authenticity. Although only four participants actually used the words "authentic" or "authenticity", nearly all participants spoke about being "real" or "true" to themselves or their identities. This is consistent with Smith's (1999) assessment that traditional cultural or indigenous talk is perceived as "naïve, contradictory and illogical" but the educated indigenous person is viewed as inauthentic (p. 14). Psychologists refer to authenticity as living one's life according to the needs of one's inner being (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008). It is through the lens of authenticity that we often find our core values, assumptions, beliefs, and limitations. In this section, I discuss findings related to participants' sense of authenticity in the face of the competing demands and expectations discussed in the previous section.

Concerning the importance of authenticity, Weston explained one of the major challenges for administrators of color in higher education:

> When you rise to that level that is usually pretty slim pickins in terms of authenticating experiences …and what I mean by authenticating experiences are those types of experiences or those types of works you do that directly validates a particular identity place that you come from as part of that rise.

Weston went on to explain that the ascension to administrative positions is a climb that systematically requires persons of color to check their unique identities at the door. His words highlight the negotiation of authenticity administrators of color must engage in as they move into positions of greater institutional power and influence. Can persons of color retain who they are culturally and racially as they move into senior administration?

According to Howard, authenticity is directly related to freedom. He argued that unless one is truly "free to speak their mind," or make the decisions that he or she wants, or be in "control of their life," their level of authenticity is limited. In that sense, authenticity is a constant state of negotiation for everyone. Why then did participants report that they, as persons of color, felt greater tensions of authenticity due to their racial status?

In this section, I present data that suggests that administrators of color face unique challenges of freedom and authenticity due to a number of racial and cultural factors. These findings suggest that participants faced negotiation of authenticity in three constructs:

Construct / Issue	Competing Tensions That Require Negotiation	
1. Credibility	Working harder than white peers to achieve same level of administrative and institutional credibility	Not allowing social justice advocacy to undermine administrative credibility
2. Strategist or Sellout	Behaving strategically to earn systemic respect and affect institutional change even if called a sellout	Staying true to cultural/racial expectations of behavior at the risk of losing institutional respect
3. Preservation of Self and Identity	Adopting systemic administrative behaviors to maintain position, power and influence	Preserving sense of self and identity

My analysis of participant responses further explains the complexity associated with negotiating one's sense of authentic identity or authenticity.

Credibility

Participants discussed: (1) the demand to work much harder than their white peers to establish credibility as an administrator; and (2) how advocacy for social justice could undermine other areas of professional credibility.

One of the consistent themes that emerged was participants' feelings that they worked much harder than their white peers to earn the same level of "respect" or "credibility." There was a feeling that administrators of color were under a microscope and

had a smaller margin of error when it came to making professional mistakes. Irving articulated the following:

> My mother raised me by, what I would call, the Three Times Rule. She just taught me flat out, probably when I was in junior high school, she said, "Son, you are smart and you have a bright future. But you need to understand now that you have to work three times as hard as a white man to get to the same place. That's the way it is. And you can emote over it all you want." Pragmatically speaking, I have a much narrower margin of error. That's the way that I have to look at. I have to stay on top of it, and I can't relax.

Weston also spoke of having to expend "three times the energy to navigate the system than the average white person." Samantha said, "We have to prove ourselves and so we work ten times harder and we have to be the overachiever because otherwise we're invisible, you know, we just disappear." She continued:

> I always found myself being the only [minority] in the room. Usually that's how it was and so I think after a while you become oblivious to that, kind of, but not at the same time, like you know you're the only one but you don't let it bother you but you also know that everyone's going to be looking at you so you either better be on top of your game or you shut up.

Luke and Barbara both spoke of the importance of educators of color to receiving terminal academic credentials to improve credibility and move into positions of administration. Luke said, "get educated, get your doctorate degree…because as you go up through the system, you will notice that there's not too many administrators of color and you've got to be on your game…you can't have any excuses." Barbara felt that her credentials granted her insider status in the culture of higher education, but she acknowledged that persons of color need to go through the ranks and earn respect through their credentials at a PWI. Credentials, she argued, are a part of what academia values and if persons of color want to move into positions of administration, they must prove themselves by having the credentials. One participant noted that persons of color do not have the luxury of certain social networks that help white administrators without the necessary

credentials get jobs. He further added that if persons of color are brought in without certain credentials, people immediately assume it was a "diversity hire."

When participants were asked what advice they might give to a younger version of themselves concerning the navigation of higher education politics, most responses were directed towards earning respect, working hard, and becoming credible in a certain area. Five participants advised their younger selves to become competent administrators for all people so that they are not perceived to be the Black, Latino, or Pacific Islander administrator. Anthony provided this advice:

> Even in this senior role, I am seen as [an administrator]. I am not seen as a Latino [administrator]. I'm seen as an [administrator] who is Latino. I think that's important for me. That's higher education. You've got to build the backdrop. Become the expert so you can be successful in that environment….I think because I'm an expert, people forget who I am and that I'm Latino. They forget where I came from, and I'm just seen as "here he is. Let's listen to him." So become an expert in a particular field so you can achieve that level of respect and you don't have to be defending who you are. I'm not saying hide your Latinoness. That's not what I'm saying. I'm just saying be seen as an expert first and foremost.

Anthony later spoke about one of his Latina female colleagues who encouraged him to pursue his passion and become excellent at his profession, because he would be in the position to do great things for Latino people. Anthony's colleague knew that professional excellence not only led to credibility but to opportunities for leadership and power positions. As Anthony noted, when "credibility increases", so too does the "ability to influence."

The desire to establish credibility, coupled with the desire to advocate for students of color, left some participants feeling that their advocacy could possibly undermine their professional credibility with their white peers. Irving said that he had to construct credibility with his network in a different sort of way. He continued, "You really do have to be deliberate about it. You have to be a big nuisance about it. But you have to be professional about it." Irving and others believed that credibility was usually granted to those persons in

the organization who could be loyal to the institution, and could deliver results that aligned with their jobs and institutional goals. This suggests that persons of color do not receive credibility points when they step beyond their job descriptions to advocate for social justice. Irving encouraged administrators of color to be smart about how they advocate. If diversity becomes an institutional priority, social justice efforts align with institutional goals. As a result Weston argued, administrators need to make diversity an institutional goal.

Amidst the sense that participants had to work harder than their white peers to earn and maintain respect, was the daily negotiation of how they presented themselves culturally. One participant discussed embracing his cultural and racial uniqueness in an effort to reframe cultural competency as a measure of credibility. If, however, administrators of color focus excessively on the uniqueness of their racial/cultural approach or view, people might think they are covering up for other inadequacies or making excuses for lack of credibility in other areas. Irving expressed feelings that were shared by many concerning the realities of their circumstances:

> Let me be very clear about this. I think [my institution] is a fair place to work, even though there are cultural blind spots and biases. This is my perception of how I have to do my job because I am a Black man. I feel like I have a narrower margin of error. I've worked in jobs before this where I think that has been demonstrably true. And I have to take it very seriously here because I have more responsibility and so I have to take that seriously and not make excuses based on my racial or cultural identity.

Participants' responses suggest that persons of color perceive that they carry a greater burden in achieving institutional and professional credibility than their white peers. Findings also suggest that in their efforts to be perceived as professionals and credible, administrators of color face scrutiny from their own communities concerning authenticity of racial and cultural identities. This is discussed in the next section.

Selling Out

Participants discussed: (1) being criticized by persons of color for exhibiting majoritarian administrative behaviors; and (2) and strategically advocating for social justice.

No participant utilized the phrase "majoritarian administrative behaviors" yet they shared descriptions and criticisms they received as administrators that alluded to an adoption or assimilation of "white" behavior including mannerisms, speech, and clothing. Participants discussed negotiating perceptions of their actions as strategic or selling out. Strategic advocacy might be the demonstration of professional behavior to gain trust of fellow administrators and eventually move the dial of diversity. An opposing view is the criticism that the same demonstration of professional behavior is an adoption of majoritarian behavior, or "acting white," and that they have sold out or abandoned their cultural/racial narrative. This criticism, usually from fellow persons of color, also assumes that the administrator of color is not doing much to advocate because the evidence of advocacy is not explicitly obvious. Irving spoke of this connection between credibility and selling out:

> You're gonna undermine every other good thing that you wanna accomplish simply by not doing the job that you were hired for. You can always negotiate change…where people's minds have changed about things and your mind might be changed in a better way. I mean, those are the things of…dynamic of a ministry of presence in your job. You know I mean if you're really gonna make social change, it's about establishing a credibility that you can live with. It's not about selling out.

No matter the actual strategy behind the scenes, participants acknowledged being labeled inauthentic in a number of ways. Anthony remembered going to college and having his own siblings tease him, "Oh so, you're selling out…right? You're selling out to the Mexican? To our family? To Mexican culture? Now you're going to be a part of the white community because you're going to be a lawyer. Right?" Irving, Weston and Howard had all been called Uncle Tom (a reference for a Black person who willfully behaves in a subservient

manner to a white person or who demonstrates white behaviors) as they moved into positions of greater power. Irving recounted the labels he received or internalized: “I got criticized a lot for being an Uncle Tom. What I often felt, then, was not being comfortable in either camp. So in some ways I was either seen as a threat, an anomaly, or as an attractive novelty.” Howard noted:

> I walked out of this meeting and I’m sure that people have shown me the finger saying, he might be a little Oreo or Uncle Tom…look how he is…he’s assimilating into the system. I think you take those risks. When you’re dealing in these kinds of predominant environments where there is a majority racial profile that you have to deal with.

Irving said, “One of the interesting things was that often times I was criticized by Black people for being too comfortable with white people. But growing up in predominantly white churches, that just happens.” Luke spoke of his colleagues of color asking him if he remembered that he was multicultural. Barbara was called “white-washed” and an “oreo” by a colleague of color. The label of “oreo” refers to someone who “looks Black but acts white” (Kennedy, 2008, p. 3). She stated, “There are a lot of people, especially faculty of color, who think that you cannot keep your heart and be in administration. And... I would say that you can. I would say that you can, but it takes longer to affect change and that you do have to walk a fine line and that you have to be everyone’s [administrator].” Barbara’s reflection hints at the question of authenticity and her belief that “keeping your heart” while in administration is possible.

A number of participants spoke about the move to positions of power noting that the higher the position, the more nuanced and sophisticated their advocacy for social justice became. They spoke of whispering behind the scenes strategically and following the mantra of many civil rights pioneers of “protesting in the streets and negotiating in the suites.” Many acknowledged that change cannot be made in leadership unless they are smart about

picking their battles and knowing when to advocate more loudly or quietly. Irving noted that other peers of color often criticize administrators of color for not being as explicit with their advocacy as they should: "you also need to understand that there are some things that I'm going to do, I'm talking about me versus the network… it's in your best interest to not always know how I'm going to do what I'm going to do. Because the relationships are complex at this level." Barbara spoke of the tremendous pressure that comes with being the only person of color or woman and letting people know that she is a team player. Anthony echoed this sentiment drawing on his childhood experiences:

> I've watched my friends in elementary school, you know, fight to get a point across. And I see where that got them. And I'm going, maybe fighting isn't the right way to do…maybe there's another way. So I've learned to develop the art of persuasion…you know. And again its not selling out, its not, it's about being smart to be able to survive another day to fight another battle, you know what I mean? Now if I'm going to sit down and try to advocate for something on behalf of my community, our students of color at the university, then I better do it a little bit differently.

Participants admitted that there is definitely a time and place for more direct "in-your-face" advocacy but warned against the consequences of that for senior administrators. Anthony said that "rabble rousing" can get peoples' attention but as an administrator, he needs to know that if he utilizes that approach he will be cast a certain way and might hinder his long-term effectiveness. He also referenced the need to choose his battles carefully so he can ultimately win the war of advocacy and progression for social justice. This strategy, in his opinion, was not selling out, rather he was being smart about the ultimate goal of moving diversity forward. Irving shared Anthony's assessment: "It has very, very little to do with selling out. You know, it has nothing to do with that. It has to do with choices, empowerment, and representation."

Participants countered the perception of "selling out" if they did not advocate in ways that others wanted them to. Strategic advocacy and behavior was not just a function of

social justice effectiveness but was a part of assimilation to majoritarian administrative behavior to maintain credibility and to survive in the position of administration.

Preservation of Self and Identity

Participants discussed the importance of: (1) early influences on their ability to navigate cultural spaces; and (2) the preservation of self and identity amidst assimilation of administrative behavior.

Much of how the participants assessed their ability to navigate the politics of higher education stemmed from early life experiences that taught them how to survive. Most participants shared how racial experiences created tensions that needed to be negotiated. Anthony said:

> I think it is also important to try to make allies of people who are not obvious allies. That goes back to again just basic grade school recess politics from growing up, it really does, where I was the Mexican in the middle of the whites and the Blacks and hated by both sides. You are going to die in that situation unless you can figure out how to connect with either one or both of those sides.

Weston spoke of his childhood in a segregated community and how athletics forced him to interact with the white community. He talked about developing a "navigative personality" or one that could move within different communities. Weston's development of a mobile identity or dual consciousness (Fanon, 1952) allowed him to feel more comfortable in new contexts and with populations not his own. He said, "I think I can kind of get around these neck of the woods, I think I can manage junior college in this predominantly white system. At least for me, I had these very shifting identities… coming from that segregated community." Weston, Irving, Barbara, Anthony and Samantha all grew up in segregated and racially hostile environments. Weston described the influence of school integration on his sense of identity and his ability to navigate a predominantly white system:

> As I transitioned into the white school, it did empower and give me some sense of my ability to navigate and deal with white people, somebody that was very different than myself, somebody that had a very different experience…my white peers had no real reference point for the family dynamics in the Black community and what we were grappling with there… that part of my identity in dealing with a wider white community is that it gave me a sense of how I can potentially navigate.

Samantha, Luke and Anthony expressed their early inclination to connect with people from various cultural communities as both a preference and a form of survival as well. Anthony referred to himself as a "cross-cultural chameleon" or someone who could fit in with, or adapt to, various communities because of his exposure to such communities. He counts this ability as extremely valuable to his role as an administrator because of the various constituents and competing interests. Anthony spoke of needing to understand the rules of the game to be able to survive. Other participants discussed developing their strength to be politically savvy as both an advocacy strategy and a survival mechanism.

Preservation of self was seen as an important aspect of navigating the political terrain. It was evident that participants changed their approaches to advocacy out of a desire for authentic self-preservation. Irving discussed how important it is for young administrators of color to be strategic in their change efforts so they do not burn out.

> Self-care…be passionate for the cause. You have to decide, do you wanna flame out early? You know? Or do you need to be in it long enough to see some real high milestone. There's also a timeliness to effectiveness, and so you kind of have to be strategic as best you can. You have to figure out what kinds of differences can you make now, and what is your long term strategy, what is your long term hope and you work that way because there are things that you can do now, and one of the most straight forward things you can do now is you can be there and be authentic about the things that you're authentic about.

Irving's advice illustrates the importance for strategic advocacy not only for administrators of colors' survival but for the ability to preserve their authentic identity. Weston echoed this

notion of preservation of self as preservation of identity, speaking of a sense of fatigue in constantly fighting battles related to advocacy:

> After awhile, you learn… shit…why am I so tired at the end of the day? And why do I have to…do I have to continue to fight the battle this way? I would also tell them to make sure they have a sense of who they are as individuals, in other words, having to advocate for these issues is very tiresome, very arduous, and that you can lose your identity very easily.

Weston's reference to losing identity speaks to the negotiation of authenticity found in shifting identities as participants moved into new spaces of power. Weston referred to diversity as a link in a chain of responsibility:

> When you were at the activist level, diversity was a big piece of the chain, but now you're in [a senior administrative meeting] and it's a very small part of the link in the chain. Why, because it links with other pieces. Now the disadvantage is that it sort of loses its identity and its relevance and its importance and all of those things. The advantage is that now you can connect how you feel at this level with how you felt at that activist level and try to make those come together in a way that it helps bring clarity in terms of asking, how do I at least keep diversity as a link in the chain relevant in higher levels of administration?

Anthony spoke about the internal dialogue he has concerning his place and position. He then contrasted that feeling with his strong level of comfort and competency with Latinos and other communities of color:

> I've always felt like a bit of an outsider because coming from my background into the higher education arena there has always been this question in the back of my mind; do I belong here? Again, not many of my peers went this route. Many of them are still in a small town, and are still doing the same hard labor work that my family grew up doing. So there's the question in the back of my head. Do I really belong here? It depends on the circle. The contrast is if I'm in an environment where there are more people like me. Not just Latinos, but people who understand what it's like to be a minority or to be underrepresented in a circle. In those circles it's much different. There are no real walls. There is no sense of being guarded. And the question never comes up "do I belong."

Anthony's reflection on feeling out of place in his administrative position reveals a cultural disconnect that often exists for persons of color in administration. This disconnect is part of

the tension that needs to be negotiated as administrators of color seek to establish a sense of racial place within the administrative space.

Preservation of racial self-identity was important to participants. Participants perceived that the demands and culture of administrative life create high requirements of assimilation if they are to maintain their positions. Weston contended that the demands on the identity of a person of color may be the most difficult part of assuming administrative positions. He noted:

> The demands force you to consistently reflect on your sense of place and identity. In other words, you're always having to grapple and reconcile your place and identity. It makes it easy if I embrace the [administrative] identity as the only identity going forward. At least I wake up knowing that I'm going to go along to get along. In contrast, if I want to be the confronter of administrative disconnects or challenge the status quo, then the challenge comes with the sense of place and identity.

Many participants felt compelled to assimilate to workplace norms in ways that shifted identities and caused negotiation tensions of authenticity.

Negotiation of Authenticity Summary

The negotiation of authenticity is multifaceted. Participants expressed tensions associated with: achieving credibility; strategic advocacy; assimilation to workplace behaviors; the perception of selling out; positional survival; and preservation of self and identity. I found the complexity of negotiation to be summed up nicely by Weston who explained DuBois' concept of the warring soul:

> DuBois always talked about, I think it fits very much with ethnic minority professionals in these traditionally white settings but he uses the reference of the warring soul and the warring soul is that you are always grappling with who you are versus what you do and how you engaged society and in that kind of thing…you are always in some kind of a battle. You are battling with your self-identity but you're also battling with the identity that you engage the larger society that may or may not embrace you. And so that inside of

> ourselves that we have a warring soul that our soul is never at rest so to speak and a lot of me often times feel like I am never at rest.

Weston's words resonate deeply with comments and experiences shared by the study participants. Perhaps authenticity is not a destination but an approach. It may be that this constant journey of unrest is where many administrators of color find their authenticity.

Negotiation of Voice

The third area of negotiation that emerged from the data was that of voice. Voice is directly linked to other concepts of power, position, and privilege. The assumption in higher education is that the higher the position, the greater the power, and the greater the influence of voice. Those who have historically held positions of power have also enjoyed the privilege of having their voices not only heard and respected but, in many cases, accepted as truth. Traditional qualitative research in various disciplines (anthropology, sociology, psychology) reveals an effort by scholars to give voice to those whom they research. Critical scholarship contends that individuals already have voices and that scholars need to focus on providing spaces where such voices can be heard (Delgado Bernal, 2002). Critical Race scholars push the conversation arguing that persons of color have valuable voices but have not had a chance to share their stories, narratives, and histories in public texts.

The findings from this study suggest that participants experienced competing tensions in their expression and representation of voice. I highlight four issues that create these tensions for administrators of color:

Construct / Issue	Competing Tensions That Require Negotiation	
1. Power of Presence	More administrators of color would change and improve the way institutions discuss and address diversity issues	
2. Experience and Empathy	Administrators of color bring unique perspectives of empathy for	

	students of color and can reach them in personal ways	
3. Representation	Forefront and represent the voices of communities of color	Represent and protect the institution even if voices of communities of color are silenced
4. Position, Risk and Silence	Speak out now that you are more visible in a position of greater influence	Do not speak out now that you are more visible in a position of greater influence

Participant responses illustrate the complexity of voice in advocacy for social justice. The first two constructs (*Power of Presence* and *Experience and Empathy*) do not present obvious tensions of negotiation in, and of, themselves. However, positioned within the larger area of negotiation of voice, the findings in these sections are important when considering the few administrators of color who face tensions associated with issues of representation, position, risk, and silence—all of which are captured in the third and fourth constructs.

Power of Presence

Participants spoke of: (1) their presence in an administrative position as a form of advocacy; (2) how conversations about diversity would change with more persons of color in senior administration; (3) the unique approaches they bring to their jobs due to their racial identities; and (4) how perceptions of institutional commitment might change.

One of the major gaps at the heart of this study is that of representation between persons of color and white individuals in positions of power. Participants noted the reality of low representation and counted their presence in senior administration as a form of advocacy. Anthony talked about his role as advocate just by being an administrator with voice. He said, "so in a sense, when I sit around the executive table as a Latino male, I'm making a point. When I speak up and voice an opinion and it is infused with all of the cultural aspects that I am, that point, that statement, whatever I'm arguing, is an element of

activism and advocacy for students of color or communities of color." Anthony shared that in his leadership circles, he often says, "As a Latino male, here's how I feel about this." It is important to define himself to ensure that his colleagues understand that he brings something unique to the table about the issue at hand.[37]

Irving also believed that "it's a presence thing." He expressed that someone cannot advocate at the highest levels without being in those circles. He continued his sentiments about what he referred to as a ministry of presence:

> Young people full of energy don't understand sometimes that there's what I would call an Akwasi religious sense… there is a ministry of presence that is effective over the long-term. There is a ministry of being there. You can't really be a role model if you're not there. (laughing) You know? And that's somethin' that's hard to understand when you're young and you have a lot of drive because you want to make change and you don't understand that being there often times counts as change to a lot of communities.

Other participants shared that their presence has given hope to communities of color and has inspired younger professionals of color to seek greater influence. Luke said, "I'm learning that I'd much rather be sitting at the table, helping with the decisions than to be begging for attention." Luke also expressed what he brings to his position that is unique due to his narrative of color:

> So when you ask me about my primary job responsibilities, I think someone else who was hired in my position would not focus on diversity and inclusion as one of their core areas. And I also think that they wouldn't be able to…and I'm not saying that they couldn't, I'm just saying that if you look at the pool, it's probably not somebody that's going to bring as strong a diversity voice as I would bring to the table because most likely, that has not been their lived experience.

[37] Anthony, in a previous section, stated that he wanted to be known as an administrator who happens to be Latino. To some, this might be incongruent with his statement above that he wants colleagues to know and recognize that he is a Latino male. These two statements were somewhat common among participants. Instead of viewing them as competing, I believe they illustrate the negotiation process that the administrators of color both want to be recognized and legitimized as administrators but also want to be valued for the unique racial and cultural lens they bring.

Directly connected with the notion of presence as advocacy was the feeling that issues of diversity, multiculturalism, equity, social justice, and inclusion would be discussed more frequently and more intently if there were more persons of color in positions of senior administration. Nearly all participants felt that the conversation would change. Samantha spoke of this change:

> I think that it would be different in just that [diversity] would be discussed more…and like I said, I don't think that for most people their intentions are bad, I just think that most of the time, they're clueless and that's why diversity is so important because you get information from here and there and everywhere.

Weston said that if there were three to five other people of color in senior administration at his institution, "by virtue of the presence, lends itself to a very different dynamic in terms of the conversations." He continued, "I also know that the more ethnic voices that are in the room, that also has a profound impact on how issues are grappled with inside the room." Howard said the dynamic would be different "because you have voices at the table." He was not sure how forthright the voices would be but he said, "I think simply because of the weight they carry by being at the table, I think all the listeners have to pay that level of attention to that group." He continued, "If you had those numbers, I would make the assumption, and I think it would probably be a good assumption, that their voice would be heard."

Some participants felt that higher numbers of administrators of color would create a greater sense of comfort to speak out on issues of diversity where individuals might have felt silenced before due to being the lone voice. Anthony spoke about a connection between persons of color that is different from the connection with white peers. He expressed a natural inclination to relate quickly with fellow voices that are used to being in the minority.

Anthony did, however, note some challenges with having more administrators of color at the table and the perceived value of his voice:

> I think it could also be a bit of a challenge though. I enjoy a certain amount of freedom right now being the only [senior administrator of color] that I might not have otherwise. You know? There's something special about me because I am the one. At least at the senior table. I wonder if it might look different in this predominantly white setting if I had two or three more counterparts at the table where our voice might get lost somewhat or might not have the power. If I were in Texas, I don't think I would have the impact that I can have here. Honestly. I don't think my Mexicanness would be seen as an asset. I might disappear in the background there. I don't disappear here. And so I kind of value that. I like being able to have a platform I guess for that advocacy and activism. Now I'm afraid that if I had all my counterparts around there and the majority of them were Mexican or Latino or, you know Black, I wonder how effective I might be as a valued perspective?

Anthony's words highlight yet another tension of negotiation. Although he was the only one to explicitly express such feelings, other participants felt valued as voices for diversity. Samantha, Luke, Barbara and Irving all spoke of feeling valued at some level for the diversity lenses they bring to administrative bodies. Barbara did mention, however, that a valued voice can quickly turn to niched role if the administrator of color is not careful.

An increase in presence of administrators of color not only influences the way issues are discussed at leadership levels but the ways the administrators carry out their core functions and prioritize their goals and responsibilities. A few participants felt that they brought unique approaches to their jobs because of their racial or ethnic backgrounds. Anthony shared how his lens influences the way he approaches his job:

> I'm covering all students, but when I looked at the job description originally, I looked at it differently than I think a white counterpart would look at that job description. I looked at it, and automatically, I started putting into it, things that are related to students of color, right? And that's just who I am, those are the lenses I'm looking through. Here's the box of outreach (forming a box with hands) and there is a part in here that's about outreach to communities of color, no question about it. There's all the other elements of outreach that I'd do as well. But here's that sacred space if you will. Someone else might not have done that. Someone else might have said,

> outreach means this and there's no part of working toward or reaching out to communities of color. So, I'm going to say that I rewrote the job description without rewriting it.

Some participants expressed the belief that greater representation of administrators of color would influence the perception of the institution. Luke spoke of the different dynamic that would accompany greater numbers of persons of color: "You're talking about not just the issues that are on the agenda, you're talking about the ways that people experience [our institutions]. You're talking about ways that people perceive [our institutions]." Barbara discussed her past institutions of higher education and noted that the ones that were serious about diversity made explicit efforts in hiring faculty, staff, and administrators from diverse backgrounds.

According to participants, there is little doubt that greater representation of senior administrators of color has the potential of shifting institutional priorities to directly impact achievement gaps and increase access for students of color. They did recognize that greater representation of persons of color is needed across the institution (in a variety of faculty and staff positions) if cultural, institutional, and sustainable changes are expected. However, through their own experiences, and by mentoring students of color, participants believe that they bring valuable, and culturally sensitive approaches to their advocacy for students of color.

Experience and Empathy

Participants believed: (1) in the importance of connecting with, and gaining strength from, role models and mentors of color; and (2) that they, as administrators of color, brought a valuable lens and voice of empathy for students and communities of color that is different from that of many white administrators due to their lived experiences.

Not only did participants speak of their role as racial and cultural mentors but some shared sentiments of having mentors of color who inspired them to review their potential. Samantha spoke of her mentor with reverence:

> Because she has lived through it, she had done all these things and as an African American woman, she knew of the obstacles and barriers that were there and it taught me through them. And I guess that's why her influence was the most meaningful because it was someone who had walked in those shoes and she walked in those shoes when it was a much more difficult time than me.

Samantha continued:

> When I went to work at the historically Black college, it was like so refreshing to be with people who look like me, who come from similar Black backgrounds, who liked to eat the same kinds of foods, you know. I thought, wow, I was in heaven. I mean it was like, I finally arrived. And it was great because we were a minority-serving institution helping minorities and helping communities of color and I was just like, it doesn't get any better than this.

Samantha's reaction to being in an environment where there are many others who share her racial narrative is common for persons of color (Villalpando, 2003).

Participants' stories demonstrate that racial connections between students and leaders who look like them and understand their narratives, are important. One participant shared that "these leaders [of color] can share the voices of [their] communities more authentically than someone from another racial background or culture." This suggests that conversations at the highest levels of an educational institution are in need of more persons of color if the discussions are to authentically reflect the voices and narratives of communities of color.

To be clear, no participant suggested that white educators could not connect with students of color; nor did any state that race alone qualifies someone to be a role model. In fact, all participants reported having significant mentors in their lives who are white. The analysis here, however, is one that focuses on voice, experience, and empathy. It is clear that

participants felt that these things mattered in the ways they advocated for students of color and negotiated their voices in positions of administration.

Most of the participants believed that they, as administrators of color, were able to advocate for, and connect with, students of color due to their own lived experiences and in ways that were culturally sensitive. Anthony spoke about a challenge white administrators might face in their advocacy efforts:

> The white administrator can lobby very effectively up to a certain point, but they can never talk from a position of genuine, "I've been there, I've felt that, I've done that, it hurts." They can't! That's that insider privilege…they will never have that. And although they can argue in the most articulate and eloquent way about something and get people really fired up, they are still going to lack that genuine piece to whatever degree.

Samantha also spoke of this disconnect by discussing her experiences as a parent of color and her interactions with white administrators at her children's elementary school. She said, "I would go to my kids' classes and they were all white female teachers and in the classes where my kids had trouble, it was because that person had no clue how to deal with kids who aren't like you." Samantha extended her perspective to explain achievement gaps between students of color and white students:

> If you're the kid that the teacher doesn't necessarily love and I think that a lot of our minority kids fall in that demographic because maybe they don't feel comfortable so they act out or maybe, there's just something that makes them different. You know, they're not blonde-haired, blue-eyed, they're not the ones who teachers love. How am I going to do well if I don't feel like my teacher wants me there? How am I going to do well if I feel like my classmates don't want me there?

Samantha's words allude to the notion that students perceive care from connecting points. If teachers do not know how to, or worse, do not make an effort to connect with students of color in ways that helps them feel culturally validated, it is easy to see why these students might not perform well.

Embedded in Samantha's words above is the centrality of the majoritarian narrative and the expectation for students to conform or assimilate to a certain "way we do things" in education. She continued to explain this paradigm by sharing an experience where a white colleague wanted to enroll more students of color into a program, but was frustrated that the students did not respond to her. Samantha counseled her colleague:

> Well if you know they're all in the multicultural center, why don't you go to the multicultural center and hang out and talk to them there. "Because I *need* them to come to my office." And I was just like, you need to change your paradigm, and I said that and she was just livid that I would even make such a suggestion that she leave her office you know. And I was like, this is insane but that still happens, you know, where people don't want to step outside of their comfort zone to do their job.

In contrast to Samantha's colleague's behavior, Barbara shared an approach for helping students of color develop strength in who they are culturally:

> Helping them see potential in themselves, that they do not have the capacity to see maybe because of the myths they've been told about what women are or what a Mexican is, what an Indian is, that they've internalized these stereotypes. So I see my role in helping people become who they should be, to reach their potential, whatever capacity.

Barbara went on to explain that because she experienced others stereotyping and tokenizing her due to her Latina identity, she knows how to talk to and work with others who experience similar struggles.

Nearly all participants talked about their efforts in helping students of color feel a sense of pride in their racial and cultural identities. Anthony and Luke both spoke about connecting with students of color by sharing personal experiences so that students knew that they, as administrators, understood what the students were going through. Samantha told students of color how "valuable they are to the institution." Joshua, Sonia, Luke, and Anthony all related stories of times when they spoke another language to make someone else feel comfortable or connected. Sonia noted that languages are "important for connection"

and she has studied multiple languages in an effort to connect with, and understand the perspectives of, various communities.

In the negotiation of voice, participants recognized that their voices were born from cultural experiences and that those experiences created empathy towards students and communities of color. However, the low numbers of senior administrators of color leads to another element of negotiation; the tension between representing the voices and perspectives of communities of color as well as the institution as a whole.

Representation

Participants felt: (1) the tension of speaking on behalf of their communities of color or their institution from a position of power; and (2) being recognized as an administrator for all people and not just for communities of color.

Most participants considered themselves advocates and/or activists for students of color. Samantha, Weston and Irving shared the opinion that activism is rooted in action and that people who consider themselves activists or advocates should put their "actions and words together." What this suggests is that people who consider themselves advocates, in this case administrators, must speak out as an action to advocate, now that they are part of a circle of institutional power. However, the three participants above, as well as others, stressed that their voices represented multiple constituencies that were congruent with their increased stewardship and responsibilities. Weston beautifully articulated the negotiation of representation as an administrator of color:

> I think that one of the major challenges of minorities in higher ed. administration is… the work that you're doing doesn't lend itself in a direct sense to the type of identity in which you've evolved from. And so it's sort of a double-edged sword, it's sort of a mixed blessing, it's sort of a dilemma where here you are sitting in the room on one end you have to be the voice for the president but on the other end, you have this other part of you that's an identity that maybe even the president doesn't fully grasp. But you know

> it's there and you know it's you and so when you see that activism that does something for you in a different way than sitting in [a senior administrative meeting] does for you, you see what I'm sayin'? It's two different identity sensations and…as an ethnic minority person, you are very, very aware of it.

Weston's narrative was confirmed by a number of participants who talked about representing their supervisors or their institution.

Each participant was given the following scenario to respond to:

> The legislative session is approaching and you are asked by your president to join a local delegation of legislators for dinner to discuss campus priorities for the upcoming legislative session. During dinner, you discuss a number of initiatives your institution is pursuing including funding for new buildings and compensation increases. After what seems like a positive conversation, you notice a few legislators at the table mumbling under their breath about immigration. It is obvious that the legislators are passionately against any perceived benefits for illegal immigrants or any benefits based on race or gender. One of the legislators turns to you to ask your opinion about immigration or entitlements. Your president turns to you anticipating your response. What would you say or do?

In every case, participants reported that they would not be completely forthright with their feelings because of their role as institutional representative. Barbara said, "you have to be cognizant of your position and protect your university." She did say that she would talk with legislators about the browning of America and changing demographics but would do so in a way that did not anger those at the table. Weston recognized that it would not be "his meeting" and that his representation of the university was more important at that moment. He said he would suggest setting up a meeting with the legislators and community leaders who might have a differing opinion to develop new insights into the complex issue of immigration. Howard said he would frame his comments with an understanding of the position his college has taken:

> May I agree or disagree with what the [institution] position is, if I am at that foremost situation representing the [institution], I'm going to support where our [institution] is standing. And not support where I am currently standing. My personal feelings aren't applicable in this particular forum. Where the

> [institution] stands, and what I support is the [institution]. And this is the position that I take, along with [my institution]."

Howard recognized that his personal feelings are secondary to his institutional stance when the two views are in conflict. This tension can create a challenging environment in which it is difficult to express one's voice when the voice counters a normed perspective.

The theme of representation also emerged when participants discussed their positional responsibility for more than just diversity-related projects, programs, and issues. Five participants spoke about their intentional efforts in, and the challenges associated with, communicating that they are administrators for all students or employees and not just communities of color. When asked what challenges she might face if she became a university president, Barbara said:

> As a person of color one of my immediate challenges would be that some constituents of white faculty would think that I was only there to support people of color. One of my first challenges would be to be everybody's president and give that message. Not a president of color. I'm president, and I'm everybody's president.

Similarly, one participant wanted to be recognized as a dean for all students while another wanted to be recognized as a vice president for all students and not just students of color. This desire for recognition as administrator for all people resurfaces earlier tensions associated with the perceptions of credibility and selling out. In many cases attempts to develop general acceptance and credibility raise questions about representation and voice.

In 2004, Barack Obama (then Senator from Illinois) delivered what would become a widely celebrated speech at the Democratic National Convention. He stated, "There is not a Black America and a White America and Latino America and Asian America – there's the United States of America" (Obama, 2004). As an administrator and aspiring president, Barack Obama understood the need to message a sense of colorblindness so that people could view him as a president first and foremost. Many white constituents question whether

he is "too Black" and will over-represent the Black community (Kennedy, 2011). However, like the participants in this study, he has faced criticism and questions from Black persons about whether he is "Black Enough" and therefore, does not represent the voice and narrative of the Black community (Coates, 2007).

The negotiation of voice, as it relates to representation, also extends to the socialization process of, or the habits that are being formed in, administration. Habits of compromise, disconnectedness due to big picture thinking, and concession-making are parts of administration. Senior administration positions require fair attention to, and treatment of, various constituents. As one's portfolio or stewardship grows, so to does the diversity of demands, and in many cases, the socialization process silences an individual's passion and voice. Weston spoke about the danger for administrators of color to be in the administrative system too long:

> And then as you sort of evolve into the organizational structure that those validations become fewer and far between. They become less and less. And then all of a sudden now here you are [a senior administrator], or whatever, and now, not only do you have to change, but your language has to change and the language that you change to often times is not the language of authentication that affirms and validates who you are as an individual, why? Because you are speaking now for [your institution].

Weston and others spoke of the ways they negotiated voice depending on who they represented. Much of the negotiation in utilizing an advocacy voice is rooted in an evaluation of circumstance, space, audience, and potential for risk.

Position, Risk and Silence

Participants believed that: (1) advocacy for social justice from their administrative positions presented professional risks; and (2) that such risks sometimes caused their advocacy voice to be silenced.

In higher education administration, I have observed that the higher the position or leadership circle, the greater the stakes, and the greater the risk of offending a constituent. One of the participants shared the following concerning the idea of risk in advocacy:

> When you start talking in those terms [referring to advocacy] for executive administration that puts risk right in front. Because if you are perceived as a friend of certain interests that could be politically disadvantageous. But as far as I'm concerned part of that is why I get paid what I do. It is why [other administrators of color], and I get paid. Earn your money.

Another participant talked about the permanence of risk in advocacy for educators of color:

> The whole element of risk. I think that the way that I see it, is as long as you're a person of color, risk is at the beginning, the middle and the end. I think that there's an element of risk at each level because on the front end, the risk is that you're doin' so much you're tired …making major blunders or being inept about your advocacy and not really focusing it…and on the other end, you risk being marginalized even though you might be in the position that you want to become a figure head.

A couple of participants talked about the price they paid for their advocacy. I do not present the specific situations to protect participants' identities; however, their words explain the negotiation of their advocacy relative to their position of power. One shared a story of internally debating whether to speak up on behalf of colleagues who were advocating diversity issues. The participant said, "I had been sitting there thinking what can I say and I knew these people trusted me, I couldn't just—it would be, they would feel betrayed if I did not say anything. So finally I decided I would speak for them." This resulted in administrative backlash from white colleagues.

A few participants acknowledged how they have changed their approach to advocacy since assuming positions of greater power. These strategies are used primarily as a means to manage risk related to participants' voice and positional influence. Luke said, "My activism has definitely shifted and changed." He continued, "The spaces I walk in now, by osmosis, I have become more politically savvy, I have to you know." Luke's sense of negotiating the

politics of administration is a necessity. Barbara said, "As an administrator, I know I shouldn't get the institution in trouble and when I see racism, I have to be careful how I call it." She added, "So I've become much… I've learned to be much more cautious." Samantha shared a reflection on her passions and the temperance of part of her voice due to racial and gender stereotypes:

> My youngest son started saying, "mom, you can't do that because everybody is going to think you're just an angry Black woman" (laughing). So my husband and I joke about it and it's like, ok, do I need to temper my remarks because I don't want to be an angry Black woman. And so I think that's why I try to take that higher road because I don't want to perpetuate a stereotype that's already there. I mean, sometimes I am an angry Black woman and I don't try to hide it but I think it's just very frustrating that somehow Black women have that stereotype placed on them and you feel like you have to temper yourself based on trying not to perpetuate that stereotype.

Samantha's self-filtering is her way of managing the potential risk of receiving criticism from her peers or other observers. Strategies for managing personal and professional risk are evidence of participants' negotiation of voice.

In his earlier reference to representing his institution, Howard spoke of his lack of freedom to respond openly due to his position. His words imply that his "personal feelings" could bring negative reactions towards him and his institution. This is directly connected to his previously expressed feelings about authenticity and freedom:

> Am I totally free, I'd say, use my name, use this school, use my position when you talk cause I could care less who it is if I'm going to tell you the truth. But we have regulatory guidelines around this because I am not totally free to say that because what can come back on that, I'm not really wanting to happen. So I have to put a harness on my freedom of expression.

Howard's reflection demonstrates a desire to be authentically free in expression as well as recognition of potential negative consequences that might accompany candid responses about racism and racial inequities. His reference to "harness" illustrates the negotiation of control as well as the potential for the silencing of voice.

Luke's reservations around speaking freely stemmed largely from respect for his supervisor. His insights illustrate the tensions associated with voice, representation, expectations, and reciprocity:

> I am careful with the way that I advocate more so because of my boss…because he's entrusted me to be an extension of his voice in many spaces. And I don't want to lose that trust. And the moment I go overboard or I get too passionate or too outspoken on one issue, I've delegitimized that power, and there would always be a question… and I don't think he could freely trust me to temper my passions in those moments, you know? Right now, I've got a green light to say what I want to say because I haven't hurt that trust yet. But my position also silences me.

Luke's passage highlights both a sense of freedom of voice granted by his boss as well as the ways his position "silences" him. Luke spoke of being "careful," not wanting to "lose trust," and tempering "passions" in his position. These phrases illustrate his negotiation of voice.

Negotiation of Voice Summary

Frequently, participants must negotiate issues of voice, power, and representation to balance their administrative positions and advocacy passions. As the, or one of the, only administrator(s) of color at their respective institutions, this burden of negotiation is intensified. Participants felt the constancy of competing demands to both speak out and silence themselves due to their administrative positions. They spoke about being "careful" and "strategic" in using their voices for advocacy. Amidst this, and other challenges of negotiation (authenticity and responsibility), participants spoke with a sense of resolve, optimism and hope for social change.

Negotiation of Hope

The final area of negotiation is one that I refer to as the negotiation of hope. As an area of negotiation, the theme of hope was less explicit yet it permeated each interview and

interaction with participants. The tension to be negotiated was not whether we should have hope in social justice change but rather, how hope is juxtaposed against racial realities, historical inequities, and vestiges of majoritarian power dynamics. In short, hope is negotiated against lenses of reality and through perceptions of one's ability to make change. The negotiation of hope, then, reveals an interplay of factors and forces that causes participants to seek and work towards change in their own unique ways. According to Bell (1992), hope is found in our ability to make change amidst daunting and real inequities.

As reported in the other three areas of negotiation, advocacy for social justice presents challenges that can discourage administrators of color. Concerning the burden of social justice advocacy, Howard said, "You know we have to walk with this and so the question is: Can we find ways to walk with this in hope?" He elaborated on the notion of walking in hope:

> I want to be able to give voice to something and give it as much as I can in a just way. And that gives me my hope and my faith, that I've been granted privilege and so to hold back, I'm promoting apathy and delinquency. To speak up is to hope and have faith in the change. So where you wanna be? That's a daily discussion. So where you're standing and how you're looking at it, either say, "I'm in pain, I'm not going to change" or "I'm in pain and I have hope and I have faith." I approach my life as often as I can with the hope and the faith that things will change.

Valverde (2003), in reference to leaders of color, also spoke of hope:

> Wherever there is a leader of color, there is hope. Wherever there is hope, there is a better future and a greater chance of a better way of life…In working toward transforming higher education to be inclusive and open, these persons ultimately created opportunity, if not hope (p. 149).

Participants shared perspectives and experiences that illustrate a negotiation of hope, amidst harsh racial realities, in three ways:

Issue	Competing Tensions That Require Negotiation	
1. Unity of Advocates	Strength gleaned from knowing there are others advocating and struggling with you	Recognizing that there are few fellow administrator advocates of color
2. Ally Building	Working with white allies who will help long term movement of social justice	Reaffirming and recognizing the centrality of whiteness as the powerbase
3. Inclusive Leadership	Subscribing to an inclusive leadership style that values all voices (especially those who have not been adequately represented)	Working within a system that functions as exclusionary and draws upon white, privileged networks

As noted above, administrators of color must recognize a number of issues as they navigate hope-reality tensions. In this section, I present findings that speak to the ways administrators of color negotiate a sense of hope.

Unity of Advocates

Participants expressed: (1) drawing strength from fellow social justice advocates; (2) the desire to support this study performed by a person of color; and (3) frustration with the reality of too few administrator advocates of color.

One finding that addressed the notion of hope in advocacy was the strength that participants gleaned from fellow advocates of color. Some participants recounted experiences of connecting with other educators and advocates of color and feeling "reinvigorated" to continue "fighting the good fight." One participant talked about having regular breakfast meetings with other administrators (K-16) of color, where conversations usually revolve around issues of diversity and advocacy for marginalized students. Another participant spoke of the need for administrators of color to affirm one another:

> The bottom line is I think we need to be in validating situations so we affirm each other whether that's in a meeting setting or a luncheon setting or part of a professional meeting setting or whatever, that we need to be more consistent in validating and affirming each other's work. At the academic level as well as the student services level.

Weston said that if "a group of minority higher educator figures are discussing these issues, I often times feel very connected to those issues so if you and I are in the same room or in the same meeting or whatever, I feel very connected to the discussion." He went on to say that he is always interested in discussing issues of diversity, but he feels strengthened when other persons of color speak up and engage in the conversation. As he shared this thought, I observed Weston's expression to be one of excitement and hope.

One of the most satisfying findings of the research process was the universal enthusiasm participants demonstrated for this study. After my initial round of electronic invites to potential participants, I received a number of emails with affirming and supportive messages indicating willingness to participate. One email read, "I don't have much time, but I want to participate because we need more studies like this." Another participant wrote, "This sounds like an important study."

Participants also shared affirming comments in the interviews. To begin each interview, I briefly shared my story with specific attention to my journey racially, educationally, and professionally. After hearing my story, Anthony said, "It's both interesting and delightful to hear your story because mine has many parallels to yours." After concluding the interview, Joshua shared some thoughts regarding my research efforts: "I admire you for doing this, and I think there is definitely a need for those students in the cultural groups. We need to put positive energy into things like you are doing. How do we help the minority to get fair representation?" Weston responded to my concluding remarks of the interview by saying:

> I think that it's a very timely and noble deed that you are performing because I think that any kind of research that sort of captures the essence of all of our voices in some collective way, some focused way as you're carrying this out, I think it gives us credibility so I really feel your research is really giving credibility and voice to those assertions that are taking place across the state

> and it's a way of really giving higher ed a snapshot of what we're all thinking and feeling.

I had met Weston one time before, but after the interview process we developed a connection of mutual respect and admiration, and reciprocated a sense of hope in our advocacy efforts.

A few participants suggested that I invite all the participants to gather periodically to discuss diversity issues and strengthen one another. One participant was excited about the possibility of reviving the currently dormant statewide organization for minorities in higher education (Utah Coalition for the Advancement of Minorities in Higher Education). He stated:

> UCAMHE was very active for you know 8-12, 15 years solid and then it kind of dropped off and but I think that there's still some possibility there and maybe again as a impetus for what you're doing with this report is that that might be an opportunity to bring up this issue of what about UCAMHE and what do we need to do with that and can we in some kind of way justify reconstituting some kind of infrastructure.

Although feeling strength from fellow advocates of color does not seem like an example of negotiation, participants recognized the reality that there are few administrators of color and not all persons of color advocate for social justice. This reality presented some discouragement for a few participants. One participant stated: "It's hard to gain any sort of momentum in your advocacy…because you realize that each one of us is just tryin' to survive…let alone building any critical mass. So it becomes a tough road." When asked what a "critical mass" would be, the participant jokingly responded, "Well…more than one…that's for sure." This response signaled an awareness of other advocates also being alone at their institutions and a sense of connection with those few who are also experiencing similar daunting circumstances for advocacy.

An important factor in the way administrators of color develop and maintain hope in advocacy is the presence of informal networks of support and strength among social justice allies and within communities of color. Participants reported, however, that ally development should not focus solely on persons of color but must include white persons as well.

Ally Building

Participants recognized: (1) the effectiveness of connecting with white allies and networks; and (2) the existence and power of white privileged structures and networks that create inequitable dynamics.

The second finding evidencing the negotiation between reality and hope was participants' recognition that ally building with white colleagues was one of the most effective strategies for advancing opportunities for students of color. One participant noted that reliance on white allies reinforced white power. The reality for administrators of color is that in their hope for change, they recognize that many efforts for social change are led, or at least supported by, white educators.

Weston said that he thought administrators of color could do a better job of having "nonminority allies or nonminority folks who can equally speak passionately about these issues that we care about." His hope is that nonminority allies will not only speak up on issues of inequity but will own the issues and lead out on them. Irving spoke of the importance of connecting with "people of good will" which he defined as "mostly Caucasian people who are sympathetic and who are willing to take risks."

Professionals of color, Irving warned, must be realistic, however, about how much these people will risk because "they are usually in a position of power." Irving's caution is for administrators of color who might be tempted to expect too much from a white

colleague, friend, or ally simply because they seem to "get it" concerning social justice. Such administrative colleagues, Irving contended, while sensitive to the issues of inequity, still proceed with caution due to their positions. Irving recognized that although his white colleagues "have privilege," they recognize the risk associated with social justice advocacy. Another participant argued that the "privilege" white colleagues have allows them to move fluidly in and out of "spaces of advocacy" without getting "niched." This same participant observed that persons of color "do not enjoy the same privilege" and get "niched" if they ever advocate for students of color.

A few participants believed that white allies can have a dramatic affect on social justice initiatives. Anthony described some of his past white colleagues as "powerful change agents." Barbara spoke specifically about the powerful effect of a white, male ally on race and gender issues:

> I think that it's absolutely critical that our white male leaders step in. When we step in it is seen as "it's about you." This is the same thing that we are told about our publishing and scholarship. If we write about people of color it is personal. But if a white person does it then its real scholarship. We can laugh it off, but it happens to be the case. I think that it's absolutely imperative that our white male leaders speak up on behalf of gender issues and on behalf of race issues.

Barbara's advice to her younger self illustrated the importance of building alliances. She said: "I didn't know this, and I wish I would have. It's only something that I have more recently learned because I'm not a political animal. I didn't grow up this way. My family was very poor, and we were always in survival. I didn't grow up with these kinds of strategies."

Barbara was one of four participants to speak of an "old boy" network, referring to the social and political capital that accompanies older white males who have been in the system for many years, and who perpetuate positions of power and privilege through their power-based networks and connections. She noted the dangers of taking on the

"establishment" or the historic and systemic power holders: "the good old boy network can get into leadership and get a stronghold on what are acceptable values and what everybody is supposed to believe. Other people might not agree, but what does it mean go against someone with power publically?" Irving said, "Ok, there's an old boy network and well the interesting thing to me in Utah is that I'm never going to be a boy in that sense." He followed that up by suggesting that administrators of color need to develop a more sophisticated network. He said, "For example. I'm [an administrator] now, and maybe I can't be in the forefront of things the way I could be as a faculty, but I could mentor faculty. I could mentor mid-level administrators. We can have those kinds of conversations, you know one-on-one, so you start influencing the network."

Weston also addressed the dynamics associated with politics and power. He described the relationship between taking political risks, ally building and discrimination:

> The discrimination part of that is when somebody's going to have to pay a bigger price and then that's where you get the alliances that take place. That's where you get the meta-messages, conversations, sidebars and so forth, you know… just kind of like the political dimension starts to kick in and so what happens is that often times if I'm not a part of that real tight network…that's when I've found myself sort of being "on the out." So I think that discrimination is there.

Weston's reference to a "real tight network" describes the existence of exclusionary cliques that result from political systems. Combine this description with participant responses about a "good old boy" network and it is easy to see the tension that persons of color deal with concerning the power of such networks. They have felt the sting of "exclusion" and "discrimination" by being on the outside of the network but also recognize the importance of building allies with those in the network to move equity issues forward.

A few participants believed that in some cases, white allies and those who hold power in elite networks can be more effective advocating for social justice than persons of

color. Barbara provided an example of this from an experience of observing a white, male ally who led an effort on his campus to require measurement and reporting along several dimensions of gender and racial issues:

> He's been doing it for several years. People aren't going to say that it's because he's Black. They might say it's because he's Jewish. He's still a white guy. And people listen to him more. When he says it's important it's different than when [another] University's Black president says something. Those two men saying the same things are going to be interpreted in different ways. Which is not to say that people of color shouldn't do it. It's to say that we are heard differently than our white colleagues.

Most participants acknowledged that their immediate supervisors and some key mentors are white and committed to issues of inclusion and diversity. Samantha feels extremely supported by her white supervisor. She said, "I know I have a direct impact and influence because he listens to me." She continued, "He wants to know my opinion, he wants to know what I have to say, and he acts on it." Howard said that his white supervisor understands that he faces challenges in a state like Utah and that she is supportive of him. His boss told him, "I can't speak for the college as a whole but I can speak for me and my role as your boss and if you do have any particular road blocks that may appear, intentional or unintentionally, please talk to me about those things." Luke spoke about his boss' support as a white ally:

> Over and over again, he has put his social capital on the line for me. And he has created spaces to get my life and voice on the table. He's backed me up, and he's advocated. He's been an ally, and so have many other white people.

Lorde (1983) cautions against a heavy reliance on the majoritarian community to solve inequities. In her seminal piece on the need to break down traditional power structures, Lorde argued that the "master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" or, in other words, reliance on the majoritarian community will never bring about genuine change (p. 95). Participant responses, however, suggest that the negotiation of hope in

advocacy recognizes that administrators of color must build bridges with the white community if significant gains are to be made. This is yet another manifestation of hope amidst racial inequities.

Inclusive Leadership

Participants discussed: (1) the notions of inclusive leadership as a way to validate diverse voices; and (2) working within a system that espouses inclusion but functions as exclusionary.

Many participants identified their leadership style as "inclusive." The inclusive approach to leadership for many participants stemmed from the assumption that all voices need to be heard. Sonia said, "I let people know that their opinions are important to me and that I'm there for them." She spoke of inclusion as a philosophy where all voices matter and are "valued." Howard said, "My style would be an inclusive style. That there's an integrated formation toward leadership and what I mean by that is that you truly believe in a holistic philosophy that every voice matters." Howard later referred to his "inclusive" approach as one centered on trust. Inclusion, Howard argued, "is to work with folks and then let them have as much autonomy to achieve what they are hoping to achieve within their area of responsibility as possible." Luke said that he strived "to be an inclusive leader" because "diverse voices enrich the conversation" and "matter" to him. Anthony reported his approach to leadership as a constant recollection of what it was like to not be in a position of power. This causes him to constantly "collaborate," "connect with," and "include" those who are not in administrative positions.

Participants reported that their journey in developing an inclusive leadership style was influenced by various mentors who modeled inclusion. Howard referenced counsel he received from his Native American colleagues to "lead with your heart" and not just your

"intellect." He said that this counsel is a constant reminder that leadership is about achieving a certain "depth of relationships." This focus on depth recognizes the "value and contribution" of individuals. Howard contended, "When we value each other, we listen to each other." Samantha shared that her supervisor "is very, very concerned about the campus and making sure that people feel included and like they're a part of the team." She then discussed how this mentor influences how she approaches her work: "I think that as a leader, you should be judged on how well you mentor your people and bring other people up within the organization." Samantha's definition of "inclusive leadership" calls for leaders to make intentional efforts to not only include people in conversations and decision-making, but to mentor them to rise in the organization.

In their efforts to employ an inclusive leadership style, participants encountered institutional and systemic challenges and recognized that inclusive leadership was not always feasible. These challenges include: feeling a sense of "loneliness" in the promotion of inclusion; the lack of "sincere desire" from administrative colleagues to "empower those in the trenches" who may not understand the "big picture" of decision making; the "silo" nature of higher education that creates "territorial power" issues; and the fact that inclusion of more voices at the table would not necessarily produce more "voices of persons of color." Barbara explained that she has reconsidered her desires to continue in administration because she has not seen her administrative colleagues demonstrate real commitment to being inclusive. A few participants also shared that while they would like to be "inclusive in all decisions" the reality of administration in large organizations "does not always allow, and should not always allow, for every voice to be a part of decisions." Irving, Howard, and Anthony reported, however, that administrators should create spaces and "processes that encourage representation of voices" of those who have been traditionally

excluded from decisions that impact them and the campus. By doing so, administrators help shift institutional culture and environment towards inclusion.

In their approach to leadership, participants discussed issues that revealed both a sense of hope through an inclusive style and a sense of discouragement due to systemic and institutional barriers to inclusion. Most participants discussed the "realities" of administration concerning the infeasibility of constant inclusion but some noted the importance for administrators to try modeling inclusive behavior for colleagues.

Summary of Negotiation of Hope

Participant responses revealed a recognition of racial inequities and the need for diversity as well as a sense of hope in their ability to create social justice changes within their spheres of influence. This realism-optimism duality presented a number of issues that participants negotiated in their roles as administrators of color. They were strengthened by colleagues of color and fellow administrators of color across the educational system as well as discouraged by the constant reminder and recognition of low representation of persons of color in administrative positions. Participants relied on and recognized the importance of white allies in their advocacy efforts but were cognizant of reinforcing the centrality and power of "whiteness." Finally, participants described their leadership style as "inclusive" even though they encountered challenges of exclusion throughout higher education institutions and the education system.

Summary of Negotiation Areas

Higher education administrators of color who wish to advocate for racial equity constantly wrestle with a series of tensions or areas of negotiation that result from political, social, cultural, psychological, and racial factors. Participants' responses revealed tensions in

the ways they negotiated their role as an administrator, their identity as a person of color, and their role in advocating for students of color. As advocate administrators, participants had to negotiate: (1) responsibility for diversity; (2) authenticy of identity; (3) voice and representation; and (4) hope and reality. Below, I summarize the layers of negotiation that are a part of participants' lived realities.

Negotiation of Responsibility	
Educating Others	Participants felt: (1) the need to help others develop critical consciousness as part of advocacy efforts; and (2) frustration with those who refused to engage in dialogues about diversity and inequities.
Responsibility for Diversity	Participants experienced: (1) pressure from white colleagues to be responsible for students of color and diversity issues; (2) frustration that diversity would not be addressed if they were not present; and (3) criticisms from white peers for giving special attention to diversity issues.
Roles and Expectations	Participants discussed: (1) feeling a greater level of expectations for social justice advocacy than their white peers; (2) the ways they demonstrate advocacy for social justice beyond their job descriptions; and (3) their responsibility as role models for students and communities of color.
Alone but Obligated	Participants felt: (1) fatigued due to status as the only (or one of the only) senior administrator of color; and (2) a sense of obligation to advocate for racial equity and diversity because they are the only senior administrators of color at their institutions.

Negotiation of Authenticity	
Credibility	Participants discussed: (1) the demand to work much harder than their white peers to establish credibility as an administrator; and (2) how advocacy for social justice could undermine other areas of professional credibility.
Selling Out	Participants discussed: (1) being criticized by persons of color for exhibiting majoritarian administrative behaviors; and (2) and strategically advocating for social justice.
Preservation of Self and Identity	Participants discussed the importance of: (1) early influences on their ability to navigate cultural spaces; and (2) the preservation of self and identity amidst assimilation of administrative behavior.

Negotiation of Voice	
Power of Presence	Participants spoke of: (1) their presence in an administrative position as a form of advocacy; (2) how conversations about diversity would change with more persons of color in senior administration; (3) the unique approaches they bring to their jobs due to their racial identities; and (4) how perceptions of institutional commitment might change.

Experience & Empathy	Participants believed: (1) in the importance of connecting with, and gaining strength from, role models and mentors of color; and (2) that they, as administrators of color, brought a valuable lens and voice of empathy for students and communities of color that is different from that of many white administrators due to their lived experiences.
Representation	Participants felt: (1) the tension of speaking on behalf of their communities of color or their institution from a position of power; and (2) being recognized as an administrator for all people and not just for communities of color.
Position, Risk and Silence	Participants believed that: (1) advocacy for social justice from their administrative positions presented professional risks; and (2) that such risks sometimes caused their advocacy voice to be silenced.

Negotiation of Hope	
Unity of Advocates	Participants expressed: (1) drawing strength from fellow social justice advocates; (2) the desire to support this study performed by a person of color; and (3) frustration with the reality of too few administrator advocates of color.
Ally Building	Participants recognized: (1) the effectiveness of connecting with white allies and networks; and (2) the existence and power of white privileged structures and networks that create inequitable dynamics.
Inclusive Leadership	Participants discussed: (1) the notions of inclusive leadership as a way to validate diverse voices; and (2) working within a system that espouses inclusion but functions as exclusionary.

These findings and constructs directly respond to my research questions and overall aims of this study. In Chapter VI, I turn to a discussion of the conclusions I have drawn from these findings as well as an assessment of the implications they have on future educational research, policy and practice. Chapter VI also includes an analysis of the ways my findings validate, extend, or respond to existing literature or gaps in the literature.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

> In describing the lived, educational, and work experiences of these Latino educational leaders, it is clear that the struggle to negotiate politics, policy analysis, and their personal and professional identities is complex—resembling many shades of gray in a white-dominated world. (Alemán, 2009, p. 197)

Alemán's study of Latino superintendents illustrated the complexity of administration for educators of color. Competing interests, contested spaces, and diverse definitions of educational success create a true navigational test for any administrator. This study reveals new layers of complexity for administrators of color who wish to advocate for social justice from positions of institutional power.

A few months after I completed the interviews, I conducted member-checking conversations with each participant to discuss my findings and approach to presenting their voices and protecting their identities. I was encouraged by the responses of all the participants who expressed excitement about the findings and a high level of comfort with the way I represented their voices. One participant said, "I think you really did a good job capturing the essence of what I wanted to communicate." Another said, "Thank you for the way you have…obviously tried to protect identity….I think it's clear that you have been careful with the data." Howard said, "I hope your paper doesn't just sit on some shelf somewhere." He then asked, "Do you have plans with how this can get into more hands than your committee?" Barbara also asked, "What will you do with the data or what are your plans to help people get this message?" Other participants asked questions that

collectively inquired, "So, now what? Where do you go from here?" In my attempt to answer the "so what?" question, I close this dissertation by engaging in a deeper discussion about the findings and their implications for research, policy and practice.

In an effort to seamlessly tie the study findings with implications for educational research, policy, and practice, I divide this chapter into three sections. First, I discuss how the study findings affirm, extend, and respond to existing literature. Next, I explore the implications that these findings and discussions have on future educational research, practice and policy. Finally, in the spirit of reflexivity, I share how this study has affected me as a researcher and participant as I seek to navigate the landscape of social justice educational leadership.

Discussion of Findings

In chapter two, I reviewed existing scholarship regarding barriers and role identities of administrators of color, critical race theory, and leadership for social justice. In this chapter, I return to these bodies of scholarship and highlight the relevance and significance of this study in a larger discussion regarding social justice advocacy in education. In this discussion, I first note findings that confirm existing research and then focus on findings that extend, or fill gaps in, the current literature. Once again, I employ Critical Race Theory as the primary lens for analyzing the significance of study findings.

Affirming the Literature – Recognizing Whiteness

The majority of the study findings affirm existing literature concerning the lived experiences of administrators of color in predominantly white institutions (Bell, 1987; Harris, 1995; Smith, 2004). The findings also validate the notion that the structure of higher education is firmly entrenched in whiteness and white privilege. This study validates the

important work of Herbert (1974), Valverde (2003), Jackson and O'Callaghan (2009), and Alemán (2009) who have all provided foundational studies that have improved the ways we understand the experiences of administrators and leaders of color. The following discussion illustrates the ways my study's findings support and validate the seminal work above. The points below also collectively demonstrate how participants, leaders of color, constantly navigate and negotiate the complexities of a historically white-valued system of higher education. In other words, all four negotiation areas and the constructs found within each of the areas respond to a system that privileges white people and marginalizes communities of color.

First, the study findings support Herbert's (1974) assertions that administrators of color must respond to competing demands or role expectations due to their racial identities. Although not a direct match with Herbert's six role determinants, competing tensions were manifest through the study findings in constructs such as "representation," "position, risk, and silence," "responsibility for diversity," "credibility," and "selling out." Like Herbert, and subsequently Murray et al. (1994), this study confirms that educational administrators of color face expectations from communities of color that compete, or are in conflict with expectations from their white peers and institutions. Participants agreed with Herbert's (1974) argument that administrators of color face greater role tensions than their white counterparts due to racial factors. This perception is congruent with discussions of white privilege; or the notion that white persons benefit from institutional power structures based on their white skin color (Kendall, 2006; McIntosh, 1988). CRT scholars have discussed white privilege as the norming of white identity in spaces of power (Harris, 1995). This argument suggests that white persons do not need to interrogate the ramifications of their whiteness nor do they face conflicting tensions between racial narratives. This belief aligns

with CRT scholarship that views the educational administrative narrative as majoritarian (Alemán, 2009).

The competing role expectations for administrators of color also factored into the barriers and challenges for educators of color in moving into positions of greater institutional power (Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009). In both the counter-story data and the "negotiation" findings, participants discussed a number of social and institutional barriers outlined by Jackson and O'Callaghan including lack of: access to professional networks; role models and mentors; institutional commitment to diversity; and general validation of race-based knowledge. These reported barriers are systemic in nature and focus on areas of the institution that are deficient. These voices represent a narrative that counters the belief that barriers for persons of color stems from self-imposed challenges and internal deficiencies. A few study participants discussed the internal barrier of self-doubt, which seemed to result from a system that centered a white, male narrative as the norm; a norm that becomes the metric against which competency and acceptable administrative behavior is measured. In other words, the barriers that have to be overcome or negotiated by persons of color are a direct result of an overarching white narrative that is positioned as normal, good, and right.

Second, competing role demands and tensions caused participants to feel a sense of fatigue as they balanced advocacy and administrative roles. A constant awareness of their racial identity in administrative spaces caused participants to feel stressed. These findings confirm existing literature regarding professionals of color feeling "tired" (Valverde, 2003) and "fatigued" (Smith, 2004) due to racial microaggressions and the challenges that accompany advocacy for social justice. Expressions of weariness were found in a number of constructs including "alone but obligated," "educating others," responsibility for diversity," "roles and expectations," and "credibility." The validation of "fatigue" felt by persons of

color is a critical component of any social justice discussion because it acknowledges the inner struggle that comes with a marginalized status or identity. This finding validated my own sense of fatigue in having to constantly negotiate competing tensions. These data also reflect Jackson and O'Callaghan's (2009) discussion of internal (emotional and psychological) barriers for the ascension of educators of color to administrative positions. Such barriers include participant references to feeling "stressed," "out of place," "disrespected," and "overwhelmed."

Part of the negotiation reality for administrators of color is the constancy of wrestling, grappling, and, as one participant noted, "warring" with competing tensions. For example, Weston stated that he felt "helpless" when he experienced marginalization in administrative meetings. This description supports Smith, Dantley, and Tillman's (2007) concept of racial battle fatigue, or psychological stresses, such as "frustration, shock, anger, disappointment, resentment, anxiety, helplessness, hopelessness, and fear" (p. 551). Smith, Yosso, and Solórzano (2006) argued that persons of color "switch on" a stress-response system "to cope with racial microaggressions (and macroaggressions)" (p. 301). This study illustrates how such stress-response coping can be framed as negotiation of responsibility, authenticity, voice, and hope.

The realities of negotiation in all four areas are taxing for administrators of color in a number of ways: pressure to educate others about the need for racial equity; pressure to be responsible for diversity; being alone in advocacy; the need to be legitimized or found credible; attacks on authenticity; pressure to conform to a white administrative narrative; sense of risk; and reliance on white allies for progress on equity issues. Even while facing such daunting expectations and realities, participants were willing to engage in multiple forms of advocacy for social justice for a number of reasons: sense of obligation; pressure to

advocate from multiple constituencies; being the only administrator of color; recognition of inequities, racism and sexism; their position of power and influence; desire to be role models or mentors for students of color; the strength they draw from fellow advocates and allies; and a sense of hope that they can create change. These findings demonstrate a sense of strategic coping with the race-based stresses and tensions that accompany administration and advocacy.

Third, competing role expectations also increased the tension surrounding participants' sense of identity and authenticity. Participants in my study spoke of their feelings of comfort and self-preservation in being with others who come from and understand their racial narrative or a narrative of color. This finding buttresses Villalpando's (2002) vital work on self-preservation versus self-segregation. Villalpando argued that Chican@/Latin@ students in schools clustered together for a sense of unity and preservation of identity. For administrators of color, there are few peers of color and even fewer spaces that validate their racial narrative. This absence of racially validating peers and spaces creates questions of identity and authenticity for persons of color. How do administrators of color find a sense of self when their surroundings do not support their racial identities?

In both the "negotiation of authenticity" and "negotiation of hope" findings, participants were cognizant of their racial identities and the perception of these identities from various constituents. This recognition affected the way they exhibited behavior; thus allowing them to be accepted in various contexts and by diverse communities. Such recognition, adaptation, and behavior are consistent with the arguments of Herbert (1974), Valverde (2003), and Carbado and Gulati (2003), who all discussed behavior changes that allow administrators of color to be successful in majoritarian systems: "assimilation"

(Herbert); "socialization" (Valverde); and "performative identity" (Carbado & Gulati). In all three analyses, the authors argued that persons of color had to change to exhibit behavior considered acceptable in a white system. They also noted that such behaviors can affect the ways that persons of color self-identify. In other words, persons of color who assimilate, become socialized, or perform their racial identity, often actually adopt an identity more closely associated with a white, normed narrative. It is in this shifting of identities that racial authenticity is questioned.

Authenticity of identity can also be difficult to achieve in an environment and system that pushes for colorblindness, objectivity and race neutrality. Morfin, Perez, Parker, Lynn, and Arrona (2006) found that institutions and administrators remained race neutral in admissions policies even when given legislative support to take into account historic racial inequities via *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*. This study supports their argument that higher education administrators have not adequately advocated for the recognition of race in institutional decisions. Part of the complexity for administrators of color lies in their participation in these administrative discussions. On one hand, participants recognized the need for greater attention to race and historic inequities that stem from their lived, authentic and racialized experiences. On the other hand, participants had to adopt behaviors, language and approaches that were dictated by a systemic culture of colorblindness, meritocracy, and race neutrality. This tension can cause administrators of color to question their authenticity of racial identity.

In a recent conversation (2012) with Whiteness scholar, Zeus Leonardo, he pointed out that discussions of authenticity for persons of color are yet another reinforcement of whiteness as the central narrative. He cautions persons of color from pursuing racial authenticity because of the way it positions communities of color as reactionary to the

influence of a white narrative. Participant responses, however, clearly showed a desire to find authenticating spaces that validated some level of authentic identity.

Fourth, participants' responses illustrated tensions found in CRT scholarship concerning whiteness as property or as a type of behavior that can be adopted to leverage power (Harris, 1995). In every negotiation area, participants discussed some form of connection with white colleagues or socialization of majoritarian behavior. In the negotiation of responsibility, participants felt that white colleagues should develop "critical consciousness" by being "educated" about social justice issues. Participants also wanted white colleagues to take "ownership" and "responsibility" for racial equity. In the negotiation of authenticity and voice, various constructs (i.e., credibility, selling out, preservation of identity, power of presence, experience and empathy, etc.) emerged because of the need to assimilate, at some level, to majoritarian or white behavior. The need to build alliances as part of the "negotiation of hope" was grounded in the belief that white allies could help move forward the agenda of social justice and, in many cases, could do so in a more effective way than administrators of color. These findings support the CRT arguments that a white majoritarian identity can be seen as an identity of power and, therefore, adoption of these characteristics and behaviors can bring power (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Tatum, 1992).

Professional socialization can be difficult for administrators of color to navigate (Valverde, 2003). This is due to the constant reinforcement of majoritarian behavior and interests as "legitimate" or "credible" (Aguirre & Martinez, 2007; Kivel, 2004). This dynamic and reality caused participants to discuss their behaviors in "negotiation" language or language that both recognizes the need for "legitimacy" and "preservation of identity." In my analysis of participant responses, I found that in their adoption of majoritarian behavior,

there existed an undercurrent of perceived effectiveness in not only conducting business as an administrator, but in preserving their positions of power, and in gaining trust of their colleagues to strategically and quietly move a social justice agenda forward. This analysis challenges scholarship on the long-term effectiveness of assimilation. Lorde (1983) and Valverde (2003) argue that assimilation to the culture of administration, with the intent of changing an organization from within, will eventually lead marginalized persons to adopt a majoritarian perspective and become changed themselves.

The balance of racially marginalized and majoritarian behavior does, however, speak to the lived realities of administrators of color. In other words, ally building is recognized as a strategy for creating a multicultural campus (Cox, 2001) and for helping white colleagues change paradigms of privilege and power (Theoharis, 2007). This suggests that participants in my study believed that the most effective behavior for them, as advocate administrators, was to strategically negotiate their behaviors for effective administration as well as advocacy.

Finally, participants' comments on hope amidst racial inequities validates Bell's (1987, 2002) concept of racial realism as well as Valverde's (2003) findings that leaders of color view themselves as agents of change and hope no matter the challenges. The experiences of negotiation in administrative spaces resurfaced images of Bell's (1992) *Space Traders*[38] character, Gleason Golightly. Bell's short story describes a scenario in which extraterrestrials come to the United States and propose that Americans receive wealth and prosperity in exchange for all of the Black people. Golightly's character, the only Black person on the Presidential Cabinet, becomes a symbol of negotiation. Although he spoke passionately against his white colleagues' enthusiasm for accepting the alien proposal, Golightly was continuously dismissed and his moral arguments fell short in the face of

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[38] *Space Traders* is a short story found in Chapter 9 of Bell's 1992 text, *Faces at the bottom of the well: The permanence of racism.*

potential white gain. In the end, Golightly counted on the votes of a predominantly white, yet humane America, only to be disappointed that in the privacy of their homes, Americans voted to accept the exchange of Blacks for wealth. Bell's story illustrates many of the feelings expressed by participants in this study—feelings of fatigue, stress, loneliness in advocacy, inauthenticity, exhaustion, and discouragement. One of the racial realities of higher education administration includes a white dominant narrative that can cause many young educators of color to question a career in such a stifling space.

However, the collective optimism of participants, even amidst counter-story data, was inspiring. Their expressions of hope and energy for advocacy are empowering concepts for younger educators of color contemplating careers in educational leadership. Clearly, those who engage in social justice activism, advocacy, scholarship, and action do so because of a fundamental belief in the need for change and their ability to take part in, or lead, such change (Valverde, 2003). This CRT paradigm is rooted in the conviction and hope that in certain spheres of influence, people will engage in finding liberatory solutions for racially oppressed or marginalized groups. Participant responses affirmed the need to understand racial inequities as well as the hope to remedy them.

The negotiation of hope may also be an extension of Bell's (1980) notion of interest convergence; or the belief that social "change will occur only when the interests of Whites are benefited and subsequently converge with the interests of communities of people of color" (Alemán, 2009, p. 184). Bell's argument, based on the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision utilized the concept of interest convergence as a lens for analysis, which allowed scholars to critique actions that may be historically perceived as charitable and socially equitable, as actions motivated by white benefit more than social justice. Participant responses concerning hope in the development of allies with white colleagues suggest sort of

a reverse strategic angle of interest convergence. Their arguments for the benefits of ally building demonstrate a strategic perspective that they view as, in some cases, a perspective of hope for actual change. Unlike Alemán's participants, my study's participants did not speak of white colleagues advocating only when it benefitted their white interests. They focused more so on their intentionality of partnership with white allies as a means of moving a social justice agenda forward. Participants spoke highly of their immediate supervisors, all of whom are white, and seemed to avoid any interrogation of the motives of white allies. This avoidance appeared to stem from both a sincere belief that their supervisors support them (except one participant) and out of fear of potential risk in questioning white colleagues. Although participants made no explicit reference to such fear, their responses reflected a certain level of administrative diplomacy. Such diplomacy was evident when participants were asked "what resistance or support do you receive from colleagues in your advocacy efforts?" For the most part, participants spoke of resistance problems within the system or a collective lack of critical consciousness rather than singling out specific white colleagues. Participants were, however, quick to point out specific white colleagues who were supportive. The lens of interest convergence, from a CRT perspective questions the motives of white persons when they advocate for social justice while the findings from this study view advocacy from white colleagues as symbols of social justice advancement and hope without necessarily questioning motives.

The consistency of findings from this study with previous literature strengthens the voices, narratives, and experiences of persons of color. This is important as Critical Race Scholars seek to reframe notions of legitimate voice and narrative. The more that scholars of color can be authors of our own realities and validate our race-based stories, the more our

narratives can shift traditional discourses and views of what is considered acceptable, credible, and legitimate.

Extending the Literature

While the majority of this study's findings are not new, there are some significant ways this study contributes to and extends the literature. This study provides: (1) a focus on the landscape of advocacy from a position of administrative power; (2) much needed analysis of advocacy administration within higher education; and (3) new insights into discussions related to Critical Race Practice and Critical Race Leadership.

Due to my representation of significant findings as areas of negotiation, new tensions have arisen or previously identified tensions have been labeled with new lenses. For example, the "responsibility for diversity" construct revealed three concepts. Participants simultaneously felt: (1) pressure from white colleagues to be responsible for students of color; (2) frustration that diversity would not be addressed if they were not present; and (3) criticism from white peers for giving special attention to diversity issues. All three of these sentiments or concepts have been discussed in the literature as separate challenges for leaders of color (Valverde, 2003); however, the combination of these challenges presents a clear tension that must be negotiated. By grouping these tensions with other "negotiation of responsibility" constructs, the picture of negotiation becomes deeper and more complex. Also, the qualitative nature of this study provided a level of depth and participant voice that is lacking in much of the administrative literature (Valverde, 2003). This added depth from negotiation constructs and participant voice is valuable to the literature for a number of reasons.

First, my primary research question asked how higher education administrators of color navigate spaces of advocacy for social justice. The construction of this question

implies that I seek to understand depth of experiences and cognitive processes regarding advocacy from a position of power and from perspectives that have not been adequately represented in the literature. Most of the studies referenced in this paper capture and present overall experiences of persons of color in administrative positions (Harvey, 1999; Herbert, 1974; Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009; Rusher, 1996; Valverde, 2003). This literature is replete with valuable data documenting experiences of racism, microaggressions, barriers, challenges, and inspirational stories of pioneer administrators of color who have succeeded in their positions (Harvey, 1999; Rusher, 1996; Valverde, 2003). Most of these studies, however, do not employ specific inquiries about advocacy as an administrator of color; thus creating a critical gap or weakness in the literature. This study also provides rich advocacy narratives missing from Herbert's study as well as that of Murray et al. (1994). From a Critical Race perspective, I consider the literature's lack of focus on advocacy a weakness because it does not challenge leaders in positions of power to interrogate the connection of their positions with the ability to advocate for social justice. Due to their low numbers, administrators and educational leaders of color are perceived as symbols of potential change in predominantly white institutions (Valverde, 2003). As such, these leaders should articulate not only their general administrative experiences but their specific attention to advocacy for racial equity. This study specifically addresses this gap by focusing on what participants have to weigh, consider, navigate and negotiate as they advocate from their administrative positions.

This study also provides a relatively diverse representation of participant identity in terms of the overall potential population within the study site. Most studies that have addressed the experiences of educational leaders of color have focused on one racial or ethnic group (Alemán, 2009; Harvey, 1999; Jackson & O'Callaghan, 2009; Lynn, 2002).

These studies have provided extremely valuable data concerning the nuanced experiences of leaders based on their unique racial/cultural backgrounds. They have also pushed the literature to recognize the value of different marginalized voices in an effort to challenge research that would essentialize and represent all persons of color as feeling and experiencing things in the same way. In this study, I have deliberately included racial and gender identifiers for readers to understand unique participant voices and perspectives. However, I felt that presenting responses in the different negotiation constructs was important in providing a deeper understanding of the overlapping and common navigational processes for advocate administrators of color. This representation of unique voices and collective constructs was one of the methodological processes that I constantly negotiated because of my fear of essentialism and my desire to represent some common marginalized experiences.

Second, although not vast in numbers, most studies that do address advocacy for social justice from an administrative perspective are found in the K-12 sector (Alemán, 2009; Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Theoharis, 2007). This may be the result of greater diversity of students in K-12 schools compared to higher education and, therefore, greater attention to issues of equity. By United States constitutional mandate, K-12 schools are required to serve all students. Higher education institutions are a voluntary option seen by many as exclusionary (Trow, 1973). Surely, K-12 schools have great issues of inequity to deal with, many of which directly feed into higher education. But part of the perception of higher education institutions as "ivory towers" stems from centuries of exclusionary, privileged, and elite institutional behaviors (Trow). In this regard, higher education has benefitted from greater scholarly attention to diversity (Smith, 2009). However, the leadership for social

justice literature is still in need of further efforts to increase understanding of the full landscape of issues that administrators of color face as a result of their racial identities.

One tangential connection to the importance of this study for higher education leadership literature is the influence of a dominant religion on institutions throughout the state of Utah. Participants reported that the Mormon church or Latter-Day Saint (LDS) community has a tremendous amount of influence on the extent to which diversity is or is not addressed. This is a vital addition to the literature because it recognizes the importance of societal contexts in the practice of advocacy and leadership. In a predominantly religious or conservative community, participants recognized the potential perceptions of advocacy as a liberal, and therefore, negative movement. The findings in this study extend higher education leadership research by addressing the political, social, emotional, religious, and racial complexities that face advocate administrators of color in predominantly white institutions and communities.

Third, the negotiation constructs provide new insights into the discussion of Critical Race Practice and Critical Race Leadership. Various scholars have extended the role of CRT as an analytical lens to Critical Race practice: Critical Race Lawyering (Yamamoto, 1997); Critical Race Practice (Williams, 1997); Critical Race Pedagogy (Lynn, 2002); Critical Race research as practice (Su & Yamamoto, 2002); and LatCrit Educational Leadership (Alemán, 2009). These scholars have called for greater attention to racial inequities in the way decisions are made and actions are carried out concerning: legal analysis; governance; strategic planning; teaching; curriculum development; hiring; resource allocation; and political issues. The CRT lens suggests that I, as an administrator of color, center racial inequities in the development of my administrative agenda (Alemán, 2009). No CRT scholar contends that this is an easy thing to do yet the call remains. This study strengthens and

extends the discussion of Critical Race Leadership by outlining a thorough landscape of negotiation for administrators of color to understand as they strategically use the tenets of CRT to work towards social justice.

In my review of the literature on barriers and experiences of administrators of color, critical race theory, and leadership for social justice, I noticed a lack of acknowledgement of, or significant attention to the negotiation constructs developed in this study. These constructs provide increased understanding about not only "what" participants experience, but "how" they process what they experience. To illustrate this point, I discuss how the negotiation areas and constructs extend the conversation around Critical Race Leadership. Specifically, I address two CRT principles: "commitment to social justice"; and "spaces for voices of marginalized people to be heard" (Alemán, 2009, p. 184).

Commitment to Social Justice

Participant responses, in all four areas of negotiation, demonstrated the connection between a level of commitment to social justice advocacy and tensions that must be negotiated. The two international participants did not see a high need for social justice advocacy nor did they feel any race-based tensions to negotiate. What this suggests for Critical Race Leadership is the understanding that social justice advocacy from a marginalized identity can be a risky endeavor. Alemán (2009) argued that LatCrit educational leadership is "foundationally political" and "endorses activism to achieve social transformation" (p. 195). Some participants perceived "activist" to be much more politically unacceptable than the term "advocate." Their fear of the word "activist" or "activism" stemmed from perceptions of radical behavior associated with individuals "outside" the institution and they did not want to be considered outsiders. To these participants, there was a sense of risk involved with being labeled an "activist." This affected the way they

negotiated the use of their voice and responsibility for diversity. These findings suggest that activism, as part of Critical Race Leadership can be a difficult term to embrace for administrators of color in power. Advocacy, on the other hand, connoted a positive action for participants and while it still posed risks depending on the level of advocacy, the term seemed less loaded politically.

This study also expands the discussion on commitment to social justice in the ways such commitment is perceived by diverse parties. Williams (1997) noted that American Indians did not care about the concepts of Critical Race Theory as much as action and advocacy for their communities. In other words, commitment was perceived as visible and substantial action that improved the well-being of American Indian people. My study participants noted that commitment to and advocacy for social justice are difficult to measure because of competing perceptions. If a Black woman speaks up about Black student issues or female student issues in a leadership meeting, her colleagues might perceive her to be a strong advocate for social justice. If not much is done by way of action, allocation of resources, marketing, and initiatives, Black students and female students may not perceive this administrator to be an advocate at all; let alone a strong advocate. In some instances, this Black, female administrator might be considered a "sellout." The findings ironically suggest that many of the most substantial and effective changes that could enhance the experience for students and communities of color are hidden within internal processes and policies and are not seen by many persons or communities of color. And, some actions that address diversity on the surface (cultural events and celebrations) are received as a sign of commitment by many external persons of color. Participants also reported demonstrating advocacy for students of color outside of their job description. These actions could be perceived in any number of ways. Students of color may perceive a high degree of

commitment or they may think that that is part of what administrators of color are supposed to do. Colleagues may admire these administrators for their advocacy and going beyond their job descriptions or, as participants reported, colleagues might criticize them for spending too much time on advocacy activities. These differences in perception make the development of any sort of metric for measurement of commitment extremely difficult. This was seen as part of the reality of negotiation for participants.

The demonstration of commitment to social justice by an administrator of color can also present challenges for long-term effects of institutional commitment. No matter the primary responsibility, if a lone administrator of color embraces the responsibility for diversity, he or she may become tokenized and essentialized. Both of these critical terms speak to the propensity for white persons to project diverse or foreign issues onto those who look foreign in a binary of white as the norm and everything else as the "other." Participants expressed fear that although they would like to share their voices and thoughts about diversity issues, they did not want to become diversity spokespersons. This not only would be unfair to unique communities of color but it demonstrates a lack of institutional ownership and commitment to diversity and inclusion. Frustration sets in for administrators of color who want to advocate but feel a lack of support from white colleagues and in some cases, other colleagues of color.

Accepting responsibility for diversity as a sign of commitment also niches professionals of color into "minority-serving" positions based on the assumption that their competencies are only race-related (Herbert, 1974; Valverde, 2003). When pressed about issues of diversity, institutional leaders can point to their diversity "expert" and present a false sense of support for diversity issues. These challenges are exacerbated when one considers the frustration participants felt in realizing that diversity would not be addressed in

their absence. Even when they are in the room, it can be frustrating to wait for someone else to "own" the issues. Once again, administrators of color are left to wrestle with their sense of responsibility to move forward a social justice agenda. This frustration and fatigue can cause administrators of color to question the personal, emotional, and psychological costs of their commitment to social justice (Smith, 2004).

This study illustrates that the unique context of Utah also adds to the difficulty for administrators of color to advance issues of social justice. Embedded within various statewide industries and institutions is a normed Utah narrative that can be described as LDS, white, patriarchal, heterosexual, and Republican. As administrators of color enter into spaces of power, their actions are in constant response to and awareness of such a narrative. In this light, one could argue that social justice advocacy and advancement can more effectively come from faculty ranks where academic freedom and tenure can act as buffers against administrative risk. However, this view also needs to recognize the difficulty for faculty of color to raise social justice issues as they seek tenure in departments, schools, and colleges that may not support such research efforts (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002).

Commitment to social justice has to be a part of any conceptual framework of Critical Race Leadership. It speaks to the core of why anyone would want to adopt a Critical Race approach to his or her leadership and administrative responsibilities. Commitment is a difficult concept to measure; especially when advocacy, activism, and action all can look different depending on perspective. Yet, I view this concept as a reminder to all administrators of color to constantly interrogate and revisit their demonstration of commitment to social justice as an integral component of their leadership style.

Validating Marginalized Voices

Another CRT principle addressed in this study concerns spaces that validate the voices of marginalized persons. The concept of "voice" is a critical element of the Critical Race Theory dialogue (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005). Voice is directly related to spaces of power, privilege, representation, and traditional authors of societal texts. Critical Race Theorists value voice as a point of discussion and analysis because it intentionally situates counter- or marginalized narratives as valuable and recognizes "the experiential knowledge of people of color" (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993, p.6). In harmony with this CRT perspective, this study centers the voices of persons of color as valuable. This study revealed that the space of administration presents a false sense of power for those who are marginalized and who want to create change. Participants expressed pressure to speak out and up for the interests of communities of color and racial equity because of their position but also felt silenced due to the high level nature of their position and potential risk of hurting the institution by representing a view of social justice that was not widely accepted. The negotiation of voice from a position of power can affect anyone in administration. From a CRT perspective, however, the negotiation of voice has a more intense affect on people of color due to the conflicting racial demands outlined in this discussion.

This study's findings extend Herbert's (1974) thesis by providing greater context regarding the limited number and powerful presence of administrators of color. All participants felt that more administrators of color would change the ways institutions addressed diversity and social justice. These perceptions assume that more persons of color inherently bring more perspectives from histories of color and would, therefore, more naturally infuse diversity into administrative discussions. Participants also believed that

because of their racial backgrounds, they are role models for students who share their racial identities. These perspectives challenge race-neutral or colorblind arguments that ignore the importance of race in one's ability to advocate and be a role model for younger persons of color. Although no one suggested that all persons of color are social justice advocates, there was some collective agreement that most persons of color are more sensitive to diversity issues based on their lived experiences. This value of voices and perspectives of color aligns with the CRT framework.

Not all participants, however, agreed that more administrators of color would automatically or necessarily be better. Anthony shared his belief that additional administrators of color might actually diminish his voice and power as a person of color and representative for diversity issues. Anthony's response suggested that he embraced a certain level of importance associated with being the only person of color in a senior administrative position at his institution. He also acknowledged experiencing some degree of tokenism but that this actually granted him a certain amount of power to speak authoritatively on issues of diversity. This perspective is an important addition to the CRT discussion around validating voices of marginalized persons. If an administrator holds such a view, they might actually hinder the development of spaces that include the perspectives and voices of students, faculty, staff, and communities of color. If this perceived expert power is embraced by some administrators of color, colleagues might not see the need to hear from other persons of color or other marginalized communities. This limitation of diverse voices would hinder an institution's ability to address racial inequities and gaps in opportunity and achievement.

Concerning Critical Race Leadership, the combination of these findings suggest that senior administrators of color need to embrace a deliberate and active role in advocacy for racial equity and social justice issues as well as seek opportunities to validate, include, and

add voices of marginalized persons in decision-making processes. It is evident from participant responses that negotiation of voice is required to effectively navigate factors of tokenism, essentialism, and silencing.

The constructs of "representation" and "position, risk, and silence" are important contributions to the Critical Race Leadership discussion. Participants recognized that they do not have the freedom to center issues of race and openly advocate for racial equity in all administrative settings. Doing so, according to participants, jeopardizes their institutions and their overall diversity agenda. Their responses suggest a need for organizational agility in the timing of advocacy. Strategic advocacy, or the ability to understand institutional culture and politics and strategically and successfully move issues of racial equity forward, could be a critical component of Critical Race Leadership.

The constructs found in this study not only extend existing discussions on racial inequities and the experiences of administrators of color, but they also carry implications for future research, practice and policy.

Implications

Implications for Research

The discussion above presents a number of implications for educational research and scholarly attention. In this section, I discuss five avenues for further inquiry and research that have emerged from this study's findings: (1) the relationship between level/type of position and level of negotiation of advocacy; (2) the commitment of educational institutions and leaders to diversity-related issues, spaces, and positions; (3) the significance of credibility and authenticity for persons of color; (4) expectations of administrator advocacy from students, families, and communities of color; and (5) the perception that persons of color have social justice white allies.

First, participants' perceptions of negotiation call for further assessment of the relationship between level or type of position and the level of negotiation required for social justice advocacy. For example, participants noted that much of their negotiation comes from balancing a majoritarian administrative narrative with their race-based narratives. Embedded within these responses is a recognition that the pressures of negotiation and levels of risk are intensified due to the high profile status of participants' administrative positions. Upon reading a draft of my dissertation, one of my committee members asked, "Why didn't you interview educators of color at other levels within the university?" While I thought about including persons of color at various levels, I wanted to focus on senior administrators of color due to their low population, high profile, and power to make significant institutional decisions. Her question, however, is an important one. One natural extension of this study is to include perspectives of persons of color about advocacy for racial equity from multiple campus positions. What is the relationship between the positional level of an educator of color, the type of advocacy they demonstrate, and the level of negotiation they experience? This question emerges from the findings that participants felt risk in advocacy and were sometimes silenced because of their high profile positions.

Another avenue of research, concerning the negotiation of position and advocacy, would be an exploration of perceptions of persons of color who sit on Boards of Trustees or the Board of Regents. My collection of data revealed a low number of persons of color on these boards in the state of Utah (four out of 99); two foreign-born or international and two domestic persons of color. Valuable data could emerge from interviews with persons of color on these governing boards. These are different types of power holders who have varied professional backgrounds and diverse levels of investment in institutional influence and decision-making. As nonemployees of institutions of higher education, the risk factor

for advocacy would be interesting to explore. What are the nuances, similarities, and differences in their responses compared to those found in this study? Have they, and how have they, experienced the negotiation of voice from their voluntary seats? These questions have the potential to provide new understandings of the risks associated with advocacy.

The findings from this study also suggest a need for further discussion about the position and role of Chief Diversity Officer and its connection to negotiation of advocacy. Only one participant in this study self-identified as an institutional chief diversity officer. As Williams and Wade-Golden (2008) argued, the position of chief diversity officer is a necessity in helping institutions remain consciously committed to issues of diversity and inclusion. While their overall narrative was similar to that of the other domestic participants, this participant did internalize a greater sense of responsibility for diversity as a primary job function. A valuable follow-up study would include a comparison of "responsibility" perceptions from those administrators of color who are chief diversity officers and those who have other primary responsibilities. A study of this nature could glean important insights for educators of color who wish to pursue a career in social justice work and those who do not want to be niched in these types of positions. This type of study would also have implications for the negotiation of authenticity: connection between racial identities and professional identities; and issues of selling out or being true to racial identities in a chief advocacy role.

Second, the findings and discussions suggest that there is a need for greater analysis of institutional and administrative commitment to issues, spaces, and positions related to diversity. Participants discussed "educating others" about racial inequities and their frustration with a lack of engagement on such issues. Future research should explore ways that higher education administrators and institutions create social justice "education"

opportunities for their personnel. Interviews with white administrators and administrators of color could reveal interesting data concerning the different ways diversity is articulated, framed, and addressed within the same institution. This inquiry is important because it provides greater context to understanding the negotiation of tensions that administrators of color face. It is also important because it has the potential of revealing the presence, or lack thereof, of a diversity agenda or value from the highest administrative levels. If institutions declare commitments to diversity but do not create spaces for the development of critical consciousness around such issues, the commitment to diversity is revealed as shallow.

Participants also reported feelings of frustration and loneliness as the only senior administrators of color. These feelings imply that more persons of color in high-level administrative positions might lessen frustration, feelings of loneliness, and tensions that must be negotiated. Researchers should explore the perceptions of the "negotiation of responsibility" of administrators of color who, unlike this study's participants, are surrounded by other administrators of color at their institution. Findings from this type of research might be similar to or different from those of this study. Either way, such findings would be important in understanding the depth of negotiation of responsibility in diverse institutions versus predominantly white environments.

Potential studies emerge from the notion of "leadership as advocacy." Participants' responses show that any sort of advocacy leadership can be a difficult road for administrators of color if they are not strategic in their practice and judgment of advocacy. This was evident in the findings on "credibility" and "risk." Participants had to negotiate behavior for various reasons (survival, respect, trust, loyalty, and representation) all in an effort to manage the acceptance of their identities, actions, and agendas. The intentionality

of advocacy as a leadership style is consistent with Alemán's (2009) notion of Critical Race Leadership (CRL).

My first iteration of a dissertation topic was an examination of Critical Race Leadership or the idea that the tenets of Critical Race Theory could be woven into a leadership style, approach, or philosophy. I was also intrigued by this topic because little had been written about it. Since CRT is a theory that calls for an active interrogation of racial issues in society, I felt that I needed to first assess the contexts of educational leadership and advocacy for racial equity. I also wanted to assess the extent to which administrators of color perceived the need for social justice advocacy and the ways they navigated spaces of power. These research questions are important context-laying questions for future research that could explore the notion of CRL. How is CRL demonstrated by senior administrators of color? What would a CRL style look like and how could such an approach be developed? What are the experiences of those who have paid a negative price for employing a CRL approach? These questions begin to expand the literature on educational leadership, social justice advocacy, and administrative position and power.

Third, the "authenticity" findings raised new questions for potential research. Participants discussed the tension of administrative socialization and the pressure to be true to one's racial narrative. A follow up study might explore the types of behaviors that are perceived to give people administrative credibility and how such behaviors compare to administrative approaches from communities of color. Scholars have studied competing racial narratives (Harris-Canul, 2003), but more CRT work is needed to understand the depth with which persons perceive the adoption of administrative credibility to be an adoption of whiteness.

Further research on the topic of "authenticity" itself is warranted. The notion of authenticity is a contested term and presents a series of questions that should be explored. How do educators of color define authenticity concerning racial identity? How do they demonstrate authentic behavior? Who gets to define what authentic racial behavior is? These questions are important as younger educators of color face decisions concerning their future in academia. Is it easier to maintain one's sense of authenticity as a professor or in a diversity-related position than by pursuing general institutional administration? I have wrestled with these questions and they caused me to pursue this dissertation topic. Even as I synthesize participant responses, I am working through my sense of authenticity as I decide whether to continue to engage this type of research or remain in an administrative role. Perhaps both could be done, although, as research has revealed, there exist political risks for educators who have an explicit social justice or race research agenda (Anderson-Thompkins, 2009; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002).

Fourth, one constituency that participants spoke about, in terms of expectations for advocacy, is students of color. Participants perceived students of color to have certain advocacy expectations of them due to the fact that they are the only (or one of the only) administrators of color in senior positions. This begs the question, "What are the perceptions of students of color concerning the commitment of administrators, faculty, and staff of color to advocacy?" Students, as well as their family members (parents/guardians/siblings) could provide additional perspectives to yield findings that help current and future educators of color understand what is expected of them as role models, mentors, and educational leaders. Students and communities of color can also provide valuable data concerning the perceptions of what administrators can or should do from a position of power. Such a study would add to the discussion about the expectations

administrators of color perceive that others have of them and the reasons such perceptions are validated or challenged.

Finally, participants' recognition of ally building begs new questions about the strategies, definitions, and motives for building alliances with white colleagues. How does a person of color build alliances with white colleagues without reinforcing the power and centrality of whiteness? What do educational leaders of color perceive to be the characteristics of white colleagues who are considered allies for social justice? How is the negotiation of hope in ally building a new exploration of Bell's (1980) notion of interest convergence? These questions address the negotiated interaction between underrepresented administrators of color and overrepresented white administrators in tackling issues of inequity together from positions of power. These new inquiries also have the potential to add to the CRT literature regarding the realities of Critical Race Praxis and the negotiated efforts that move a diversity agenda through majoritarian means or persons.

Implications for Practice and Policy

In addition to opening new doors of research, the findings from this study have implications for educational practice and policy. Senior administrators would benefit from discussions about the: (1) creation of spaces that are both culturally validating for marginalized communities and "educational" where campus personnel and students can develop critical consciousness; (2) collection, assessment and presentation of achievement gap and representation data; and (3) creation of positions, job descriptions, and offices that are dedicated to diversity issues.

In response to participants' feelings that they had to constantly "educate" their peers about the importance of diversity, this study demonstrates the need for institutional leaders to create more "educating" and "culturally validating" spaces. One of these spaces includes

dialogue and training on issues of race, diversity, and inclusion. I lean towards the approach of dialogue because I assume that people learn based on exposure to new experiences, lenses and perspectives rather than a prescriptive training that is often not internalized. However, I also recognize that in some institutions and situations, training implies a sense of requirement and can, therefore, lead to greater participation. Rather than a yearly "diversity" speaker, institutions must create spaces including, but not limited to, the following: "privilege" dialogues; talking circle dialogues; diversity training, critical consciousness development retreats; cultural competency training; culturally responsible pedagogy; diversity panels; critical issues film series dialogues; and diversity lecture series (Smith, 2009). Concerning policy, each new employee should receive training on issues of diversity similar to sexual harassment training required of all employees. The structure of the "training" should not be as much about broadcasting of universal information that everyone must follow (as is the case with other forms of training). Diversity "discussions" or "trainings" should be focused on issues of inclusion, exclusion, prejudice, privilege, inequities, and cultural competency and invite participants to reflect critically about such issues (Garcia & Hoelscher, 2008).

Administrators of color should also feel validated in their racial/cultural spaces. Drawing on Valenzuela's (1999) research on Subtractive Schooling, institutions should adopt practices that do not require students or employees to "subtract" important parts of their cultural narratives. For example, at one institution in Utah, administrators are developing an ecumenical reflection center for people of various faiths or no specific faith to have a quiet space for meditation, prayer, and small gatherings. This initiative has been received well by the community and is especially significant for Muslim students, faculty, and staff, who have had to use bathrooms and personal vehicles for individual worship. These types of spaces

and forums also include: intercultural plazas; language fairs; campus selection of décor, statues, and images that represent diversity; and community/family events geared towards communities of color (Garcia & Hoelscher, 2008).

The second "educating others" implication for institutional policy and practice concerns the collection and presentation of achievement gap and representation data. Institutional values are evident in the type of data an organization collects. Too many campuses do not use diversity data to address diversity issues (Smith, 2009). The number of instruments and strategies (e.g., equity audits, diversity scorecards, inclusion assessments) to collect "diversity data" in higher education is growing (Bauman, Bustillos, Bensimón, Brown II & Bartee, 2005; Bensimón, 2005; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen & Allen, 1999; Milem, Chang & Antonio, 2005; Williams, Berger & McClendon, 2005). Institutions should find or develop an instrument that assesses the following: representation of administrators, faculty, and staff by race and gender; representation of students in each major, department, school, and college by race and gender; representation of students in high level involvement programs (i.e., honors, leadership, student government, study abroad, and internships) by race and gender; graduation and retention rates of students by race, gender, and major; level of student involvement with cultural engagement activities; student, staff, and faculty perceptions of racial climate and sense of inclusion; and K-12 students' and families' perceptions of an institution's diversity climate (Smith, 2009). Departments and divisions could be required to submit a yearly report of this data. Once the data are collected, institutional leaders should post the data, set goals to address gaps, and organize initiatives and efforts to improve representation, close gaps, and be inclusive (Clayton-Pedersen, Parker, Smith, Moreno, & Teraguchi, 2007; Nettles, Sedlacek, Smith, Musil, Hudgins, & García, 2002). These new "educating" practices and potential policies could influence how

administrators of color feel: supported in their advocacy; white colleague ownership of diversity issues; and confidence in their institution's support of students of color.

Institutions that claim diversity as a value need to improve the way such values influence how performance is measured. Although not exclusively driven by performance evaluations, credibility is influenced by the collective perception of an administrator's competence in his/her core responsibilities. Formal and informal assessments of leadership or administrative competency should include greater attention to one's commitment to diversity. Much like the recommendation to hold institutional leaders accountable and responsible for diversity issues, this suggestion requires reframing what is considered credible and competent administrative behavior (Cox, 2001; Smith, 2009).

Participant counter-story data also revealed a belief that their institutions lacked commitment to diversity issues. From these data, I conclude that institutions of higher education need to improve in the ways diversity and inclusion are built into the leadership agenda (Cox, 2001). This would facilitate greater attention to, and ownership of, issues of inequity so that administrators of color would not feel scared or silenced on such matters. Until institutional leaders make diversity, inclusion, and social justice a part of institutional initiatives, discussions, culture, and values, the few senior administrators of color who wish to advocate for social justice will continue to be caught in difficult tensions concerning voice, representation, and spaces of power.

Finally, institutions should evaluate how diversity factors in to institutional structures and processes. Leaders should build into administrative job descriptions a certain level of responsibility for diversity. For example, as part of their job descriptions, campus leaders should be expected to make improvements in the areas of inclusion, access, and diversity within their stewardship. This type of institutional commitment would shift responsibility

for diversity to the body of leadership rather than one person—who usually happens to be a person of color. Key to this approach is the lever of accountability. Supervisors need to lead out in modeling an expectation of inclusion improvements if organizations are going to see real change (Cox, 2001).

The findings also have implications on the recruitment, hiring, and retention of professionals of color. The low number of potential participants for this study is a significant finding in, and of, itself. Participant responses further confirmed that their institutions lacked adequate representation of persons of color in all staff, faculty, and administrative positions. In response to participants' calls for greater representation, it is clear that higher education institutions must assess their efforts to recruit, hire, and retain persons of color who represent the diversity of students on their campuses for faculty, staff, and administrative positions. The tensions associated with "risk" and "silence" are directly related to the fact that participants were alone in their advocacy and represented a significantly marginalized voice. The lack of representation of persons of color in senior administrative positions as well as faculty and staff leadership calls for a reevaluation of hiring practices including marketing of positions; interview committee make-up and questions; cultural liaisons and navigational mentors who can help candidates feel racially and culturally comfortable in the environment; and expected competency with diverse communities written into job descriptions.

Institutions must also improve in the development of explicit offices and positions dedicated to championing diversity and inclusion initiatives. Institutions should consider the creation of positions and/or service offices including: senior-administrative-level chief diversity officer; human resources diversity officer (usually as an affirmative action and equal employment opportunity officer); associate or assistant dean for diversity, access, and

inclusion (within a specific college or school); office of ethnic affairs (or multicultural center); equity and access center; inclusive pedagogy and diverse classroom resource center; student government diversity officer; and recruitment specialist for underrepresented communities. These spaces and positions create environments that support diversity initiatives and marginalized voices (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999). If campuses were more supportive of these efforts, administrators of color might not feel such a high level of risk in expressing their voices on behalf of students of color and racial equity.

There are some issues with the creation of these diversity-specific positions, offices, and spaces. One issue speaks to the negotiation of responsibility in that persons of color become tokenized as the experts and gatekeepers of all things diversity. This hinders white colleagues from "owning" diversity issues or feeling a sense of responsibility for them. Diversity-related spaces can also become targets of hostility, especially as it relates to sexual orientation. Having said this, it can be difficult for the values of inclusion, equity, and social justice to begin to permeate the institution without explicit commitments in the forms of positions, offices and spaces (Cox, 2001; Smith, 2009).

The creation of "educating" and "culturally validating" spaces, diversity-assessment tools, and diversity-related positions reflects institutional commitment and, more importantly, leadership for social justice. The implementation of such actions requires a high degree of courage on the part of administrators of color. This challenge has not fallen short on me as researcher. The process of this research endeavor has had implications for the development of my research and leadership agendas. Although this study contains valuable findings with implications for research, practice, and policy, I found equally stimulating and poignant discoveries concerning my own professional journey and scholarly interests.

Planting My Flag

The imagery of planting a flag in new territory is one that can emote feelings of pride in discovery, achievement, and ownership. For many colonized communities however, such images can also serve as a harsh memory of others who have claimed ownership of lands not their own. Whether it be a flag of colonization, independence, or national reverence, the symbolic nature of planting it suggests definitive direction, ownership and pride in something. As a person of color, an emerging scholar and current administrator, I wrestled with many questions that pushed me in some way to plant my academic and professional flag. Where do my passions and strengths in research lie? Will those passions and strengths be validated by the academic world? What path would best serve my thirst for advocacy for communities of color? Would I be more supported or accepted as a scholar if I focused on more nonthreatening, general topics? Do I really want to conduct qualitative research when so many have told me that it is difficult, time consuming, and may not yield the same level of respect as a quantitative study? Are there any risks personally or professionally if I study issues of race or racism? These and other questions weighed on me throughout the process and continue to exist to some degree.

In selecting my topic of study, I was often reminded of Derrick Bell's (1998) warning to scholars of color who engage in research that is uncomfortable to traditional holders of academic power:

> This fact translates into a not so subtle pressure to take positions in our writing that will not upset the mostly White faculty and college administration who hire and promote us. It goes without saying that those doing the selecting tend to be attracted to minority candidates who appear as much like them as possible, and are most happy if the minority person's research and writing are comforting rather than confrontative. (Bell, 1998, p. 137)

The dynamic above has caused me to pause on a number of occasions. Throughout this research effort I kept asking myself, who is the audience I am writing to? Is it fellow administrators of color reading and feeling a sense of connection to similar experiences and feelings? Is it younger students or educators of color who are considering educational administration as a possible career option? Is it my colleagues (most of whom are white) who have constantly told me how much they want to read it? Is it educators broadly who wish to understand a new angle to address achievement gaps? Or is it the scholarly insiders of CRT and social justice research (including those on my committee)? The answer I found is, "Yes. It is all of them." Why? Because I desire to build bridges concerning issues of inclusion.

I presented findings and data that will undoubtedly upset some people while staying true to the voices of those in the study. I attempted to write the dissertation in such a way that brought awareness to the racial inequities and gaps in education and racial experiences of people of color, while heeding Denzin's (2003) advice that "Those who write culture must learn to use language in a way that brings people together" (p. 460). I recognize the importance of being explicit with data even when they are uncomfortable for people, but I also want people to engage in the conversation with me and not shut me off. Herein lies another negotiation dilemma for race-based scholarship; that of honoring marginalized voices without alienating those who need to develop greater critical consciousness.

As I consider the realities I face as a leader of color in American higher education, I am simultaneously discouraged and hopeful. My discouragement stems from the historical racial realities and societal inequities that seem to have no end in sight. The realist within me recognizes the inherent inequities that accompany any civilization in a flawed world. My hope, however, is born from engaging in the social justice movement and seeing change occur, even if the steps are small, the risks are great, and the rewards are

intrinsic. Therefore, I plant my flag in the cause for equality. I also add my voice to those who have been a part of reclaiming authorship of the perspectives and experiences of communities of color. In the movement to both celebrate and validate unique differences and to create awareness of inequitable differences, I hope to be engaged in the work of advocacy for marginalized communities such that I might live up to an image put forth by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., when he stated in 1961 the following:

> People are often led to causes and often become committed to great ideas through persons who personify those ideas. They have to find the embodiment of the idea in flesh and blood in order to commit themselves to it. (Phillips, 2000, p. 1)

APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT LETTER

Re: A dissertation study entitled *Using Critical Race Theory to Assess How Higher Education Administrators of Color Navigate Spaces of Leadership for Social Justice* by Kyle A. Reyes

Dear name of potential participant,

I am writing to let you know about an opportunity to participate in a research study about leadership for social justice. My name is Kyle Reyes and I am a doctoral candidate in the Education Leadership and Policy Department at the University of Utah. My qualitative study centers the narratives and experiences of administrators of color as vital voices in understanding the cultural, social, and political factors in advocating for social justice in higher education.

Since my study focuses on the experiences of senior administrators, I contacted each of the eight public institutions of higher education in Utah and received data concerning executive administrators who self-identified as any race other than white. The results of these data yielded a pool of 18 potential candidates. I too, am an executive administrator of color at my institution and am included in the population of 18. I have searched online for contact information based on the data I was provided by each institution (i.e. race, gender, and position) and have found your contact information on your institution's website.

I would love to follow-up on this email by scheduling a 15-minute phone call with you to explain my study a bit more. Agreement to be contacted by phone does not obligate you to participate in the study. If, after receiving greater explanation of the study, you would like to participate, please email me your willingness to do so and I will consider your email response as consent.

If you would be willing to discuss my study further, please respond to this email and let me know the contact information of your administrative assistant to set up the phone call. If you already know of a time within the next few weeks, please let me know what might work for you. You may also call me directly at 801-376-4657 (cell) and the rest of my office information can be found below.

Thank you for considering this research opportunity.

Sincerely,

Kyle A. Reyes
Special Assistant to the President
Utah Valley University
801-863-8271
kyle.reyes@uvu.edu

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

CONSENT DOCUMENT

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Contact me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

BACKGROUND

My name is Kyle Reyes. This study is not only being conducted for my dissertation but is born from my desire to develop greater access and opportunities in higher education for underrepresented communities. This study explores how Utah higher educations administrators of color negotiate and navigate spaces of leadership and advocacy for social justice. As a senior administrator of color, I have noticed competing demands or tensions (culturally, politically, socially, historically) regarding leadership and advocacy for underrepresented communities. With this study, I hope to understand how fellow administrators of color perceive the need for, and demonstrate action towards, advocacy for students of color and other marginalized communities. I also hope to gain greater insights into the educational opportunity, achievement, and representation gaps that exist between white communities and communities of color.

STUDY PROCEDURE

This study is comprised of two face-to-face, interviews lasting between 60-90 minutes each. As part of this study, you may choose the location, times, and days of the interviews. I will digitally audio record each interview. Questions will be asked about your experiences and perspectives related to your position of influence and advocacy for students and communities of color. I will also conduct a 30-45 minute follow-up phone call to discuss what I gathered from the interviews and to verify that I captured your responses accurately and appropriately.

RISKS

The risks of this study are minimal. You may feel uncomfortable thinking about or talking about personal information related to race and advocacy. If the interview experience causes you to feel discomfort emotionally, you may opt out of the study.

BENEFITS

There are no direct benefits for taking part in this study. However, I hope the information gathered from this study may help develop a greater understanding of educational achievement and representation gaps in the future.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your data will be kept confidential. I will not be asking for any personal information other than the information I received from your institution's website (i.e. name, title, email, work phone number). Data and records will be stored on a password-protected computer located in my workspace. Only I will have access to this information. I recognize that as a person of influence, you may not feel comfortable responding to questions that explore issues related to race and advocacy within your institution. To address this, you will be assigned a pseudonym, which will be kept with your responses. In publications, I will use a pseudonym when referring to your responses.

PERSON TO CONTACT

If you have questions, complaints or concerns about this study, you can contact me at 801-376-4657 or kyle.reyes@uvu.edu. If you feel you have been harmed as a result of participation, please call my faculty mentor, Dr. Amy Bergerson at 801-581-6714 or email her at amy.bergerson@utah.edu.

Institutional Review Board: Contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) if you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant. Also, contact the IRB if you have questions, complaints or concerns which you do not feel you can discuss with the investigator. The University of Utah IRB may be reached by phone at (801) 581-3655 or by e-mail at irb@hsc.utah.edu.

Research Participant Advocate: You may also contact the Research Participant Advocate (RPA) by phone at (801) 581-3803 or by email at participant.advocate@hsc.utah.edu.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

It is up to you to decide whether to take part in this study. Refusal to participate or the decision to withdraw from this research will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. This will not affect your relationship with the investigator.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION TO PARTICIPANTS

Participants will not be compensated for participation. The only cost to the participant is time spent for the two interviews and the follow-up phone call.

CONSENT

By agreeing to participate in the interviews (via email), you are giving your consent to participate.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND SCENARIOS

INTERVIEW 1 – Perceptions of race, identity, equity, advocacy, roles and responsibilities

Begin the interview by telling the participants a little about my background and the study.

Starter question

a. Tell me a little about your background and history. What is your elevator speech about your family, education, and career?

1. How do you perceive/identify/locate your racial/ethnic/cultural (and other) identity(ies)?

a. How do you self-identify racially, ethnically or culturally?

b. What things have influenced your sense of cultural or racial identity? (people, geography, experiences, events)

c. Have you always culturally self-identified the same way? If no, what are the other cultural self-identities you have claimed?

2. How do you define/discuss/perceive the need for race-related equity and advocacy in education?

a. What are some of the major issues related to educating students of color in our current K-16 system?

b. What are some of the factors that have influenced the educational achievement gaps between students of color and white students?

c. How do you define advocacy or what does it mean to be an advocate? How about activist?

d. According to your definitions, would you consider yourself an advocate or an activist, neither, or both? Why?

3. How have your racial/cultural identities and experiences influenced your sense of advocacy for race-related equity in education?

a. Are there any pivotal moments that have changed the way you view the need for advocacy for students of color?

b. In what ways do you feel a sense of responsibility or obligation to advocate for students of color due to your racial identity?

c. Would you mind sharing an experience where you have felt some level of racial/cultural discrimination in your early years?

d. Have you ever felt some level of racial/cultural discrimination in your professional career and how did you react to such treatment? Was your reaction influenced by your position?

4. To what extent do you perceive advocacy for students of color as a primary responsibility of your current job description or professional role?

a. (If necessary) What are your primary responsibilities in your current position?

b. How do your primary responsibilities align with or counter perceptions of others about what you are charged to do?

5. How have your perceptions of, and ability to advocate for, equity changed as you have progressed in your career?

e. Describe someone in your life that has helped shape your perception of a good administrator. How about someone who has been a good example of an advocate?

INTERVIEW 2 – Leadership praxis for social justice and advocacy for students of color

Last time, we talked about your background, identity, and your perceptions of the need for advocacy for students of color. This interview will focus a bit more on advocacy as an administrator of color.

6. **How do administrators of color approach or demonstrate leadership for change—with special attention to leadership for equity and social justice?**

    a. In what ways have you advocated for students and communities of color?

    b. What resistance or support do [have] you receive[d] in advocacy efforts (i.e. other senior administrators, community, students, faculty, staff, etc.)?

    c. How might advocacy for social justice be different if there were more representation of administrators of color at your institution?

    d. What would an institution look like if it was run by you?

    e. Scenarios

7. **What are the environmental, institutional, and political factors that affect the way you think about, talk about, and mobilize to address, inequities in their institutions of higher education?**

    a. In what ways do you feel or have you felt like an insider with your organization? In what ways have you felt like an outsider with your organization?

    b. Describe how committed your institution is to issues of equity, diversity, and multiculturalism.

    c. What advice would you give a younger aspiring administrator/educator of color concerning the political landscape of higher education at your institution or in Utah?

    d. Do you feel any sense of risk in advocating for students of color? If so, how does that affect your advocacy efforts?

    e. What changes are necessary (institutionally, societal, individually, leadership) to move forward issues of equity, diversity and multiculturalism?

Scenarios for 2nd Interview[39]

Scenario #1: The Xenophobic Comment
You are an academic administrator at a regional university and stop by a departmental office to pick up a book you are borrowing from a colleague. On your way into the office you notice two students waiting to talk with the receptionist. The students, first-generation Americans, are conversing animatedly in Vietnamese while they wait to be helped. You hear the administrative assistant say to the receptionist, "I don't know why these students speak to one another in that foreign language! Don't they know they are in America and going to an American University to get educated?" The room suddenly becomes quiet. You quickly turn and notice the pained looks on the students' faces. The receptionist looks questioningly up at you. What would you say or do?

Scenario #2: Legislative Leverage
The legislative session is approaching and you are asked by your president to join a local delegation of legislators for dinner to discuss campus priorities for the upcoming legislative session. During dinner, you discuss a number of initiatives your institution is pursuing including funding for new buildings and compensation increases. After what seems like a positive conversation, you notice a few legislators at the table mumbling under their breath about immigration. It is obvious that the legislators are passionately against any benefits for illegal immigrants and ask your opinion about the status of immigration. Your president turns to you anticipating your response. What would you say or do?

Scenario #3: It's in the Past
During an administrative discussion about Diversity-required courses, the topic of an American Cultural Studies class emerges. One fellow academic administrator begins a heated discussion about the impact of slavery on families. Monica, an African American colleague, reacts by saying, "You don't understand. My family lives with the legacy of our family being broken up against our own will. We don't have your privileged experience of having a traceable family tree." Another colleague on the committee responds by saying, "Monica, that is all in the past so we might as well move on. Dwelling on anger and bitterness is not good for anyone." You are the only other person of color in the room. You recognize that Monica has a reputation on campus for being outspoken on issues of race and diversity. After the comment to Monica, you notice that she looks directly at you. What would you say or do?

[39] These scenarios were adapted from a series of diversity scenarios by Garcia and Hoelscher (2008).

APPENDIX D

NODES AND SUBNODES

NODES	# of references to node	# of participants who commented on node (9)
IDENTITY		
• Changing or shifting identities	23	7
• Education and professional life	38	9
• Major influences (experiences)	63	9
• Major influences (people, mentors)	66	9
• Preservation of identity and influence on children	21	4
• Racial, ethnic, gender, and cultural identities	70	9
LEADERSHIP FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE		
• Advocacy, action, and activism (scenarios)	179	9
• Allies and ally building	26	8
• Critical consciousness and change	18	5
• Leadership style	24	7
• Racial risk	26	8
• Sense of responsibility or obligation for advocacy	13	5
POLITICAL DYNAMICS OF HIGHER ED.		
• Navigating administrative terrain (advice)	34	9
• Political rhetoric and legislative influence	5	4
• Position, power, voice and representation	92	9
• Utah Context – religious influence	22	7
COMPETING TENSIONS AND ROLES		
• Authenticity and selling out	47	9
• Expectations, roles and responsibilities (job)	88	9
• Insider and outsider status	32	8
• Role modeling and mentoring	13	4
EDUCATIONAL ISSUES FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR		
• Access, opportunity, and achievement gaps	21	9
• Affirmative Action	6	3
• Assimilation, accommodation and acculturation	32	7
• Deficit perceptions of communities of color	9	5
• Institutional, systemic, or societal commitment to diversity	56	9
• Role models / mentors of color	30	9
• Standardized testing	7	4
DISCRIMINATION AND INJUSTICE		
• Historical oppression	12	6
• Microaggressions	23	7
• Racism	43	9
• Sexism	14	3

APPENDIX E

STATEMENT ON USE OF CRT

Individuals or organizations may attempt to co-opt my work and use it for their own gain. This may include an attempt to manipulate the study and/or major points of critical race theory. They may try to focus on the fact that a CRT dissertation has been conducted by a member of the LDS church on persons of color (some of whom are LDS). My intent was to use CRT in a critical way to review higher education leadership in the state of Utah regarding the position of administrators of color. This document should not be read as an LDS endorsement of critical race theory.

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