The Lived Intersectional Experiences of Privilege and Oppression of Queer Men of Color in Counselor Education Doctoral Programs: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

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Dedication

To my parents, Derek Wai Wah Chan and Elizabeth Ong Chan, you are the reason I have a chance to learn unconditional love, live my dreams, and become a change agent. You have taught me so much: work ethic, collectivism, culture, and community. It is because of you that I know this world is not perfect, but it is full of hope.

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"It is necessary to remember, as we think critically about domination, that we all have the capacity to act in ways that oppress, dominate, wound (whether or not that power is institutionalized). It is necessary to remember that it is first the potential oppressor within that we must resist – the potential victim within that we must rescue – otherwise we cannot hope for an end to domination, for liberation."

— bell hooks

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Abstract of Dissertation

The Lived Intersectional Experiences of Privilege and Oppression of Queer Men of Color in Counselor Education Doctoral Programs: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

The advent of the *Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies* (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2016), the *American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of* Ethics (2014), and a more comprehensive emphasis on multiculturalism and social justice (Haskins & Singh, 2015; Ratts, 2009, 2011; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014; Smith & Okech, 2016) within the counseling profession highlight a movement towards examining practices and social identities grounded in a formative understanding of intersectionality. The institutionalization of intersectionality emerges from a longstanding history of feminist scholars (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Hancock, 2016) critiquing misconstrued gaps and revolutionizing the meaning of multiple social identities and social justice movements (Anzaldúa, 1987; Collins, 1986, 1990, 2004; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; hooks, 1981, 1984, 1989; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). Although intersectionality has richened the possibilities of social justice praxis, its theoretical connection has been largely absent in the context of empirical investigations. This current study utilized an intersectionality paradigm and methodological strategies of interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014) to examine the lived intersectional experiences of privilege and oppression of Queer Men of Color in Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs. Three participants were interviewed across nine interviews approximately consisting of 90 minutes in length. Findings indicated six superordinate themes emerging from the data analysis: (a) Multiple Dimensions of Privilege; (b) Multiple Dimensions of

Oppression; (c) Context/System; (d) Complexities of Intersections; (e) Critical Incidents/Conflict; and (f) Congruity/Change for the Future. The discussion considers the themes emanating from the participants in light of previous forms of implementation utilizing intersectional approaches. Implications broadly for the counseling profession, the social context of counselor education and doctoral education, and the praxis of pedagogy are explored. Future directions for research and limitations of the study are also explicated.

Keywords: intersectionality, counselor education, counseling, Queer Men of Color, social justice, multiculturalism

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

This chapter delivers a concise overview of the research study to supplement the basis of the research questions, ranging from significant and contemporary developments in relevant theoretical and empirical literature to the components constructing the design of the study. While specifically defining the research questions, the chapter details an overview and purpose of the study. It supplements a critical examination of the existing problem within multiculturalism and social justice in counselor education. The chapter also covers the disparity of applying intersectionality within counseling and counselor education. To transpose the statement of the problem, the chapter offers a statement of significance providing implications as a launching point for the meaning and applicability from this study. Describing a summary of the research design, significant pieces of the literature review, theoretical framework, paradigm, and methodological aspects are woven into the explication. Concluding this chapter are the delimitations as a demonstration of the decisions undergirding the design, limitations of the study, a list of key terms, associated summary definitions of key terms, and a summary of the chapter.

Overview

The recent development of the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC; Ratts, Singh, Butler, Nassar-McMillan, & McCullough, 2016), the *ACA Code of Ethics* (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014), and the recent philosophical emphases on multiculturalism and social justice (Haskins & Singh, 2015; Ratts, 2009, 2011; Ratts, D'Andrea, & Arredondo, 2004; Smith & Okech, 2016a, 2016b; Sue & Sue, 2013) continue to institutionalize the call for both multiculturalism and social

justice as integral factors in the development, training, and education of counseling professionals. Although growing prominently for decades (Carbado, Crenshaw, Mays, & Tomlinson, 2013; Cho, 2013; Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013; Cole, 2009; Collins & Bilge, 2016; Cor & Chan, 2017; Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Davis, 2008; Walby, Armstrong, & Strid, 2012), discourse on the implementation and institutionalization of intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1988, 1989, 1991; Collins, 1986, 1990, 2004) continues to indicate revolutionary intellectual and critical thought to re-envision and redefine the complexity of social and cultural identity and its mirroring social structures. As Black feminists, Crenshaw (1989, 1991) and Collins (1990) both crafted significant voices for intersectionality within their respective disciplines of law and sociology, although they asserted the history of intersectionality began much earlier with pioneering women of color scholars, authors, and writers (Anzaldúa, 1987; hooks, 1981, 1984, 1989; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). Empirical studies indicate multiple gaps that delineate evidence-based practices resembling training models, pedagogies, and curricula focused on multiculturalism and social justice more broadly and, more specifically, on privilege and oppression (Hays, Chang, & Dean, 2007; Hays, Dean, & Chang, 2004; Malott, 2010; Malott, Havlik, Palacios, & Contrisciane Lewis, 2014). These gaps often reside within the infusion of multicultural and social justice practices in an empirical manner, especially with the lack of research involving the simultaneous experience of privilege and oppression within counselor education.

Statement of the Problem

Trends within the counseling profession emphasize the relevance and implementation of multiculturalism (Comas-Diaz, 2012; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014; Ratts et

al., 2016; Sue & Sue, 2013) and social justice (Ratts, 2011; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014; Ratts et al., 2016) as integral factors in the development of professional counselors, specifically as the profession continues to emerge with its own distinct identity across helping and mental health professions (e.g., social work, psychology). Tracing the origins and divergence of the counseling philosophy, multiple traditions inform the counseling profession including psychoanalytic traditions, cognitive-behavioral traditions, humanism, multiculturalism, and social justice (Ratts & Pedersen, 2014). Ratts and colleagues (2016) consistently emphasized the alternation of privilege and oppression in relationship to the intersections tied to complex multidimensional construction of cultural and social identity. Given the context grounding the individual and relationships between individuals, statuses of privilege and oppression alternate (Hammer, Crethar, & Cannon, 2016), which extends the plausibility of engaging intersectionality as a tool for analysis within the training of counselors. There is significant promise in utilizing an intersectionality framework to uncover the relationships among people that have multiply-marginalized experiences of oppression and among those individuals that experience the alternation of privilege and oppression. There is also significant value in critiquing the practices, pedagogies, and curriculum of the counseling profession as a form of developing the profession systemically.

The 2016 CACREP Standards require counselor educators to embody multiculturalism and social justice, remain intentional about addressing statuses of privilege and oppression in counselor education programs, and offer educational opportunities to bridge conceptual constructs of multicultural counseling and social justice as part of the praxis of counselors. Although the Standards offer guidelines and

benchmarks, the Standards do not necessarily govern the flexible execution by which counselor educators choose to adhere to the Standards. Based on this execution, counselor educators may not necessarily have the tools or informed pedagogical practices and curriculums to increase their effectiveness of multiculturalism, social justice ideologies, and praxis. Intersectionality can serve as a useful strategy and analysis for counselors by mainstreaming the theory into the counseling profession.

The other persistent issue is the gap in empirical research within the counseling profession, much more specifically on privilege, oppression, and their simultaneous relationships. A significant majority of the current empirical research analyzes privilege and oppression as a subset of the multicultural and social justice training within counselor education programs, but does not historically focus explicitly on the research questions. Studies that have attended to the duality of privilege and oppression conceptualize the attention to the topics more broadly without engaging specific sets of mutually constituting identities and directly addressing their understanding of intersectionality (Hays et al., 2007). Other studies have also historically attended to Whiteness and White privilege without strategizing an intersectional approach to directly engage privilege and oppression and specific relationships among identities (Malott, Havlik, Palacios, & Contrisciane Lewis, 2014; Hays et al., 2004; Paone, Malott, & Barr, 2015; Rothman, Malott, & Paone, 2012). Since the Croteau, Talbot, Lance, and Evans (2002) study, the presence of an empirical project focused on the duality of privilege and oppression has been largely absent. To focus much more exclusively on counselor education, there is a need to extend empirical projects deploying intersectionality as a means to engage privilege and oppression, although Haskins and Singh (2015) identified this framework

theoretically through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT). Through the Haskins and Singh (2015) interpretation, CRT engenders an agenda that addresses the centrality of race and racism while calling into question the knowledge and practices implemented by privileged, hegemonic White groups.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to understand how queer men of color make sense of privilege and oppression in Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs. To exemplify the definition of queer in this study, the term queer operates as an inclusive definition to represent the diversity of sexuality, affectional identity, and gender identity facing oppression consequentially from heteronormativity and cisnormativity (Chan, 2017; Chan, Erby, Farmer, & Friday, 2017a; Cor & Chan, 2017; Moe, Bower, & Clark, 2017). As a result, the representation of queer in this study includes individual participants identifying with a marginalized identity within sexual, affectional, and gender identities (e.g., gay, pansexual, trans, transgender, gender nonconforming, genderqueer, bisexual). An individual with a non-heterosexual identity or non-cisgender identity could identify as a participant within this study (Harper et al., 2012). Men of color for this study was inclusive of diversity within racial and ethnic identities (e.g., Black, African American, Asian, Native American, American Indian, Latinx) to denote marginalization associated with racial and ethnic identities. Considering this purpose includes the following elements: (a) a critique on social structures situating the lives, experiences, and interpretations of queer men of color; (b) a social justice agenda emphasizing privilege and oppression; (c) a strategic engagement of mutually constituting identity categories; and (d) a development of critical recommendations to

transform and demarginalize the lives of the participants, the profession, and the counselor education curriculum. Consequently, this research study will focus on the guiding research question:

- How do Queer Men of Color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in counselor education doctoral programs?

Statement of Potential Significance

Building on the intersectionality framework deployed historically through conceptual literature (Bowleg, 2008, 2012; Cho, 2013; Cho et al., 2013; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008) and empirical research (Bowleg, 2013; Hurtado & Sinha, 2008; Mahalingam, Balan, & Haritatos, 2008; Singh, 2013; Szymanski & Sung, 2013; Velez, Moradi, & DeBlaere, 2015; Viruell-Fuentes, Miranda, & Abdulrahim, 2012; Warner & Shields, 2013; Yim & Mahalingam, 2006), a significant call to align intersectionality as a critical tool of analysis (Carastathis, 2016; Carbado et al., 2013; Cho, 2013; Collins & Bilge, 2016) persists in developing creative, yet strategic applications to continue expanding intersectionality as a multidisciplinary effort. Hence, this intersectional project will serve as a single project that catapults additional analyses of privilege and oppression among the conflation of other unique social identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, affectional identity, social class, spirituality, ability status, regional identity). The intention is to contribute to the burgeoning body of literature that surround intellectual foresight offered by the intersectionality movement. Intersectionality established its fertile ground, yet its necessary applications rely upon interdisciplinary efforts and offer opportunities to evolve beyond its contemporary usage.

Generating an overview of conceptual and empirical literature within the counseling profession and, more specifically, within counselor education reveals an inherent gap with the rarity of intersectionality as an analytical tool or framework. Mainstreaming intersectionality into the counseling profession mobilizes the complex, yet unfinished endeavor to explicate social and cultural identity as a multidimensional construct while critically examining problematic social structures responsible for perpetuating multiple overlapping forms of oppression. Intersectionality has been theoretically employed to identify pedagogical tools (Haskins & Singh, 2015), but needs clearer ideas within pedagogy and curriculum to increase the effectiveness of pedagogical practices to ensure counseling students are synthesizing methods of approaching privilege, oppression, social justice, and intersectionality. Multiple particular domains exist to situate the current study as a priority to increase its significance and development within its contributions. These domains relate to contributions involving the application and contribution to the intersectionality movement; mainstreaming intersectionality into the counseling profession; demarginalizing the profession and counselor education; and generating transformative and translational practices between macrosystemic issues and policies to reflect personal experiences for multiply-marginalized groups.

Theoretically, intersectionality has gained prominence as a critical framework for multiple disciplines (Clarke & McCall, 2013; Hancock, 2007a). Providing an empirical application to intersectionality in the counseling profession could offer a distinct alternative (Clarke & McCall, 2013) application in a discipline that demonstrates a nascent, yet fertile relationship with its paradigmatic approaches. Given that intersectionality has a promising relationship with the philosophy of counseling, it can

serve as a theoretical basis for social justice praxis and can expand conceptual and empirical literature. Based on the increasing relevance and dialogue about multiple dimensions of social identity and the call to action with social justice in counseling and counselor education (Chang, Crethar, & Ratts, 2010; Ratts et al., 2016; Ratts & Wood, 2011), counselors and counselor educators can gain a more intimate understanding of the methods through which their privilege, oppression, and social identities influence representation in a system. This system is predicated upon the dominance emanating from majority cultures and representation.

Since intersectionality enacts a social justice agenda to demarginalize the hegemonic power relations existing among social identity categories, this research study has the potential to reify the lived experiences of a multiply-marginalized group. This research study can serve as the catalyst to creatively explore the other dimensions of social identity categories pivotal to redefining the consolidation and synthesis of social justice within the profession. More importantly, this synthesis unifies particular deployments of intersectionality as a critical tool of analysis within counselor education both conceptually and empirically. Hence, the study could change practices on a macro level, where policy is instituted within the profession and within the policies of counselor education departments' practices. In addition, the study can be used to further develop practices and relationships with counselor educators and students searching to innovatively demonstrate a commitment to social justice in the classroom and education.

Bolstering this effort is the systemic location of counselor education departments and graduate programs (i.e., Master's and doctoral) in the sociopolitical context of higher education institutions. Considering this placement, doctoral education and subsequent

experiences of doctoral student experiences are unequivocally caught in a network of sociopolitical structures (Harper & Palmer, 2016; Ramirez, 2014, 2016; Shavers & Moore, 2014a, 2014b; Truong & Museus, 2012; Truong, Museus, & McGuire, 2016). Considering the location of CACREP-accredited doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision, their foothold in higher education positions complex relationships among the program, the institution, and the stakeholders inhabiting these environments (e.g., students, faculty, staff). Understanding these crossover relationships contextualizes the necessary attention both on the sociopolitical nature of doctoral education and on the experiences of marginalized doctoral students. Relating the areas of counselor education and doctoral education will enhance knowledge for practices in counselor education and will critique systemic issues for doctoral education. With this background, this study will target how queer men of color in Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression. While justification exists for building upon how doctoral students in Counselor Education and Supervision apply intersectionality to inform their roles, training, and practices, framing doctoral student experiences in academia sheds light on the richness of critically examining doctoral students' experiences in doctoral education to inform learning practices (Jones, 2015).

Theoretical Foundation and Conceptual Framework

This study adheres predominantly to core principles aligned with the burgeoning dialogues and entrenchment of intersectionality across a multidisciplinary effort. Intersectionality stems from a specific group of core values and principles that have remained valuable to the discursive spaces employing the praxis of social justice, active

sites of resistance to injustice, and methods for social action. Although the theoretical foundation has significantly expanded since the work of Crenshaw (1989, 1991) and Collins (1986, 1990), two distinct organizations of the core principles underscore the theoretical and intellectual contributions. Collins and Bilge (2016) identified specific domains—social inequality, power, relationships, social context, complexity, and social justice—that enact intersectionality and increase its accessibility as an analytical tool. Smooth (2013) summarily conflates the expansive ideas of intersectionality to apply from micro to meso to macro:

1. Resisting additive models that treat categories of social identity as additive, parallel categories and instead theorizes these categories as intersecting;
2. Antiessentialism and insists upon variation within categories of social identity;
3. Recognition that social identity categories and the power systems that give them meaning shift across time and geographical location;
4. Embracing the coexistence of privilege and marginalization acknowledging that they are not mutually exclusive;
5. Changing the conditions of society such that categories of identity are not permanently linked to sustained inequalities in efforts to build a more just world. (p. 21)

Methodology

Based on insights from an intersectional paradigm and an extensive amount of conceptual and empirical literature that attempts to deploy intersectionality as a tool of critical analysis, the methodological strategies primarily emerged from interpretative

phenomenological analysis (IPA; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith et al. 2009). IPA stands as a qualitative approach and methodological framework that employs both philosophies and strategies often resembling the predecessors of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism (Brocki & Wearden, 2006; Smith, 2011). IPA, as a result, navigates a basis that "human beings are not passive perceivers of an objective reality, but rather that they come to interpret and understand their world by formulating their own biographical stories into a form that makes sense to them" (Brocki & Wearden, 2006, p. 88). The purpose of IPA actively investigates experiences, the processes of making sense of experience, and self-reflection (Brocki & Wearden, 2006; Smith, 2011). IPA stems from specific philosophical insights from the works of Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Gadamer, Schleiermacher, and Merleau-Ponty (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006; Smith, 2011; Smith et al. 2009). Generated as a "double hermeneutic," IPA inculcates methods in which the "researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them" (Smith et al. 2009, p. 97). Using purposeful sampling involving convenience and snowball sampling strategies, this study obtained three participants that exemplify the identities within communities of queer men of color. Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) posited that the sample size must be small when using IPA, in order to iteratively make sense of the interpretation of a phenomenon and to fully attend to the convergence and divergence of the sample. Similarly, to engage in the snowball sampling strategy, I contacted national counseling listservs saturated with doctoral students in Counselor Education and Supervision and key stakeholders (e.g., department chairs, doctoral program coordinators, LGBTQ+ resource center directors) to disseminate my solicitation for study that will have (a) a brief description of the study, (b)

the purpose of the study, (c) information on university IRB and approval number for the study, and (d) selection criteria to qualify as a participant. As part of this solicitation, individuals were invited to contact me through email with their interest in participating. Upon initial contact, I sent the informed consent form approved by the university IRB and a demographic questionnaire. Upon completion of both items and a signature, I provided a packet that includes all three interview protocols and schedule the first interview. I kept the sample size small due to intense and heavy in-depth procedures encountered in both the data collection and data analysis processes in addition to purposeful navigation of convergence and divergence among participants' experiences. Utilizing IPA, the study instrumentally focused on an idiographic approach that seeks to engage in-depth experiences representing convergence and divergence across cases. Useful to the intersectionality paradigm, the development of the sampling methods considers the mutually constituting nature of diverse social identities and the social conditions situating their experiences.

For data collection, I conducted a series of three 90-minute semistructured interviews through video conference. There is a total of three semi-structured interviews akin to Seidman's (2013) three-series model for interviewing in qualitative research. Interview protocols will be provided as an electronic packet ahead of their scheduled times to participants who consent to the study. Data collection procedures will follow in this order structure: semi-structured interview #1 (Appendix B), semi-structured interview #2 (Appendix C), and semi-structured interview #3 (Appendix D).

The data analysis process began simultaneously during the data collection process, as data analysis begins with the first pieces of data collected (Miles, Huberman,

& Saldaña, 2014). As I continued with the first group of semistructured interviews, I started analyzing the data with the following categorical steps:

- Preparation and Organization of the Data
- Reviewing the Data
- Coding in First Cycle
- Coding in Second Cycle
- Creating Emergent Themes and Patterns for Individual Narratives
- Searching for Patterns across Themes and Cases
- Displaying the Data
- Engaging Interpretations through Analytic Memoing
- Alternative Understandings and Conclusions
- Developing and Writing the Report

Operating from an IPA philosophy, the data analysis included reading the transcript fully without jotting notes or comments (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The second review included jotting of notes (Miles et al., 2014). The next step in reviewing the data a third time for first cycle coding started with the first cycle of coding to utilize the strategies of in vivo coding and narrative coding (Miles et al. 2014; Saldaña, 2016). Reviewing the data one more time after conducting in vivo coding and narrative coding, I utilized the second cycle of coding to engage pattern coding (Saldaña, 2016). I added to a codebook after both sets of coding processes are completed. Analytic memoing took place after completing the second cycle of coding (Miles et al., 2014) while I continued to add brief notes and reflections to a bridling journal throughout the research process.

After organizing the pattern codes, I generated a list of sub-themes to represent a table for each individual participant. Upon review of these themes, I utilized the IPA strategy of identifying "super-ordinate themes" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 97), where I examined the convergence and relationships across themes of participants to represent the superordinate themes in another table. Throughout the entire process of the research study, I employed an interpretive community of two individuals who are external to the study to share pieces of the data and meet with me to discuss my audit trail, reflexivity, and data analysis. This interpretive community is well-versed in their own qualitative projects and has training and coursework in critical methodologies and qualitative research. Given my positionality as an insider researcher (Greene, 2014), I engaged in bridling (Vagle, 2009) as an iteratively reflexive process during the procedures of the study as opposed to bracketing, which relays assumptions primarily prior to the study. Bridling was represented in the form of a bridling journal, where I took notes and reflections about multiple steps of data collection and data analysis procedures in addition to analytic memoing. Additionally, I consistently implemented analytic memoing throughout the data analysis procedures after the second cycle of coding was complete.

Limitations and Delimitations

Paradigm and methodology guiding delimitations. Much of the paradigmatic values grounded in intersectionality theory and the philosophical background from IPA dictate the strategies that constitute the domains of ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology. Deriving methodological strategies from intersectionality allows for the flexibility inherent in qualitative research, but requires significant attention to its historical convergence of critical theories and origins in Black feminism and Critical

Race Theory (Carbado et al. 2013; Collins, 1990, 2004; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). Given this specific position with intersectionality, the strategies utilized to employ intersectionality must meet the research purpose grounded in values associated with major principles (e.g., antiessentialist; strategic consideration of mutually constituting categories; focus on macro and social structures in relation to micro-level experiences; critiques on social structures; social justice agenda).

Limitations. Utilizing a qualitative study with an intersectionality paradigm creates opportunities and flexibility, but tightens intentionality based on its unified principles. An innate issue within qualitative research is the transferability of findings (Singh, 2013), which coincides with generalizability frequently used in the semantics of describing quantitative traditions (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Van Manen, 2014). Although transferability often prioritizes applications similar to generalizability, one major issue of the study is its transferability to other communities and identities exhausting a fuller understanding of communities of queer men of color (e.g., queer Latinx cis men, bisexual Native American cis men). Given the small homogeneous sample, researchers and scholars should consider the caution of applying the study's findings to other groups related to the social identities purposed within this study (i.e., queer and men of color). Although queer and men of color remain inclusive in the purpose of this study, researchers and scholars should cautiously note the findings are not exhaustive of all communities related to queer men of color. Additionally, the findings did not include any participants who explicitly identified within transgender communities (e.g., trans, transgender, gender nonconforming, genderqueer, non-binary). Participants were also sampled from both the North Atlantic Region of the Association

for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) and the Southern Region of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). Different regional contexts could have influenced the political climate and climate of safety for participants regarding their interpretations of privilege and oppression. Additionally, participants were sampled strictly from CACREP-accredited doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision. Researchers should take note about the sampling within CACREP-accredited doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision before applying the findings to doctoral students and doctoral education from other disciplines.

This study also negotiated forms of bias influencing the study emerging both from the researcher and the participants. Considerably, I, as the researcher, identify as a queer man of color, which coincides with both the phenomenon and population of interest. Standing as an insider researcher involves a significant utility to changing access to the participants as a key informant, but this positionality can obscure data from the participants without constant attention to the reflexivity involved in governing decisions about the study and the data analysis. Additionally, the participants could have responded to me as the researcher to match the influence of my power or to connect with my social identities and perspectives on privilege and oppression.

Definition of Key Terms

Intersectionality. The quintessential definition of intersectionality cannot necessarily stand limited to one canon or discipline, given its historical mapping and vast territory. Intersectionality accounts for the resistance to "single axis of analysis" posited by Crenshaw (1989) as a seminal pioneer of intersectionality in legal scholarship in addition to the "matrix of domination and "interlocking forms of oppression" postulated

by Collins (1986, 1990). Although they centered the experiences of multiply-marginalized groups, intersectionality intentionally reflects a social justice agenda with a significant critique of social structures responsible for hegemonic power relations that mirror the multiple overlapping forms of oppression. As a result, intersectionality focuses on the multiple systemic levels in order to eradicate social injustice. Intersectionality embodies the complexity that emerges with a multiplicity of core principles defining its vision, which are extensively described by Smooth (2013):

1. Resisting additive models that treat categories of social identity as additive, parallel categories and instead theorizes these categories as intersecting;
2. Antiessentialism and insists upon variation within categories of social identity;
3. Recognition that social identity categories and the power systems that give them meaning shift across time and geographical location;
4. Embracing the coexistence of privilege and marginalization acknowledging that they are not mutually exclusive;
5. Changing the conditions of society such that categories of identity are not permanently linked to sustained inequalities in efforts to build a more just world. (p. 21)

Social identity. While social identity can appear broad, it is often situated in the context of culture and in the interplay between individuals' and society's perceptions. Althoff (2013) described social identity: "Social identities are the result of how people see themselves, combined with how they think others see them. Social identities are formed by social categories and these social categories are in turn based on social

differences. The social meanings of these differences can lead to social inequality" (p. 395).

Queer. The term queer is a political reclaiming of a term in order to mobilize sociopolitical movements to engage in antidiscrimination advocacy and political change by deconstructing and reconstructing meanings of sexual, affectional, and gender identities. As Lugg (2003) noted, previous semantics would refer to queer within sexual orientation and gender. In particular texts (Sue & Sue, 2013), queer paralleled with historical references semantically of sexual minorities. The semantics of queer has been deployed for political mobilization and resurgence to resist heteronormative claims within law, policy, and social structure. Queer also sensitizes the forms of othering specifically across sexual, affectional, and gender identities and unifies the antiessentialist framework to dismantle the boundaries of specific identity categories. For this study, queer was intentionally utilized to represent communities and individuals who have been othered on the basis of their sexual, affectional, or gender identities. Queer brings to light the realities experienced especially by heterosexism, genderism, and heteronormativity.

Person of color. In this study, persons of color refer to racial/ethnic minorities who are othered at multiple systemic levels on the basis of racial and ethnic identities. In light of the Minority Stress Theory (Meyer, 2003), Balsam, Molina, Beadnell, Simoni, and Walters (2011) indicated the inordinate amount of discrimination and ostracism that people of color face on a daily basis. Although people of color are defined as racial/ethnic minorities in this current dissertation study, the dissertation study also centers experiences with racism to expose the normative issue of racism in social structures.

Privilege. Privilege refers to two aspects: advantage and dominance. Unearned privilege is a function of receiving access to entitlements that should be equally distributed to other people. When someone experiences privilege, they are placed at an advantage or status that creates dominance and power over others (Johnson, 2006).

Oppression. In relationship to privilege, oppression fragments into several categories, including silence, disenfranchisement, discrimination, and ostracism (Singh & Salazar, 2010b). Oppression can arrive in multiple overlapping forms (e.g., racism, sexism, heterosexism, genderism, ableism, classism). Taylor (2016) also covers oppression as "a form of injustice that occurs when one social group is subordinated while another is privileged, and oppression is maintained by a variety of different mechanisms including social norms, stereotypes, and institutional rules" and "perpetrated by and affects *social groups*" (p. 520).

Multicultural counseling. Multiculturalism and multicultural counseling enact practices that adhere to principles of diversity and empathy for differences in cultural worldviews and identities. Multicultural counseling necessitates the expansion of culture (e.g., race/ethnicity, sexual identity, affectional identity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, social class, spirituality) to engage differences across relationships, worldviews, values, and belief systems, given that each community of identities results in its own formulation of culture (Lee et al., 2009). Multicultural counseling also sheds light on the experiences of historically marginalized and minority populations often not represented in particular contexts and systems (Brinson & Lee, 2005).

Social justice. Social justice carries multiple definitions across a variety of disciplines in an effort to implement and call to attention the demand for equality and

equity while dismantling the distinctions of advantage and disadvantage. In defining social justice principles, Singh and Salazar (2010c) identify opportunities for "empowerment, self-determination, advocacy, and change" (p. 97), instrumental values for "attention to inequities, advocacy, and empowerment strategies for members of marginalized and oppressed populations" (p. 97), and approaches for "awareness of systems of power, privilege, and oppression" (p. 101). With sociopolitical factors in mind, social justice in counseling also prioritizes an effort to advocate on multiple systemic levels for communities of clients (Ratts, 2009).

Summary

Relying on an intersectionality paradigm to explicate extant conceptual and empirical literature in conjunction with the research design, this study intended to understand how queer men of color make sense of privilege and oppression in Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs. From nine interviews of approximately 90 minutes each with three participants, the study focused on exploring the guiding research question: How do Queer Men of Color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in counselor education doctoral programs? This chapter synthesizes the major features of this study with the following key components: (a) the statement of the problem; (b) purpose of the research; (c) guiding research question; (d) statement of significance; (e) paradigmatic approach of intersectionality; (f) summary of the methods aligned with an IPA methodological framework; (g) limitations; (h) delimitations; and (i) definitions of key terms. With a brief overview of the study, the remaining chapters explicate the literature review, methods, findings, and discussion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter focuses key aspects of conceptual and empirical literature associated with the research questions, research purpose, and components of the methodological design. Generating a discussion on this literature review unifies historical trajectories of philosophies underscoring key terms, aspects, and theoretical developments in counseling and counselor education while developing a significant basis for the history and principles of intersectionality. Specifically, to purpose the intentionality of topics associated with the research study, the literature review details the theoretical aspects and developments of the counseling profession to underscore the philosophical underpinnings of multiculturalism and social justice as foundational to counselor professional identity. Additionally, summaries of empirical studies outline the trajectory of evidence-based practices demonstrating the implementation and investigation of training and counselor education with multiculturalism and social justice. The explicated summaries illustrate notable conjectures focused on gaps specifically with a unilateral focus on White privilege and a stark lack of the implementation of intersectionality in counselor education (Croteau et al., 2002; Malott et al., 2014; Hays et al., 2004; Paone et al., 2015; Rothman et al., 2012). Moving from a more in-depth understanding of multiculturalism and social justice in counselor education, the chapter emphasizes a detailed and rich knowledge base of intersectionality to supplement the overarching theoretical framework. This theoretical framework includes significant components of the history of intersectionality, a heavy description of the principles revolutionizing conceptual and empirical research, and insights of best practices offered by scholars conducting

intersectionality research. Intersectionality also garners two types of applications relevant to the current study, yet reinforces the complexity of intersectionality in research continuing to unfold in new investigations. These insights derive from the topics of literature surrounding queer men of color in addition to empirical studies focused on multiple minority stress. Although studies detailing specific applications of intersectionality within the scope of their disciplines continue to emerge, scholars identify the major gaps in intersectional research largely by alerting disciplines to the complexity of intersectionality. This issue continues to remain apparent even in approaches to understand the experiences of queer men of color, especially as privilege and oppression provide a simultaneous and mutually constituting experience. Based on the topics illustrated, the chapter closes with a summary unifying insights developed from the conjectures emerging from gaps within empirical studies on multiculturalism and social justice in counselor education, applications of intersectionality, and the established rationale for extending empirical research on intersectionality and queer men of color.

The Counseling Profession: Philosophy, History, and Implications for Multiculturalism and Social Justice

Generating a comprehensive understanding of the counseling profession as a unique, distinct juncture among the helping and mental health professions necessitates a clear focus on the history and philosophy of counseling (Kaplan, Tarvydas, & Gladding, 2014). The emerging history of counseling as a distinct profession relies on an effort to establish its uniqueness and professional advocacy among the helping professions (Kaplan et al., 2014; Myers & Sweeney, 2004; Myers, Sweeney, & White, 2002). Many of the recent guiding documents outlining professional identity and professional

responsibility for members of the counseling profession elicit an important emphasis on establishing multiculturalism and social justice practices and education into the praxis of counseling and counselor education. Much of this notion stems from values associated with the counseling professional philosophy that diverged from other helping and mental health professions (e.g., psychology, social work) to create the strength and clarity of a unique professional identity. Philosophical tenets guiding the unification of counselor professional identity gained more traction recently through incorporation into the American Counseling Association (ACA) 20/20 Initiative, which distinctly gathered representatives from every division of ACA and its organizational affiliates (e.g., Chi Sigma Iota, National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. [NBCC] Council on Accreditation for Counseling and Related Education Programs [CACREP]) to broaden the visibility and variability of voices contributing to counselor professional identity. Provided that the divisions and regions of ACA have distinct specialties associated with their work and advocacy (e.g., Association for Adult Development and Aging, Counselors for Social Justice, Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development), ACA intentionally decided to rely on the inclusion of numerous representatives to create a task force. This task force would properly represent the counseling profession as a unified front to extend initiatives for client, student, and professional advocacy (Kaplan et al., 2014). A major contribution from the task force established by the 20/20 Initiative is the professional definition of counseling: "Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals" (Kaplan, et al., 2014, p. 366). This definition of counseling voices a launching point for

professional counselors to establish their values, comprehension, and advocacy of the profession functioning among diverse specialties and work settings. Thus, the profession builds upon a burgeoning philosophy of collaborative, contextual, holistic, developmental, and strengths-based approaches toward clients with attention to multiculturalism, social justice, and diversity. The emergence of this confluence resulted in a unitary focus on a wellness model to capture diverse facets and domains in a multidimensional lens of wellness (Hattie, Myers, & Sweeney, 2004; Myers & Sweeney, 2004, 2008; Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000).

Specific integration of the values remains visibly represented as extensions in several guiding documents that have surfaced over many years in the counseling profession. When considering developmental, contextual, and collaborative concerns based on the interaction of multiculturalism, social justice, and diversity, the formative understanding of counseling takes place across competencies and standards throughout counseling and counselor education practices. Given the most recent change with the *ACA Code of Ethics* (American Counseling Association, 2014), a committed explanation of the professional counseling definition has emerged with powerful unifying and engaging tenets to implement it. For example, the core values listed in the Preamble of the *ACA Code of Ethics* expand on ethical starting points to reach high standards:

1. enhancing human development throughout the life span;
2. honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts;
3. promoting social justice;

4. safeguarding the integrity of the counselor–client relationship; and

5. practicing in a competent and ethical manner. (p. 3)

As the *ACA Code of Ethics* carries a longstanding history as a guiding document in the profession, numerous supplementing documents have extended the spirit of the major ethical document. More recently, ACA has endorsed the *Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies* (MSJCC; Ratts et al., 2016), which represents a pivotal update to the increased emphasis on multiculturalism and social justice as integral facets of counselor professional identity. The MSJCC, in particular, was a substantial contribution to transform the profession's commitment to multiculturalism and social justice by comprehensively addressing multiple dimensions and constructs of culture and social identities in the development of the document. Reaffirming the document was a significant revision to the historical pioneering of the *Multicultural Counseling Competencies* (MCC) established by Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992). Evidenced by its multifaceted development as a model, the MSJCC observed that the work of counseling professionals applied beyond the expansive landscape of practice. Counseling professionals' efforts were occurring and accountable for multiple systemic levels (Arredondo et al., 1996; Chang et al., 2010; Ratts, 2011; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014; Ratts et al., 2016). Counseling professionals' efforts called for the necessitated response to re-envision how counselors meet the needs of clients and students and how counselor educators train their students as growing professionals. The delivery built upon the MSJCC exacted a multidimensional framework that captured applications focused on services and delivery at multiple systemic levels (e.g., micro, meso, macro) to mirror the development of the most recent *ACA Code of* Ethics—a document saturated with

increased emphasis on social justice—and the exponential development of social justice scholarship as embedded contributions within counseling practices (Nassar-McMillan, 2014; Ratts et al., 2016). Another significant value associated with the MSJCC was the reinforcement of "aspirational" excellence, the commitment to a "lifelong process" of development in multiculturalism and social justice (Ratts et al., 2016, p. 30), which significantly challenged counselors to move beyond the baseline of cultural competence often established by standards.

Even far more relevant to the construction of privilege and oppression is the MSJCC's innovative conceptualization of intersecting identities to situate an analysis of power, privilege, and oppression as mutually shaped. Additionally, Ratts et al. (2016) developed the MSJCC with the intention that comprehensively addressing the disparities of power, privilege, and oppression would extend to knowledge, skills, and awareness as developmental constructs. Ratts et al. (2016) asserted that the concentric contexts and identities that influence worldview and understanding have a significant interaction with power, privilege, and oppression. This foundational viewpoint gives root to a call to action primarily with the function of (a) bolstering development of counselors through the lifespan, (b) operating from a socioecological model to position efforts for client and community change at multiple systemic levels, and (c) the simultaneous process of engaging with privilege and oppression in the interaction among counselor, client, and context. As the MSJCC continues to take effect in counselor education graduate programs, counseling supervision, and practice, the necessary effort to enhance the implementation of the MSJCC requires additional conceptual and empirical evidence to operationalize the spirit and values of the guiding document.

Other competencies have also paralleled the same spirit of inclusion, diversity, access, and equity to empower clients across a variety of identities. More explicitly, there are competencies that act as guiding documents devoted to outlining foundational guidelines for the immersion of counselors to reflect much more deeply about their practices. While Ratts et al. (2016) assumes the MCC postulated by Sue et al. (1992), other competencies carry their own distinct identity and contributions in the dialogues of diversity and inclusion within the counseling profession. Primarily, examples include the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC) *Competencies for Counseling with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Ally Individuals* (Harper et al., 2012); *ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling Transgender Clients* (2009); and ASERVIC *Competencies for Addressing Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counseling* (Cashwell & Watts, 2010). Recently, new guiding documents developed by ALGBTIC and the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC) involve the *Standards of Care in Assessment of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Gender Expansive, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTGEQ+) Persons* (Goodrich et al., 2017) and *Standards of Care for Research with Participants Who Identify as LGBTQ+* (Griffith et al., 2017). Each of these competencies and standards carry significant relevance for diversity and inclusion due to their specific address of multiculturalism with regard to inclusion, culture, and identity. For example, the ASERVIC Competencies for Addressing Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counseling dedicate a section solely to the domain of culture and worldview with the assumption that spirituality in its many forms (e.g., major world

religions, agnosticism, paganism, atheism) acted as a significant basis for well-being and the infusion of cultural values into counseling.

Similarly, the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling developed two sets of competencies recently that focus on inclusion and diversity across sexual, affectional, and gender identities, especially giving a central emphasis to the variations of identity often invisible in the scope of counseling practice and training. The results were two sectors of competencies delivered on LGBQQIA individuals in the community (Harper et al., 2012) and transgender individuals in the community (ALGBTIC, 2009); these competencies differentiated cultural and social identities describing sexual and affectional identities in addition to gender identity within the community. Both documents acknowledge the visible and invisible intersections that influence the shaping of the sexual, affectional, and gender identities portrayed in the guiding documents. Both sets of competencies also aimed to cover a comprehensive range of applications utilizing a launching point for best practices and the search for high standards in the development of counselors working with the LGBTQQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, ally) communities. The information provided was an exhaustive attempt, yet was only a baseline. Both documents also prioritize the significant basis for implementing values of multiculturalism and social justice as ideologies foundational to counseling practices and counselor professional identity. Of primary importance is the reality that many members of the LGBTQQIA community are often ostracized, oppressed, and othered on the basis of their identities, which results in deleterious effects on their wellness and health (Meyer, 2003, 2010). Framing this extension around social justice is both competencies' call for inclusive

language in training and in practices as a baseline (ALGBTIC, 2009; Harper et al., 2012; Singh & Burnes, 2010). These practices constructed a framework for developing culturally sensitive and affirming practices to apply across multiple specialties, contexts, and settings with members of the LGBTQQIA community.

Predicating the foundation of counseling is the five forces often identified as instrumental philosophical movements impacting currents in the profession (Ratts, 2011; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014). Ratts and Pedersen (2014) captured the five forces in an organized framework while attending to the various nuances through each philosophical shift in the ideology of counselor professional identity. The reach for establishing a solidified counselor professional identity demonstrates the vast array of philosophical influences and shifts to adapt to contextual and social issues across the historical construction of community, human development, and wellness (Ratts & Pedersen, 2014). To illustrate the complex, yet distinct perspective of counselor professional identity, the evolution of these philosophical forces in counseling represents movements that build upon the former to create an interdisciplinary framework as opposed to fully replacing a prior philosophical shift (Hansen, 2010). As a result, changes in ideology, particularly through tracking its divergence in philosophical underpinnings, influenced counselor professional identity to emerge with the unique identity it carries in guiding documents and the professional definition of counseling. The first philosophical force aligned with psychoanalytic traditions based substantially on the work of Sigmund Freud. Although Freud acted as a forefather in the development of many mental health professions, there were extensive critiques that the entire psychoanalytic tradition and model both focused too heavily on contributing to individual change, intrapsychic issues, and the

establishment of a medical model. The resulting critique was the major lack of social issues and factors impacting clients' capacity for change, which reduced many approaches in the psychoanalytic tradition to focus on an extremely biological process. The second major force included the cognitive-behavioral tradition, which sought to assist clients and communities served in the mental health and helping professions by addressing "distorted thought" and to "skillfully control their thoughts" (Ratts & Pedersen, 2014, p. 23). Similar to the psychoanalytic tradition, the major issue with critics of cognitive-behavioral therapies and approaches were its subsequent lack of cultural inclusion and social factors while entertaining a predominant disposition toward cognition and behavior.

While these early philosophical movements created a history among the counseling profession, a major paradigmatic shift took place with the work of Carl Rogers to identify the humanistic tradition, which has carried a substantive portion of many tenets within counselor professional identity (Hansen, 2010; Hansen, 2012; Hansen, 2014; Perepiczka & Scholl, 2012; Scholl, 2008; Vereen, Hill, Sosa, & Kress, 2014). The most recent forces surfacing in alignment with humanism, multiculturalism, and social justice unify as the major predispositions aligning with the currents of professional identity, responsibility, and values associated with the counseling profession. Humanism's contribution to the counseling profession thrives on its orientation to growth and development across the lifespan. Summarizing its theoretical overview would position humanism as "a belief in the potential of every human being, personal responsibility, the innate good in people, freedom, and personal insight," which "sees the good in every individual" and equates counseling to "help clients reach their potential"

(Ratts & Pedersen, 2014, p. 24). An additional shift in the priority of counseling emphasized the centrality of an "egalitarian therapeutic relationship between client and counselor" (Ratts & Pedersen, 2014, p. 24). The humanistic tradition began a shift in the discourse to engage clients through their own priorities and potential for change; it also suffered, however, from the delicate balance of properly attending to individual change in the context of collectivistic cultures that prioritized contextual and systemic influences.

Outlining its distinct values to develop a stronger professional identity is the philosophical strand distinguishing multiculturalism as the fourth force in counseling (Comas-Diaz, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2013; Pedersen, 1991; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014). Considerably, multiculturalism acted as a major force in response to multiple sociopolitical events impacting the counseling profession during its proliferation and foundation (Ratts & Pedersen, 2014). As Ratts and Pedersen (2014) described, specific events reinforcing the need to challenge dominant cultures and power relations often supported by White identity enacted the efforts to involve multiculturalism as a response within Civil Rights Era. Sue and Sue (2013) also reinforced the importance of multicultural training and practice in response to the rapid growth of diversity changing the landscape of worldviews influenced by race and ethnicity through the means of immigration, globalization, and intercultural contact. Multiculturalism surfaced with the understanding that attempting to capture empathy (Garcia, Bardoshi, Siblo, Steen, & Haase, 2013), worldviews, and lenses of clients and communities the counseling profession served was a function of sociopolitical and sociological influences demonstrating an engagement with values, worldviews, and belief systems. Although multiculturalism acted as a pivotal force in the counseling profession, other viewpoints

argued that multiculturalism remained confounded by its claims to engage culture at both ends of the spectrum: (a) as a function of multiple social identities that could potentially misconstrue its foundational tenets in attending to race, ethnicity, and the centrality of racism (Lee, 2013a) or (b) as the exclusive priority on racial and ethnic identities in the discourse of multiculturalism (Ratts & Pedersen, 2014). Multiple scholars (Bemak & Chung, 2005, 2008, 2011; Ratts, 2011; Vera & Speight, 2003) reinforce this observation that commitment to social justice expands beyond the cultural exchange seeking individually congruent change. Instead, the effort must occur at multiple systemic levels to alter barriers blocking clients' capacity for change, growth, and self-actualization.

Extending from the critiques and gaps in the multiculturalism movement, the evolution of counseling sought to meet standards of systemic change to exist in the collaborative effort between counselors and clients (Ratts & Pedersen, 2014). Beginning with its foundational stages in claiming social justice as the fifth force in counseling (Ratts et al., 2004), an active engagement of social justice continues to emerge as a revolutionary set of values among professional identity in the counseling profession. The explosion of social justice scholarship (Bemak & Chung, 2005, 2008, 2011; Chang et al., 2010; Grimes, Haskins, & Paisley, 2013; Grothaus, McAuliffe, & Craigen, 2012; Hammer et al., 2016; Haskins & Singh, 2015; Lee, 2007, 2013a; Manis, 2012; Odegard & Vereen, 2010; Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011; Ratts, 2009, 2011; Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010; Ratts & Hutchins, 2009; Ratts & Wood, 2011; Singh et al., 2010) in the counseling profession based in conceptual and empirical research exemplifies the visionary influence social justice contributes as a normative paradigm in counseling. The evidence in social justice scholarship extends the implementation in dialogues

instrumental to the philosophical development of counselor professional identity. Innovatively, newer guiding documents, such as the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014), ALGBTIC *Competencies for Counseling with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Ally Individuals* (Harper et al., 2012), ALGBTIC *Competencies for Counseling Transgender Clients* (2009), and *Competencies for Counseling the Multiracial Population* (Kenney et al., 2015), identify social justice as valuable aspects of counselor professional identity and practices. To reflect the framework associated with the development of a philosophical shift of social justice as a fifth force, Ratts and Pedersen (2014) observed the repeated assumption that activating change and self-actualization relies solely on clients and communities simply adapting in the face of contextual barriers and forms of oppression. In contrast, they argue the types of measures taken to serve clients must counteract oppressive social structures in order to assist clients and communities with achieving increased outcomes of wellness. Thus, they assert that multiple forms of oppression (e.g., homophobia, racism, sexism, heterosexism, poverty) contribute to degrees of distress, injustice, harm, and lower outcomes of mental health and wellness.

Relevant to the current study, the 2016 CACREP Standards have continued to adapt in alignment with needs from the profession, with fundamental issues impacting counselors at a variety of settings and levels, and with increased engagement, advocacy, and consolidation of counselor professional identity. As integrated into the systemic effort to develop professional and client advocacy, the Standards heavily engage multiple facets of counselor professional identity with respect to history, philosophy, and guiding ethical documents from the counseling profession. Additionally, the Standards

implement accreditation standards to ensure that a strong baseline of training offers a launching point for entry-level counselors and counselor educators to enrich their development across the lifespan. Within the foundational portions dedicated to the base of professional identity, Section 2 of the 2016 Standards actively specifies this context with attention to multiculturalism particularly in the foundation established by Section 2.B: "The program objectives (1) reflect current knowledge and projected needs concerning counseling practice in a multicultural and pluralistic society…" (p. 8). Section 2 also delivers an entire section dedicated to social and cultural identity. Examples of dimensions from Section 2.F.2 (SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY) comprise the following:

a. multicultural and pluralistic characteristics within and among diverse groups nationally and internationally

b. theories and models of multicultural counseling, cultural identity development, and social justice and advocacy

c. multicultural counseling competencies

d. the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others

e. the effects of power and privilege for counselors and clients

f. help-seeking behaviors of diverse clients

g. the impact of spiritual beliefs on clients' and counselors' worldviews

h. strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination (p. 9)

While the section on social and cultural identity inculcates content domains focused on entry-level counselors and a baseline for all counselors within the profession, portions of the Standards stand dedicated to doctoral learning for Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs accredited under CACREP, which are vital to the current study. For instance, the Standards communicate an attention to cultural and social justice implications across the core content areas of doctoral professional identity (p. 34-35):

- Counseling – "ethical and culturally relevant counseling in multiple settings" (Section 6.B.1.f)
- Supervision – "culturally relevant strategies for conducting clinical supervision" (Section 6.B.2.k)
- Teaching – "ethical and culturally relevant strategies used in counselor preparation" (Section 6.B.3.h)
- Research and Scholarship – "ethical and culturally relevant strategies for conducting research" (Section 6.B.4.l)
- Leadership and Advocacy – "models and competencies for advocating for clients at the individual, system, and policy levels" (Section 6.B.5.j); "strategies of leadership in relation to current multicultural and social justice issues" (Section 6.B.5.k); and "ethical and culturally relevant leadership and advocacy practices" (Section 6.B.5.l)

The development of the core areas in the doctoral portions of the Standards weave multiculturalism and social justice into Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs to enable successful doctoral students to demonstrate more in-depth skills and a foundation for evolving practice. The CACREP Standards offer additional fodder for

obtaining feedback and revising institutional policies and environments in the accreditation process to meet high standards, stronger professional identity, and delivery of best practices to the training of counseling graduate students (Lee, 2013b). Additionally, the history of the 2016 Standards (Smith & Okech, 2016a) identified a response to mirror other guiding documents—most prominently, the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014), especially in the praxis of implementing multiculturalism and social justice into action on multiple systemic levels.

Surveying conceptual and empirical literature would result in numerous outcomes dedicated to the intimate understanding of these topics in a fluid, yet coherent manner. Generating trends on the topics would yield specific understanding about recent patterns in the history of multiculturalism and social justice scholarship in both counseling and counselor education. This understanding would be in addition to the significance of intersectionality's embodiment as a catalyst and mainstreamed framework for application. A particularly interesting development is the paucity of literature focused on directly engaging and operationalizing privilege and oppression. The theoretical constructs are often mentioned in overarching discussions of social justice and multiculturally responsive training (Chang et al., 2010; Comas-Diaz, 2012; Ratts, 2011; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014; Singh et al., 2010; Sue & Sue, 2013) unifying the importance of counseling principles with privilege and oppression. However, major challenges exist in tailoring a praxis of both multiculturalism and social justice beyond an abstract, conceptual framework. The imperative to implement a conceptual understanding of multiculturalism and social justice continues to remain across multiple professional roles and levels of counseling (e.g., counselor, supervisor, counselor educator). Conversely, the

lack of empirical research on training tailored to include these constructs provides less fodder for the often-negotiated effort to meet standards, guidelines, and requirements for counseling practices and the counselor education curriculum. Although outlining strategies to implement social justice (Bemak & Chung, 2005, 2008, 2011; Ratts, 2009, 2011; Ratts & Wood, 2011; Singh & Burnes, 2010; Singh & Salazar, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c) carries extensive utility, the significant gap continues to extend in developing data-based research that informs the process and act of engaging standards of multiculturalism and social justice. Without continued, active engagement in the process of researching multiculturalism and social justice as applied frameworks, counselors, counselor educators, and counseling students can experience problematic applications that reduce or counteract ideologies instrumental to enacting values of multiculturalism and social justice. Conceptually, the profession has continued to build upon significant strides in its scholarship through detailing movements that alter philosophical currents to orient counseling professionals to attend to multiple systemic barriers impacting client and community change. Counseling professionals, in this perspective, hold a responsibility to recognize and act in collaborative forms of advocacy to promote the salience of injustice and resist methods and social structures that disenfranchise marginalized groups. This persistent effort continues as evidence in the movement across guiding documents (e.g., *ACA Code of Ethics* [2014], MSJCC [2016]) that establishes a call to action. While this call to action stands, another major concern arises when delivery of conceptual forms of multiculturalism and social justice only serve as nebulous ideas or fodder for intellectual exercise instead of social action. This argument calls into question the practices and delivery of the constructs held in multicultural and social

justice counseling competencies not for its necessity in the counseling profession and counselor professional identity, but more so for its implementation and embodiment. The variability in pedagogical, curriculum, and training methods to ascertain a commitment is much more mixed when implementing the translation of guidelines and enacting standards (Malott, 2010; Smith & Okech, 2016a, 2016b).

Connecting the method and innovation of counseling practice and counselor education design of curriculum and pedagogy is based on several assumptions, yet mixed findings (Malott, 2010; Bidell, 2013, 2014) exist on the development of contributions associated with a lone multicultural counseling course in the counselor education curriculum. Malott (2010) integrated the development of outcomes associated with a single multicultural counseling course with a notable trend: at least one multicultural counseling course has a positive outcome from the development of factors connected with multicultural competency. Other researchers (Chao, 2012; Bidell, 2013, 2014) examined variability across the outcomes of a multicultural counseling course. Significant issues surfacing in the findings of these studies were particular markers that multicultural competency as a whole increased, yet competencies associated with other indices (e.g., competency with counseling LGBT clients) did not increase. By examining conceptual and empirical literature, Malott (2010) also observed that a predominant issue was the lack of consistency involved in multicultural counseling courses, which broadened the spectrum of variability within a single multicultural counseling course. Malott (2010) gleaned that a variety of pedagogical tools and a complexity necessitated further research to understand best practices in the delivery of multiculturalism in counselor education. In fact, Chao (2012) also identified that multicultural counseling

courses indicated through the findings that knowledge and skills increased, but awareness was not a key variable of increase. Noting the findings of the studies raises specific concerns and observations about potential directions for multicultural counseling training and counselor education. Relying on a single multicultural counseling course to achieve the responsibility of students' comprehension of multiculturalism and social justice operates on an underlying assumption that students will presumably understand how to apply these values successfully across the curriculum, across counseling modalities (e.g., individual, couples, family, groups), and across settings (e.g., clinical mental health, community, school, rehabilitation, addictions). Engaging multiculturalism and social justice in a silo also reduces multicultural competencies and standards to prescriptive methods that entertain assumptions and stereotypes about specific cultural and social identities instead of creating a launching point for students to begin dialogues about culture with clients. As Chao (2012) had mentioned, one major issue demonstrates the complexity of multicultural training that fragments into the tripartite model of knowledge, skills, and awareness (Sue & Sue, 2013), but attending to one domain (e.g., knowledge) does not account for the development for another domain. The issue presented by Chao (2012) also creates a notion about the complexity of multicultural awareness, which leads to an increased need in research and extends to the synthesis of privilege and oppression. In light of the MSJCC, this argument provides a continued basis for the simultaneous experiences associated with privilege and oppression (Hammer et al., 2016; Ratts et al., 2016) that is contingent on contextual and sociopolitical factors.

Meeting the competencies on the MSJCC requires an attention to the complexity of identity that pervades multiple systemic levels outlined as part of a deeper reflection of

self-awareness to translate in tandem with knowledge and skills (Ratts et al., 2016). Underlining the framework of the MSJCC along with other guiding documents in counselor professional identity reinforces the notion that engaging multiculturalism and social justice operates as a developmental, lifelong process, but involves the complexity of multiple dimensions of cultural and social identity. Engaging in this process can appear as a daunting task, considering the varying levels of awareness and immersion experienced by counselors of diverse cultural and social identities. Although examples of competencies exist to serve as a means to provide tools instead of an isolated end, translating awareness to fundamental sets of skills and knowledge—which usually relies on consciously approaching a much deeper interconnectedness and synthesis within both domains and identities—is a common difficulty. The guidelines set forth by the 2016 CACREP Standards are also purported to significantly extend opportunities for the professional roles and impact influenced by counselor educators. Counselor educators that train and supervise graduate counseling students at both the master's and doctoral levels hold a distinct professional identity to model an understanding of this complexity, which is not explicitly operationalized within many of the guiding documents and in the 2016 CACREP Standards.

Privilege and Oppression in Counseling and Counselor Education

The construction of privilege across disciplines has developed into its established understanding and recursive use as a social and sociological construct (Bonds & Inwood, 2016; Collins, 1990; Johnson, 2006; Khan & Jerolmack, 2013; Messner, 2000, 2011; Papay, 2010). Johnson (2006) enacted two forms of understanding privilege through positioning entitlements in comparison to rights. The problematic concern Johnson

(2006) raised is that privilege is reflective of an unearned nature in which individuals or members of groups originating from privileged statuses establish a form of dominance and advantage. Formative to the construction of privilege are dialogues focused with the language and centrality of oppression (Fanon, 1963; Freire, 1968). It is their historical accounts and formative developments as seminal scholars on privilege, oppression, marginalization, and subordination that contributed to both the historical situatedness and the historicity perpetuating levels of hierarchies, hegemony, and power relations. Bonds and Inwood (2016) reaffirmed this attention to "*historicized* accounts" (p. 715) with the interplay of historically influenced sociopolitical issues and their lived effects on accentuating the immediacy situated in a problematic status quo. The continued facets of privilege also relate to experiences and social structures extending advantage (Eckerd et al., 2016). More than advantage, issues of privilege persist in determining class, race, and gender hierarchies and hegemonic power relations that reinforce forms of discrimination and ostracism frequently in the scope of policies and social structures (Bonds & Inwood, 2016; Collins, 1990). Semantically, privilege demonstrates the interspersed statuses of advantage and disadvantage, but more explicitly, it is a reflection of domination, brutality, imperialism, and exploitation (Bonds & Inwood, 2016; Collins, 1990; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Bonds and Inwood also added that privilege represents "taken-for-granted benefits and protections" (p. 716), which in the context of whiteness and white privilege reside on presentation of skin color.

In order to capture privilege in the scope of counselor education, significant attention focuses on the application of privilege in counseling practices frequently underscored in counseling relationships in addition to the privilege that takes place in

counselor education (Haskins & Singh, 2015). Multiple scholars and researchers (Chang et al., 2010; Haskins & Singh, 2015; Ratts et al., 2016; Ratts & Wood, 2011) in counseling challenge counselor educators to examine privilege and inculcate the construct in their experiences and pedagogy with students. This specific effort becomes often subsumed into the overall layers of multicultural counseling training and education, where discussions on privilege considerably reside in training associated with multiculturalism and social justice (Ratts et al., 2016; Ratts & Wood, 2011). Privilege also allows for invisibility, notably in the scope of a simultaneous manifestation with oppression generally due to an overarching focus on one set of identities as opposed to understanding the confluence (Corlett & Mavin, 2014).

The development of dialogues on oppression target a multifaceted construct that pervasively coincides in tandem with privilege, but maintains a reflection and location of subordination, victimization, disenfranchisement, violence, and discrimination. Supplementing the impact of oppression, multiple studies document the detrimental effects of oppression on mental health and wellness outcomes (Meyer, 2010, 2014). Within the counseling profession, numerous scholars and researchers (Ratts, 2009, 2011; Ratts & Hutchins, 2009; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014; Ratts & Wood, 2011; Singh et al., 2012; Singh & Salazar, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c) document the immense need to combat oppressive forces on multiple systemic levels, while incorporating awareness and resistance of oppression as imperative tasks into counseling practice and training (Chang et al., 2010; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014; Ratts et al., 2016).

Empirical Studies in Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Training

Devising a plan to construct the current study requires summarization and critique of constantly engaged research within training multiculturalism and social justice in counseling with the inclusion of privilege and oppression. This section relates heavily to the practice and implementation of research with privilege and oppression in counseling on a much more explicit level. There are numerous indications of conceptual and empirical literature that engage multiculturalism and social justice to offer strategies to embody the values and constructs associated with each domain for the purposes of pedagogy and curriculum in counselor education (Black & Stone, 2005; Chang et al., 2010; Estrada, Poulsen, Cannon, & Wiggins, 2013; Haskins & Singh, 2015; Israel, 2012; Liu, Pickett, & Ivey, 2007; Malott, Paone, Schaefle, & Gao, 2015; Patrick & Connolly, 2013; Ratts & Wood, 2011; Smith & Shin, 2008).

Although not necessary exclusively focused on intersectionality or a social justice framework, Malott et al. (2014) conducted a study that utilized a significant understanding on consciously engaging White female supervisees' experiences working with Latino youth. As a subset of the framework and data due to its heavily related constructs of multiculturalism, this study focused on the perceptions of White female counseling supervisees by applying training experiences from the classroom to considerable work with the community. Its applicability to the research questions and current study extend by virtue of its utilization of generating an understanding of how Whiteness associates with privilege and, as a result, status and advantage. Data was collected and analyzed from three different sources: "a transcription from a 3-hour focus group with the supervisees; case notes from the supervisees detailing each group session; and transcriptions from individual interviews of a 40-minute duration with half of the

supervisees" (p. 135). In particular, their study generated two specific themes focused on lack of cultural knowledge, which essentially filtered into misconceptions from supervisees about the culture of Latino clients, and Whiteness, which fragmented into self-awareness of their own cultural biases, dominance, and privilege. Generating transferability, the study showed that multicultural experiences with marginalized communities could be used to facilitate self-awareness, understanding, growth, and gaps in multicultural training. Major limitations from the study focus on the reality that the participants could have responded to the principal investigator of the study through a different relationship as instructor-student or supervisor-supervisee. Additionally, the authors of the study identified the plausibility of students expressing concerns that were similar to "novice counselors" (Malott et al., 2014, p. 138).

Odegard and Vereen (2010) actively discussed social justice in counselor education pedagogy through an empirically-based study utilizing grounded theory methodological strategies and a postmodern theoretical framework. Grounding this study utilized the primary research question: "What are the experiences and processes of counselor educators integrating social justice into their pedagogy across their training curriculum?" (p. 131). Building upon a purposeful sampling strategy, Odegard and Vereen (2010) sought to gain participants who actively challenged inequality and oppression through consciousness and action. In terms of data collection, Odegard and Vereen strategized multiple sources of data, including two rounds of interviews, member check interviews between the two rounds, and the last piece of data collection—a focus group among all four members. Using their data collection and analysis, Odegard and Vereen noted four themes that could align the relationship between social justice and

pedagogy: “increasing awareness, facilitating a paradigm shift, implement curriculum, and navigating challenges” (p. 144). As part of their recommendations, they explained a movement can arise to develop measures to implement this theory, and a more intense focus needs to be developed to understand specific strategies to engage challenges and approach complexity in their classrooms.

Hays and colleagues (2007) identified particular gaps in privilege and oppression constructs in the call for their involvement in multicultural competency and training. As a part of their study, they sought to answer the research questions on “(a) How do practitioners see privilege and oppression influencing and interacting in the counseling process? and (b) What changes in training and practice related to these constructs do they see as necessary to better serve clientele?” (Hays et al., 2007, p. 318). They engaged with a diverse sample (n = 16) of varying cultural identities across race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, and spirituality. Specifically, they had conducted semi-structured interviews for eight participants for 45-60minutes and a focus group with the other eight participants for 2.5 hours. For the individual semistructured interviews, Hays et al. (2007) interviewed five of the eight participants a second time due to lack of clarity and with saturation in mind. Results varied across multiple experiences of the participants. In particular, participants would often identify privilege with White, male, and high socioeconomic status with an increased emphasis on the discussion of socioeconomic status. Oppressed clients, according to the participants, were generally positioned as racial minorities, women, and working class. Participants also provided indications that there was crossover between personal and clinical experiences. As part of client interventions, participants observed they wished to empower their clients and usually

involved self-reflection as part of their practices. Other results address the second research question, eliciting significant information on the gap of privilege and oppression in academic institutions, counselor education programs, and community agencies. Participants attributed multiple factors involved in the alarming gap of training on privilege and oppression: lack of safety, intangible practice of diversity, disregard of within-group differences, and lack of modeling from counselor educators and supervisors basking in privilege. Additionally, they also counterbalanced with "positive training experiences" exemplified by "use of videos, multicultural case vignettes, guest speakers, seminars, reading assignments, and experiential activities" (p. 322). In an effort to change approaches to engage privilege and oppression in training, participants identified exploring counselor biases, experiential activities, accessing tools to discuss privilege, oppression, and power differentials with clients, and increasing safety within spaces of training.

One of the most relevant studies was conducted by Croteau, Talbot, Lance, and Evans (2002), who created an empirical research study on conducting privilege and oppression in a simultaneous format or, as they refer to this dynamic, an "interplay" (p. 239). Although not structured in an intersectionality framework and without any reference to intersectionality, the study portrayed a relevant construction of the simultaneous nature permeating privilege and oppression by examining multiple forms of oppression and multiple forms of privilege that come into contact. Croteau et al. limited their sample specifically to higher education professionals in student affairs that emphasized multiculturalism in their practices. Using purposeful sampling, Croteau et al. (2002) organized their sample of 18 participants into the following categories: "(a) all of

the participants in the interviews for people of color were heterosexual, (b) all of the participants in interviews for LGB people were White, and (c) all of the participants in interviews for women were White and heterosexual" (p. 241). As part of their data collection strategies, they interviewed participants in pairs. They indicated their data analysis process included a model strategized from Consensual Qualitative Research that focused on inductive data analysis individually and in consensus through three iterations of coding along with an outside auditor external to the study between the second and third review and coding of the data. As part of their findings, they noted the difficulty in recognizing the interplay simultaneously across identities: privileged statuses heavily obscured marginalized statuses and there were connections among statuses of oppression (e.g., a person of color to an LGB person). To orient their recommendations for research, they noted that more qualitative studies must take place and should organize the construction and pairing of identities differently. They also questioned their own groupings and organization of three distinct groups of people (i.e., heterosexual people of color, White LGB people, and White heterosexual women) because they had suspected differences among the groups.

Summary applied to the current study. Summarizing the literature base focused on extensions of privilege and oppression into multicultural and social justice training in the counseling profession, the synthesis of information also considers future directions and pitfalls. Many studies have a focus on White privilege (Malott et al., 2014; Hays, Chang, & Dean, 2004; Paone et al., 2015; Rothman et al., 2012) or an extremely broad understanding of privilege and oppression (Croteau et al., 2002). Studies are not necessarily focused on the intention of serving as intersectional projects or providing the

full extent of deploying intersectionality as the theoretical framework and paradigm. While the breadth of multiculturalism and social justice have increased their duality in organizing research and training, the empirical studies utilized to extend comprehension, consolidation, and application remain limited (Odegard & Vereen, 2010). It should serve a particular note that Croteau et al. (2002) was one study that closely embodied the work of the current study, but there are specific directions that differ from the current study. The Croteau et al. (2002) study was published 14 years from its contemporaries and focused exclusively on professionals, not students. In addition, the Croteau et al. (2002) study had no mention of any intersectional design or core constructions from the intersectionality theoretical framework nor exhibited an intentionality to examine the confluence of a specific set of mutually constitutive identities (e.g., queer men of color), especially the study of multiply-marginalized individuals. Noticeably, they used single-subordinated groups to organize their research design, which acts counterintuitively to the recommendations of Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach (2008). Their sampling also did not identify groups and sites of research frequently associated with the counseling profession (e.g., NASPA) and counselor education students.

Intersectionality as a Theoretical Framework: A History and Praxis

To capture the expansive landscape of intersectionality theory and its contributions since the seminal works of early pioneers (Anzaldúa, 1987; Crenshaw, 1988, 1989, 1991; Collins, 1990; hooks, 1981, 1984, 1989; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983), charting its movements and mapping its evolution capture the essential philosophical tenets and theoretical constructs while instilling its call to action for social change and activism. While rooted in feminist paradigms and values, the forerunners of

intersectionality generated significant dialogue as predecessors by tactically combating social structures and individual experiences of oppression to lay the foundation for the possibilities of social change. Scholars widely engaged with feminism and intersectionality (Bilge, 2013; Collins & Bilge, 2016; May, 2014) also acknowledge the widespread and exponential growth of intersectionality, yet hold significance in the seminal dialogues captured before its marked visibility. Nonetheless, the convergence of many of its philosophical forces have resulted in the entrenchment and impact of intersectionality as a revolutionary force (Cho, 2013; Cho et al., 2013; Cole, 2008, 2009) across an extensive diversity of disciplines and scholarship, ranging from its saturation in particular disciplines (e.g., law, sociology, literature, psychology) with further extension to other applied disciplines (e.g., counseling, higher education, management, economics, nursing). Mapping its history and evolution (Carbado et al., 2013; Hancock, 2016) serves as an instrumental practice to mitigate the biases commonly obscuring its philosophical roots, construction, and application. This effort builds upon the overview of the framework that tracks the seminal and major philosophical and political movements acting as the catalyst for the entrenchment of intersectionality.

Charting early history. The widely debated argument as a result of the explosion of intersectionality literature both conceptually and empirically is the pinpointed history or its genealogy of predecessors (Bilge, 2013; Carbado et al., 2013; Collins & Bilge, 2016; May, 2014). Considering its movement from a broad content specialization to multidisciplinary applications using the theoretical framework as a sub-content specialization (Hancock, 2007a, 2016), there are several strands that mark its genealogy, yet identify the commonality of predecessors who stirred and inspired the sociohistorical

movement of intersectionality. As some scholars indicated (Collins & Bilge, 2016), the debate on intersectionality continues to adapt (Carbado et al., 2013; May, 2014), although it vividly reflects the theoretical philosophy and analysis as an ever-changing, revolutionary construct catering to multiple disciplines. In philosophical alignment, intersectionality garners the possibilities to trouble discourse and dialogue in order to encapsulate possibilities to change systems obstructing rights and dignity.

Intersectionality became much more visible through its revolutionary establishment in scholarly discourse among multiple disciplines. Primarily, intersectionality heavily emerged in its semantics and preceding language through the work of feminist scholars and, more specifically, Black feminist scholars. Carastathis (2016) pinpointed Crenshaw's work in the context of Critical Race Theory in legal scholarship with its establishment in values and approaches critiquing policies seeking to remove rights and protections within legal systems (Crenshaw, 1988). Within Crenshaw's early work (1989, 1991) in the legal scholarship and discourses on law and policy, she reasoned that women of color remained invisible in sociopolitical movements striving to achieve women's rights. A feminist movement could not be considerably advocating for all women when specific groups of women were errantly removed from the voice and representation of its advocacy. Crenshaw (1989) detailed the troubling context and critiques the apparent invisibility and victimization of women of color experienced. Lacking protections in a system of law do not aim to prevent violence specifically for women of color. Organizing and mobilizing the visualization of this framework identifies the specific challenges that obstruct safety and deliver consequential challenges for women of color not reflected in social structures in the context of policies

and protections (Crenshaw, 1991). Crenshaw (1989, 1991) noted the consistent omission of Black women and women of color at the intersection of multiple marginalizations, given the disguised resolution of women's issues and successful countering of oppressive practices. Exposing this issue not only indicates the reality of multiply-marginalized groups disenfranchised and invisible in the gaps of singular forms of marginalization, but it also garners attention for the contrasting and simultaneous forces of privilege and oppression attached to specific identities.

Indicative of disparities within feminism and women's rights, Crenshaw (1989, 1991) critically examined feminist movements by alerting stakeholders to its alarming gaps. Extending this understanding, Crenshaw (1989) claimed that anti-discrimination agendas and law cannot stand with a "single-axis framework" (p. 139). Within the same time period, Collins (1990, 2004) gained particular prominence in implementing Black feminist thought into scholarly discourses of sociology, given Black women and women of color frequently suffered interstitially with the "interlocking nature of oppression" (Collins, 1986, p. S14) that bound their capacities for knowledge and transformation of systems. Residing within their discursive understandings and spaces to reorient a social justice agenda, both Crenshaw and Collins made critical decisions to arm their positionality to counter the multiple convergent forms of oppression. By shifting the discourse of feminism and activism within their respective disciplines, they highlight the direction of sociopolitical and advocacy moments purported to challenge injustices. Formatively, they noted that singular understandings of social identity allowed for men of color to engage racism and exclude sexism while White women directed efforts against sexism, yet failed to include racism. Developing their own social location and

positionality as reference points, they noted that their intersections became strategically erased in the face of overarching social justice, human rights, and feminist movements.

Although Crenshaw and Collins are often credited for serving as forerunners of the intersectionality movement, they both often identified the extensively unique path created by a history of feminist writers that existed before them (Anzaldúa, 1987; hooks, 1981, 1984, 1989; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). The consequential revolutionary tenets found in intersectionality are formative artful insights from the work of the predecessors, who predominantly delivered their experiences of pain, survival, and resistance as women of color. They were critically engaged by locating their experiences of oppression, reifying them, and utilizing them as active forms of resistance and activism. Given their individualized and collective experiences, much of their efforts on engaging the convergence of their intersections was often rendered invisible through the structural barriers that attempted to denounce their contributions. Reflecting their individual and collective experiences mirrored the troubling contexts and social structures surrounding their lived experiences.

Philosophy: Understanding values, approaches, and analyses in intersectionality. Since the seminal work of Crenshaw (1989, 1991) and Collins (1986, 1990), intersectionality has exponentially grown into a multidisciplinary effort as a point of departure to critically examine mutually constitutive relationships. These relationships exist among social identity categories and identity politics for strategizing a social justice agenda and locating overlapping forms of marginalization and oppression (Bowleg, 2008, 2012; Carastathis, 2016; Carbado et al., 2013; Cho, 2013; Cho et al., 2013; Cole, 2008, 2009; Davis, 2008; Dhamoon, 2011; Hancock, 2007a; Parent et al., 2013; Shields, 2008;

Smooth, 2013; Wilson, 2013). Intersectionality emerged from the values and tenets grounded in Critical Race Theory (CRT; Carbado et al., 2013; Carastathis, 2016) and feminism, which ushered in unifying tenets from both forces to exact the critical agenda to interrupt social injustice, inequality, and inequity often occurring in the margins formed by converging social identities. In particular, origins from the feminist movement attached theoretical components of Black feminism (Collins, 1990). Embodying the philosophical underpinnings of intersectionality necessitates an intentionality that seeks to strategize and deconstruct power relations among social identities (Cole, 2008, 2009). Consequently, building on an intersectional framework recognizes the multidimensional nature of social and cultural identity (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexual identity, affectional identity, gender identity, ability status, spirituality, regional identity, social class). Several scholars and researchers align with a critical examination of interlocking categories of social identity (Bowleg, 2008, 2012; Cho, 2013; Cho et al., 2013; Cole, 2008, 2009; Shields, 2008). This viewpoint operates from a fundamental belief that conceptualizing the categories as mutually exclusive would overlook experiences from specific identities and privilege particular identities (Bowleg, 2008, 2009; Cole, 2008, 2009; Parent et al., 2013; Shields, 2008).

Two particular groups of scholars constructed pithy, yet explicated accounts of the foundational intersectional agendas. Collins and Bilge (2016) recently dedicated their explication of intersectionality with a commitment to ensure the theoretical framework can remain palatable and accessible to a wide audience ready to deploy the framework as analysis. In devising their description of intersectional tenets, Collins and Bilge identified core constructs at the heart of the ideology: (a) social inequality; (b) power; (c)

relationality; (d) social context; (e) complexity; and (f) social justice. Instrumental to their work were particular definitions synthesized to deepen understanding of the core values. Collins and Bilge (2016) particularly noted in their definition of power that "power relations are to be analyzed both *via their intersections*, for example, of racism and sexism, as well as *across domains of power*, namely structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal" (p. 27). Observing the definitions of the core values recognizes that the values cannot operate in isolation, but they must weave together to represent the fullness of an intersectionality lens. Supplementing foundational paradigmatic approaches, Smooth (2013) explicated elements of intersectionality through the summarization and organization into major principles:

1. Resisting additive models that treat categories of social identity as additive, parallel categories and instead theorizes these categories as intersecting;
2. Antiessentialism and insists upon variation within categories of social identity;
3. Recognition that social identity categories and the power systems that give them meaning shift across time and geographical location;
4. Embracing the coexistence of privilege and marginalization acknowledging that they are not mutually exclusive;
5. Changing the conditions of society such that categories of identity are not permanently linked to sustained inequalities in efforts to build a more just world. (p. 21)

Synthesizing this information supports the foundational methods of analysis given by Collins and Bilge (2016), but also highlights the unitary understanding offered by

predecessors (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Collins, 1990). Contributing to this lens, Smooth (2016) approached significant principles that attend to the social justice agenda; the relationship of power relations across multiple systemic levels (e.g., micro, meso, macro); and resistance to reductive or flattened viewpoints on social and cultural identity.

An additional organizational framework that builds upon the philosophies of intersectionality exist from Walby, Armstrong, and Strid (2012). Although Walby et al. (2012) unified much of the revolutionary language and definitions historically appearing in intersectionality literature, they also reorganize and, consequently, redefine particular facets of intersectionality to ground their use for future scholarship and research. Walby et al. (2012) remains careful about distinguishing between "structural intersectionality" and "political intersectionality," as each term semantically carries its own definition while contributing to the overall movement of mainstreaming intersectionality. As Walby and colleagues noted, the immediate differentiation of structural intersectionality elicited observations on the stratification of individuals and members of multiply-marginalized groups. To illustrate political intersectionality, they indicated its purpose to generate a social justice agenda tailored to build upon the experiences of multiple marginalizations for specific groups.

Relevantly speaking to the interstitial movements across and between the multiplicity of identities, Collins (2004) explicated the challenge of moving in spaces that affirm insider status, which allows for advantage. Nonetheless, the complexity attached to individuals who gain advantages within a given system that provide the veil of an insider status complicate the reality of identities consistently attached to the outsider statuses. Collins (2004) argued, for instance, the plight of Black women in sociological

academia and how they continue to cope within a system historically dominated by White men. Although they may become insiders, Black women, as Collins observed, "must assimilate a standpoint that is quite different than their own" (2004, p. 118). Collins reasserted that "interlocking systems of oppression" negotiate widely different viewpoints than attributed to "white male insiders," which requires members with outsider perspectives to wrestle with the tension of assimilating to a system unintended to accept these perspectives or planting in its resistance. Based on these observations, Collins (2004) offered the options of attending to either end of the spectrum or focusing on another option "to conserve the creative tension of outsider within status by encouraging and institutionalizing outsider within ways of seeing" (p. 122). Considering the purpose of the current study and its epistemological reach, Collins (2004) formulates an approach to extend the variable applicability of the outsider within status (e.g., queer communities, racial/ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, people of color, working-class communities), where "the experiences of outsiders within is one where intellectuals learn to trust their own personal and cultural biographies as significant sources of knowledge" (p. 122).

Best Practices in Intersectionality Research

Deriving from the philosophical claims, potentialities, entrenchment, and applications across the historical contributions and mainstreaming of intersectionality, tailoring an intersectional research project relies on guidelines developed by scholars conducting efforts to develop lines of research embodying tenets and values from intersectionality (Bowleg, 2008, 2012; Cho, 2013; Cho et al., 2013; Choo & Ferree, 2010; Dhamoon, 2011; Duong, 2012; Fotopoulou, 2012; McCall, 2005; Shields, 2008;

Tillapaugh & Nicolazzo, 2014; Warner, 2008; Warner et al., 2016; Warner & Shields, 2013).

As May (2014) argued, the immersion and application of intersectionality form substantial inquiries that celebrate its extensive commitment and contributions to culture, social identity, identity politics, and social justice, yet reinforce the quest for deepening the search for creating new ways of knowing. This effort to expand beyond its initially mainstreamed foundations allow for subjection to critiques on its analysis and application, given that scholars and researchers attempting to deconstruct intersectionality operate without the intended philosophical underpinnings associated with its seminal history (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Davis, 2008). For scholars attempting to build on intersectionality scholarship, May (2014) attached multiple recommendations to meet the currents of intersectionality scholarship while reifying the development of its philosophical values and transformative engagement. May's perspective was a resulting outcome of multiple scholars claiming the act of engaging and capturing intersectionality with the plight of common assumptions. May (2014) asserted "bracketing/bias could conceivably render intersectionality's contours more visible, underscoring its incommensurability with and resistance to dominant logics" (p. 100), which prioritizes a constantly reflexive understanding of the researchers' impositions on the application, analysis, and design of methods. Additionally, May (2014) critiqued an overarching issue relevant to the development of the future of intersectionality research projects: "Another means of assessing intersectionality nonintersectionally is evident when scholars portray intersectional scholarship as attending primarily to contexts of lived experience or structural constraints and patterns of power, rather than both, equally and in

relation, as intersectionality calls for" (p. 102). The conflicting, yet cautious issue on trends of applications in intersectionality is the potential blurring of history and contributions, especially in the lack of a "both/and" approach and ostensible attributions to seminal pioneers and scholars (May, 2014, p. 102). Supplementing this issue is the notion of hierarchies of oppression established in the face of intersectionality applications that serve to perpetuate and reduce intersectionality exclusively to the additive approach (Bowleg, 2008; Corlett & Mavin, 2014; May, 2014). The resulting hierarchy ranks privileges with particular forms of identity that identify a single-identity basis for analysis, while claiming intersectional tenets—an act that stands counterintuitively to the heart of intersectionality.

The formation of intersectionality research continues to build upon empirical and structural insights from researchers across many disciplines. To debunk the nebulous nature in attempts to attune to the complexity of intersectionality in research across multiple disciplines, other scholars continue to enrich the discourse by shifting and recasting with new innovative practices that still embolden the praxis and application of intersectionality. McCall (2005) instrumentally defined intersectionality by attending to its core constructs and philosophical underpinnings while explicating three forms to redefine her considerations and operationalization of research with intersectionality. McCall (2005) utilized these three forms, "anticategorical," "intercategorical," and "intracategorical" (p. 1773), to creatively understand the possibilities of intersectionality in research. Anticategorical complexity operates on refuting boundaries around previously normed social identity categories due to issues of essentialism that do not account for the extensive diversity in experiences. Anticategorical complexity asserts

this notion that utilizing previously normed categories capitulates to categories born out of power relations historically defined by dominant groups while rendering some members of a given group invisible with its preexisting boundaries. It attempts, in this sense, to "deconstruct analytical categories" (McCall, 2005, p. 1773). In contrast, intercategorical approaches utilize preexisting social identity categories by strategizing their social location to generate critiques on social structures and determine problematic issues of social inequalities, inequities, and hegemonic power relations. As McCall indicated, the intercategorical approach acknowledges "there are relationships of inequality among already constituted social groups, as imperfect and ever changing as they are, and takes those relationships as the center of analysis" (p. 1784-1785). While intercategorical approaches cannot be assumed to disregard the fluidity and hybridity of social groups and identity categories, their operationalization occurs at the other end of the spectrum in comparison to anticategorical complexity and anticategorical approaches. Intracategorical complexity "falls conceptually in the middle of the continuum between the first approach, which rejects categories, and the third approach, which uses them strategically" (McCall, 2005, p. 1773). Additionally, McCall defined intracategorical complexity semantically with the approach "to focus on particular social groups at neglected points of intersection…to reveal the complexity of lived experience within such groups" (2005, p. 1774). Considering the current study utilizes the intracategorical approach, McCall (2005) also supported the utility of case study and interpretive research methods to apply qualitatively to situate interrogations falling under the umbrella of intracategorical complexity. To critically examine intracategorical complexity would necessitate the incurrence of rich, thick data to exemplify the lack of attention to

intersections moving interstitially within normative social identity categories and reveal the variation within narrative content and lived experiences. McCall (2005) observed the following in defining the application of intracategorical complexity: "Traditional categories are used initially to name previously unstudied groups at various points of intersection, but the researcher is equally interested in revealing—and indeed cannot avoid—the range of diversity and difference *within* the group" (p. 1782).

Other intersectionality researchers have organized another grouping of definitions of intersectionality to generate its mobilization among empirical research and identify recommendations for best practices (Bowleg, 2008; Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Hancock, 2007a, 2007b; May, 2014; Parent et al., 2013; Shields, 2008; Warner, 2008; Warner et al., 2016; Warner & Shields, 2013). Fundamentally, the emergence of intersectionality has resulted in categories of research attempting to explicate applications with increased utility and the types of conceptualizations that frame research questions, methodological insights, and enacting a social justice agenda. Conceptually, intersectionality researchers can also organize their projects into four different types of approaches: (a) additive, (b) multiplicative, (c) interactionist, and (d) intersectional (Bowleg, 2007; Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Hancock, 2007a, 2007b; May, 2014). Although intersectionality has historically established a method to comprehend multiple marginalizations, many researchers consistently run into issues facing the embodiment of intersectionality (Bowleg, 2008). As one of Bowleg's major critiques on intersectionality research, the lack of depth is often related to examining the multiple identities together and creating assumptions that take a position on intersectionality. Many of these approaches are often additive: they unify the discrepant confluence of multiple categories and assume the grouping of

mutually constituting categories can be conclusive, reflective, and essentialized within that same group (Bowleg, 2008; Hancock, 2007b). Reasonably, the major issue in creating this strand of research, as Bowleg (2008) reminds, captures lived experience contrary to the philosophical alterations offered by foundations in intersectionality. Presumably, intersectionality becomes proselytized under the multiple minority stress umbrella or assumptive relationships among mutually constitutive groups that frequently result in a "triple jeopardy" (Bowleg, 2008). Bowleg (2008) recognized the major disparity in how research questions are framed, given insights from her own empirical research. Along with the potential triple jeopardy hypothesis organized by assumptions on intersectionality, Bowleg (2008) observed that constituting research questions that enter an additive framework will only receive answers that are conclusive of additive methods. An example illustrating this assumption is that stacking marginalized identities together will irrevocably result in increased social inequality. Bowleg (2008) also outlined referent studies that reject the assumptions of increased social inequality because this frame of reference establishes a framework antithetical to the core values of intersectionality's history. This issue does not only occur in quantitative studies. In qualitative studies, Bowleg (2008) derived that much of the methods through which we ask questions often separate categories of identity, which lead to participants providing answers that stand in a rank order. The problem with this issue refers to the problematic hierarchy already visibly given to some identities (Yuval-Davis, 2006), which seems reflective of descriptions of "oppression olympics" (Yuval-Davis, 2012, p. 47).

Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach (2008) problematized additive, multiplicative, and interactionist approaches because they stipulate the double-jeopardy hypothesis and

hierarchies of power as a focus of intersectional research. Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach (2008) also supplemented this problematic viewpoint with separating identity categories; instead, the scholars proposed that research must search for the confluence of multiple-subordinate identities to construct models that resist "intersectionality invisibility" (p. 377). Intersectionality invisibility relates the problem of missing particular confluences of identity within the gaps convergent forces of oppression. In addition, intersectional invisibility also describes the increased effort to reveal experiences of "nonprototypical members of their constituent identity groups" (p. 381).

The other relatively popular approach in approaches to intersectionality within quantitative designs represent multiplicative approaches and designs (Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Hancock, 2007a, 2007b; Parent et al., 2013). Multiplicative approaches are similar to additive approaches in that they frame relationships between social identity categories by positioning how much the oppression associated with one identity will exacerbate the other identity. On occasion, multiplicative approaches semantically adopt the language of interactionist approaches. Corlett and Mavin (2014) explained that additive, multiplicative, and interactionist approaches frequently subsist with quantitative methodologies. On the other hand, intersectional approaches have a heavy emphasis and tendency to gain traction in qualitative traditions and methodologies for the purpose of exploring questions that seek to understand the complexity of phenomena within mutually constituting categories (Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Parent et al., 2013).

Across other disciplines, several critiques respond by creating applications within respective disciplines by integrating the specific tenets that undergird the construction and framework of intersectionality. Warner et al. (2016) identified problematic

applications and conceptualization of intersectionality in the discipline of psychology. Particularly, trends have given significant rise to the empirical research saturated with wrestling the tension of psychological research's dominance in quantitative research and prioritizing positivist and postpositivist paradigms upon empirical research. This issue raises questions on the notable argument of the source of truth and value-free claims frequently associated with positivist and postpositivist research. Warner et al. asserted the saturation of this research in intersectionality reduces its understanding to additive approaches and a "one-size-fits-all theory" (2016, p. 173). Instead, Warner et al. (2016) supported the efforts to weave intersectionality into the fabric of empirical investigations such that the efforts transpose individualized experiences with tactical understandings of inequalities and inequities laden in social structures. Warner et al. (2016) also considered the particular notions grounding an epistemological stance to entrench empirical projects to realize its philosophy: (a) an emphasis on a social justice agenda, (b) resisting the "one-size-fits-all theory" (p. 173), and (c) interdisciplinary insight and collaboration.

Focusing on the context of the current study, ignoring the crossover of higher education, counselor education, curriculum, and pedagogy would simply ignore the temporal, contextual, and political boundaries situating the experiences of multiply-marginalized students. Considering the ramifications of intersectionality in higher education, given the housing of Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs, transactions reflecting multiple points and locations of overlapping forms of oppression magnify the application of intersectionality in praxis (Ahmed, 2012; Chan, Erby, & Ford, 2017b; Taylor, Miller, & Garcia-Louis, 2014; Wijeyesinghe & Jones, 2014) and research (Museus & Saelua, 2014; Tillapaugh & Nicolazzo, 2014). Referring to research in higher

education and its relationship with intersectionality, Tillapaugh and Nicolazzo observe the reflexive nature of intersectionality research. To embody it epistemologically means to signify an actively reflexive comprehension of the tensions placed on the salience of multiple identities carried by the researcher, their interactive relationship across identities, and the deconstruction of power and privilege defined by systems. Tillapaugh and Nicolazzo noted "we are suggesting that researchers' identities do influence the ways in which they make meaning and view their own research from a variety of epistemological foundations (e.g., those of our colleagues)" (p. 114). Thus, Tillapaugh and Nicolazzo grounded intersectionality with useful implications for research. Applying its tenets in research calls for the significant development of reflexivity, positionality, and immense attention to macrosystemic levels of domination and subjugation (Choo & Ferree, 2010).

Queer Men of Color: Examining Social Identity and the Complex Location of Privilege

Although there is a glaring disparity within specific intersections of social and cultural identity in research, it is of particular note to address the social positioning of queer men of color in the counseling profession, given the multiple statuses incurred as part of their lived experiences and positionality. Developing a basis for queer men of color originates from gaps in the counseling profession demonstrating the substantial majority of women (Michel, Hall, Hays, & Runyan, 2013) and, more specifically, White women in counseling (Garcia et al., 2013; Sue & Sue, 2013). Intriguingly, other recent forms of data from the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015) and Schweiger, Henderson, McCaskill, Clawson, and Collins (2012) support this demographic index.

Although males have been positioned as a minority within particularly gender-stereotyped professions and an overwhelming majority, it is a common assumption that all men subsist with the same experiences granting them opportunities (Williams, 2015). Williams observed the frequent complexity surrounding men who enter female-dominated professions due to the "glass escalator" as "welcomed into these professions and encouraged to move up into the better paying and higher status specialties" (p. 391). However, Williams (2015) also conceded the reality that this pattern does not describe all men, given the consequential reality that queer and racial/ethnic minority men do not often receive the same advantages afforded to the majority of men who enter female-dominated professions. Part of Williams's (2015) critique is the salience of stereotypical advantages with men thriving in female-dominated careers, which are recursive and institutionalized conceptions of masculinity and heteronormativity within the work setting. Other studies support this same outcome. Specifically, Forsman and Barth (2017) observed that masculine descriptions and a decrease in femininity associated with professions garnered interest saturated in female-dominated professions. Pertinent to a study on graduate students, Isacco and Morse (2015) concluded the lack of academic support for men who do not adopt characteristics of traditional masculinity ideology. As Williams (2015) noted, men often occupy spaces of privilege and advantage, even as a member of a minority group and subjugation to tokenism, but this space of privilege is obscured with the intersections of race, sexuality, gender identity, and social class. This complexity coincides referentially with Michel, Hays, & Runyan (2015) in their findings, which portrayed a mix of beliefs in support and disagreement with the lack of male recruitment and retention. As a result of the Michel et al. (2015) study, mixed thematic

elements acted in both support and disagreement with traditional gender beliefs and roles, the reality of male privilege, and the need to support men in counseling programs. Supported by the summarization of Williams's (2015) conclusions, observing the findings across multiple studies creates a critically engaged perspective on the pervasive issues of heteronormativity, patriarchy, and hegemonic power relations that still reside within social structures, such as education and the workplace. Based on this observation, two particular notions have emerged: (a) success and thriving seemingly function from power based in masculinity and (b) the complexity of social identity alters forms of privilege, extending the simultaneous experience of privilege and oppression and its consequent fluidity.

Complicating matters of identity, consciousness, and masculinity, Hurtado and Sinha (2008) also developed nuanced conclusions based on the complexity of race and gender intersections. While men arguably represent advantages and occupy the space of a privileged identity, Hurtado and Sinha conversely observed that Latino men rejected the notion of hegemonic masculinity on the basis of identifying with feminist ideology and aligned with positive descriptions of hegemonic masculinity. Their findings troubled the discussion on complexity by noting multiple intersections contributing to the consciousness raised by experiences of oppression frequently attached to their identities as Latino men. In cases represented by Hurtado and Sinha's data and participants, conceptions of manhood and masculinity ideology were racialized by values emerging from another identity, which contributed to the lack of stereotypical advantages afforded to men historically.

Furthering the positioning of a focus on queer men of color is the grounding both from intersectionality and the complexity of agency and resiliency through negotiating strategies to thrive and succeed in academic environments (Brockenbrough, 2013, 2015; Singh, 2013; Singh & McKleroy, 2011). This development formulates the epistemological strands to resist assumptions that the only types of narratives shaped by the convergence of multiple forms of oppression result in victimization, failure, and decline (Brockenbrough, 2015). Entertaining such realities perpetuates a disregard for the "transformative possibilities" (Brockenbrough, 2015, p. 29) and the biased omission of convergent discrimination and oppression (McCready, 2012, 2013). This lens situates the analysis, critique, and call to action of developing knowledge that properly engages the transversal feminism explicating the various spaces on education and research (Unterhalter, 2009; Yuval-Davis, 2006, 2012). The crossroads of the vantage points from these scholars (Brockenbrough, 2013, 2015; Haskins & Singh, 2015; McCready, 2012, 2013; Unterhalter, 2009; Yuval-Davis, 2006, 2012) acknowledge the epistemological possibilities, where knowledge stands at a location among the intersections as opposed to the dichotomous understanding privileged by one social identity (Brockenbrough, 2013). Brockenbrough (2015) emphasized this unique vantage point in location to redefine education, context, and social location by holding to the reality that particular forms of oppression, such as homophobia, heteronormativity, and heterosexism, can be racialized. Attempting to understand these lived experiences also negotiates the ramifications of social structures and methods to remain critical of the structure (Brockenbrough, 2013, 2015). Brockenbrough (2013) argued for a "queer of color critique" that formulates "an interdisciplinary corpus of scholarship on the dialectics between hegemony and resistance

that shape the lives of queer people of color across local, national, and transnational contexts" (p. 427).

Other scholars (Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Nash, 2008) also indicated the recommendation to "broaden the subjects" (Corlett & Mavin, 2014, p. 272) as a significant aspect to engage the simultaneous complexity adhered to within intersectionality principles. In order to generate an intersectionality model, it is necessary to frame the purpose of the study to adhere to the unique (Collins, 2004) realities, revisit the simultaneous complexity, and generate commentary for organizing and mobilizing social action to change social structures. Corlett and Mavin (2014) observed the unification of these principles are necessary, yet broadening the subjects to engage the duality of privilege, even among multiply-marginalized individuals who can serve an increasingly useful purpose to understand intersectionality interpretations. To attend to the process and consciousness of intersectionality, Corlett and Mavin (2014) added that "researchers should place emphasis not only on *who* is studied but also *how* intersectionality is studied" (p. 272), which is extremely consistent with Warner and Shields's (2013) related recommendations. Bowleg (2013) specifically embodied much of this approach by gaining data on Black gay and bisexual men notably on their perspectives of intersectionality. By directly addressing the issue of intersectionality, Bowleg (2013) was able to glean further information on how perspectives of intersectionality could diverge into commentary on micro and macro level experiences. Addressing the issue of intersectionality directly with participants relayed an intimate understanding of the consciousness and the ways that Black gay and bisexual men make sense of their experiences. This research showed that these men's experiences

particularly reinforced stereotypes and microaggressions instituted within heterosexism among the Black community, racism in the White LGB community, public socialization to the visibility of race and invisibility of sexuality, and pressure to conform to masculine norms (Bowleg, 2013). In addition, Bowleg (2013) was also able to engage sites of resilience provided by the narratives of her participants, which reinforced notions from Collins (1986, 2004) on the outsider-within status. Examples include the consolidation on consciousness and growth in efforts to understand their own intersectional experiences, liberation from the conventionality of societal norms, and transformative repercussions by understanding their own experiences.

Empirical Studies on Queer and LGBT People of Color: Multiple Minority Stress

The wide array of conceptual and empirical research on intersectionality has amassed to applications across several disciplines. Stemming from these efforts, intersectionality operates as derivatives of empirical, data-based research through creative methodological insights (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods designs) with the underlying philosophies as a guiding lens. Noting particular shifting trends in intersectionality research, it is imperative to consider the ramifications of implementing research designs in attending specifically to methodological insights and contributions to the movement of intersectionality research. To engage the expansive applications of intersectionality across disciplines, I outline empirical studies that have historically deployed intersectionality through encountering data in both quantitative and qualitative traditions. It is also significant to highlight that not all studies on queer people of color, LGBT people of color, racial/ethnic minorities, and the crossroads of these historically marginalized groups necessarily utilize an intersectionality framework or paradigm to

ground their research studies (Meyer, 2010, 2014). Nonetheless, several researchers noticed the alarming gap in research on LGBT and queer people of color (Parent et al., 2013; Sarno, Mohr, Jackson, & Fassinger, 2015). Additionally, studies that develop on the experiences of LGBT people of color detailed the inordinate amount of stress and stigma focused on this convergence (Balsam, Molina, Beadnell, Simoni, & Walters, 2011; Bostwick et al., 2014; Frost, Lehavot, & Meyer 2015; Meyer, 2010, 2014; Szymanski & Sung, 2013).

Meyer (2010, 2014), for example, examined the population of LGBT people of color from a minority stress model, which constitutes that oppression conflated with minority status. Although studies in these cases were completed on LGBT and queer people of color, the intriguing and consistent observation relayed by multiple studies (Bostwick et al., 2014; Meyer, 2014) returns to questions on the direction of minority stress and an understanding on its conclusive effects. The effects often build on conclusions that minority stress exists, but often, scholars identify new gaps within the complexity of a multidirectional focus on multiple minority experiences. In contrast, Aranda et al. (2015) discovered mixed findings in examining the confluence for African-American and Latina lesbians in the coming out process and depression. O'Donnell, Meyer, and Schwartz (2011) conducted a study on LGB youth of color, particularly on a sample of LGB Black and Latino communities, by utilizing logistic regression to test the risk of suicide and depression. In their study, they noted the specific issues that are statistical evidence for the increased indicators of depression and suicidal ideation among the community. Although they did not suggest additional information for how to approach future directions from their study's findings, they indicated that future research

on this topic must explore additional questions tied to the complexity and emphasis on uncovering the specific mechanisms that mediate the interaction.

Szymanski and Sung (2013), on the other hand, detailed the multidirectional nature of particular interactions occurring within Asian-American sexual minority persons. Branching from Minority Stress Theory (Meyer, 2003), the Szymanski and Sung (2013) study attempted to uncover specific aspects of oppression within a notably multiply-marginalized group. Utilizing regression analyses, they tested for specific models and hypotheses in the structure of particular mediators of outness to families and the world while initially testing for heterosexism and racism among the sample. They observed that many of their study's limitations resided in its convenience sample and the homogeneous understanding of Asian-American sexual minority individuals. In addition, they attended to the disparity across research studies focusing on the confluence of racial/ethnic and sexual minority communities by alerting future researchers to the complexity of the experiences and the heterogeneity associated with re-engaging LGBTQ persons of color.

Similar to the Szymanski and Sung (2013) study, Balsam, Molina, Beadnell, Simoni, and Walters (2011) tested a newly developed measurement in its early stages to develop an instrument that accurately described multiple dimensions of LGBT people of color and their experiences of microaggression. Their measurement was based on a three-part study that included multiple methodological traditions, which moved from qualitative to quantitative. The qualitative tradition used in the set of studies to develop the measurement employed semistructured interviews and focus groups to generate themes across their findings, particularly regarding heterosexism within racial/ethnic

minority communities, racism within LGBT communities, sexual objectification, and relationships. The second and third parts of their study utilized an exploratory factor analysis to test the structure of the measurement and organize its findings. Their findings significantly shed light on the specific issues affecting wellness and stigma within the community across convergences. However, they noted the limitations positioned with their study, despite its mixed-methods design and three-step phase. The study lacked sample size to generate any understanding on the variance between groups.

Bowleg (2008, 2012) significantly contested the problem of utilizing a minority stress model to explicate the narratives and determinants of health and wellness for the confluence of sexual, affectional, and gender identity with racial/ethnic identity. Bowleg reasoned this problem existed across multiple disciplines, historically defined by quantitative data to utilize as markers of health and wellness (e.g., psychology, public health). Citing her (2003) study on the multiple minority stress model, Bowleg gained multiple insights on specifically embodying intersectionality since she realized the two pitfalls associated with her study were the gap in conceptually engaging historical pioneers of intersectionality and intersectionality's philosophical trajectories. These were in addition to the framing of the question using an additive model. Moreover, Bowleg (2012) argued that the use of the word *minorities* often highlights the multiple minority stress that pins multiply-marginalized groups into additive approaches, which thereby flatten their identities instead of examining their interactions. This notable issue remained problematic from understanding the 2003 study on the notion that a triple jeopardy hypothesis could fully engage the complexity of intersectionality and shed light on the particular intersections of Black lesbian women (Bowleg, 2008). Bowleg's (2013)

study demonstrated an explicit investigation of how Black gay and bisexual men perceive intersectionality, which derived multiple perspectives of variation among the commonly unitary assumptions applied to the communities. This study (Bowleg, 2013) provided particular questions to trouble the previously held notions that intersectional empirical projects only result in deficit models that do not necessarily describe models of resilience.

Two groups of researchers (Singh, 2013; Singh & McKleroy, 2011) developed intersectional projects that inquisitively garnered attention on transgender persons of color and trans youth of color with an intentional focus on their resilience. The specific frame of reference on utilizing intersectionality with grounding in qualitative traditions derived new perspectives on the methods through which trans people of color negotiate resilience as a product of navigating their intersections. Both projects stood to explore this complexity by identifying the intersections as a phenomenon of interest as opposed to reducing or flattening the categories. As part of the findings in the (Singh, 2013) study, trans youth of color used unique methods to redefine the intersections and categorical definitions of racial/ethnic identity and gender identity. Additionally, the participants also spoke vehemently about utilizing social media as an active site of resilience and critiqued their belongingness and place in the LGBTQQ youth community. Utilizing intersectional and intercategorical approaches, Singh (2013) highlighted the existing potential limitations, given that the participants had access to extensive trans-advocating resources at hand in a large Southeastern city. Conversely, the trans youth experience, however, was not necessarily reflective of the nuances occurring for trans youth of color in other regions. Many of the limitations folded into a specific limitation on generalizability in qualitative research, although Singh (2013) constantly identified

transferability as the benchmark of reach. The research findings in these two studies (Singh, 2013; Singh & McKleroy, 2011) identified the evolving complexity that cannot necessarily essentialize noted categories, but places effort on deconstructing assumptions and definitions in addition to revolutionizing critical thinking.

The Sociopolitical Nature of Doctoral Education

There is a growing body of literature examining the complexities pervading sociopolitical environments in the context of higher education, but more specifically, doctoral education (Ramirez, 2014, 2016; Truong & Museus, 2012; Truong et al. 2016). While higher education represents a challenging environment at large for historically marginalized communities in light of multiple overlapping forms of oppression (Ahmed, 2012; Museus & Truong, 2013), the saturation of literature surrounding higher education carries an extensive trend in representing undergraduate students while sorely missing a heavier emphasis on graduate education (Harper & Palmer, 2016; Truong & Museus, 2012). Consequently, scholars have heightened their attention toward unraveling doctoral student education as a site of examination, particularly for marginalized groups (Baker & Moore, 2015; Bertrand Jones, Osborne-Lampkin, Patterson, & Davis, 2015; Harper & Palmer, 2016; Holley & Gardner, 2012; Holm, Prosek, & Godwin Weisberger, 2014; Pifer & Baker, 2014; Ramirez, 2014, 2016; Shavers & Moore, 2014a, 2014b; Trepal, Stinchfield, & Haiyasoso, 2014; Truong & Museus, 2012; Truong et al., 2016). Several pervasive issues demarcate the doctoral education experience, particularly for students emerging from historically marginalized groups. The first is the overarching underrepresentation of students of color in doctoral education programs (Harper & Palmer, 2016; Ramirez, 2016; Truong et al. 2016). This concern points to the systemic

supports that have historically served more represented communities within doctoral education, while excluding students from historically marginalized communities without the necessary supports institutionalized into the culture of doctoral education. As Ramirez (2016) identified, lack of institutional supports exacerbates the substantial complexity associated with opportunities and meeting needs to provide for factors necessary to the long-term success of marginalized students. Harper and Palmer (2016) also observed this issue specifically for doctoral students of color who frequently expend their energy battling insults, harassment, incivility, and invalidation from their faculty and peers. Hubain, Allen, Harris, and Linder (2016) identified that microaggressions and racism were commonplace experiences in graduate education despite an intense focus on social justice, equity, inclusion, and diversity in the curriculum of higher education and student affairs graduate programs. Other researchers (Hubain et al., 2016; Smith & Freyd, 2014) noted that students of color in graduate education programs also face institutional betrayal.

When examining spaces of doctoral education and experiences of marginalized individuals who occupy these spaces, numerous scholars attend to a concentrated focus on developing intersectional meaning (Hubain et al., 2016; Ramirez, 2014). While generally centered in the excavation of oppressive experiences and critically-based frameworks (e.g., CRT, feminism), much of the current work in relation to marginalized students and doctoral education centralize on qualitative research to investigate how doctoral students make sense of their experiences and how they navigate oppressive experiences (Truong & Museus, 2012; Truong et al., 2016; Shavers & Moore, 2014a, 2014b). Given the political complexities layered into higher education and, more

specifically, doctoral education (Ramirez, 2014, 2016; Truong & Museus, 2012), the concern with exploring doctoral students from historically marginalized groups characterizes the complicated nature of analyzing and investigating their experiences. In relation to intersectionality, many of the empirical studies targeting doctoral students' experiences generate qualitative methods to more openly and holistically explore both personal experiences and systemic issues in doctoral education and higher education. This positioning also predominantly reflects many recent empirical studies' entrenchment with critical race theory as their theoretical frameworks (Baker & Moore, 2015; Hubain et al., 2016; Truong & Museus, 2012).

Relevant empirical studies. Specifically, Baker and Moore (2015) investigated the experiences of underrepresented doctoral students in counselor education by exploring the experiences of doctoral students of color in counselor education. Utilizing a CRT theoretical framework, they intended to expose the "dominant narrative" (p. 69) by framing predominantly White institutions as the dominant narrative. For the purposes of data collection, Baker and Moore conducted single interviews of 19 participants ranging from 30 to 120 minutes. During and after each interview, they recorded process notes. As part of the data analysis, they utilized transcribed interviews, field notes, and reflections from the researchers to undergo open and axial coding that would eventually form emergent themes. They conducted member-checking through sending the themes to participants. A majority of participants (74 percent) provided confirmation of the themes, while the remaining 26 percent did not respond for confirmation. Their results alluded to six themes: "playing the game; individual characteristics and attributes; intersectionality; support; voice; and talk the talk, walk the walk" (p. 72). In the study, participants

indicated they had to determine ways to achieve more than their peers, which was consistent with "playing the game" (p. 72). Referring to "individual characteristics and attributes" (p.73), participants focused on their independence, positivity, and initiative to engage and find opportunities. Describing intersectionality, the study participants offered experiences where colleagues misinterpreted their experiences through assumptions about their race and ethnicity and experiences of within-group discrimination. Illustrating "support" (p. 76) referred to the support from faculty, family, peers, and funding. The researchers also pointed to the difficulty and opportunities present in counselor education doctoral programs through different levels of speaking openly about their experiences and concerns. Their last theme on "talk the talk, walk the walk" (p. 78) focused on faculty's representation of cultural competence. Baker and Moore provided specific recommendations for faculty members and doctoral students in counselor education. For faculty and departments, they asserted that department and organizational climates must increase openness and affirmation for marginalized individuals. They also recommended faculty increase the emphasis on orientation for doctoral programs to ensure students were socialized to mentoring with other faculty and students of color, discussing research interests and collaborative opportunities, and engaged in differences surrounding doctoral education. Major limitations included reference to the balance of both negative and positive experiences for the participants and the identity of the primary investigator who did not identify as a racial or ethnic minority.

Similarly, Shavers and Moore (2014a) conducted a study regarding self-presentation strategies for Black women in predominantly White institutions. They centered the study in a Black feminist theoretical framework and recruited 15 participants

using criterion-based purposive sampling. The researchers conducted individual semistructured interviews with all 15 participants to collect data, resulting in approximately 45 to 60 minutes per participant. As part of the data analysis, they conducted open and axial coding. To conduct member checking, they sent themes emerging from the data to the participants with a request for confirmation; only 13 of 15 participants completed member checking procedures. The themes presented from the data include the following five themes: "(a) academic mask, (b) private self, (c) other selves, (d) protection of self, and (e) disadvantages of the academic mask" (p.397). As the authors interpreted these results, they noted that preserving self-presentation resulted in lower indications of well-being as an outcome of compromising the self. As part of the recommendations, the authors called on faculty to generate more avenues and emphases on mentoring and participation in cultural sensitivity training. Additionally, they recommended that institutions generate supports, such as groups on campus, orientation, and expectations for doctoral education environments. For the limitations, the authors pointed to the lack of generalizability since many of the participants' responses operated on unique, individualized experiences.

Shavers and Moore (2014b) conducted a second study specifically focused on coping and resiliency strategies for African-American women in doctoral programs at predominantly White institutions. To inform their lens and interpretation, they grounded the study in a theoretical framework on Black feminist thought, utilizing elements of critical and feminist theories. While interviewing 15 participants, they utilized individual semistructured interviews and demographic questionnaires to obtain data. Additionally, they conducted the member checking process through participants' confirmation and

responses to identified themes. Consistent with using grounded theory, the researchers utilized open and axial coding to eventually develop themes. To speak to the major theme of "the double-edged sword" (Shavers & Moore, 2014b, p. 23), they included two subthemes: "prove-them-wrong syndrome" explicating determination of the participants and "part-of-a-bigger-whole syndrome" emphasizing collectivism. Throughout their findings, they noted recommendations to increase well-being and emphasize communities of support. Major limitations included the extensively broad constructs presented in the study: focusing on academic persistence, well-being, and limited generalizability from engaging unique, individualized experiences.

Truong and Museus (2012) produced a study focusing on how doctoral students of color cope and respond to racism. As part of their study, they characterized the political constraints attached to events and experiences in doctoral education while involving the complicated nature of racism and racial trauma. To implement their study, they utilized CRT and Mellor's (2004) taxonomy of coping styles to frame their theoretical framework. They engaged methodological insights and steps from transcendental phenomenology. To collect data, they implemented the long semistructured interview to build on individual interviews with all 26 participants averaging interview timespans of two hours and ranging from one to four hours. They involved multiple readings of the data and coding and generated thematic categories, textual descriptions, and structural descriptions. The findings offered extensive descriptions of both racism and racial trauma. For racism, they identified the following themes: "onlyness and isolation; identity intersectionality; differential support and investment; low expectations, high standards; role of funding; exploitation of students;

neglect; devaluing of research on race; reproduction of racism by people of color; cumulative effects of racial microaggressions; secondhand racism; and violations of institutional and federal policies" (Truong & Museus, 2012, p. 237). For racial trauma, Truong and Museus described the following themes to explicate this finding: "anger, shock, self-doubt, depression, dissociation, physical pain, and spiritual pain" (2012, p. 237). Additionally, they related in their findings that violence was not part of the coping mechanisms in response to racism. They also found that responding and coping with racism depended on context. Their findings illustrated the wide breadth and diversity of coping strategies utilized by doctoral students of color. Truong and Museus also noted that the participants indicated that racism preceded their racial trauma. The limitations for their study related to the preexisting knowledge of higher education and postsecondary institutions along with their own victimized experiences of racism.

Truong et al. (2016) focused a recent study on highlighting experiences of vicarious racism among doctoral students of color. Although their research study emphasized experiences of doctoral student of color, their sub-questions to the guiding research question navigate through experiences, coping, and making sense of the experiences. Truong et al. (2016) utilized a transcendental phenomenological approach to guide the study's methods with procedures for data collection and steps for data analysis. Through multiple readings and developing codes to align with significant statements, they created emergent themes, structural description, and textual description. To illustrate their findings, they indicated four themes, where two themes related to the experiences descriptive of vicarious racism (i.e., observed racism, trickledown racism) while the other two themes attended to coping strategies (i.e., normalization of racism,

racial resistance). In describing the two themes associated with vicarious racism, Truong et al. (2016) defined "observed racism" as "instances in which participants experienced vicarious racism by hearing stories about or seeing racism directed at faculty and peers" and "trickledown racism" as "cases in which participants were structurally affected by racism directed at their faculty mentors of color and which resulted in negative consequences for participants" (p. 233). Regarding the two themes illustrating coping strategies of participants with vicarious racism, the researchers observed "normalization of racism" as "the process by which learning about secondhand racism led doctoral students to the realization that racism is a normal aspect of their graduate education programs" and "racial resistance" as "cases in which vicarious racism resulted in participants' collective mobilization to combat racism" (Truong et al. 2016, p. 233). Their study also pointed to two limitations specifically with the lack of international students in the sample in addition to the selection bias, where participants were predisposed to the study due to an interest in sharing their experiences.

Ramirez (2014), retrieving data from a larger case study, examined the experiences of Chicanos/Latinos(as) during this first year in doctoral programs. Fundamental to the study was its grounding in an intersectionality theoretical framework. Their sample consisted of 24 Chicano/Latino(a) participants recruited from purposive and snowball sampling. Data was collected using interviews ranging from two to four hours. To analyze the data, Ramirez (2014) involved inductive analysis utilizing open and axial coding. Of the 24 participants, Ramirez observed that only three of the participants experienced extensively positive adjustment within the first year of the doctoral program, while the rest of the sample relayed numerous challenges within their experiences.

Themes surrounding the challenges described the following: "(a) academic transitions (*n* = 12), (b) isolation and alienation (*n* = 9), (c) clashes with traditional academic culture and the graduate school curriculum (*n* = 8), and (d) microaggressions (*n* = 7)" (Ramirez, 2014, p. 174). Ramirez also identified a major limitation—relying on the use of a small sample size that is based within a single institution, which detracts from the possibilities of engaging with a variability of participants.

In addition, Ramirez (2016) notably enacted a study focusing on various components of the doctoral student experience for Chicano/Latino(a) doctoral students, including experiences of training, doctoral socialization, and discipline. Ramirez (2016) retrieved and based this study on data from a larger case study taking place within a single institution, but grounded this study's theoretical frameworks both in intersectionality and social capital. Since one research question had focused specifically on discipline, Ramirez organized the sample of 24 participants into gender (12 men and 12 women) and discipline (three in natural sciences, 16 in social sciences, three in education, and two in humanities). Ramirez utilized inductive analysis and open and axial coding to develop the themes associated with the research questions. Observing participants from the social sciences, Ramirez indicated that a majority of participants were dissatisfied with the training, the doctoral programs were reproducing inequalities involving race, class, and gender, and doctoral socialization was seemingly lacking. Ramirez had also explained that participants from the humanities were critical about their training, requiring self-agency for doctoral socialization and unequal distribution of opportunities. Participants from the discipline of education had positive perceptions with their experience by citing the lack of competition, although there were racist and classist

layers embedded within disbursement of doctoral opportunities (Ramirez, 2016). Comparatively, Ramirez pointed to participants from the science disciplines as the most satisfied and positive about their opportunities and training. Additional findings also illustrate participants' negotiation of peer support and faculty mentorship as reasons bolstering their inclusion and satisfaction with their programs (Ramirez, 2016).

Synthesizing insights from empirical studies. Many of the studies examining the doctoral student experiences provide significant contributions to the burgeoning dialogue. As multiple scholars have observed (Baker & Moore, 2015; Truong & Museus, 2012; Truong et al., 2016), the variability of oppression for doctoral students results in an extensively wide breadth of deleterious effects. It alludes to the contextual layers (Ramirez, 2014, 2016) imposed on doctoral students of color forcing more complex methods to cope with these tenuous issues (Truong & Museus, 2012). The empirical studies produced by Shavers and Moore (2014a, 2014b) supplement this viewpoint by taking into account both the explicit and subtle effects taking shape on the lives and experiences of historically marginalized doctoral students. While doctoral students from marginalized groups may not necessarily be experiencing actively explicit instances of discrimination and oppression (e.g., public defamation insults), passive instances of marginalization (e.g., feeling invisible, lack of opportunities and support) can exacerbate feelings of isolation (Ramirez, 2014) and force a masking of identities that ultimately result in lower indications of well-being (Shavers & Moore, 2014a, 2014b). By growing the attention to doctoral students' experiences, the merit of this scholarship demonstrates a focus on eliciting experiences and action surrounding contexts of doctoral education.

While Baker and Moore's (2015) recent study informs counselor education specifically, they confine their approach to racially and ethnically underrepresented students in counselor education, which engages a singular form of historically marginalized identities. This issue coincides concomitantly with other studies that have a tendency to focus preemptively on a singular identity, yet build upon findings commonly on intersectionality stemming from the data (Holley & Gardner, 2012; Hubain et al., 2016; Truong & Museus, 2012; Truong et al., 2016). Ramirez (2014) directed attention to this issue with intersectionality by detailing the need to shift the axes of analysis to other social identities (e.g., social class, ability status, sexuality, affectional identity, gender identity). Although multiple studies (Baker & Moore, 2015; Ramirez, 2014, 2016) deployed intersectionality as one of the theoretical frameworks, multiple studies serve a point of context for the analysis and discussion, but does not explicitly interrogate intersectional experiences specifically as the major basis of the research question and research purpose. Ramirez (2016) noted inequalities on the basis of race, gender, and class, but this positioning of intersectionality in the theoretical framework seemed to elicit an understanding of single and multiple marginalizations representative of additive and multiplicative approaches (Bowleg, 2008; Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Hancock, 2007b). Hence, the inception of the research studies is not necessarily focused on explicitly asking about intersectional experiences, but rather, predisposing assumptions based on the linkages categorized by identities.

Unique to the some of the empirical studies discussed (Shavers & Moore, 2014a, 2014b; Truong & Museus, 2012), the researchers engaged in bracketing to remove biases from the data analysis, but some of the authors carried identification as insiders to the

participant groups within their studies. For example, Truong and Museus (2012) had both experienced racist events and involved professional experiences and knowledge with higher education and postsecondary institutions. Contrarily, the primary researcher in Baker and Moore's (2015) study did not identify with the participant community of interest, which the authors cited as a limitation within the study.

Summary

Gleaning information from intersectionality as a theoretical framework situates the current study with tools for best practices, guidelines to properly engage the philosophy of intersectionality, and an outline of paradigmatic and methodological insights to meet the research questions and phenomenon of interest. There is a significant call to implement an understanding of privilege, oppression, and its resulting simultaneous complexity into the knowledge base of the counseling profession (Ratts et al., 2016), but currently, much of the literature within the counseling profession tailored to meet this competency and guideline is heavily saturated with conceptual literature (Conwill, 2010; Haskins & Singh, 2015; LaMantia, Wagner, & Bohecker, 2015; McDowell & Hernández, 2010; Williams, Karlin, & Wallace, 2012). Other empirical studies in counseling and counselor education generate focus on the positioning of faculty in academia (Haskins et al., 2016), but do not necessarily speak to the ramifications on students and, more specifically, on the methods through which students engage their consolidation of multiculturalism and social justice training. Adding to this development, many studies entailing experiences of doctoral education extensively cover and employ methods to navigate the complexities of oppression in doctoral education (Baker & Moore, 2015; Holley & Gardner, 2012; Ramirez, 2014, 2016; Truong & Museus, 2012;

Truong et al., 2016). These studies explicate the nature of oppression as associated with a specific social identity, which give credence and document the numerous damaging effects of oppression. However, the challenge with the current overview of literature subsists on the lack of investigations that centralize intersectionality, the simultaneous negotiation of privilege and oppression, and the navigation of interstitial spaces between linked identities. Based on current trends and recommendations outlining the deployment of intersectionality in empirical research (Bowleg, 2008, 2012; Cho et al., 2013; May, 2014; McCall, 2005; Warner, 2008; Warner et al., 2016; Warner & Shields, 2013), it is particularly important for the current study to adhere to a relative understanding of efforts to resist the essentialism of specific identity categories while engaging the social justice and macrosystemic implications. It is even far more important that future research continues to resist a reductive approach of establishing an additive model by, instead, employing an intersectional model to maintain the antiessentialist value.

Chapter 3: Methods

Introduction

This chapter formulates the development and foundation of the methodological process associated with my study. As my assumption in qualitative research points to the belief that methodology is subsumed primarily into a paradigmatic process (Blackstone, 2012; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kuhn, 1996; Pollock, 2012), the chapter organizes the sections sequentially to address major components of a paradigm, including ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology. Since these components are not mutually exclusive, it is significant to layer details that construct upon the formation of each step as a result of my research questions. Consequently, it is necessary to discuss my philosophical worldviews associated with the paradigm to frame this study along with my personal assumptions raised in relation to the study. After a discussion on the elements of the paradigm, I outline my process as the researcher to align with decisions intended to meet a specific, yet intentional methodological design. By illustrating components of the design, I also address validity, transferability, and my own reflexivity. The research purpose actively engages multiple dimensions tied to the intersectional lived experiences of privilege and oppression among Queer Men of Color in Counselor Education doctoral programs: (a) attention to the mutually shaped and multidimensional nature of multiple social identities; (b) critiques on power relations written historically into the historically-based social structures; (c) delivery of a social justice agenda engaging axes of privilege and oppression; and (d) generating recommendations for social action and demarginalization for multiculturalism and social justice in the counselor education curriculum. As a result, the research question follows this structure:

- How do Queer Men of Color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in counselor education doctoral programs?

Paradigm

Outlining the elements of a paradigm generates the voice of the researcher in aligning specifically with a purposeful intent focused on developing methodology aimed at addressing the phenomena of interest in the research questions. Eliciting the paradigm initiates a dialogue particularly about the frame of the researcher and the research study at hand to negotiate specific decisions utilized especially within a research study framed in the qualitative tradition. Although outlining the development of the research process and methodological elements remains vital to describing the whole of a research study to relate the researcher's stance, there is an increasingly significant utility to supplement numerous philosophical underpinnings underscoring the positionality of the researcher (Blackstone, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Denzin, 2009, 2010; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Hays & Singh, 2012; Kuhn, 1996; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Although research in the qualitative tradition often argues for the necessary inclusion of engaging researcher positionality, bringing the researcher's standpoint carries valid justification within multiple traditions of research (e.g., quantitative mixed methods) as a form of a reflexive exercise designed to align with the purpose and, subsequently, the methodological components of the study. Explicating this philosophy vividly creates both the foundation and the framework to align methodological decisions aimed at properly reifying the phenomena of interest and, especially in qualitative research, the voices of the population of interest. Considering the historical efforts to legitimize qualitative research as rigorous

research, it is vital to solidify this effort through uniquely identifying the paradigm guiding the researcher and the methodological process.

Given that my research study has a unique relationship in the domains of multiculturalism and social justice, the necessary utility of illustrating the vantage point of the researcher and the subsequent philosophical assumptions is largely critical (Denzin, 2009, 2010). As Denzin beautifully captured the essence of the experiences tied historically to legitimizing qualitative inquiry as a benchmark for rigorous research often saturated in a majority of quantitative research focused on evidence, the arguments for engaging paradigm to assert qualitative research's placement continues to grow particularly in alignment with values of social justice. The values of social justice particularly relevant to Denzin's (2010) articulation of "paradigm wars" (p. 421) negotiates for narratives of marginalized groups and communities often lost within the basis of a sequential process utilized in the scientific method of quantitative research. This statement is not necessarily a question of the quantitative tradition's validity, but it is a formative inquiry into reifying specific voices from marginalized communities that are often underrepresented in quantitative research. This perspective speaks heavily to the intention of qualitative research to relay narratives that are often obstructed in barriers formed within social structures. Denzin (2009) specifically noted this historical account in terms of the sociopolitical nature of research, which reinforces barriers to achieving social justice and equity due to a prioritization on research identified by a dominant narrative.

The importance of demonstrating philosophical underpinnings associated with research garners a way of knowing that each comes with its own unique history (Denzin

& Lincoln, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The more commonly utilized paradigms (e.g., positivism, postpositivism, constructivism, critical, postmodernism) fluidly offer the flexibility as launching points to dissect and analyze the basis for ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology (Blackstone, 2012; Kuhn, 1996; Lincoln & Guba, 1994). Considering all four components would form a foundational understanding about the researcher's vantage point and positionality, this explication describes an intimate source of knowledge through the researcher's social positioning and lens. As a result, it is instrumental to utilize an extensive description of the philosophical tenets associated with the paradigm to position each component as an influence on the methodological process.

Intersectionality theory as a paradigm. Positioning intersectionality theory as a constantly evolving approach in multiple disciplines fosters efforts to redefine the boundaries of social identity and cultural identity in a matrix of power relations situated in social structures. Intersectionality theory's claim to innovation and a significant intellectual contribution surfaced from the work of Crenshaw (1989, 1991) and Collins (1990) who both shifted the trajectory of a discourse on advances in human rights affecting their representation. As women of color, their narratives became the cornerstone as seminal scholars in intersectionality while integrating many historically foundational scholars contributing to the content of the theoretical approach's philosophical tenets (Anzaldúa, 1987; hooks, 1984).

History as foundation. Describing intersectionality in relation to its methodological contributions necessitates a brief sociohistorical approach as its confluence of tenets often move prominently across several disciplines attempting to

operationalize the overview of the theory. This effort includes the numerous strands of scholarship that have constructed an entire body of a theory. Since intersectionality continues its journey of development in multiple disciplines, it offers significant launching points to generate both a dialogue and call to action regarding identity politics, multiculturalism, diversity practices, social identity categorization, social justice, and practices to engage social action for marginalized communities (Carbado, Crenshaw, Mays, & Tomlinson, 2013; Cho, 2013; Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013; Dhamoon, 2011; Hancock, 2007a). As its theoretical overview continues to expand, it is important to negotiate the historical underpinnings of the theory to prevent secondhand interpretations from overshadowing the seminal source material. Additionally, this effort to construct developmentally utilizing its history focuses on the potential misinterpretation and divergence constructed within the intellectual contributions and operationalization for specific disciplines.

Generating an approach from its history would aim at recognizing the substantial efforts intertwined with the revolutionary approach and ideologies developed by Crenshaw (1989, 1991) and Collins (1990). The interdisciplinary set of foci is a subject of multiple philosophical strands that often coincide with other notable paradigms of research (e.g., critical feminist), which has led to a visionary movement shifting intellectual discourse since its inception to current intellectual contributions. Intersectionality is grounded in its history and has grown exponentially since that point. Mapping this history (Bowleg, 2008; Carbado et al., 2013; Cho, 2013; Cole, 2008, 2009; Collins, 1990, 2010; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; McCall, 2005; Shields, 2008; Warner, 2008) illustrates the trajectory across disciplines with a predominant saturation in disciplines

associated with its early roots (e.g., sociology, law, psychology) to extend to other applied disciplines prioritizing practices and services (e.g., counseling, economics, business, higher education, student affairs). Reinforcing this early history is necessary to describing fundamental tenets tied to creating avenues for researching intersectionality and utilizing it as an influence on the methodological process. Otherwise, ignorance of intersectionality's historical trajectory limits the application and potential to creatively answer new research questions dedicated to dismantling barriers in social structures, demarginalizing oppressive experiences for multiply-marginalized groups, and re-envisioning social and cultural identity with social justice (Hancock, 2007a).

Crenshaw (1989, 1991) had begun her early intellectual contributions on coining the term "intersectionality" as a form of demarginalizing oppressed populations held within a matrix of power relations represented in social structures. Primarily, she was intent on reifying the superficial ties to social justice and problematic representation pervading the feminist movement within her contemporaries. Crenshaw, as a scholar of law, argued that her representation as a woman of color was not fully represented. At the time of her work (1989), she had indicated the specific relations to antidiscrimination statutes that seemingly offered no recourse or protections for women of color and, more glaringly, immigrant women of color. Although Collins continued the prominence of intersectionality, her variation of intersectionality continued to extend the construct into intellectual spaces coinciding with her ideas on Black feminism (1990). She reinforced the idea that the mutuality of interlocking forms of oppression continues to subject marginalized populations with explicit barriers to lack the resources and empowerment to thrive in society. Although Collins heavily substantiated the definition of Black

feminism, she reconsidered the idea to recognize that utilizing a framework to critically examine interlocking forms of oppression was, in fact, feminist. Within both sets of scholarship, one problematic issue poignantly stated was the growing feminist movement that seemed to exclude women of color, although the feminist movement had claimed to focus on women's rights, human rights, and social justice. Nonetheless, Crenshaw (1989) had argued that this positioning was problematic since women of color were overseen and consequently experiencing subordination in a different variation. Experiencing multiple points of marginalization served as cause to critique a feminist movement largely reflected with the voices of women carrying power and privilege. Thus, the same advocacy for human rights for women was missing a distinct piece that a unifying feminist movement was not critically aware of the possible intersections, which commonly reflected White women and excluded women of color. In an effort to resist this perspective, Crenshaw indicated her critique as a format to center the margins, particularly when a singularly marginalized group fails to recognize the embodiment of privilege at the expense of a multiply-marginalized group. Crenshaw's scholarly work identified the reality that feminist movements were not the only type of social justice and human rights movements suffering under this veil. In the event of sociopolitical movements with aims to counteract racism and sexism, albeit separately, the problematic issues still stand that without a critical analysis, each separate movement removes the representation of women of color through the convergence of racism and sexism. Nonetheless, both Crenshaw and Collins acknowledged that their early works were not the first collections of scholarship attempting to dismantle hegemonic power relations within oppressive social structures (Collins & Bilge, 2016). The fluidity of their early

works formed the construction from the work of other scholars actively critiquing both social inequalities and inequities occurring at the convergence of multiple identities (Anzaldúa, 1987; hooks, 1984; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). With this basis, Crenshaw (1989) prominently identified that antidiscrimination law must move beyond the "single-axis framework" as a justification for extending social justice on an individual level of personal experiences with marginalization and on a systemic level wrought with policies either failing to protect marginalized populations or oppressing through barriers and explicit discrimination (p. 139).

Utilizing Intersectionality Theory as the Basis for a Research Paradigm

Transitioning through the early sociopolitical movements within civil rights frequently identified through the 1960s to the work of seminal scholars issuing a platform for intersectionality (Anzaldúa, 1987; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Collins, 1990; hooks, 1981, 1984, 1989; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983), the exponential growth of intersectionality scholarship in the most recent decade of the 2000s is a recent trend located in both conceptual and empirical literature. Examining this recent trend would expound upon numerous uses of intersectional frameworks to apply specifically to the respective discipline, reify uniquely individualized experiences of multiple marginalizations, and dismantle both barriers and boundaries surrounding multiply-marginalized groups by extending a call to action for social change within social structures. The rising number of research studies is a considerable reason for many scholars to begin raising best practices to assert the seminal source material and heart of intersectionality, while revolutionizing its applicability to form pillars establishing a paradigm and increasing the rigor associated with previously established forms of

research, especially in the vein of the scientific method (Bowleg, 2008, 2012; Cho, 2013; Cho et al., 2013; Dhamoon, 2011; Hancock, 2007a, 2007b; McCall, 2005; Warner, 2008; Warner & Shields, 2013). The intellectual efforts stirred by this movement continue to develop a foundation focused on positioning intersectionality scholarship and research to gain credibility as a research paradigm with rigorous and sound standards often associated with methodology.

The primacy of intersectionality in intellectual discourses and contributions to research has revolutionized the theoretical framework to increased attention beyond a content specialization (Hancock, 2007a). Hancock (2007a) delivered observations on the intentions of intersectionality to innovatively answer questions on culture, social identity, and the nexus of identity politics and social structures. However, Hancock (2007a) also critiqued this direction given that scholarly discourses often parallel intersectionality in relation to other feminist paradigms (e.g., black feminist studies, Chicana feminism). While feminism operates philosophically at the root of intersectionality, intersectionality theory extends to broader levels of analysis, requiring its utility as a standalone product. Hancock's observations elicited aligned unitary principles to develop a "body of normative theory and empirical research" (2007a, p. 251). Expanding intersectionality's applications to a series of efforts in scholarly discourse and research operates within an extension of sub-content specializations, which Hancock (2007a) emphasized as a means to apply to several disciplines and types of questions in empirical research.

As intersectionality subsists with exposing nuanced experiences of power relations, hegemonic practices and policies, and social structures of oppression, intersectionality operates with foundational definitions aimed at utilizing a broader form

of analysis to explicate personal experiences of marginalization to larger systemic forms of subordination and, hence, stratification. The foundational definitions offer a basis to situate intersectionality as a research paradigm with specific intentions to deconstruct the lived experiences of marginalization across multiple social identities and formulate a social justice agenda that vehemently critiques and erodes problematic, inequitable social structures Intersectionality emerged philosophically from the movements of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and feminism (Carbado et al., 2013) to expose overlapping forms of oppression that impact human rights, protections, dignity, and the ability to thrive. More specifically, the feminist movement cited was Black feminism rooted in differentiated forms of advocacy redefining the feminist movement as culturally situated within other identities. Generating this history revolutionized a platform for early discourses on intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Collins, 1990) to reify the stratification of power, social inequality, and social inequity. These discourses on intersectionality emphasized the convergence of multiple forms of oppression embedded within the stratification of power and advantage. Intersectionality calls to attention and, most importantly, calls to action the critical analysis of multiple systemic issues (Cole, 2008) by layering the interconnected, multidimensional nature (Cole, 2009) of social identity (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender identity, social class, socioeconomic status, sexual/affectional identity, ability status, regional identity). The expansion of this analysis determines the linkages on social identity with more in-depth observations on the connections between multiple marginalized identities. Nonetheless, intersectionality's efforts to demarginalize hegemonic power relations related to the confluence of social identity categories arrives with the direction to invariably expose subtle and explicit

forms of privilege and oppression (Cole, 2009; Hancock, 2007a). Critically examining interlocking social identity categories would situate these identity categories as mutually shaping instead of mutually exclusive (Bowleg, 2008, 2012). Arranging identity categories in a mutually exclusive fashion negates lived experiences associated with one identity over another identity (Cole, 2008, 2009; Parent et al., 2013; Shields, 2008; Singh, 2013), develops a ranking to assign salient social identities based on privilege (Bowleg, 2008), and becomes counterintuitive to an intersectional paradigm.

Utilizing intersectionality theory frames forms of scholarship and empirical research in the perspective of a social justice agenda (Carbado et al., 2013; Cho, 2013; Cho et al., 2013). Hence, creating a paradigmatic position on research with intersectionality necessitates a unique critical analysis to develop a social justice agenda (Dhamoon, 2011; Hancock, 2007a, 2007b; Lépinard, 2014; McCall, 2005). Prioritizing the intersectional paradigm challenges methods through which researchers explore and explicate cultural and social identity (Shields, 2008; Warner & Shields, 2013), but it also develops a social commentary on the structures contributing to the reinforcement of barriers, exclusion, and ostracism for communities experiencing multiple forms of marginalization. This commentary is a significant call to action to actively alter a system that uniformly continues to stratify levels of power and subordinate members of multiple minority groups often overlooked in common analyses of culture and social justice. Developing this aspect of an intersectional paradigm also reifies the interaction between experiences of marginalization at the individual level in comparison to the larger systemic levels (e.g., meso, macro) fostering these experiences. Hence, the interaction taking place is more than simply an investigation of the intersections of identities as a

unique construction of interpretation. Rather, there are sociopolitical implications resulting in the confluence of specific identities.

Generating additional discussion from the philosophical underpinnings of intersectionality, identifying constructs valuable to an epistemological comprehension tailors theoretical aspects for explicating the overarching research paradigm. Considering my research question highlights a critical examination on the intersectional lived experiences of privilege and oppression of Queer Men of Color in counselor education doctoral programs, deducing the connection between intersectionality results in a multifaceted research purpose: (a) a critique on social structures and power relations; (b) attending to the confluence of multiple identities; (c) generating a social justice agenda formulated on investigating privilege and oppression; and (d) efforts to dismantle instances of oppression with multiculturalism and social justice in the counselor education curriculum. The resulting nature of the research purpose achieves an intimate awareness with personal philosophy, assumptions about the study and professional identity, and consistency between the research purpose and paradigm.

Social justice and parallels with CRT. Intersectionality provides a significant launching point for this research study, given its direct association to elements of social justice. The intention largely addresses a focal point on the lived experiences of an oppressed group with multiple minority statuses, while attending to the significant complexity of consciousness, meaning-making, and contextualization when simultaneously holding privilege and oppression. An intersectional paradigm stands in contrast to commonly traditional approaches to research that substantiate investigations and research questions on testing and predictive methods, such as positivist and

postpositivist paradigms (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Most visibly, the goal of an intersectional paradigm emerges as a two-fold process: (a) framing lived experience of mutually shaped social identity as critique of social structure and (b) substantiating linkages of personal experience and connections to sociopolitical contexts and structures. Paralleling intersectionality theory's roots in critical race theory (CRT), CRT centralizes the normative dynamics of racism and centering of race in development of a social justice agenda (Bernal, 2002; Hernandez, 2016). Central to the research purpose described in this study, another vital principle of CRT relates the legitimacy of experiential knowledge from historically marginalized groups subject to racism, which has subverted the experiences and worldviews of racial and ethnic minorities. Given that the legitimacy of truth and knowledge is situated in the perspectives of privileged groups, Bernal (2002) vividly points out CRT's marked attention to students of color as legitimate holders of knowledge. Emerging specifically from observations in Bernal's work, intersectionality broaches a paradigmatic goal to strategize intersections of identity categories as a foundation of transformation for both policies and practices within social structures (e.g., context, government, education). This method of counteracting one form of oppression carries a vision of reforming social structures to change a history of subordination, which, especially in the context of my study, engages reform on curriculum, education, and pedagogy in counselor education.

Parallels with queer theory. Holding a similar critical space is the expansion of queer theory as a parallel to intersectionality theory. While framing queer theory negotiates significant critical tenets layered into its history as a research paradigm, queer

theory's parallel layers an extensive level of utility for the application to studies focused on understanding unique lived experiences (Adams & Holman Jones, 2011; Goodrich, Luke, & Smith, 2016; Misgav, 2016; Valocchi, 2005). This unique positioning serves a strengthened purpose that coincides with intersectionality theory and, subsequently, a justification for its application. It is clear that scholars positioning queer theory often take its confluence into account with feminist practices and theoretical approaches such that there are unifying philosophies intent on dismantling oppressive social structures and policies (Cannon, Lauve-Moon, & Buttell, 2015; Chevrette, 2013; Gedro & Mizzi, 2014; McCann, 2016; Showden, 2012). Utilizing principles from queer theory (Creswell, 2013; Lugg, 2003; Lugg & Murphy, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), substantiated viewpoints stand parallel to other critical methodologies, such as CRT, yet take on diverse, nuanced stances that create a lens, reinforcing the application for intersectionality. Queer theory (Lugg, 2003; Lugg, 2006; Lugg & Murphy, 2014; Lugg & Tooms, 2011; Tooms & Lugg, 2008) thrives on its critique of sociopolitical structures situating barriers and resulting oppressive experiences often focused on sexual/affectional identity and gender identity. Hence, there is a nuanced emphasis on counteracting heterosexism, genderism, heteronormativity, and homophobia. A vivid principle grounded in the foundation of queer theory is its attention to historical movements contributing to the historical situatedness of normative experience, power relations, and status (Lugg, 2003; Lugg & Murphy, 2014; Tooms & Lugg, 2008). The resulting outcome in utilizing the sociohistorical approach is an activist agenda intended to form political mobilization and community organizing with aims to resist oppression (Lugg, 2003). The other constituting perspective on queer theory is the oppressive reality devoted to both

expansive identification in the queer community and the suspicion of appearing within one of the queer identities, which remains a signature to patriarchy woven into the fabric of social structures perpetuating marginalization (Lugg & Murphy, 2014). Any individual not inhabiting masculine traits, characteristics, and behaviors are problematized through refusal of acceptance and the continued establishment of barriers to equality, equity, and rights (Lugg, 2003). This perspective operates with the resistance to perform and pass to reinforce masculinity and patriarchy as elicited forms of power. Queer theory (Lugg & Murphy, 2014) also centralizes homophobia as a normative experience contextually and socially similar to CRT's assumption that racism surfaces as daily experiences. As Lugg (2003, 2006) reinforces, queer theory embraces intersectionality particularly as a form of analysis based on the multidimensional nature of identity and representation. It is its construction of intersectional claims that vehemently stands uniquely as a devoted method with an "anti-assimilationist" (Lugg & Murphy, 2014, p. 1185) and "antiessentialist" (Lugg, 2003, p. 104) viewpoint and approach.

Prioritizing intersectionality as a paradigm. Recursive dialogues on operationalizing research in intersectionality offered specific viewpoints and recommendations for the basis of creating an intersectional project. Intersectionality theory has valuable insights from the persistence of other critical methodologies and critically-informed theories over a long period of history that witnessed multiple movements of fighting for human rights. While the commentary on best practices (Bowleg, 2008; Cho, 2013; Cho et al., 2013; McCall, 2005; Shields, 2008; Warner, 2008; Warner & Shields, 2013; Yuval-Davis, 2006) for an intersectional paradigm in research

raises complexity, specific subsets of the philosophical tenets continue to underline the heart of intersectionality involved in this current research study and reinforce the paralleled nature of intersectionality developed in relation to other critical methodologies (e.g., CRT, feminist, queer). McCall's (2005) proposition and delivery on intersectional methodology raised questions to shift the discourse to realize more extended potential. Primarily, McCall identified multiple forms of complexity deconstructed in perceptions and assumptions of intersectional experiences. Relevant to the current study, McCall devised language around "intracategorical complexity," (p. 1773-1774) which resists predetermined or pre-existing boundaries on historically situated social identity categories while strategizing the formations of social identity to maintain a critical stance on oppressive social structures.

McCall's (2005) description of intracategorical complexity specifically identifies an intimate relationship with other philosophies undergirding the approach to the study. With Lugg's (2003) antiessentialist framework, there is a relationship to McCall's (2005) analysis of intracategorical complexity that purposes the antiessentializing framework with the flexibility to critically examine convergence and divergence. Utilizing the experiential knowledge associated with these processes would shed light on assumptions placed on Queer Men of Color surviving in oppressive contextual and temporal spaces, revealing the simultaneous nature of divergence and convergence in oppression. The problematic issue of exclusively utilizing queer theory is its prioritization of sexual identity, affectional identity, and gender identity, which can overlook the racialization of sexual, affectional, and gender identity and the inherent racism associated between and within communities. In contrast, developing CRT as an exclusive research paradigm also

disengages unique forms of oppression emerging in conflation beyond racism. Intersectionality unifies this discursive space of inquiry by reinforcing a coalescing set of principles underlining the standpoint to the investigative binds: (a) visibly showcasing critiques of social structures and power relations (Carbado et al., 2013; Dhamoon, 2011); (b) prioritizing a commitment to social justice, members of marginalized communities as holders of knowledge, and the ontological and epistemological notions held in pluralistic perspectives given to the convergence of multiple overlapping forms of oppression (Carbado et al., 2013; Dhamoon, 2011); (c) utilizing antiessentialist frames to position intersectional narratives as unique lived experiences of meaning-making; and (d) emphasizing the value of intersectional approaches as narrative experience (Bowleg, 2008; Cho et al., 2013; Corlett & Mavin, 2014). Given the frame positioned by an intersectional paradigm, its principles adhere to developing the social justice agenda, which offers a voice that is inherently critical in qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Although qualitative research remains positioned well as a form of developing social justice praxis in a methodological process, utilizing an intersectional paradigm creates a more specific line of inquiry to navigate rationales for informing each step of the methodological development and process.

Intersectionality has taken multiple forms to address the resistance associated with a basis in occupying multiple social identities. As CRT persists with an opposition to race-based oppression and queer theory formulates an opposition to sexual-based, gender-based, and affectional-based forms of oppression, intersectionality initiates a commitment to critically analyze these specific confluences with an assumption that social identities are mutually shaped. Soto (2010), for example, positioned an active

resistance to race-based oppression by noting the gender, sexual, and affectional frameworks indicated within Chican@ literature. As Soto deconstructed assumptions on historical vantage points on race-based oppositional frameworks, critical opposition generates dialogues on the shaping of racially and ethnically based values when they are queered and speak far less to dominant heteronormative and patriarchal structures delivered. Soto's viewpoints are valuable to the intersectional paradigm, given that oppression associated with one social identity cannot be examined in isolation. Similarly, Ahmed (2006) detailed the developing landscape of queering phenomenological frameworks to actively engage social relations embedded in lived experience by expanding phenomenology as an analysis of contextual, temporal, and developmental pathways to objects and space. Ahmed (2006) reconstituted the relationships between lived experience by attending to the belongingness and consciousness of place and status in context. The object, according to Ahmed, defines the possibility of opportunity and freedom for individuals oriented in a particular space. The alignment between Ahmed (2006) and Soto (2010) is the coherent movement and definition of a particular sexuality described in orientations, although their applications extend to reconstructions of the norms around gender identity, sexual identity, and affectional identity. They both significantly highlight that sexuality, in particular, has influenced ideologies from racialized understandings defining identity, norms, and freedom. For example, Ahmed (2006) generated a significant dialogue that the history of racism perpetuates boundaries around the space of desire and sexuality, which then shapes belonging, identification, and freedom in that space. Ahmed (2006) observed a stark reality that other social identities give shape to extensive histories of power, subordination, and visibility, which perpetuate

histories of recursive systemic barriers. In this lens, the mutually shaped understanding of identity changes the view of objects and lived experiences that can arrive into consciousness. More powerful conceptions of Ahmed's (2006) work realizes the beauty of queerness and parallels intersections that contribute to disrupting the norms established by social structures. The representation changes the possibilities of identity politics to negotiate more opportunities of consciousness and freedom, which sociopolitically frees the binds of invisibility and allows for these experiences to come into view.

Paradigm to methodology. Moving from the paradigm to the development of the strategies utilized in the research process, the framing of an intersectional paradigm in addition to the research purpose within this study align with the methodology identified in interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). While intersectionality as a paradigm can implement a multiplicity of methodological approaches (e.g., narrative analysis, thematic analysis), it is flexible as the paradigm governs each component. Synthesizing the research question, research purpose, phenomenon of interest, community of interest, and paradigmatic insights from intersectionality organize collectively to establish IPA as a vehicle viable to informing the methodological process. Given its new production in discursive spaces on qualitative methods (Larkin, Eatough, & Osborn, 2011; Larkin et al., 2006; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith, 2011; Smith et al., 2009), IPA operates under innovative and flexible strategies to capture experiences enriched by intersectional consciousness. IPA's flexibility generates a means to fluidly follow IPA strategies as guidelines while negotiating the value of reaching the interpretation based on the consciousness of a phenomenon. In order to build upon previous conceptual aspects and histories of philosophy rooted in phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994), foundational voices

in the development of IPA (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003) utilized significant influential philosophies to enrich an integrated understanding predicated on phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology, and the "double hermeneutic" (p. 3). Consequently, Smith et al. (2009) drew from several seminal pieces of philosophical underpinnings associated with phenomenology, including Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre as the heart of lived experience and Schleiermacher, Heidegger, and Gadamer as major contributors to hermeneutics. Referring to the utility of IPA philosophy specifically with Merleau-Ponty, there is marked attention to the understanding of the tensions between body and place, which organizes consciousness on the relationships between individuals, lived experience, and context as situated and ever-changing. Unifying with the intersectionality paradigm, IPA also reinforces this potential based on engagement with the philosophical constraints of extracting both the personal (e.g., individual) and political (e.g., social structure) by engaging interpretations on the essence (Murray & Holmes, 2014).

To creatively reach for a deeper sense of reconstructing consciousness of phenomenological experience, IPA stands to bring the insider perspective forward by allowing for the "double hermeneutic" to take place in which the "researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 3). Accessing the experience from the researcher's end accompanies a reality of directly making sense of the participants' consciousness of their experiences while deepening the interpretation and consequent reflexivity as a basis of the methodology. Highlighting the essence of a phenomenon in addition to salient components of life narratives influencing the interpretation on the essence relies on long

interviews to strategically extend the breadth and depth of data often grounded in an ideographic approach. Although IPA scholars would often rely on the utility of one long interview, the strategies are flexible dependent on the decisions aimed at the research questions and purpose, allowing for an intentional flexibility (Smith et al., 2009; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Despite an assumption of IPA methodologists to derive simply from the use of single interviews from participants, I utilized the development of three long semi-structured interviews to attain an expansive landscape of rich, thick data, considering the complexity rooted in intersectionality along with experiences derived from privilege and oppression. This structure follows the lead of Seidman's (2013) model that operates strictly with the three-interview structure to remain inclusive of life narratives, reaching for the essence of the phenomenon, and revolutionizing participants making meaning and making sense of their experiences. Utilizing Seidman's model is an effort to engage iterative encounters with privilege and oppression and align with IPA's idiographic approach to deepen the themes shared individually and collectively to closely examine convergence and divergence of study participants' experiences of privilege and oppression. Additionally, rich, thick data engages the consciousness and discovery of the essence of an experience while realizing the temporal, contextual, and political implications impacting the participants, their lived experiences, and their vantage points. This expanded position refers to the establishment of intersectionality theory as a paradigm, given that recent scholars (Bowleg, 2008; Hancock, 2007a) strategize the unique intention of intersectionality to creatively engage lived experience in addition to disentangling complex interlocking relationships of power. It is the complexity that

requires the involvement and management of rich, thick data to build upon re-engaging lived experience as an iterative process.

Sample and Sites of Research

For this study, I engaged sites of research that utilizes participants from any of the 83 Counselor Education and Supervision PhD and EdD programs that are accredited under the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP). Utilizing CACREP programs as the sites of research derives from the implementation of the 2016 CACREP Standards that address the development and training of graduate counseling students. The standards also extend to Master's and doctoral students, but they instill a benchmark and standardization into the values guiding pedagogy and curriculum development. Drawing from an intimate understanding of the CACREP standards also assists with the implementation of pedagogy and curriculum development for the basis of its diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice domains integrated into priorities for doctoral training programs. More importantly, the Standards (CACREP, 2016) establishes counselors' professional identity utilizing the paradigmatic forces of multiculturalism and social justice, especially through deeply engaging awareness and examination of privilege, biases, and cultural worldviews impacting counseling students.

I utilized a purposive sampling strategy involved with convenience and snowball strategies. Coinciding with my alignment to an intersectionality paradigm and the methodological strategies tied to IPA (Smith et al., 2009), the purposeful nature of engaging the research question and phenomena requires an intentionality as to my decision process in sampling to move forward with engaging the strategies entailed in my

data collection (Coyne, 1997; Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012; Maxwell, 2013; Noy, 2008; Patton, 1990, 2002, 2015; Suri, 2011). Hence, I engaged a convenience sampling strategy by sending to listservs across the counseling profession and snowball strategy as primary strategies to identify key informants to the phenomenon. Selection criteria included the following characteristics: (a) 18 years or older, (b) currently enrolled in a CACREP-accredited doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision, (c) identifies as a male (cisgender, transgender, or non-binary), (d) identifies as a member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of racial/ethnic identity, (e) identifies as a member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of sexual, affectional, or gender identity, and (f) identifies as having, at least, one experience of privilege and, at least, one experience of oppression in the doctoral program.

My attention to sampling strategies involves an understanding on the multiple forms of marginalization this community continues to intersectionally engage historically, which guides my decisions on retrieving access to the sample. Because of the convergence of multiple marginalizations, I am cognizant that attending to access requires an effort to remain constantly reflective on the positionality of stakeholders and the kinds of protections for participants, which resulted in my decision process to gain participants through the process of purposive sampling via listservs. As a result, I initially posted my solicitation for participant recruitment through professional listservs in the counseling profession (e.g., CESNET, Counsgrads, DIVERSE-L, ACA Connect). Since many graduate students often become members of the listservs and have recommendations from faculty to join the listservs, it served one method of directly accessing participants from their site at a larger national level. This method also follows

opportunities to mitigate additional ethical issues layered into the experiences of the doctoral student participants, including difficult relationships with faculty, dual relationships and boundary issues, and self-disclosure of sexual, affectional, and gender identity in the programs. The other method included my contact with department chairs and doctoral program coordinators across 83 Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs accredited by CACREP to solely disseminate my participant recruitment to their listservs and communications to extract doctoral students and alumni without engaging politically bound relationships between faculty and students and a priority on protecting participants from potentially contentious issues within their programs. Utilizing both avenues obtained participants from a variety of outlets, considering that students are not necessarily attached to many open forums along with preparation for barriers from department chairs and doctoral program coordinators who may not disseminate the solicitation for participants.

Data Collection and Procedures

After receiving approval from the institutional review board (IRB) at my institution, I began the process of data collection through a series of sequential steps to utilize multiple avenues of outreach for soliciting participants. Primarily, the basis of the convenience sampling process first guided me to contact a series of professional counseling forums and listservs, including, but not limited to CESNET, Counsgrads, DIVERSE-L, and ACA Connect. This intention served the purpose of broadening the outreach to numerous outlets rather than relying on a few commonly used outlets. In addition, these listservs are often saturated with numerous graduate students, particularly doctoral students, and early career professionals. The contact on each listserv included

the following elements: (a) an invitation email with a brief description of the research study, (b) its purpose, (c) selection criteria for participants, and (d) approval from the institution IRB (with IRB approval number). After the first week of sending a wave of solicitation for participants, I began my process of contacting department chairs and doctoral program coordinators from each counselor education doctoral program with personal emails. Additionally, I contacted directors and administrators overseeing LGBT Resource Centers if the institution housing the doctoral program offers these services to students. Each department chair, doctoral program coordinator, and LGBTQ+ resource center director received a personal email with the invitation using the same elements for consistency: (a) an invitation email with a brief description of the research study, (b) its purpose, (c) selection criteria for participants, (d) approval from the institution IRB (with IRB approval number). I resent the invitation letters through email to each professional counseling listserv with two more posts, allowing for at least two weeks to pass before a new post is set.

In the invitation email, I invited potential participants to contact me through email. Upon initial contact from a potential participant, I provided participants with (a) a copy of the informed consent approved by the IRB and (b) demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire had the following elements: (a) first name; (b) age; (c) gender identity; (d) racial/ethnic identity; (e) sexual/affectional identity; (f) highest degree attained; (g) region (e.g., Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision [SACES]); (h) current semester of doctoral study; (i) current phase of doctoral study; (j) email address; and (k) pseudonym to use. Item (g) had five options to select to designate region as classified by the Association for Counselor Education and

Supervision regions: (a) Southern, (b) North Atlantic Region, (c) North Central, (d) Rocky Mountain, and (e) Western. Item (i) describing current phase of doctoral study listed the following options for participants to select: (a) first year of study; (b) pre-comprehensive exams; (c) post-comprehensive exams; pre-dissertation; and (d) working on/in progress with dissertation. Participants only needed to complete the demographic questionnaire once for the study before the first interview began. I instructed participants upon the initial contact that I will be able to schedule the first interview time once I receive a completed and signed informed consent form in addition to a completed demographic questionnaire. Once I received the completed informed consent and demographic questionnaire, I sent the packet of interview protocols as part of the three-series interview and schedule the first interview with the participant. Upon completion of the study, I provided a $40 gift card of their choice (i.e., Target, Starbucks, or Amazon) to participants for compensation.

The interview modality. Face-to-face interviews arguably offer an intimate understanding and relational connection between researchers and participants, which establishes an ideal component for data collection in the event of utilization of long interviews. In contrast, every qualitative study cannot follow the conduction of face-to-face interviews due to the purpose and strategies uniquely associated with the study. In the context of this study, the convenience sampling approach broadened my ability to engage participants that are not necessarily representative of one type of intersection nor one specific region of the United States of America, particularly when gaining flexibility to examine the convergence and divergence of lived experiences are an intentional component layered into the research process. The other point of caution is the sensitive

nature of topics associated with the study, which may engage difficult experiences from the past and the present. This point allows me to remain cautious of the setting in which the interviews could take place, especially if interviews would take place in public settings. Consequently, I utilized Skype interviews as the major tool for this study, but I offered participants the option of participating in face-to-face interviews within the radius of the metropolitan areas of the District of Columbia, including northern Virginia, Baltimore, and southern Maryland, in private settings with limited distractions.

Observations of Skype interviews in qualitative research settings have extended the utility of video conferencing for flexibility and potential in forms of data collection. Specifically, Skype interviews in qualitative research demonstrate pragmatic utility for budgeting time and financial boundaries around the research design (Janghorban, Roudsari, & Taghipour, 2014). The increased exponential growth of technology also offers extensive variety in tools to engage in Skype interviews for the data collection process, including the use of smart phones, tablets, and computers in conjunction with the internet (Moylan, Derr, & Lindhorst, 2015). Skype interviews have also offered capabilities of intentionally engaging participants in private spaces that carry limited distractions and increased comfort levels for reflection, which has significant utility for the current project with the nature of sensitive topics (Oates, 2015; Peters & Halcomb, 2015). Given that multiple researchers have bolstered efforts to operationalization Skype interviews as techniques in qualitative research, recent guidelines continue to support its implementation and efficacy to extend the utility and maintain the integrity of researcher-participant interactions and relationships (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Peters & Halcomb, 2015; Hanna, 2012; Moylan et al., 2015; Oates, 2015; Seitz, 2016). Skype interviews

remain an innovative tool to engage much more intimately with participants, especially in the presence of nonverbal cues, interaction, dialogue, and language that moves beyond verbal communication.

The interview process. After potential participants contacted me through email, I forwarded qualifying participants a packet of information to offer additional context for their participation in the study through email. During this time, I provided the informed consent approved by IRB and the demographic questionnaire. Upon receiving the completed informed consent and demographic questionnaire, I provided a packet of information with access to the interview protocols and their subsequent order. I intended for this step to provide the entire context of the study for their continued participation with a notice that they can withdraw from the study at any time. Within the contact over email, I also determined a time that is best for the schedule of the participant, provided the option of Skype or face-to-face interviews dependent on the location, and provided any answers to questions they may have about the study. Before completing the schedule for the first interview, I also checked with participants on questions about the documents and completion of the demographic form.

Upon beginning the first interview, I relayed information about the informed consent and introduce myself as the researcher, including some salient pieces of my current professional setting. Orienting the participant to the research study, I provided a brief overview on the structure of the study to include the most prominent pieces, including the sequential order of the semi-structured interviews. Additionally, I read the informed consent with the participant and ask for verbal consent on the recording. In essence, I delivered the structure as semi-structured interview #1 (Appendix B), semi-

structured interview #2 (Appendix C), and semi-structured interview #3 (Appendix D). Another significant piece that I discussed upon the first interview is the scheduling of member checks after each semi-structured interview before proceeding to the next interview in data collection. The member checking is intended to ensure that the participant agrees with the transcription of their statements before the researcher moves forward with coding and analyzing the data. Separate times were scheduled for member checking as part of the data collection to provide participants a dialogic space regarding confirmation of their statements. Participants received the opportunity to review their own interview transcripts. The separate times took place after the completion of a semi-structured interview. Upon each semi-structured interview, I reiterated to participants that the interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed. Interviews were saved on an encrypted external drive to attend to security of the data and protection of the participants. Since I recorded interviews with two devices (i.e., a traditional audio recorder and an iPhone), it was imperative for me to transfer the information to the external drive and destroy the audio data from the devices upon transfer. After I confirmed all errors in the transcription process, I destroyed the audio recordings. After I collected and analyze all the data respective to each participant, I requested the last member-check meeting to conduct member checking, to confirm the plan for compensation, and to discuss notes emerging from potential themes associated with their data and participation in the study.

Development of semi-structured interviews. The implementation of interpretative phenomenological analysis requires philosophical underpinnings from hermeneutics that involve specific methods of data collection to attend to both the

interpretations of the participants and the researcher. Phenomenological designs strive to engage participants with their experiences in an iterative fashion with building upon the interactive relationship between participants and experience (Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012; Maxwell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994; Van Manen, 2014). Constructing the design to meet principles attached to IPA and intersectionality, procedures to collect data can include additional usage of other methods to gain access to more intimate understanding on the interpretation of a phenomenon. Phenomenological scholars align with strategies that focus on revealing the essence of a phenomenon in the research process (Moustakas, 1994; Van Manen, 1990, 2014). Bridging from this philosophy, interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith et al., 2009) wrestles with these tensions by building on the intimacy among participants and the data and the subsequent consciousness and interpretation through meaning-making. This positioning refers to the methods through which participants make sense of their lived experiences, but more importantly, enriches the relationship in which researchers attempt to make sense of the participants' relationships with their lived experiences. This interpretation aligns participants with revisiting complex experiences in their lives by retrieving reference points from other portions of their life narratives. Consequently, the interviews in its sequential order allow for the fluidity of participants to revisit their narratives as an iterative process.

Summarizing the combination of interviews, the order was intended to process as bridges from interview to interview as reflected in the ordering of the appendices (Appendix B to D) reflective of the Seidman (2013) three-series interview structure. Utilizing multiple reference points enriched by more than a single interview also expands

the data to engage far more extensive and deepened reflections in language. As phenomenological methods often establish, the main tool of research is long interviews (Moustakas, 1994; Van Manen, 1990; Seidman, 2013). Following Seidman's (2013) model as a launching point, I utilized interviews approximately around 90 minutes per semi-structured interview to maintain the integrity of the structure of the research process and content associated with each interview.

Although focus groups have become a popular data source (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013; Seidman, 2013; Smith et al., 2009) and a plausible avenue of triangulating data, I chose not to use focus groups for this study. There is extensive utility in engaging focus groups as a portion of data collection, but considering the values associated with my axiology particularly in attention to social justice, social positioning, and power differentials, I was cautious about protecting the safety of my participants in addition to mitigating risks associated with disclosure. These axiological constraints align me with the values often associated with critical paradigms to focus on ethics and privilege of the researcher. Thus, I intended to protect the disclosure of my participants in the plausibility of focus groups, especially because I, as the researcher, cannot assume all my participants are out in relation to their sexual, affectional, and gender identity. Utilizing focus groups with the potential of outing my participants through a Skype focus group would increase the risk of potentially causing harm and privileging the researcher's assumptions, which acts counterintuitively to the values associated with critical paradigms.

Data Analysis

Analyzing data often coincides with the process of data collection as a simultaneous, yet distinct process as opposed to a mutually exclusive process (Hays & Singh, 2012; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Smith et al., 2009). Otherwise, the major pitfall of treating both processes as separate in chunks of time can result in problematic burnout and misinterpretation of the data, which necessitates an ongoing process of data analysis during the process of data collection (Miles et al., 2014). Since this dissertation study focuses on strategies employed by the body of research and literature on interpretative phenomenological analysis and a sequential order of data collection strategies, it is pertinent to maintain an ongoing process of data analysis during the data collection efforts. According to Smith et al. (2009), analysis in IPA often takes the form of an "iterative and inductive cycle" (p. 79). Synthesizing the strategies from IPA would also elicit the flexibility tied to negotiating specific strict strategies frequently established in common uses of qualitative research. Hence, IPA chooses not to remain prescriptive in its method of data analysis, but prioritizes "a set of common processes (e.g., moving from the particular to the shared, and from the descriptive to the interpretative) and principles (e.g., a commitment to an understanding of the participant's point of view, and a psychological focus on personal meaning-making in particular contexts, which are applied flexibly, according to the analytic task" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 79). IPA holds the principles and philosophical tensions to draw significant value in the development of a data analysis process. In addition, it is pertinent to reinforce the fact that IPA stands as an idiographic approach, giving credence to individual interpretations in addition to shared meaning. This idiographic approach engages an approach to the phenomenon as a single interpretation (i.e., narrative derived from single participant in

phenomenon to deliver divergence) and multiple interpretations (i.e., narratives grouped thematically to reflect convergence and divergence) within the community of interest. Despite its flexibility, IPA largely carries parallels to strategies and processes often established in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012; Maxwell, 2013; Miles et al., 2014; Moustakas, 1994; Saldaña, 2016; Van Manen, 1990) with the intentionality utilized to adhere to the IPA principles. In order to make sense of the data, I included the following overarching categorical steps as part of my data analysis process: (a) Preparation and Organization of the Data; (b) Reviewing the Data; (c) Coding in First Cycle; (d) Coding in Second Cycle; (e) Creating Emergent Themes and Patterns for Individual Narratives; (f) Searching for Patterns across Themes and Cases; (g) Displaying the Data; (h) Engaging Interpretations through Analytic Memoing; (i) Alternative Understandings and Conclusions; and (j) Developing and Writing the Report.

One of the first major steps early in the data analysis process begins with the preparation and organization of the data often detailed through the simultaneous guidelines and steps from data collection. After interviewing and recording the audio portions of interviews with participants, the data was stored and moved forward to the transcription process. During transcription, each interview was transcribed verbatim as a typed Microsoft Word document, which is necessary to the engagement of IPA principles (Smith et al., 2009). Additionally, all three sets of semi-structured interviews per participant were transcribed through a third-party transcription service. Each piece of data was de-identified with a pseudonym in the study. After receiving the transcription from the third-party service, I reviewed the full transcript with listening to the full audio recording to confirm for any errors. Once I confirmed any errors and confirmed the

transcription, I deleted the audio recording. Upon completion and transcription of each interview, I stored the Microsoft Word document organized according to folders in a secure encrypted external drive with password protection. Analytic memoing is a vital component at each stage of the research process to detail reflections, insights, and interpretations of the researcher in relation to the multiple forms of data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Miles et al., 2014). Upon the completion of the interview recording and transcription, I produced brief memos to supplement my reflections and orient my reflexivity to attend to nuanced understandings of the data sources and participants (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016). All memos were organized into the bridling journal. More in-depth analytic memos took place after the second cycle of coding.

After the organization of information from each data source, I participated in the next step of the data analysis process, which refers to review and immersion of the data. This process allowed me as the researcher to increase my familiarity with the participants, their narratives, and the sources of data provided throughout the process of the study. Given the marked nuances and dimensions in participants' verbal communication, language, feelings, behaviors, worldviews, and beliefs, it is pertinent to engage in multiple readings of the data source and material to examine distinctions that arise with each reading of the textual insights (Seidman, 2013; Smith et al., 2009). IPA principles call for this strategy to continue the pathway as a researcher in an iterative process of "making sense" of the data from the participants attempting to make sense of their experiences. As IPA (Smith et al., 2009) prioritizes "immersing oneself in the data" (p. 82), I read the entire transcript of the interview initially in its entirety without placing

any comments or notes. After the initial reading, I began a line-by-line reading. After this second reading, I reviewed the transcript with another line-by-line reading and including jotting as part of this process to initiate comments, notes, or highlights on the words, language, and margins of the transcript. Jotting is a tool with extensive utility to bridge the reflections from the data into awareness for the researcher, further iterations of data collection, and attending to holistic frames upon moving into the coding process (Miles et al., 2014). Although jotting may not necessarily integrate with analytic memos, jotting can still develop as an instrumental part of the process that informs future steps and directions in the research process in addition to enhancing the depth of the analytic memos and meaningful units of analysis when reviewing data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Smith et al. 2009). Other sources also supplement this idea as an integral tool in the readings of data (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Miles et al., 2014; Seidman, 2013; Smith et al., 2009).

After immersion within the data, the next steps I took in my process of data analysis focus on coding strategies as a first-order and second-order process. Upon receiving the data from my participants, I immediately engaged the first cycle of coding (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016) after the initial readings and re-readings with jotting of notes and comments. The first cycle primarily aimed to organize data into chunks to align with referring to meaningful units of analysis as a product in the research. This assignment of coding also comprehends data by reducing it to meaningful units of analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) to later establish themes and patterns emerging from the data. The major basis of the paradigmatic tenets guiding this study builds a foundation for strategies associated with both the first cycle of coding and

the second cycle of coding to align emergent themes. Taking the values associated with intersectionality focused on social justice, positionality, and privilege, especially privilege of the researcher, it was important for me as the researcher to properly engage the initial coding process to center the words and language of the participants primarily through in vivo and narrative coding as they share their narratives (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2009). The attention to this relationship is even more apparent due to my status as an insider researcher with the community of interest (Chavez, 2008; Greene, 2014; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013).

As a result, the first cycle of coding operated primarily in alignment with a combination of in vivo coding and narrative coding (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016). Although open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) or initial coding (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016) in other schools of thought often take precedent as an established form of coding strategies since the coding process is often referent to the first cycle of coding, my plan was to integrate my approach with positionality into this coding strategy. With my relationships with my specific identities (e.g., queer, person of color, male) and my participants, my goal in alignment with the critically-informed components of the paradigm is to position the experiences they share as valuable forms of knowledge, where truth is situated in the experiences emerging from marginalized and oppressed communities. The words and language the participants use to capture the essence of their experiences demonstrate value, especially when social structures historically convey otherwise. This approach not only identified a bottom-up approach, where the words and language of participants give rise to the codes, but it also reinforced the purpose of in vivo coding. The additional operational utility of engaging

the data in its first cycle of coding includes narrative coding given the recursive and iterative process attached to the hermeneutic understanding of a phenomenon. Since engaging an understanding of the data arranges multiple long interviews in the context of interpretations, utilizing narrative coding approaches meaningful units of analysis as part of larger stories. In the context of this study and the paradigm, narrative coding also referred much more creatively to issues of culture, context, and social structures to identify the developmental nature of culture and context situating members of marginalized communities (Saldaña, 2016). After each first cycle of coding, I completed a brief notation or memo to include in my bridling journal and to attend to my reflections from the basis of reviewing the data, assigning codes, and questioning my decisions and motives for particular codes.

The intention of the second cycle of coding acts as a second-order process to organize the data with the possibilities of developing emerging themes and patterns from the data. My primary strategy to organize the second cycle of coding engaged pattern coding (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016) to elicit themes, patterns, explanations, amplification of theories, and understanding of intimate relationships between participants and their experiences. As indicated by Miles et al. (2014), "pattern codes can emerge from repeatedly observed behaviors, actions, norms, routines, and relationships; local meanings and explanations; commonsense explanations and more conceptual ones; inferential clusters and 'metaphorical' ones; and single-case and cross-case observations" (p. 88). The major benefit of engaging with pattern coding is the alignment with IPA's intention to engage emergent themes, especially in relation to the convergence and divergence of experiences within the sample. Moving to the second cycle of coding

builds upon the potential for within-case analysis and cross-case analysis helpful to understanding the convergence and divergence across multiple interpretations on a phenomenon. Upon completion of the second cycle of coding, I also prepared in-depth analytic memos to reflect on my decisions and comprehension of the interpretations emerging from the patterns within the data. After the development of coding through reviewing the data, I kept an ongoing codebook of the patterns codes that I fluidly revised upon the iterations of readings and coding with the data in addition to analytic memoing.

As part of the next step in the data analysis, I organized the emergent themes and patterns from the pattern coding first as associated with each participant. Since there are multiple sources of data in the form of many interviews included for each participant, I created a table to highlight the following: (a) the emergent theme or pattern and (b) words as examples to capture the theme. After organizing the sub-themes (second-cycle codes) into this table, I reorganized the themes to coincide with a table for participants as emerging themes cut across their interpretative statements and passages in the data. Multiple IPA pioneers and researchers (Smith et al., 2009) often call attention to these emerging themes as "super-ordinate themes" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 97) to describe connections across narratives from each participant. Hence, I produced a table detailing superordinate themes to focus on overarching themes that could represent the convergence and divergence among participants.

To develop the continued nuances in alternative interpretations from the researcher to the data, there were a series of strategies employed to continue enhancing meaning-making outside of the scope of the developed themes. The first strategy I employed is the involvement of an interpretive community to audit my analysis process.

To invite the members as part of this interpretive community, the guidelines for this interpretive community included two other members external to the study that have received training and coursework in critical methodologies and qualitative research. To protect the information of the participants, the interpretive community did not have access to any identifying information. The only information the interpretive community gained access to are the data collection tools and information with only disclosure of the pseudonym. The interpretive community reviewed an overview of the study, the data collection tools, and pieces of the data collected from participants provided by the researcher to familiarize with the research process entailed in this study and provide potential insight in a dialogical manner with meetings with the researcher. A major priority of the interpretive community is to ensure that the themes provided align with both the philosophy guiding the methodology, attention to the participants' voices on their experiences and interpretations, and development of insights focused on the phenomenon, research questions, and research purpose. I met with the interpretive community to share pieces of the data and discuss my relationship with the data and the participants. The second strategy involved reflections from the analytic memos, including an iterative understanding of reflexivity and a critical examination of observations detailed in the memos. Since I added to my bridling journal after (a) the completion of the review of each transcript, (b) the completion of the first cycle of coding for each transcript, and (c) the completion of the second cycle of coding for each transcript. Utilizing these intervals to support bridling journals in conjunction with analytic memoing after the second cycle of coding challenged me as the researcher to

engage with the depth of my comprehension, perspective, and interpretation among the participants' interpretations on their narratives delivered in the transcriptions.

Writing and representing the report of the findings stands as an instrumental step in the data analysis process due to its filter from the interpretation of the researcher. Following Smith et al.'s (2009) model and an evaluative standpoint from Smith (2011) on the quality of developing a strong IPA research study, the structure of developing a report on the findings highlight each participant as a case to represent the idiographic approach explained in IPA. Observing this strategy from IPA necessitates the detailing of participants their own narrative established with their own themes. I subsequently provided the accounts, themes, and interpretations of the following participants involved in my study under their pseudonym. As each participant carries their own section under each theme and sub-theme, I structured the writing with both illustrations of superordinate themes and followed with specific expanded excerpts from their data. All participants were reflected across each superordinate theme in depth. Although the tables were transformed into narratives of their sections, the structure of the section concomitantly integrated the detailed themes, excerpts to amplify the theme, and insights on interpretations from the researcher. The convergence and divergence of themes across the participants' interpretations became a major focus of the detailed description of the findings. Specifically, I conveyed the structure in the sequential order of highlighting the theme, the excerpts from participants that optimally communicate the theme, and insights from the researcher's interpretation.

In developing and writing the report, I also considered the work of several scholars exploring systemic issues. (Fine, 1994. 2006; Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong;

2003; Humphrey, 2007; Wagle & Cantaffa, 2008; Weis & Fine, 2012) as part of the values inherent in the intersectionality paradigm. Channeling this scholarship builds upon underscoring my role as the researcher and taking an active approach that critically examines my relationships among me, the participants, and the institutional contexts. While intersectionality thrives on its basis for critiquing problematic social structures and institutions and enacting a call to action for social change (Hancock, 2007a; Hankivsky et al., 2010), participants from marginalized communities are caught in a network of sociopolitical systems that underscore the vulnerabilities attached to requesting disclosure of participants' narratives. This idea resonates with application in this study concerning marginalized doctoral students who manage to navigate the painstaking political complexities of higher education and, more specifically, doctoral education (Truong & Museus, 2012; Truong et al., 2016). Reflecting on the work of Fine et al. (2003), I integrated multiple considerations as I constructed the writing of the report: (a) aligning with IPA to identify convergence and divergence; (b) accounting for discriminant cases against researcher positioning and bias, although relevant to the research question; and (c) the negotiation of "great stories" (p. 184) and "good story" (p. 185) to counterbalance the tensions of illuminating the "romanticized" view of narratives as actors against social injustice while prioritizing an importance on the "mundane" (p. 187) everyday stories of the participants. This particular inclusion of the "mundane" (p. 187) resists the problem displayed through the lens of researcher bias, which could paint illustrations of participants' narratives exclusively through contentious points. Aligning with the Fine et al. (2003) insights, it is important to wrestle with the perception of convergence as a priority, given that convergence may not necessarily be attainable in the construction of a

report from the data. This argument synthesizes with IPA's informative prioritization on critically examining both convergence and divergence to deepen the variations among individual participants, considering the temporal, contextual, and political influences on the lives of participants. Additionally, Fine and colleagues' (2003) point on constantly pushing for reflexivities meshes with IPA's unique philosophical development on the double hermeneutic, where researchers are making sense of the participants making sense of their experiences. Retrieving from participants' voices, writing the report also entails a fit between stories that ultimately describe the interplay between resilience and oppression in juxtaposition with intersectionality's resistance to a strict dichotomy. To synthetically weave elements from Fine (1994), Fine et al. (2003), and Weis and Fine (2012) specifically in light of both intersectionality and IPA, it is imperative to explicate the data in such a way that reifies the experiences of participants; grapples with the tensions interwoven into the relationship between the researcher and researched; documents systemic issues; and exposes structural issues in the relationship among participants, communities, and institutions. As Fine et al. (2003) observed, careful attention must be given to the overarching messages demonstrated about marginalized groups in writing the report, considering the tenuous perceptions social structures have historically placed on marginalized groups and the possibilities of the researcher reproducing marginalization and oppression through the researcher's safety and privilege.

Validity, Reliability, and Transferability

The challenge of creating and synthesizing a qualitative project lies in its issues of contrast with previously established forms of research often in the positivist and postpositivist paradigms and epistemologies (Creswell, 2013; Van Manen, 2014). Van

Manen (2014) supplemented this perspective by alluding to the unique applications of design integrated into the facets of a given qualitative project: "Qualitative research is not well-served by validation schemes that are naively applied across various incommensurable methodologies" (p. 347). Given the phenomenological piece attached to this study, validation also targets the essence of the phenomenon in such a manner that does not obfuscate lived experience completely with other forms of data irrelevant to aiming at experience. Validation also focuses on the embedded components of the research questions in the lens of ensuring research questions attach to lived experience. Extending from phenomenological understanding, IPA (Smith et al., 2009) unifies this concept by employing the hermeneutic associated with phenomenological understanding. Smith et al. (2009) noted the predominant viewpoint that negotiates two goals of engaging lived experience by uncovering the essence while revisiting lived experience with interpretation.

Saturating validity for this particular study stems from strategies detailed by Creswell (2013). "Prolonged engagement and persistent observation" (Creswell, 2013, p. 250) operates on the notion that building trust and gaining access to clarify decisions in the study carry extensive importance in truly deepening understands of a given phenomenon. My immersion in the study through numerous strategies, including multiple interactions and source-building with the participants and the data, fortifies this approach. The number of data collection tools and increased interaction beyond a simple single interview refer to a stronger immersion as part of this experience. Additionally, engaging reflexivity in the lens of bridling and numerous analytic memos reify the development of prolonged engagement with the data. I also engaged with "triangulation"

by "multiple and different sources methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence" (Creswell, 2013, p. 251). Of particular importance to my study is the informative placement and organization of data based on the collection tools. Wrestling with the intersections of tense, vulnerable constructs and their subsequent complexity calls for the construction of multiple methods of data collection, including three long semi-structured interviews, to expand data more from simply verbal interactions and understandings.

Creswell (2013) and Van Manen (2014) often pointed to the evaluation of validity in phenomenologically-based research to engage human experience much more fully and ensure that the representation often collected in the data truly amplifies the voices of the participants and the phenomenon. Two particular questions that build on this framework refer to the assurance that (a) there is a clear phenomenon to study and (b) there is a deepened understanding of phenomenological philosophy detailed in the study description. Other formative processes to evaluate validity in this study rely on questions of the researcher sharing intimate reflections and biases influencing the decision-making in the study.

An often-positioned threat to validity is the identification of researcher bias (Maxwell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), which adds particular concern in the interaction between researchers and the phenomenon of interest. While IPA extends the utility and flexibility for actively engaging researcher bias, I employed strategies that seek to mitigate researcher bias as an iterative process as opposed to a single matter of experience or action. Although bracketing is a frequently utilized form of challenging researcher bias by relaying positionality and assumptions early in a qualitative research

project, bracketing does not offer substantive material to challenge my positionality in relation to the data, especially at the root of my positioning as an insider researcher. This direction also leads to the implementation of member checking as another form of validation to ensure the transcription fits their voice and engagement with the phenomenon. I engaged member checking upon the transcription of each interview by scheduling additional brief meetings with the participants to ensure there is a dialogue in the member checking process. With an additional layer of member checking after the last interview, I also scheduled the last brief meeting with the participant to discuss some of the emergent themes from their participation and the themes across the convergence of the project. This action positions the participant as a collaborator, but also allows them to influence alternative understandings from the part of the researcher.

Engaging with this research process also necessitates the development of rich, thick data as a form of validation in the data analysis steps (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). This information is built upon rich, thick data shared in identifying meaningful units of analysis and the expansion of multiple sources and information retrieved in the data collection steps. In addition, qualitative inquiry necessitates this layer of rich, thick data to amplify the interpretation associated with themes. The construction of rich, thick data must also coincide with the writing of the report, where the representation of themes is heavily supplemented through excerpts, language, and perspectives directly from the participants. The data does not necessarily appear in extremely small chunks, but rather, extended accounts that add a nuanced understanding to expand and enrich the meaning of the particular theme.

An additional strategy I employed in my study is the use of an interpretive community consisting of two individuals well-versed in qualitative research and critical methodologies (Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012). This interpretive community maintains a position outside of the study, which could certainly mitigate the possibility of enmeshment with the data. To gain more credibility in the audit process, I shared pieces of the data with the interpretive community to review my data, interpretations, and conclusions to ensure that particular biases are properly counteracted in the implementation of the data analysis process. I requested the interpretive community to review pieces of my data and analysis process. They had no access to identifying information of the participants, but had the ability to view pseudonyms attached to the participants' individual data. This perspective is also supported by Smith et al. (2009), although their implementation of supervision on a research project maintains flexibility with either utilizing supervision, peer debriefing and review, or auditors to engage in a review of the data analysis.

Phenomenologically-based research often resists the normative aspects of reliability instilled in the rigor often placed across other qualitative traditions (e.g., basic interpretive, grounded theory) that speak far more to conceptualizing data in the development of quantitative understanding (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Smith et al., 2009; Van Manen, 2014). The challenge is predicated on the uniquely designed strategies to reify the essence of the phenomenon and address philosophical concerns often attached to gathering accounts of lived experience. The information stemming from the data also serves as a reflection of critical paradigms in which the participants' voices are amplified and not necessarily reduced by paralleling strategies surreptitiously across qualitative

traditions and forms of rigor perpetuated by quantitative traditions. Arguably, attaining consistency in the data is also a result of other strategies utilized to address threats of validity in qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The triangulation of methods accessed a repeated form of interaction and engagement with participants to increase the voice reflected by participants in the data. In addition, developing a constant attention to reflexivity through the researcher conducting analytic memos and including sections of reflexivity written into the analytic memos allows for the pieces to ensure the data appears consistent in the analysis and the researcher's decisions and approaches. Keeping an organized document of analytic memos are valuable to addressing issues of reliability, especially in this study predicated on an interpretative phenomenological analysis. This organization of the analytic memos allows for the development of an audit trail, which "describes in detail how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 252). When an auditor is able to reflect on the decisions and process the researcher encountered, this process can demonstrate an increased portrayal of the level of inquiry and alterations in decision throughout the entire data analysis process.

An important aspect of conclusions stemming from the data analysis process addresses concerns of transferability, which stands akin to quantitative traditions' use of generalizability in their reach for rigor. Transferability stands as a more consistently applicable use of generalizability in qualitative research to note the ramifications of the applicability emerging from the data. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) observe the "reader or user generalizability" as "leaving the extent to which a study's findings apply to other situations up to the people in those situations" (p. 256). Important to the application in

this study, the critical values utilized in the intersectional paradigm form the basis of an understanding that is transformative for the researcher, the participants, the audience of this study, and the context or system. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) recommend the extension of rich, thick data as an important factor in expanding the value for transferability. The involvement of multiple data collection tools along with the representation of data in the findings provide significant variation to necessitate critical thinking and maximizing applicability from this study.

Reflexivity

As Guba and Lincoln (1994) predominantly situate the research process in line with critical inquiry, there is an engaged emphasis with the process of reflexivity to consider. Relevantly, this process has carried the investigation of this phenomenon from its inception, which negotiates values, worldviews, and social location as influential constructs underscoring my relationship with the research (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Hays & Singh, 2012; Hays & Wood, 2011). Based on the intersectional paradigm layered with its own critical tenets, I argue that reflexivity is an intimate relationship with investigations across a variety of methodological designs, but holds even more significance for the development of rigor in qualitative research and alignment with a critically-informed paradigm. Considering Guba and Lincoln's (1994) description on research paradigms, I align specifically with the notion of resocialization of the researcher. This reality brings forth the positionality that research brings a relational, two-fold process of transforming the lives of the participants while transforming the lives of the researchers. Malterud (2001) identified an additional description on the importance of reflexivity: "A researcher's background and position will affect what they

choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions" (p. 483-484). Through the work of multiple scholars layering the synonymic, yet differing implementations of reflection and reflexivity (Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013; Fine, 1994, 2006; Weis & Fine, 2012), I also refine my lens on the role of researcher and reflexivity by interrogating my own relationships with my participants and the space (i.e., institutions) and critiquing my stake in these relationships as I co-construct the narratives with my participants in representing the data. Considering this avenue, reflexivity as informed by bridling (Dahlberg, 2006; Vagle, 2009; Vagle, Hughes, & Durbin, 2009), the hyphen (Fine, 1994), and multiple critical scholars dialoguing on the hyphens (Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013; Fine, 2006; Fine et al., 2003; Humphrey, 2007; Wagle & Cantaffa, 2008; Weis & Fine, 2012) activates the persistent engagement with the participants, the data, and the relationships highlighting inhabited spaces between researcher and researched. As a result, reflexivity, as I implement it in this study, engages an active process that cannot simply remove biases and values prior to my involvement with the study. On the contrary, reflexivity unsettles my relationship with participants' experiences by interrogating the insider-outsider lens; safety and objectivity as the researcher; and political engagement in altering oppressive social structures (Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013; Fine et al., 2003). To explicate reflexivity in this context, I must engage the political complexities laden within participants' experiences, yet provide careful attention to the ways I manage my own agenda and safety with interpreting and disseminating messages from the data.

Otherwise, refraining from engaging this relationship would reinforce the status and action of othering while affecting the safety of participants (Fine et al., 2003).

Thus, my study formed an increasingly detailed process of reflexivity to engage intimately with a process of bridling and insider perspective, given my own identification as a queer man of color with the population of interest. In order to engage with this reflexive process, I considered the process of bridling through memos reflected in a reflexive journal that call my positionality into question about observations with the methodological process. This strategy entails a direct process with identifying specific relationships with the research at hand, but more explicitly, Vagle (2009) noted the second-order process of critically analyzing the relationships among researcher, participants, narratives, and positionality. As a variety of qualitative scholars (Dahlberg, 2006; Vagle, 2009; Vagle, Hughes, & Durbin, 2009) comment philosophically on the relationships that reinforce the meaning of positionality and relationship with the research. Primarily, the overarching critique examines the reality that researchers are not fully removed from the constraints of the study and research process. In fact, the notion is that they are situated in a constantly moving relationship that changes temporally and contextually from inception to conclusion (Vagle, 2009). The interaction of bridling offers the ability to wrestle with the tensions of the research process and the phenomena of interest. More importantly, bridling emerges as an iteratively reflexive process that refers to an active engagement of the phenomena as opposed to a passive engagement. It is an active and intentional commitment to deconstruct and reconsider assumptions based on the interpretation of the research. The other critique on preconceived notions of other forms of reflexivity refers to the limited expanse by simply achieving a stopping point

when relaying assumptions (Vagle et al., 2009). Bridling asserts that researchers cannot simply fully remove themselves from the phenomenon. As part of the construction of reflexivity and data analysis, I engaged specifically in disseminating a reflexivity statement within the writing process and the interviews shared with my participants, the reflexivity journal to detail my formed relationships with the processes of the study, positionality, and participants, and the recursive memoing necessary to examine the process of data analysis.

Reflexivity Statement

As the researcher, I embarked on a journey of iterative processes with negotiating the tenets grounded in intersectionality, my own narrative of intersectionality, and the consciousness associated with my positionality in addition to the complex, simultaneous interplay of privilege and oppression. There are several facets in my own history of narratives that touch upon my own situated identities realized in contextual, temporal, developmental, and political perspectives. I share the confluence of my social identities and expand on pivotal experiences associated with the consciousness of privilege and oppression within my experience of curriculum and pedagogy. I identify as a queer person of color, a second-generation, Asian American, able-bodied, cisgender male. I also identify as a pluralistic Catholic with more priority on spiritual meaning-making than religious doctrine. In dialogues on social class, I grew up as the child of two immigrants in the southwest region of the United States with a middle-class background with access to education and opportunities.

I speak as an insider to the phenomenon of interest, as I critically analyze my own experiences of oppression and privilege through my own lens as a queer man of color.

As an insider researcher, I am extremely cautious about privileging my narrative over the narratives of other participants and the communities involved in my identities. The insider perspective I bring to this phenomenon arrives with its own intersections, primarily as I recall my experiences with privilege and oppression in nuanced, distinct manners. However, it is this distinct nature that allowed me to process a consciousness around simultaneously carrying both privilege and oppression in an intersectional manner. I engaged this insider perspective in a variety of methods, primarily through requesting another scholar trained in qualitative methods to interview me with the same questions positioned in my study.

Detailing experiences of oppression engages specific insights from my life narrative to include as part of my own critical reflexivity and, thus, critiques on the social structures. There are significant experiences of oppression that underscore the potential nature of bias in the study along with the intimate relationship with the phenomenon. I am a doctoral candidate in the Counseling PhD program at a large private institution in the mid-Atlantic, bordering on northern east coast of the United States of America and the South. I have also received my Master's degree of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from the same department, which has given me a history with the department for more than five years in Master's-level and doctoral-level CACREP programs. I am a National Certified Counselor (NCC) with a priority to advocate professionally for the counseling profession. I am also a leader in the counseling profession as a voting member of several professional counseling associations, task forces, and committees, especially positions that amplify LGBT issues in counseling, diversity, and social justice.

I also take a deep interest to the area of multiculturalism and social justice, as my burgeoning scholarship has launched an area of research for which I hope to expand my contributions. Given this growing level of scholarship, I have brought issues of diversity to the forefront as part of my leadership, service to the university, service to the profession, counselor education, supervision, and research. I am committed to expanding the knowledge base on multiculturalism and social justice, dismantling oppressive social structures, increasing an activist scholarly agenda, and mainstreaming intersectionality. My training across the Master's and doctoral programs has reached particularly for this area as increased attention to deepen my understanding of culture, social identity, and social justice.

I also explicitly came out early in my doctoral program by identifying as a member of the LGBTQ+ communities, gay, and queer. In reflecting on this experience, the influencing factor was that my sexuality was often racialized. It was not a norm to be queer in the worldviews and values of racial/ethnic identities that emerge predominantly as patriarchal, hegemonic, heteronormative, and masculine, which led to many years of initial silence about my sexual and affectional identity. I was a product of socialization since my family and communities rarely discussed non-heteronormative sexual identities. If the identities were discussed, they were positioned as negative. This issue was transposed with the reality that no faculty members were explicitly out in my department, and none had explicit discussions on the construction of sexual, affectional, and gender identities, which led me to remain cautious about my safety, representation, and advocacy in the program. This experience led me to wonder whether multiculturalism and social

justice could expand validly beyond race and ethnicity or if multiculturalism and social justice were only available for certain parts of my identities.

There were two significant markers involved in further experiences with the doctoral program. One major issue was members of faculty and supervisor teams who posed the question that the department should ask students if they are comfortable seeing LGBTQ+ clients. This process and question were part of a cultural norm in the department. In that moment, I was silent with anger, shock, and disbelief. It was difficult to capture my words in those moments, but eventually, I relayed written feedback to comment on a widely ostracizing issue. More than ever, I questioned whether change would actually happen and faced my silence again with the inquiry if we would ever ask a student that question based on another social identity, such as race or ability status.

The other issue I faced specifically with curriculum and pedagogy carried two components. Curriculums focused on multiculturalism and social justice continued to lack an intersectional narrative or any discussion pushing beyond the boundaries of singular identity categories. Each social identity was predicated on a single day of training giving credence to one cultural group each day, but excluding a notation on intersections. For example, we would spend time with "Counseling Asian Americans" or "Counseling LGBT clients" instead of engaging the intersections unified in the crossover of social and cultural identities. The issue I often faced in this moment was whether I could possibly see intersectional narratives discussed in the counselor education curriculum because it was seemingly a missing component.

One primary experience captured the essence of my privilege and my resounding consciousness as a result. I remembered sitting in a classroom with multiple disciplines of doctoral students with a focus on work, identity, and adult development. The topic for the class meeting focused on classist interpretations of work identity. After some time in the discussion, our class was discussing the position of working class identity. I referred to an idea that there is potential for individuals to continue to utilize their prior experiences to build upon future experiences for promotion and, essentially, "climb the ladder" to better positions. A colleague in the class confronted me on this issue with the reality that many people do not have this choice and do not feel like they may ever have the choice. After reflecting on the experience and moving past a perplexed reaction, I realized that I had perpetuated a classist viewpoint, which caused me to reconsider how I had integrated career development with my clients. I also reflected on whether I had held onto my experiences of oppression in light of the privileged identities I carry.

My philosophical approach emerged from this confluence as a humanist, feminist, and postmodernist. I acknowledge a major belief that collaborative relationships are at the primacy of my work and connection to initiate change and growth. I also firmly believe that all people are capable of growing to reach their self-actualized potential. As a feminist, I believe in a major principle of equality and equity by dismantling barriers woven into the fabric of social structures. As a postmodernist, I tend to view other individuals' narratives with attention to unique experience that entail multiple forms of perspectives based on the confluence of cultural and social identities. It is the combination of these tenets that I find myself to be intersectional and to be an advocate for intersectionality.

In light of these values and approaches, I consider not only the experiences attached to my reflection, but also the positionality inherent in relationship with my identities. This relationship situates me within the relationships of privilege and oppression influencing my social positioning and relationships within my institution. To disentangle my privilege and oppression, I can easily locate my sites of oppression both as a racial/ethnic minority and sexual minority, yet I contest the reality that only my intersections matter. I inhabit spaces of privilege through the lens of my identities, but also in the safety as a researcher instead of the vulnerability as the researched. I am not writing simply for myself to actively open this dialogue on my voice, but rather, I consider the voices in shared meaning who inhabit those same marginalized identities with me. The hyphen provides me with an insider-outsider lens. I am inside of the community, yet I question sameness because sameness infers that I can consequentially represent voices in the community exclusively through my own voice. In my current institution, I represent one of many students of color in my program, yet my sexuality and affectional identities do not feel represented. However, this issue is not conclusive of experiences for other queer men of color engaged in separate contexts, institutions, and identities. I interrogate passive engagement with the community as a result of my role as an activist engaged in countering social injustice and the reproduction of oppressive social conditions. My experiences of oppression build a connection—a relationship—while my privilege allows me to speak openly about injustice as a political act.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter illustrates the findings driven by the guiding research question and consistent with the explication of interpretative phenomenological analysis. The purpose of this research is to understand how queer men of color make sense of privilege and oppression in Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs. As a result, the findings reflect responses to the guiding research question:

- How do Queer Men of Color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in counselor education doctoral programs?

The research study involved informant-rich narratives from three participants identifying as Queer Men of Color currently in CACREP-accredited doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision within the United States. Utilizing the Seidman (2013) three-interview series model, three long semistructured interviews with each participant provided a significant latitude to map and examine a wide breadth of experiences and interpretations of the phenomenon of interest, yet included possible sites of depth to dialogue further about interpretations regarding the participants' experiences. The three long semistructured interviews also allowed for engagement with particular parts of participants' experiences to ascertain contextual interpretations from their life narratives, given the components of (a) life before the phenomenon of interest, (b) life during the phenomenon of interest, and (c) further meanings and interpretations upon consciously identifying lived experience. Aligned with the organization of interpretative phenomenological analysis, the analysis and organization of data presented provides accounts that are concerned with phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography (Smith, 2011; Smith et al., 2009). Utilizing the philosophical grounding of IPA as a foundation,

examining convergence and divergence across the interpretations and experiences from participants is highly important (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith et al., 2009). Smith (2011) notably identified that an IPA study integrates pieces from each participant to exemplify the connection and thread across multiple participants' narratives (i.e., convergence) while demonstrating the unique nuances embedded within each participant's experience (i.e., divergence and idiography). In cases of three participants, Smith (2011) identified the need to thread connections across all three participants and to include data to accentuate each superordinate theme. Consequently, each theme involved in the analysis and response to the research question utilizes pieces of narrative and examples from each participant. After integrating IPA philosophy and methodology with the data analysis in conjunction with two cycles of coding (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016), I systemically arrived at six superordinate themes identifying connections across the data: (a) Multiple Dimensions of Privilege; (b) Multiple Dimensions of Oppression; (c) Context/System; (d) Complexities of Intersections; (e) Critical Incidents/Conflict; and (f) Congruity/Change for the Future.

Participant Profile

For the purposes of participant protection and de-identification, the participants will be subsequently referred to under the pseudonyms of Brian, Jared, and Frank. All three participants identified with and responded to the following inclusion criteria: (a) 18 years or older, (b) currently enrolled in a CACREP-accredited doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision, (c) male-identified (cisgender, transgender, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, genderqueer), (d) identifies as a member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of racial/ethnic identity, (e) identifies as a

member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of sexual, affectional, or gender identity, and (f) identifies as having, at least, one experience of privilege and, at least, one experience of oppression in the doctoral program. The participant demographics in Table 1 demonstrate the responses indicated from participants to self-identify across social identities. In the purpose of this study, I defined queer as an inclusive term to reflect the diversity of identities across sexual, affectional, and gender identities and the marginalization associated with sexual, affectional, and gender identities. Although queer was used to group and capture non-heterosexual and non-cisgender identities for participant recruitment, the participants were provided the demographic questionnaire as a method to self-identify. Similarly, men of color represents an inclusive term for individuals represented across historically marginalized communities associated with race and ethnicity (e.g., Black, African American, Asian, Latinx, Native American, American Indian). In disseminating the informed consent and demographic questionnaire documents, I asked participants to openly self-identify on the demographic questionnaire. On the demographic questionnaire, the indication of "/" was not used to separate identity categories, but rather, to leave self-identification open to the participant. Hence, racial/ethnic identity was not indicated to serve as a bifurcation of racial and ethnic identities. Similarly, sexual/affectional identity was not indicated to serve as a separation of sexual identity and affectional identity. The demographic questionnaire included write-in options to allow for participants to identify among these social identity categories more openly and flexibly through self-identification. Appendix H shows the method in which the demographic questionnaire was presented to participants.

Through responses to the demographic questionnaire, the participants identified with these demographic characteristics at the time of the study. Brian identified as a 40-year-old cisgender male, Black/African-American, and Gay/Queer. Brian's highest degree attained was a Master's degree in Social Work. Working on his dissertation, Brian was located at a doctoral program in the Southern region, as designated by the five regions of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). Jared identified as a 27-year-old male, Black/African American, and Queer/Bisexual. Jared's highest degree attained was a Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. In the pre-comprehensive exams stage of his doctoral program, Jared was located at a doctoral program in the Southern region of ACES. Frank identified as a 29-year-old male, Black, and homosexual. Frank's highest degree attained was a Master's degree in Rehabilitation and Clinical Mental Health Counseling. In the first year of study, Frank was located at a doctoral program in the North Atlantic region of ACES. Table 1 includes descriptive demographic details about each participant.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Age	Gender Identity	Racial/ Ethnic Identity	Sexual/ Affectional Identity	Highest Degree Attained	Region	Current Semester of Doctoral Study	Current Phase of Doctoral Study
Brian	40	Male/ Cisgender	Black/ African-American	Gay/Queer	Master's Degree in Clinical Social Work	Southern	Fifth or more semester	Working on/in progress with dissertation
Frank	29	Male	Black	Homosexual	Master's Degree in Rehabilitation and Clinical Mental Health	North Atlantic	Third or fourth semester	First year of study
Jared	27	Male	Black/African American	Queer/Bisexual	Counseling Master's Degree (Clinical Mental Health	Southern	Third or fourth semester	Pre-comprehensive exams

Theme One: Multiple Dimensions of Privilege

Analyzing the response to the research question, participants synthesized diverse representations and interpretations of privilege contextualized through their life narratives and experiences within their doctoral programs. To make sense of the complexities of privilege, participants often wrestled with the difficulties attending to various forms of privilege both through lived experiences of privilege and associated identities with privilege. Participants frequently identified multiple facets of privilege to operate under distinct definitions, but also mirrored some of their descriptions through examples, stories, and metaphors. For example, Frank identified the metaphor of a "bag of chips" to frame his own understanding, interaction, and experience of privilege. To exemplify the metaphor of a "bag of chips" in relation to privilege, Frank explained with the following observation:

> And it was like um, when you're dealing with privilege, right, and- and you're- you're striving for equality, it's almost like you know you have this bag of potato chips. And, um, you, as a- a person with privilege, has the bag of potato chips, but the person, who's whether oppressed or with less privilege does not have the bag [of] potato chips. So, um, like you, when you- when you have privileges, you're almost like, "Well, they need to get them a bag like this is bad why can't they have a bag? This is like…this is a problem." But you also aren't willing to share your bag of potato chips, right? So, it's like, I'm not…to some degree, it's like saying, 'I'm not willing to give up my privilege so you could have some privilege. But they need to get you your own privilege; that's for sure.' So, um, to some

> degree it's like you're fighting to get them a bag of chips, so they can have privilege, but you're not sharing your privilege with ‘em.

Brian used metaphors from movies and the political system to illustrate examples of privilege as a particular system of “unearned benefits.” Brian provided an example originating from a comparison to the movie *Wonder Woman* that exemplified how he made sense of privilege associated with the majority of people with a particular gender-based identity:

> So, and it could be reverse. It could be that one entire community could be, I don't know, say, like Wonder Woman. She came from an entirely Amazonian kind of community, and it was all women, and, you know, just looking at the most recent movie, it didn't look like they were struggling financially. They were running the entire island. Uh, but we did see, or at least I saw when I saw the movie, that, and that would be the movie from 2017, was that there was a lot of different races that were in the movie. And so, but they were all women. There were no men on the island. So that could be one form in, in terms of an identity, uh, where gender is clearly prevalent or, or more present because that was the nature of that particular cultural environment.

Jared discussed his own metaphorical example which symbolized how he experienced and made sense of privilege as a context for his own life. For instance, he identified the “intellectual center” to more richly describe how he made sense of privilege currently and historically within his experiences:

> …because we have the university that I go to, um it looks so different with the amount of people who, the amount of intellectuals who decide to come into the

> city, the businesses that focus themselves around the city, um the uh opportunities that people have to create uh you know, a camp for children who want to read. Or to create a, something for the marginalized neighborhoods or populations because there's this intellectual center that exists in the space.

Based on Jared's contextual examples regarding the "intellectual center," Jared used the metaphor to indicate perceptions of control involved in privilege. Jared described it this way in this passage:

> But again because of that selectivity, it may make it more difficult, um, for those who haven't been a part of, maybe the development of that intellectual center, or, um, maybe even those that the intellectual center is serving, air quotes, um, that they don't get the opportunity to be a part of the process of what the intellectual center is.

The metaphors embedded within each narrative indicated distinct notions about how participants uniquely interpreted their experiences.

Several pattern codes also distilled larger nuanced pieces of raw data exemplifying the theme of Multiple Dimensions of Privilege. For example, participants wrestled with the tensions associated with identification and responding to privilege. Across all experiences, participants identified male privilege as part of their experiences, but often explicated and negotiated male privilege in different capacities, experiences, and contexts. In other second-cycle codes, they were able to identify the interpretations of their experiences that connected privilege to opportunities. Participants also observed the challenges of privilege, focusing on invisibility and lack of awareness.

Male privilege. Participants from this study uniquely identified male privilege across their interviews, but with an extensive variety of experiences influencing their interpretations of male privilege. The complexity inherent in this second-cycle code especially exemplified the divergence of interpretations across the experiences of the participants. They had all identified male privilege as a component of their experiences, but carried differing interpretations based on their experiences. Notably, one participant (i.e., Brian) indicated that he had a more difficult time noticing male privilege as a part of his experience in his doctoral program while the other two participants (i.e., Jared and Frank) discussed that male privilege influenced their positioning and experiences within their doctoral programs.

Pieces from each participant's observations demonstrate that portions of their individual experiences reflect male privilege. Brian, for instance, made the following statement as part of his experience in his doctoral program:

> I felt kind of shamed because I felt like the professor wanted me to present a certain way but...but didn't know what to say or whatever and I think instead of allowing me to do it the way that I needed to do, I felt like, um, I felt like she didn't think I was good enough as a male particularly as...as a Black gay male to be able to share my truth in the way that I needed to share my truth because she wanted to...to make me be a part of some privilege-tight life that I just did not represent, and I can't comment and speak about something that is just not something uh, I'm...I'm aware of or I'm a part of. Not mean just aware of, it's just I wasn't a part of that life. Whatever that is for her was for her, it's...it's not

> something I knew about. I didn't grow up in the kind of family that she thought I grew up in.

Additionally, Brian followed this complexity of male privilege by tying this complication to his own interpretation and intersections:

> …to tell somebody that they're not sharing enough and to try to force, particularly men in the class to embrace the idea that all men have privilege not knowing every male's background. Not understanding how race and other isms that we may call 'em intersect and impact what that looks like for that particular male besides an African-American Black gay male whose sexual or affectional orientation are just as important as someone else who's heterosexual, I'm…I'm not sure that I could see within the African-American Black community how I have benefited from privilege when I have specifically chosen professions that have historically been dominated by White men and White women.

Brian realized other individuals had raised male privilege as a concern within his experiences, but also felt unsure that he exclusively experienced male privilege across his life. The two other participants Jared and Frank, in contrast, wrestled with the complexities of their male privilege by acknowledging the presence of male privilege in their experiences. Jared and Frank acknowledged male privilege was part of their doctoral program experiences, but male privilege was certainly a complex idea. Frank specifically analyzed his own male privilege:

> …so I think for me especially in this program, uh, being a male, one of the few males in the class, you know, I've noticed that when I decide to speak, it's kind of like, okay the world stops and let's, let's hear what Frank has to say. Um, and it's,

it's, it could be because I don't speak much, so when I do speak, I speak with a purpose.

Frank also further analyzed his own male privilege with the following interpretation:

> Um, but I also can see there's just some level of privilege there. I can probably just cough and they're like, 'Oh, my God, that was great. Like, thank you for that.' You know? Um, and it, and, and I think it does have some, to some degree to do with my maleness.

With a more explicit analysis of his own male privilege within his doctoral program, Frank made the following explanation:

> There is this male privilege in the program, and I don't know if it's intentional because, for example, myself, um, the Caucasian male, and the biracial male I referred to. They all…They all have strong connections with at least one faculty member, whether they go out in their research team…Um, and to some degree, the actual scholarship or an assistance-ship of some sort. And there's another team, research opportunities, or presentation opportunities…And not to say that women don't have that, but I find that the women of color, and my cohort, are struggling more to, kind of, prove those relationships.

Although Jared indicated similar related perspectives on male privilege, Jared provided unique experiences informing his lens on male privilege. One example included the following:

> Those are things that you know I get like there are things that guys talk about, but I, I don't know, there's still a piece of me that feels very uncomfortable with that and like at the same time, I recognize that I have the privilege to be a part of these

> conversations. And it makes me feel like I'm a part of the group; I'm a part of the end circle of male faculty that exist.

As Jared particularly wrestled with this experience in his doctoral program, he expanded with a notion that his privilege as a male allowed him inclusivity in the "boys club": "I, I know with the male faculty that we're part of the boys club. And I don't know what to do with that because that's a privilege to me. That's, that's definitely a privilege for me." Augmenting this complexity, Jared cited an example of an experience in his program, where he noticed his female colleagues, especially women of color, receiving harsher feedback than he would have had:

> Um, but I've seen several of my female cohort members like kind of break down and cry, um, because of just like you know they, they didn't feel, they didn't feel like they have what they needed; it didn't feel like they were supported in like their writing endeavors and things like that. Um, and that ma-, finally gave a final product, it wasn't, they felt blindsided, and go like, okay, so this wasn't up to your standard, but what is your standard, right? Um, and that just hasn't been my experience with it, and maybe again that might be my maleness.

Jared specifically reflected on this moment in his program, where he was invited to serve as a coauthor on writing projects and not provided the same level of critical and harsh feedback compared with his colleagues identifying as women of color.

Opportunities. Participants in the study related their definitions and experiences of privilege to "opportunities," which included multiple iterations of privilege (e.g., access, power, responsibility). Brian specifically and frequently referred to privilege as

"unearned benefits." Brian captured this notion in multiple interpretative statements. One statement referred to the notion especially of "unearned":

> …I guess I look at privilege as, as being unearned on the basis of, um, it could be a variety of things. It could be, it could be unearned based on a person's gender. It could be based on their race. It could be based on socioeconomic status.

In another interpretation more specific to explaining the relationship between "unearned benefits" and "access" associated with privilege, Brian observed the following:

> …and so with privilege, it's, it's access on the basis of maybe a history from a particular group of people or a class of people, but then when I think about activities, I'm thinking in terms of, um, it may, may not even be activities. It may be, um, unearned benefits.

To further clarify his own experience of "benefits" in the context of privilege, Brian described an experience where he was offered an assistantship granting him financial opportunities:

> I didn't have to compete the same way that everybody else did. So, the assistantship was being offered to one student who couldn't take it, it's a female student. and uh, because she was married. and so, I, at the time, was not working at the institution where I was working because I was entering in the doctoral program. but I needed a source of income. And so, that professor said, 'Oh, Brian might be a good person because he's done this kind of work.' So, it's really up to the person who hires, that person said 'Well, I'll just go…I'll read this and I will take the word of this particular professor because I have a relationship with that person.' And as I think about privilege, benefits are earned based on relationships.

> That's another way for me to look at it. Now, I had to back it up. She didn't just choose me because of, of that person or maybe she did. I don't know. What I do know is is that I didn't…I didn't really…I didn't interview for it.

This assistantship referred to a specific benefit at a time when he was not working at the current institution in which he is employed.

Frank offered multiple instances of his experiences of privilege with its complex forms. Privilege emerged in Frank's narratives through particular opportunities within his doctoral program. When he noted the financial opportunities offering support that contribute to the possibilities of success in the program, Frank identified this sense of "financial freedom" not captured within other students' experiences:

> …there's privilege in, um, in being a fellow. There…As a fellow, and, and I'm on a research team, compared to the other people of color who are not fellows. So, they don't have that financial or, uh, freed-, freedom, sort of. I mean, they don't pay you that much. Um, but it works. They don't have that financial freedom, and really don't have the, the time to not do work on the weekends and, you know, still have this work-life relationship because I've completely gave up my full-time job that I had.

While reflecting on this experience in his program, Frank continued to consciously analyze his understanding of opportunities in comparison to other colleagues: "So, there, there's privilege there, but also, as a fellow, there's opportunities that have presented to me that haven't been presented to my other colleagues of color." Connecting to privilege, Frank observed his access to research opportunities within his doctoral program's research teams and to faculty connections:

> It's like, we're having these real conversations and helping to affect things differently. Um, and how I'm in a leveled privilege because I'm on a research team, so I'm learning about research first-hand, I'm doing presentations, I'm…There's all these things that I get to do, um, because I'm a fellow, whereas other people, because they're working full-time, and because they're going to school full time…And they don't have time to be on a research team, or people aren't thinking about the…To be on a research team because they're not as…They're not around as much. They're not getting as much opportunities.

To describe specific opportunities interpreted as privilege, Jared illustrated a particular point about power, privilege, and connection. Tying his privilege prominently to his connections with faculty, Jared also noted that faculty often pinpointed him as a source of knowledge and focused on providing connections for his professional development, scholarship, and career:

> …we're using power right, like if I would like to connect to someone that they have a connection with or friendship with or something like that at a conference or community event, I feel comfortable going up and saying like "Hey you know, um," maybe telling them off to the side like "Hey, I noticed that you've been talking with Dr. such and such; is it, what do you know about them?" and things like that. They'd be like, "Oh yeah, I'd love to introduce you to these people or this person," like "Come meet them." You know, like there's this privilege in that. Um, when things come up that meet my research interest or meet um, you know, my clinical interest, I get told about it. I get asked to be a part of those things.

Difficulties of privilege. The participants observed the challenges and difficulties inherent in making sense of privilege and identifying how privilege emerges in complex systems. In particular examples, participants observed that privilege fostered a position and culture of safety and power. As participants observed with other individuals' actions and their own personal experiences, they noted the challenges of discerning privilege and how it affects their relationships with other individuals and communities. In recognition of this pattern, participants also noted the problematic mechanism of conforming to the system defined by power—both by individuals and groups historically governing power. Participants felt forced to "fake" and conform to power in order to succeed and achieve in systems that historically marginalized their intersections of social identities. Broadening the scope of this interpretation, participants recognized the issue of conformity ascribed to standards established and maintained by historically privileged identities and majority groups. To describe this challenge, Brian interpreted the following:

> And then people who may represent the majority community start to create who's a good person of color and who's not a good person of color-...who I can kinda work with, and make deals with, and give them some benefits, and those who I cannot work with and deal with...no matter the education. So that's, that's probably why I'm saying that, um, it's not as simple…

Jared expounded on this conformity and complexity of privilege: "Like the insidious nature of privilege in my life prior to this program just continues to be this osc-...Or continued to be this oscillation of okay, what privileges can I fake so that I can win?" Jared further alluded to the complexity of privilege by joining privilege with conformity:

> What privileges can I like mimic or um emulate or um, imagine myself having so that I can succeed, and win, and be productive, and be um equal? I don't know, have equal opportunities? Certainly not equitable. Um yeah. So, it's a lot. There was a lot to unpack there.

Augmenting his point about the power and control embedded in privilege, Jared shared another interpretation:

> So, what happens when that individual has privilege, understands that they have privilege, and recognizes that in order for them to maintain that privilege, they have to um, they have to encounter other people who don't have those privileges, and um, almost, either keep them unaware that they don't have those privileges, um that they have to defend against those people obtaining, uh, at least a little bit of that privileged state.

In Jared's specific interpretation, there was a prominent description about the difficulties of privilege, where privileged individuals can easily disengage, deny privilege, or lack awareness if they do not encounter differences with marginalized and oppressed individuals. Jared also alluded to the idea that privileged individuals can maintain control of privilege, which makes awareness far more difficult to examine and identify privilege.

Amplifying the complexity and difficulties inherent with privilege, Frank analyzed his own interpretation:

> And, and I think when you're, when you're in a position of privilege, and not everyone, I guess I, I should speak for myself…When you're in a position of privilege, it's always challenging; it's always a tough decision to say, "Do I want to give up my privilege so that…This person can experience what I'm

> experiencing? And, uh, are we going to have the same level? Am I going to be missing out? Or, is it just going to be taken away from me completely if I say something?"

Captured within the narratives of the three participants, privilege intertwines with a multiplicity of issues alluding to power, access, responsibility, and conformity. Privilege can remain difficult to discern, especially if it is invisible to individuals carrying privileges and privileged identities. As Brian had demonstrated, privilege is not necessarily a "simple" component, especially when it is entangled within the linkages of multiple social identities.

Theme Two: Multiple Dimensions of Oppression

Participants in the study expanded on a plethora of mechanisms, experiences, and interpretations extending to the multiple overlapping forms of oppression embedded within their positions and experiences in doctoral programs. They also combined some of their interpretations and experiences from other contexts to more fully inform, navigate, and understand their experiences of oppression within their doctoral programs. Participants related a variety of experiences and types of oppression. Several key second-cycle codes alluded to (a) societal images; (b) tokenism; (c) barriers; and (d) silencing/censorship.

Societal images. The participants mirrored their experiences in association with their social identities as problematic representations and stereotypes stigmatizing their worth and value. Stereotypes and stigma emerged as a pattern within the experiences of the participants, primarily leading to experiences of invalidation, microaggressions, and overt discrimination.

Frank richly recounted his own pain and emotionality surrounding his intersections within society. Namely, he cited his reaction to the police treatment and killing of Philando Castile in Minnesota in 2016. Frank contextualized his experience surrounding this context to his own positionality and social location with the conglomeration of his social identities. Frank faced the issue with this description:

> So, I think, I think what hit me the hardest, um, was obviously the last three or four years where Black men are dying by the hands of the police. Um, and, specifically last summer…Where there were, there were two incidents in one week. Um, and specifically, of those two instances is Philando…Um, I think what, what hit me the hardest with that was, I'm under liability, at any given time, I could be pulled over. And I could be reaching for my wallet, and it could happen to me. Um, there's nothing that makes me any different than him.

There were two iterations of interpretative statements that captured Frank's understanding of how his intersections have been contextually and historically stigmatized through parallel representations with other Black men who have been killed. One iteration included the following passage paralleling this experience within the time before Frank's doctoral program:

> There, there…And I, to some degree, I still feel like that. And even when I, I, I get pulled over for getting a ticket, I'm like, "Do I need to turn on my phone and start recording? Am I safe?" I start stuttering, I'm shaking, and it's like, "Okay, sir, you just ran a stop sign." You know? Um, so in that organization, I, I realized even before I started school, that I was disposable.

A second iteration deepened Frank's analysis about the meaning of carrying this "disposable" representation: "…it became very clear to me because of what was happening across the country. Like, I'm, I'm disposable and, and no matter how above the line I am, or how in I am, I'm still just another Black man."

Jared used a key example to convey his own experiences of societal images that have continued to perpetuate stigma about his intersections. In this example, Jared discussed the reality that this perception stemmed from a custodial staff employee who is a Black woman. Expressing his sadness at the event, Jared identified the experience in this observation:

> Um, I remember walking on campus. I was a junior at the time. And I was like…No, I was a sophomore. Um, and I was leaving one part of campus to go to a math class, and one of the staff members um, janitorial staff members, another Black woman was like, "Oh, hey, baby. What team are you on?" And I'm like, like if you look at me, I do not look like at athlete at all. Any sport. Nope. I am a scrawny, Black man. Like that is all I got. But that even she had identified that the Black males on that campus were there because they were athletes of some type.

To exemplify this particular experience of societal images, Brian related interpretations stemming from his interactions in the classroom and with a particular professor indicative of the professor influencing Brian's narrative. Brian discussed how this professor was a woman of color who experienced oppression, yet perpetuated stereotypes about his own intersections:

> And what made it so bad is that instead of asking and try to learn from the person's experiences so you can…you know, do better in your research, you

> decided to make a blanket statement and in a sense, you turned around and you perpetuate the same kind of stereotypes and stigmas that you say you don't want in your own research.

In conjunction with experiences of stereotypes and stigma informing his narrative during his doctoral program, Brian identified an interpretation related to how his intersections of social identities have often been tied to stigmas and stereotypes. He cited this example:

> …if it was as white and black, it will be…it would be an easy assignment, but when you don't include the reality that we see on TV about people's lives and the perceptions because perceptions become the reality…that's where stereotypes and stigmas and things come from, it's what we see out in…on TV, we…we just start wrapping people together.

Utilizing a narrative before his doctoral program, Brian generated an example on how he has faced particular stereotypes from the media informing his own experiences of oppression. This key interpretation shed light on how his intersections were complicated due to images perpetuated on the television:

> So, I think maybe in, say, if I were in a typical conventional-…African-American Black southern family that was middle class a-, uh, then being male and African-American Black may have benefited me more-…if I were married. But since that doesn't apply to me, that's probably why I have trouble with the male piece-…because of the images that are seen on TV-…the perceptions of some of my friends about their families. Um, one of my good friends from Vietnam said to me, uh (laughs), um, his parents were afraid uh, uh, they are afraid of Black

people-…uh, particularly African-American Black people. So, he was, it was hard for him to invite me to his house because of their fear.

Tokenism. Using a variety of key examples, experiences, and interpretations, the participants noted the complexity of tokenism that layered into their experiences of oppression. In particular, tokenism complicated experiences of oppression since it is frequently postulated by social and political systems to serve as a privilege. However, the participants found that tokenism continued to represent the pressure and negativity resulting from the sociopolitical nature of social structures in the participants' intersections and experiences.

Frank, for example, highlighted two specific venues in which his own tokenization, especially with his social identities, became a function to benefit the systemic structure of society and in his workplace. Recalling an earlier point in his narrative, he applied the context of his workplace at a community agency to inform his interpretation of oppression: "Um, it, they, they pick out certain identities, identities to, um, to benefit the cause of the organization." Frank further contextualized his interpretation of tokenizing his identities both in the workplace and the institution: "You know, I've recently been talking about this in class, and like, diversity is one of those buzzwords that's been around for a long time. Um, and, and most organizations want to present as...Diverse or inclusive, or acceptant." Frank communicated the contrast inherent in this particular insight by relating the following comment on organizations, workplace, and institutions regarding diversity: "So, on, on the outer surface, they want to, organizations tend to…And sometimes universities…Want to present as such. But when it comes down to like the, the structure of the university, that's not always present."

Frank highlighted the meaning by contextualizing his positionality with the functions of diversity and tokenism. For example, he made the following observation to illuminate his intersections and how they played a role in the auspices of the organization:

> So, like let's say who I represent for them is diversity. I represent a, a Black male, um, "We're, we're inclusive, we have a Black male here." And, um, all that stuff. And I think for me, who I identify as, I identify as a queer male. Afro-Caribbean male to be specific, right? Um, and I think they, they're, they're different depending on who is interpreting it, but it's all the same thing, I'm still me. It's, it's all a part of my identity, so…

Applying this context to make sense of his representation tokenized within this particular organization, Frank emphasized the following statement:

> And, and I think that, that was a realization in with all the things I've been saying, that, within this organization. It was a privilege, but it was also, it was, for them, what I represented. I represented diversity. But they didn't really want to diversify the organization.

Within his doctoral program, Frank explicated the multiple ways in which he has experienced tokenism, diverging into (a) extensive pressure on his performance in the program, (b) comparisons to other students of color and other men of color currently and historically in the program, and (c) notable tensions regarding performativity to act a certain way to "present as non-threatening." Frank described the tokenism taking place in experiences within the doctoral program:

> But, in the same token, I feel like there's this level of tokenism that I was greeted with, where, um, other cohorts before me were like, "Oh, Frank, I've heard about you. You know, since you interviewed, they've been talking about you." And Frank this, and Frank that, and Frank is going to do this, and so there's almost this, um, this idea that, you know, I'm this, the perfect Black guy.

In another observation, Frank identified the comparisons associated with his experience of tokenism in the doctoral program highlighting the idea that he is "closely observed":

> …they have this, this concept of a Black man, um, in this program. And so, for not to fit that mold, I was immediately put on, like, this pedestal, but also, like, closely observed because you can tell that a lot of the faculty members are, like, comparing what their experiences are to that person and what their experiences are to me.

Elaborating further, Frank indicated how he had been placed under the "microscope" throughout his program:

> Not only do I have to prove them, uh, wrong, that I'm not like the other Black men that have been in the program, but I also have to…I'm like, under this microscope. Everyone's watching me to see what I'm going to do, and how I'm going to per-, uh, how I'm going to be.

To make sense of his experiences connected to tokenism within the program, Frank recognized that he felt a significant amount of pressure to perform and create changes in the program:

> But also, to have, like, the weight of a doctoral program on my shoulders, and the expectation that I'm going to take us to new heights. It's been all of three weeks,

like, why do I have these responsibilities? So, those were all of the things that were coming up for me, and it, and it was, it was anxiety provoking. And, I think, for the first semester, it was, like, nerve-racking because I'm like, "Oh my God. My writing isn't up to par and they think I'm supposed to do all these amazing things, while I'm here. How the heck am I going to do that?"

Brian made sense of his experiences of tokenism particularly regarding survival in the doctoral program. Notably, he identified the challenging component of being "the only one" with his particular intersections while failing to derive major benefits for his completion of the doctoral program:

> And I can say for sure at my school, not very many African-American Black men are graduating 'cause not many of them are coming into the program. I'm the only one in my cohort. So, and then, when you start looking at the faculty, you just don't see very many that look like you and the ones that do are burn out. They can't really…if there are not many people, they're burn out. They don't wanna be the…the 'cause. No one's really asking them to be the 'cause but sometimes, you just wanna know what you're getting into.

Jared indicated two different aspects of tokenism presenting his doctoral program experiences. Reflecting on these episodes, he provided two interpretative statements expanding on the idea of tokenism and the meaning as a "rarity" in the counseling profession. He made the following observation about being a "rarity":

> You know, like I don't know, although I just thought about that, so I will recognize and acknowledge that I have continuously have a narrative pushed back into me of the rarity of being a Black male that's on this field right, um, and that

> like I need to cherish being a Black male, um, I need to nurture and investigate, like the importance of my rarity inside this field and like why am I rarity in this field, like investigate why that is the case um, and how like all the different faculties that really need to raise the diversity, but I'm gonna be a catch, I've heard that so many times like you're gonna be such a catch to whomever you land with.

The second example included the following observation:

> …again is my perception, um, and so because men are so rare and especially men of color are rare, like "Let's give lots of extra, extra supplemental support to Jared. Let's be more fine-tuned and critical in our feedback towards these women."

In the second example, Jared compared the attention and softer feedback received from faculty members in comparison to women in his doctoral program that received much more critical feedback. Jared explained this type of "rarity" bred a form of marginality associated with fitting largely into a narrative predetermined by history:

> Um, I didn't feel like I have the chance to not study well and to be good at something, um, for fear of people finding out about me liking like the dude down the street, you know, like I dunno maybe that's why I busted the statistics, um, and now I'm being prized for the thing that I still, outside of the counselor education realm, feel very marginalized by and that's tough for me to digest.

Barriers. All participants described a variety of negative experiences interwoven into barriers showcasing a number of interpretations of the meaning of barriers. Although some participants identified barriers, particularly within their journey, they

critiqued the institutional and contextual barriers in conjunction with barriers that disconnect them from the community.

A notable interpretation from Brian described "barriers" in relation to oppression: "Um, well, I, I look at it as being kept down-…kept down, or put down, or barriers, uh, placed in the way, um…to see if you can, if you can rise above it.". Combining both "barriers" and oppression into one concept, Brian furthered this interpretation: "So many conversations about persevering, well, you know what? It's exhausting to persevere if you've never persevered." Brian detailed the exhaustion that emerges from struggling to overcome many barriers and navigating multiple forms of oppression within academia.

Elaborating, Frank explained barriers were a form of disconnect from colleagues in his cohort. However, with his definition of barriers, Frank placed greater emphasis on the disconnect rather than institutional barriers inhibiting his growth:

> So, that definitely created a barrier for, um, me. I'm going to say me. That created a barrier for me, uh, because…You know, I'm being completely authentic, and vulnerable, and open, and you know, I'm being insightful. And I think that's often…And I don't feel like that was received.

Although his definition of barriers differed from Brian's, Frank identified a related form of oppression by describing exclusion, which operates as a barrier in his experiences. For instance, Frank described examples based on experiences with his cohort in specific courses: "…in the event, with that particular class, it kind of brought the people of color closer, but then it, kind of, like, created this barrier around them that excluded other people in the program." Frank also amplified this interpretation of barriers with the following example:

> …I think what I was referring to is this idea of, you know, being vulnerable, and just being open in, in these classes, but feeling like I'm…It's not reciprocal, um, on, on both ends. So, I guess, you can say that creates a barrier in connecting with, um, a certain demographic, or the, the Caucasian individuals in the program because there's a…There's an inauthentic-ness about our interaction.

Adding to his point about barriers, Frank included the following particular statement with the interpretation that expands distinctly on the notion of barriers:

> I mean, I guess it was. I mean, it creates a barrier in the kind of relationship that I would want to have with my colleagues. Um, so, like, and, and what I mentioned earlier was this idea of, like, being naked, but…And you see me, but I don't see you, right?

Frank's argument and analysis of his experiences highlighted key points about his observations and experiences of students of color frequently carrying the burden and having experiences publicly examined since they are considered unique and diverse. Frank also argued that students of color were often "surveillanced."

Although Jared mentioned barriers in his experiences and narratives, his interpretation applied barriers as functions of oppression manifesting in their own unique manner. Jared connected barriers and oppression together: "…oppression for me is, um, when the power differential within a system creates, um, uh, a need for the individuals that are higher or more empowered um, to um, stop or stagnate or hinder those without that power to progress." Explaining his interpretation of the connection between barriers and oppression, Jared shared the following observation:

> I think that's kind of like the core of oppression for me. Like if, if something or someone is creating a barrier, um, whether it is intentional or unintentional, um for another group or someone with a different identity marker who is in the out group of some sort, uh to not move forward, to not progress, to not grow, um to not feel safe, that is oppression.

However, Jared connected the oppressive notion of barriers to his own experience, personalizing barriers as "anxiety" produced by forms of oppression within his experience. For example, he described his view in the following manner:

> Getting in the way, um, adding anxiety, um, me putting up barriers. Uhh, I have a tendency that when I get really anxious for something, I delay it. I take a lot more time to complete a task and sometimes I completely miss deadlines. It is like the core of a couple monsters of school, undergrad and grad. And so, yeah, I- that's, that's what would get in the way. Increase the level of anxiety.

This particular clarification of anxiety emanating from barriers was in response to the lack of safety frequently pervading his experience:

> Like they're, they're thinking about like who has expertise in this area, and I want that- what and I'm like, those things are cool, but if I can't talk to my committee members about some of my stuff as I write some of these subjectivity statements and some of this positionality stuff, like, all that stuff can go a wash because they're only gonna get so much of me, and my work's not gonna be good. I don't think my work's gonna be good without talking about this, like I'm worried, and I'm conscious of those oppressed identities getting in the way of me producing good work. So, yeah, that's how it's affecting my life right now, I think.

Silencing/censorship. A prominent pattern in the lived experiences of participants included multiple experiences of silencing and censorship. This pattern highlighted particular areas in their doctoral programs, where no dialogues existed to recognize their intersections or other parts of their identities. In other contexts, specific social identities of the participants were rarely discussed in their experiences and interactions with peers and other faculty members, particularly since the centrality of social identities prominently emphasized race and gender in their programs. In other contexts, forms of oppression tied to their experiences highlighted the ways they were censored institutionally or prevented from meeting in a safe space to dialogue further about problematic issues and their own experiences.

For example, Brian related his experience within his doctoral program about feeling silenced:

> I'm accustomed to it, I suppose because, again, most of my faculty members have been women. So, when there's a small number of men in the class, regardless of their race or gender, and you're being taught by a…a gender that had historically been marginalized, underrepresented, underserved, mistreated in pay and many other avenues, but you begin to realize you can't really say as much; you're almost silenced because if you say anything, you're in the minority and so…and I mean that in terms of number.

Brian specifically highlighted his experience of being outnumbered within his cohort and within his classes. Expanding on his doctoral program experiences, Brian also noted a particular moment when he experienced silence from a professor.

> …you can't always voice what you really wanna voice for the sake of the class. And even if you try to speak about it on the side, that person would utilize their research agenda to say, “No, this is what I was trying to say.” “Well, that's not what you said.” So, what you tried to say versus what you actually said is not the same thing.

Elaborating, Brian framed the experience in connection with oppression:

> Example of an oppressive experience to me is when you're in class, and the professor ask, take question and ask for a response, a reflective response, and you respond according to what your experiences have been about and the professor turns around and says, “No. That's not what I'm talking about.”

Adding to his points about silence and censorship, Brian also noted that oppressive experiences within his program forced him to fit a type of narrative that did not necessarily align with his experiences and lens:

> So, what we do with oppression or we…we…we make up our own language to…to try to justify what we're doing. And I think that's what so disheartening is that if a person is teaching about that in the classroom and then, they turn it around and they're creating new language to be able to oppress other people and to force people to accept that, that's simply just as oppressive as just being open and blatantly oppressive and saying, "Look, we're not going to graduate you two years from now. We just decide to let you know early." Whereas, instead of just telling you that because you need to get your numbers look a certain way or you can't have too many people in the counseling program to graduate at the same time or whatever the case may be, it's better to just say, “Look, we can't graduate

> that many people at this time. Therefore, we need to extend your time. We will help you pay for it, or we will not help you pay for it, but we're letting you know." This is stuff that they don't talk about.

Brian related oppression to silence about his progress in the program and connected with the oppressive experience about using a type of language to silence his voice for his interpretations, lens, and perspectives within the program.

On the other hand, Jared negotiated an interpretation about the meaning of being "voiceless" as a result of oppression:

> Yeah part, part of being oppressed or feeling like a- I'm voiceless in a space allowed me to realize, like oh, wow, I am not valued as much as the other people in the room that don't experience the world as I do. Um, and that's not necessarily always within my program. Um, in fact, like more so than not, it's outside of this program. Um, but I think having had those experiences remind me that I am not always appreciated.

To amplify the bounds of silence, Jared expressed the following statement: "Um, so the really sad thing that I'm, I'm thinking about right now, um, my queerness rarely comes in the conversation with my faculty." Additionally, Jared expanded on the concerns and fear regarding particular identities linked to his intersections:

> And I imagine that it would be very difficult for them to hire an outright openly queer man and then an openly Black man, openly Black like that's a thing, like I can be closetedly Black. Um, but like for me to have these two identities and not renounce, right, like I'm not saying that I'm going back into the closet or, um, that I choose to be celibate because I'm Christian, um, but that my ability to work at

> those institution, my ability to work and remain in the city decreased tremendously because of how I identify, and I'm concerned about that. I'm concerned about not being appreciated as a faculty member, as a researcher, as a community interventionist and advocate and consultant because of my queer identity more so than my Black identity, like I feel like everybody wants a Black man around, um, to not so much a queer person.

While his experiences of silence coincided with Jared's, Frank provided different contextual experiences focused on silence around his identities. Frank identified a key aspect of his experience of silence primarily surrounding his intersections by characterizing the action of "suppress to survive." Frank identified this interaction in the context of his narrative, contrasting privilege with a conscious observation of oppression from his life:

> I think, I think that's a tough one because, um, being in the program has really opened my eyes to a lot of things, so there are things where I thought it was a privilege, um…And, and, to some degree it was, but the majority of it wasn't really. Um, and I think that what I'm, what I'm, what I'm trying to say is, um, being in my doc program, um, I've realized that in my work experience and my life experience, I…I could call it, "Suppress to survive."

As Frank notably described this interpretation, he broadly explained his experiences related to the interactions in which he had to "suppress to survive." In one context, he visibly noticed that he had sustained experiences of microaggressions and invalidation, but he chose not to act on them for self-preservation: "Um, and so there's a lot of things

that have happened to me; microaggressions, or even overt aggressions…And it's almost like it, it never happened." Frank added context in the following statement:

> It never happened because I've suppressed it so much in my work life, where I needed to. I gotta stay, I have to stay employed. I have to get a paycheck, I have to live, you know. There are things that I want and things that I need.

In another experience at his workplace, he noted that the organization had failed to discuss his identities and experiences in the context of the multiple shooting deaths of Black men, despite the priority on his positioning as a Black male in the organization and the majority of clientele originating from Black communities:

> And I think, um, added to what happened last summer...Uh, being a part of this diverse organization, uh, it was like we lived in a bubble. And it wasn't being addressed with the staff; it wasn't being addressed with the clients. It was like it never happened.

In addition, Frank expanded on this notion of feeling "disposable" as a result of the silence, as he applied this issue to his own personal experience of the problematic contrast in the organization: "Not even a whisper. Not even a whisper. And I think that was obviously, uh, for me, that made the connection of being super, like, disposable." Frank also identified a particular experience of censorship in his doctoral program, where he noted that he and other students of color had to "filter" their feedback and discussion in the classroom to ensure other students and the faculty were not "uncomfortable":

> And, and I think that's something that continues to come up with myself, and my colleagues, or the, the people of color, in m-, in my uh, cohort, where we're…We're constantly having to filter, um, either our feedback, or what we say,

or how we say it, um, to not make others uncomfortable, not make the professors uncomfortable.

Theme Three: Context/System

Participants noted the variability of context and a systems perspective integrated into the mechanisms of social positioning and social location. Their experiences, descriptions, and definitions were grounded in context (e.g., academia, classroom, counseling profession, atmosphere), but were also impacted by the type of system influencing their intersections (e.g., social structure, tiers, class system). Participants frequently contextualized the system situating their intersections as one that was consistent with a system governed by privilege and oppression. Additionally, their descriptions and interpretations generated a map to integrate systems, histories, and context as a foundational basis to discern and make sense of privilege and oppression. Context and systems played major roles in distinguishing personal experiences and narratives of privilege and oppression, especially in the methods participants used to navigate both their intersections and the coexistence of privilege and oppression.

Academia. The participants specifically signified the structure informing their social positioning and social location within academia, higher education, and doctoral education. Outlining the context within their classrooms and programs shed light on the type of atmosphere and systems involved in expanding further interpretations of privilege, oppression, and intersectionality. Through the indications outlined by context, Frank highlighted the atmosphere and surrounding context influencing his experiences of privilege and oppression. Frank used these descriptions to discern how privilege and oppression continued to emerge throughout his experiences and to understand how he

gained a more visible consciousness around privilege and oppression interconnected with his social identities.

Frank also included contextual perspectives about the tier or class structure situating his position as a queer man of color within his doctoral program. For example, Frank noted the context of the composition of his cohort as a basis for majority and domination in the doctoral program:

> And, and interestingly enough, like I mentioned, this cohort was kind of split, but it was a majority people of color, so that almost indicates to me, like…So, they're fine for any White person who somewhat qualified to be in…Um, and interestingly enough, he was the only White male in, in our…He is the only White male in our cohort.

Frank utilized this point to contrast the reality that students of color in his program continued to face the weight and responsibility of educating colleagues, providing more feedback, and operating on a higher standard of evaluation in comparison to White colleagues. In addition, Frank also explained the specific context of differences among the majority, minority, and those who held power:

> So, a lot of my classes are not, um, intentionally divided, but my smaller groups are, kind of, divided. So, my cohort is pretty split down the middle. There's eight of us, and I think there may be five people of color and four Caucasian people…Individuals, which is…I-I feel like that's uncommon to have a majority, um, people of color, in, in a cohort, in a doct-, on a doctoral level, at least, or even on a master's level. Um, so a lot of my classes are split. Literally, three Black people, three White people.

Despite the equal split, Frank consistently noted that he and many of his colleagues as students of color were frequently "surveillanced." Conversely, Frank discussed a separate experience in another course that displayed differences resulting from the course content and the faculty member instructing the course. Using this context showed Frank where barriers and disconnects with other colleagues, especially other White students in the doctoral program, could have been mitigated:

> Well, our professor in multicultural was a person of color, and did a better job at addressing what was in the room, and I would say it's multicultural, so we're obviously going to talk about race, and culture, and all ... Everything related to oppression.

Although these particular observations about context connected with Frank's experiences of privilege and oppression within the classroom, Frank described the context to demonstrate the complexity attached to his intersections: "…it's almost like a tier where there's, I feel like, there's women of color, the men of color, the White women of color and then the White…no, I'm sorry. The White women and then the White men." To accentuate this understanding about context, Frank continued his analysis involving privilege and oppression:

> …in some degree, it's great that I'm not at the bottom, but I'm also not at the top, and we're all not on the same playing field. Uh, or on an even playing field. So ... it- it, there's privilege in like you know I get- I get some opportunities above others, or I'm somewhat considered for what others are. But on the same time, there's a whole pool of people that are considered before me to some extent.

Expanding on another unique narrative, Brian had a flashback about his program and began expanding on the context and atmosphere in which a key experience about privilege took place:

> Well, I think then about my doctoral program and the first time that privilege came up in the program was in my first class, uh, a social justice class in the summertime, and it was about understanding what privilege is and learning how to acknowledge what that means to the person. Um, and so, that's what where it began for me.

Contextualizing his experience of academia through his relationship with his doctoral program, Brian remarked on the "unspoken rules" captured in the system of higher education that potentially had a pervasive effect on his experiences of privilege and oppression in the doctoral program:

> They've got theirs, and…and that right there may not be oppression based on my gender and my race or sexual or affectional orientation, but it may be their preparation for the academy, which is very cutthroat. So even the academy and its unspoken rules can be oppressive to not only…well it depends, but it can be more oppressive to people of color because there are not enough of us. So, we…we didn't make the rules. We have to learn them and figure them out as, you know, that's what you do. And part of that figuring out, I have to be honest with you, is very relational.

Joining with his experience, Brian deeply reflected about majority groups and representation at his institution, which often comprised multiple White faculty members,

most of whom were White women. Brian used his understanding of his faculty composition and the academy to make sense of his experiences of oppression:

> See, 'cause there are some people, sadly enough, believe that being gay is a White men's orientation. That's sad, but it's the truth. Especially when you're…when you're dealing with a professor that does not represent the majority of the professors in the program. Most of the faculty in my program…at the institution are White. White women.

In conjunction with Brian and Frank's experiences, Jared included an in-depth comment about using context to understand his experiences of privilege and oppression:

> That um, if historical events occurred differently, if systems didn't interact with each other in the ways that they've learned to interact with each other, privilege would look differently. Um in a different world, where um slavery didn't exist, I might be in a very privileged state because of my race.

Jared noted the historical, systemic, and contextual aspects related to his experience that defined the boundaries of privilege across his identities. History informed much of how Jared made sense of privilege and how he applied a similar synthesis with his experiences in his doctoral program. This comment also showed the contrast embedded in privilege and oppression that differentiates individuals and groups linked to identities on a basis of power relations.

Broader context. The participants utilized societal context to connect interpretations and experiences of privilege and oppression to emphasize their social location. Broader context across their narratives before and within their doctoral programs explicated the influences expanding and diminishing power related to their

intersections. Generating parallels with broader and societal context, participants interpreted the salience of their intersections, which would exhibit visibility, invisibility, empowerment, and disempowerment.

For example, Jared indicated that he had to different layers of systemic context to inform how he made sense of his intersections. In the following passage, Jared indicated that capturing his interpretations within his doctoral program would also connect heavily to other levels within the profession and within societal context:

> Hmm. I think I'm really probably one of the most fun intersectionalities, um, so I'm struggling with when you say doctoral program because I'm trying to keep it just to what I experience at my institution, but for me, the experience of my program has been the conglomeration of what I do in the classroom, in the community, and my state, and on the national/regional level.

Jared specifically tied intersectionality, privilege, and oppression as experiences that bridge concomitantly between the doctoral program and larger systemic levels contextually. Understanding the relationships among these contexts is particularly helpful to engage and navigate intersections within social identities, especially given the shifting nature of power, privilege, and oppression embedded within the power relations of social structures.

Frank similarly used nationality to frame the context of his intersections. Considering that power and intersections of social identities are framed contextually, temporally, and historically, Frank's reference to his nationality negotiated a relationship between his identities and the context of nationality. Frank referred to the following point:

> But, you know, uh, as a, so I'm, I'm a, I'm an immigrant. I was born in Jamaica. I moved here. Um, and part of my research is around, uh, the lived, the lived experience of queer people in Afro-Caribbean.

To broaden his point, Frank also mentioned his relationship with society to add context to the following observation: "Uh, it's definitely society. Because in society, because I can think like before in- in all my professional roles, I- I present in a certain way." Frank analyzed society as the context informing his intersections, particularly with how society accentuates its disposition regarding his social identities. Society interconnects with social identities by offering a frame that empowers or disempowers Frank's social identities. In conjunction, society acting as the contextual background establishes norms on the presentation and legitimization of his social identities. Frank offered a more detailed analysis, putting this particular idea into a broader context and aligning it with his interpretation of privilege and oppression:

> So that's why I feel like I'm not at the bottom. Because there may…there- there are people I still look at and I'm like, "How is this person here?" Um, so yeah in- in regards to…I think you may have asked about like the tier where the Black woman, Black man, White woman, White man. I think that's just a reflection of society. Um, and often times it may vary where in- in my experience what I've observed, it can sometimes vary where there's males, White male, Black male, White woman, Black woman. Um, it may vary like that. But I think often times than not, it's Whites and then people of color.

Adding to the perspectives offered by the other participants, Brian detailed the context of "nationality" as a basis for guiding his intersections and offered a more lucid image for

making sense of privilege and oppression. Brian explained the following interpretation to harken back to his narrative and experiences:

> …you know, I think as I think about it for me, I would have to reflect on my, what I may perceive as unearned benefits-…or having access, um, to things on the basis of, say, for example, where I come from. Nationally, right? So, living in the United States of America, the fact that I was born in the United States of America, um, could be viewed as h- having privilege because of what this country offers-…because of the benefits of a free education, uh, so just nationality alone could be viewed as a form of privilege. And I would say, for me-…in this country, being, uh, nationally from the United States of America, there is some privilege in that.

Based on his identities, Brian's interpretation related the complexity inherent with nationality as a privilege and as a social identity. However, the interpretation also functioned as a context to determine how privileges were organized structurally. The country or region he was located in could discern the meaning and linkages of privilege to his social identities, which could shift upon relating to another country or region.

Theme Four: Complexities of Intersections

All participants wrestled with the complexities of intersections and the manner in which their intersections tied specifically to their contexts and experiences. In some of their experiences, the centrality of their intersections relied more saliently on race and gender while queer identities were far less discussed or silenced. Participants richly referenced the unique experiences often brought forth by their intersections grounded in an evolving complexity. To amplify this complexity, participants also detailed the

meaning their intersections held for them in a holistic and synergistic manner. Reifying their intersections enacted a sense of understanding their own identifies in a systematic manner while creatively honing in on the value of each identity. By wrestling with the complexity of their intersections, they discussed the idea of understanding identities in a mutually constitutive manner.

Unique experience. The pattern of unique experience highlighted the idea that the participants interpreted their intersections as a conglomeration of identities more fully representative of their individuality. Identifying their identities did not necessarily create a set of multiple identities to exclusively partition and add together. Otherwise, participants noted that fully separating or compartmentalizing pieces of their identities raises issues when every identity is fundamental to characterize their representation. Additionally, participants considered the confluence of their identities as creating a new lens and experience.

Jared highlighted an interpretation of his experiences within his doctoral program aimed at the reflections of his intersections and intersectionality. He viewed the possibilities of intersectionality that foster growth through a unique lens:

> Well in that case, um, so the intersectionality of being queer and a person of color uh, is really powerful to meet some other people, um, in our last national conference, um, and just other doc students that are also experiencing that and just how powerful of an experience that was. Um, yeah that was, that was really nice for me, um, to happen, to experience that. Um, in my own program like just here at home, I don't think I experienced it as much other than like the complicity in Black and economically disadvantaged. I don't know how I can word that, um,

> they get the intersection of my Blackness and my queerness; queerness is so quiet that it feels less of an intersectionality until I'm writing a paper. And then to me, it becomes highlighted and it matters.

Jared realized the power in his intersections and the possibilities of navigating intersections to inform the salience of privilege and oppression. Jared recognized that certain intersections and identities become far more prominent when relating to increasingly complex ways of making sense of experience. This statement also refers to another interpretation Jared offered to identify his unique experiences within the crossroads of his social identities:

> And so, as I've gone throughout this process, I'm thinking about the uniqueness of my identities. Um, the experiences that I have as a non-majority individual, whether that be my sexuality or with my racial identity. And all those areas I realize that the work that I do, the ways in which I educate, the ways in which I lead, things that I research, all go back to creating a new perspective and creating a new, a new path for us to gain knowledge and for people to acquire knowledge. Because my experience isn't the same as a Gerald Corey or a, you know, an Irvin Yalom. I don't, I don't have the same corporal context as these guys.

Jared compared his own identities represented by major leaders in the counseling profession (e.g., Gerald Corey, Irvin Yalom), but recognized that he would have unique contributions since his intersections were far different than the majority of predecessors in the counseling profession. By navigating particular intersections, Jared related the promise of contributing to the counseling profession through a different lens. Jared realized the creativity in his unique lens and unique experiences as a pathway to foster

advancement and capital contributing to the development of knowledge. Jared also contrasted this issue as a predominantly White male narrative occurring in the counseling profession, where he can navigate his intersections and experiences to produce different perspectives and types of knowledge valuable to the profession.

Brian identified a concurrent interpretation of unique experience to magnify the problematic focus and separation on singular forms of identity within the classroom:

> I don't know that one can separate there when we make up so much…we're not just…we're not like pods or drones or anything, we're…we're human beings, so there's more than just what we see on the surface. And so, I think for me personally, it would have been great if we had talked about deconstructing your overall identity to be able to name the different pieces that make you up, and some of us won't be able to name all of those because we don't have that much history or knowledge about our…our ethnic or even racial background.

Brian pinpointed several arguments to enact how he made sense of the unique experience with his intersections in his life. To contextualize his experience in the doctoral program, he argued for historical deconstruction of overall sense of identity to refocus the dialogue about the conflation of social identities. More explicitly, a key point Brian enacted in this interpretation is about "deconstructing" identities to consider the complexity and crossroads of social identities comprising an individual as opposed to focusing exclusively on one identity. He recognized the depth reifying his experiences, but focused attention on moving beyond considering only identities that were heavily prominent. Brian specifically referred to the complexity of the intersections realizing that a single identity cannot fully represent an individual: "So, almost felt like it needed to be

broken down and not just locked together because it's very complex." To add to his point, Brian highlighted the idea of unique experience by clarifying that intersections are "not black and white":

> And so, when we started talking about these terms, there are definitions that can be very apparent on paper, but when you're talking about lived experiences, uh, those experiences are not as black and white as the definition on paper.

Brian's interpretations expanded on the complexity of social identities with the recognition that intersecting identities cannot breed a dichotomous experience. Attempting to disentangle how a singular focus might diminish his identities, Brian provided an example that amplified this complex notion of layering into a unique experience: "…intersectionality would come up for me in that if I expressed a point a view, it does not represent the point of view of all heterosexual Black men 'cause I'm not heterosexual." Brian discussed this issue since a singular focus on social identities could easily misrepresent his own experiences. Given Brian's intersections, his voice would be distinct and would not fully represent entire communities.

In conjunction, Frank observed that his intersections provided him a connection with communities that he serves. For Frank, the confluence of his identities expanded his lens to fully grasp an understanding of other communities that share his identities:

> So, I think, um…my intersectionality influences that because of what- what my unique experiences are. And like I mentioned, working with majority people of color. Um, and- and right not half my case load are people of color who identify to some degree on the LGBT spectrum. So, like they- they obviously have intersection experiences that may effluence or influence, um, their work

> experience. Uh, so being able to, like, talk to that and, like, afford them the language to have those conversations and have those ah-ha moments and, like, really build and work through those experiences has been very rewarding.

Frank expanded on the connection embedded within his experience by highlighting the lens provided through the "unique experiences" as a result of his intersections. His intersections allowed him to build on connections with other individuals and communities of similar intersections. Additionally, Frank also exemplified the unique lens and experiences channeled from more fully engaging with his intersecting social identities. Attempting to make sense of his experiences and their subsequent connections, Frank recognized the intersections of his clients' social identities by reflecting on intersectionality:

> I think, um, when I- when I think of intersectionality in general and we've probably talked about this before this before. The multi- multiple layers that make up, um, a person specifically people of color. Um, and I think, let's start with my- my role as a counselor. I think intersectionality, often times my clients don't have the language for what they're experiencing…so sometimes there's a little psycho ed there which I'm- which I'm very grateful for and to foster conversations on how the- the intersections of their identities may be affecting their unique experiences, whether it's in the workplace or in the relationship, or just in the world.

Reflecting on intersectionality and social identities of clients, Frank made sense of his own intersections in connection with clients' experiences and social identities. Frank specified pieces embedded within identities interconnected to the systems underpinning

how individuals and communities, especially marginalized communities, experience their world. Frank integrated this particular notion and its connection with an explanation of his own intersections and how he began to make sense of them through an intersectional lens:

> No, I think, um, you know, intersectionality obviously identifies for me like my SES, my, um, my immigrant status. You know, there's some kind of privilege that, um, being, even an African-American that you, you, um, obtain that individuals to our naturalized citizens or immigrants or foreign students, right? That, um, there's no, they don't have that kind of, like, access or choices. Um, identifying as a, a, a gay male, right? A gay, queer, queer, gay male. Um, there's, there's that level. There's, there's…It's definitely multi-layered, um, but I also think it creates such a unique experience for me that…Um, there's a, there's a community there.

While highlighting multiple layers as part of his identities, Frank also acknowledged that his intersections function in a way that breeds a "unique experience" and a "community." This interpretation coincides with the connections among social identities that participants integrated to understand themselves as individuals. They utilize these intersections to fully engage with a more intersectional experience that is unique.

Navigating the coexistence of privilege and oppression. Participants used interpretations to make sense of the shifting, yet coexisting nature of privilege and oppression in their lives. To augment this idea, participants identified salient examples and identities that elucidated the methods through which they encountered privilege and oppression concomitantly. They unified examples to make sense of their experiences

notably through realizing how intersections allowed them to navigate within and outside spaces in addition to within and outside communities. Thus, they also identified privilege and oppression by how they navigated its confluence through becoming connected and disconnected within systems and communities. Their intersections also layered into narratives of multiply marginalized communities with attempts to navigate the multiplicity of their identities.

For example, Jared recognized an interpretation that ultimately shed light on his intersections in relation to his privilege. The primacy of this navigation explained a particular recognition of community membership and power within and outside communities on the basis of an individual's intersections:

> Um, you know, I, but I still recognized that while I still had privileges within the Black community, I did not have privileges outside of that space. Um, you know, um, so much of, I guess, my Black identity is tied to finances.

Jared also utilized his identities to navigate his own sense of queerness and the ways his queer identity could disempower him across his communities. In this example, Jared shared more about "leaning on other identities" to navigate towards privilege: "So, yeah, I, I think I leaned on a lot of my identities that I had, um, that were privileged. And that were, um, that were accepted probably, that maybe wouldn't be accepted in other circles." In contrast, Jared highlighted the following explanation about varying experiences of marginalization and how he navigated multiple spaces in his life among communities and institutions:

> Um, I've always had to talk about the differences in Black church and White church. Um, I very often had to explain to people that like because I'm not a

> Black athlete, like, and because I'm a choir boy, like everything looks so different in my world. And even like when I think about my high school relationship with, um [name removed], my best friend at the time. Um, like I, I think the intersectionality of while we were both like queer and questioning? Um, like because I was Black right, um, I doubly didn't feel safe.

In this example, Jared experienced marginalization within a marginalized community as he navigated queer identity within Black communities, especially in the image represented by the relationships in his identities. A particular example during the time of his program highlights the centrality of this issue for Jared, specifically as he navigated his identities to function within privilege and oppression:

> Um, we're talking about my queer identity because I just happen to come up with relationship stuff. And I talked to her about like, yeah, I don't, I don't date as many people of color, specifically women of color because I'm concerned that women of color won't see me as a very authoritative figure in that relationship. And then I talk about how, like, unusual it is for me to talk to a woman of color about this, um, knowing that she's very engaged in the Black community in, uh, my city because, um, you know, I'm, I'm worried that my legitimacy of being a mental health professional, of being a caretaker, of being, you know, a Christian, of being all of these things and all these other circles while legitimacy and my ability to function in those spaces, um, is decreased or denied completely because I identify as queer.

Designating this issue particularly through the lens of privilege and oppression, Jared discussed the possibility of another identity decreasing his "legitimacy" in the context of

his other social identities. The juxtaposition of his identities alters the conglomeration of how his identities relate to privilege and oppression.

Brian, however, integrated his understanding of privilege and oppression through understanding relationships and linkages between individuals. In the juxtaposition, he noted the coexistence of privilege and oppression through deepening a perspective on the system, but also recognizing an individual's narrative of intersections in a much more in-depth manner. Brian identifies an example:

> And so, in being able to discern and determine that, looking at each individual experience and pulling them together like a jigsaw puzzle is probably what would help me determine the intersections that I have benefited from privilege or did not benefit because of oppression. And I would go as far as to say that I had benefited more on the front end and getting in…than I had been on getting out.

Brian also continued his interpretation with connecting social identities and their intersections to navigating privilege:

> So, for me, for example, before I could recognize privilege, I had to begin to recognize my intersectionalities first…so, I almost felt like we had to split ourselves apart in different identities that make us all up as one person or as a whole. So, recognizing race, gender, religious or spiritual beliefs, gender identity, uh, sexual or affectional orientation, a lot of things that we may not always think about in living our lives unless something happens to us.

In this analysis, Brian indicated the social identities that comprise a more intuitive understanding of privilege and its relationship with oppression. Recognizing the complexity of intersections bridged particular ideas for Brian with how he uniquely made

sense of his own experiences of privilege and oppression. Aligning with that perspective, Brian also integrated another example in the juxtaposition of privilege and oppression. He highlighted the challenges of navigating privilege when complexities magnified the types of oppression. The following passage relates this perspective on Brian's interpretation regarding the influence of oppression on privilege:

> And being an American is one thing, but it's not the same as being someone who represents the majority of the political system or even the race of people who make decisions in…in social work. So, the intersection to me is what causes an issue with recognizing privilege especially if you come from a community or a group that has historically been marginalized, oppressed, underserved, underrepresented.

Placing this idea together with another interpretation, Brian indicated the influential power oppression carries in conjunction with privilege. As positioned in the following statement from Brian, oppression operates as a force that can overwhelm the experience and consciousness of privilege: "…it's simultaneous, but I think sometimes or oftentimes with the oppression piece, when you see more of that, it takes away from any kind of, uh, unearned benefits that others may perceive that you have." Despite the "simultaneous" nature of privilege and oppression existing in the conflation of identities, Brian recognized that oppression has served as a prominent force within the doctoral program and his life narrative.

Aligning with Brian's perspective on privilege and oppression, Frank also argued about the complexity of navigating privilege and oppression concomitantly through his intersections. He provided a vital interpretation coinciding with Brian's interpretation in

recognizing that oppression has a powerful influence on how it shapes an understanding of privilege. Frank made the following commentary:

> …so, to some degree I feel like, you know, I have privilege because of my maleness, um…But because of my race, and my, my sexual identity there's a, there's a whole, um, level of oppression there that overshadows that privilege that I did have.

Frank discussed the reality that oppression can magnify issues for individuals and communities. In addition, Frank fortified the salience of oppression in his experiences that reform how he is represented and how his privilege changes.

Theme Five: Critical Incidents/Conflict

Participants used critical incidents and conflicts to richly describe the methods through which they make sense of intersections and lived experiences, especially with both privilege and oppression. Providing instances of critical incidents and conflicts raised consciousness and complexity associated with the complicated nature integrated with privilege and oppression. Generating particular patterns from their experiences and interpretations, the participants identified multiple instances in which they noted irony, antithesis, incongruity, internal conflicts, and external conflicts. Within this theme, participants also generated significant dialogue on experiences when they faced challenges and resistance deepening the comprehension of privilege and oppression within their lives. Patterns generally organized into moments of external conflict, internal conflict, and irony to showcase differences and methods through which the participants uniquely made sense of privilege and oppression within the context of their doctoral programs.

External conflict. Participants communicated multiple examples of external conflicts to highlight the tensions with some of their identities. External conflicts raised particular consciousness surrounding the systemic and social structures they were facing as a result of their intersecting identities. External conflicts comprise of problematic instances, events, and experiences that the participants encountered within their contexts, systems, individuals, and communities (e.g., classroom, academia).

Frank identified multiple instances of external conflicts taking place notably in his classes. While describing his experiences in multiple classes, he also noted the manner in which he became disgruntled with the system. This issue was especially notable, given the dichotomy of an "us versus them" dynamic, where he was disconnected from fellow colleagues. Frank explained multiple moments where he encountered conflicts within his classroom. One moment of an external conflict highlighted the conflict he had with a professor about feedback given to a White student in a class focused on counseling supervision. The class involved a White faculty member instructing the class, but an episode occurred where the faculty member relied on students of color to critique and educate a White student on the problems with his work. Frank first described the following:

> Um, from the professor, my feedback would have been direct and spot on, and I would have received it, um, whereas for the other individual, the feedback would have…would not have come from the professor. It would have, kind of, been relayed back to the class, and for the class to deliver that feedback to him, rather than the professor to deliver that feedback to him.

Frank had issues with the way in which the professor handled a teachable moment in class, given that feedback was largely different toward his positioning as a student of color and his other colleagues as students of color. Frank noticed this comparison realizing that the faculty member was "coddling" the White student, although he should have received more direct feedback from the professor. Additionally, Frank related a more problematic concern with the faculty member:

> And, and I think there's, there's power in the professor delivering the feedback. You're, you're more really likely to adhere to it, and maybe make those changes, whereas classmates delivering that feedback. And I think because of the cultural, um, separation, if you will. Um, a lot of the feedback that we provided went unheard. So, I think that there was almost a level of, "Well, you guys should know better, so you guys, you guys teach him. Get him to where you are," on one, one, one instance.

Frank used this moment to exemplify a concern about differences that allude to social location based on social identities. In Frank's example, this relationship juxtaposed with representation of experiences of privilege and oppression.

One external conflict that Jared conveyed to illustrate differences contextualizing privilege and oppression within his doctoral program. He noted the problematic difference between himself and his female colleagues, as women of color, regarding faculty feedback on their skill sets and expertise in writing. Jared became increasingly conscious of the differences and his own privilege in that space while recognizing the event as a conflict:

> Um, and for the most part, that feedback or I guess this goes back to that social identity, most of that feedback, uh, has been towards the females that are in our program and not as much towards like me. And it sounds I feel like I'm a slacker, right? I really feel like I'm a slacker in some areas, um, but, you know, I get very gentle feedback of, like, you know, you didn't do so well, um, you know, we'll give you extra time like revise, resubmit.

Noticing this difference, Jared indicated the harsher feedback that colleagues, as women of color, were receiving from faculty, although he had not received that type of feedback. In additional conversations, Jared had also faced the same colleagues who had conversations about the differences while erupting into tears about the feedback. In this aspect, Jared became more conscious about the disconnect with his colleagues identifying as women of color and, consequently, identified the possibilities of the influence of privilege and male identity. Jared also identified another external conflict in which he attended a conference that did not advocate well for differently-abled communities. Jared's own awareness was challenged in the context of his own privilege. Jared shared the following experience with major details on the external conflict at this conference:

> What helped me to be conscious…so while I was at the conference, someone, we were walking down a flight of stairs and someone just said, like, wow this is not very accessible. And he was just talkin' about the stairs and just how many there were. Um, it was a younger guy too, um also able-bodied. But, um, yeah, it just made me stop and look around at the facility. Uh. I just started wondering, like, oh wow, I really haven't seen a lot of elevators around here. Um, and what for-what is there for people who might be visually impaired? What are we adding in

> as supplemental opportunities? I mean there wasn't a sign language interpreter for any of the speakers; that's also another thing to think about and consider. So, yeah, that one triggering conversation, it was so flighty, and I'm sure passed b- excuse me, passed by a lot of the people I was with, but it-it brought to my awareness of yeah, you know, we don't think about these things and we should.

Jared interpreted his own consciousness by beginning to examine context upon this interaction at a conference. Additionally, Jared used this experience as an analysis to begin thinking more systemically and intuitively about areas that he does not necessarily reflect on due to components of privilege.

Facing a different conflict, Brian illustrated a particular experience within a class activity in his doctoral program focused on social justice. He faced an external conflict both with the class and the professor, but primarily, the focus of conflict operated with his relationship with the professor. Two passages captured major details of the experience. One passage described the following piece of Brian's experience in the classroom:

> So, it's not as open and shut as I thought that the professor wanted at the time, but I think the professor wanted the experience or wanted the students or myself to go through the experience of being able to just try to find something and not really fully discuss the intersections in the way that this particular interview is going.

As Brian digested the interactions with his professor, he noted that the professor used power and influence to designate a particular narrative about a single social identity. Brian found this interaction to be counterintuitive, particularly regarding the relationship he had with the complexity of his intersections, given that other individuals in the class

were not fully aware of his narrative. Additionally, he was primarily concerned a particular depth to understanding his narrative was lacking, while the professor could have painted a specific image of his identities. Brian also explained further details about his conflict within this second passage:

> But I don't always believe that the professor from the professor's point of view was able, to me, anyway at least, or the class to reconcile that the intersections themselves, uh, could make it challenging to recognize privilege, especially when you come from communities that had been historically, you know, oppressed and so on and so forth.

Brian experienced this external conflict as an instance where the professor had used her point of view to implement an image of privilege exclusively on his identities. However, Brian explained the incongruent nature of this experience, given that his other identities were historically attached to marginalization and oppression.

Internal conflict. Internal conflicts operated as a category and pattern to exemplify moments where the participants became conflicted with their position or actions in a particular experience. Frank identified the process emerging from his experience when he noted that he was forced to give critical feedback to a White colleague in the classroom. In this instance, the faculty member placed the responsibility to give feedback on students of color, including Frank. Frank shared a part of his internal dialogue relaying the type of conflict he was facing in the experience, where he noted comparisons between individuals from privileged communities and individuals from historically marginalized communities. Frank's example included the following passage:

> And another instance is, I don't want to bring my fellow man down, so you guys get to do that, so I continue to have this cushiony and sleek relationship with this person, while there continues to be a separation among the cohorts.

Frank identified that his internal conflict related to the possibility of disconnecting with a fellow colleague in his cohort, while receiving the burden of providing feedback to another student when the responsibility should have been under the instructor's authority. Frank continued to showcase this internal conflict, especially as he navigated intersections with his connection to the other student as a male. However, they differed primarily across racial identity.

Jared explicated a particular experience of internal conflict that magnified the salience of his intersections, context, and navigation of privilege and oppression. In Jared's experience, he identified some of the intersections pervading his experience with meaning across the conflation of Christian, male, queer, and Black identities. He pointed to a particular experience in his life that influenced his understanding of privilege and oppression throughout his life and his doctoral program. There were multiple instances of internal conflict related to this pattern. Primarily, this experience focused on the outness of his queer identity in relation to one of his best friends. In this experience, Jared found himself attracted to one of his best friends, but chose not to pursue the relationship with him, which disrupted their friendship. Jared related that his friend was ready to disclose his own queer identity and become involved in an intimate relationship with Jared, but Jared did not eventually reciprocate. He related several pieces of his internal conflict, realizing how he had navigated his own intersections along with the issues of a system forcing particular images onto his identities: "I had the privilege to go

back in the closet." Adding more detail to his narrative on this particular experience, Jared shared the following piece:

> Um, because he had chosen, very distinctly to say, like, I'm going to make moves to let my family know that I am no longer straight. Um, and he, he had been dating p-, men secretly for years, right? And I had been helping him, defending him, and defending his pride with some of these guys that were just like treating him like trash. And I felt, like, that was okay to do that, to be an advocate, right? Like it was okay to be an ally, um, and, like, a closeted ally. Um, closeted in the sense that I would never let other people know that I was being an ally.

Jared added to this particular example exemplifying the dimensions of his internal conflict: "Um and I, I mean I, it took me years to reconcile that with him. Um, of how ashamed I felt for not being there for him. Um, for not going down on a burning ship with him." In addition, Jared expressed that he had "so much disappointment" in his experience. Jared also cited another statement to coincide with the disappointment in his experience: "Ah ugh, God, that just feels so gross that that happened. I'ma, I'ma use a lot of feeling words."

Expressing more of his internal conflict about the story, Jared shared a vital piece of his experience through this analysis:

> Um, but I mean my chest, even right now as I'm talking to you, is tight because I, I still have a lot of like shame that I chose, I chose to be whatever. Straight I guess? What? Um instead of fighting for the person I had been fighting for for years, um, I chose to not love him well, which is completely contradictory to, like, my values as a Christian.

Jared related a prominent incongruity within his identities by defying the authenticity of his identities and, consequently, the values associated with those identities. This internal conflict related to the difficulties upon his reflection and meaning-making from both the flashback and the present in his doctoral program. For example, Jared related a piece of the silence he faces on his queer identity within his doctoral program, which related to another internal conflict:

> Like I didn't, I didn't have that intersectionality of all of those things. And so, when I came to make that decision of, like, I'm sorry I choose her, I can see all of those things swirling around and being a part of that decision-making process. And continuing to be a part of that decision-making process as I, like, continue to maintain this closeted identity up until grad school really.

Jared used several internal conflicts to contextualize both privilege and oppression distinctly as his own life narrative had informed his experience in his doctoral program.

Brian also related multiple instances where he made sense of privilege and oppression through a pattern of internal conflicts. He integrated an internal dialogue to recognize and reflect on privilege and oppression. For example, he explicated the following on the complexity of his intersections in relation to privilege and oppression: "And so, for me, and I struggled with recognizing privilege because I felt like a lot of my intersections had been historically marginalized, underrepresented and oppressed." Brian indicated the challenges in his internal conflict due to the coexisting nature of privilege and oppression within his experiences and identities. To further his point, Brian reflected on his understanding of the complexity of privilege and oppression in his life, which triggered another brief internal dialogue: "So, it was very difficult for me to recognize

privilege because I've had so many experiences in my life where I was unaware but also couldn't see privilege."

Irony. Through some of the interpretations of the participants, they identified particular experiences in which they noted incongruities. They used forms of antithesis to feature differences, as many of these differences in an antithesis example raised consciousness and attention toward issues of privilege and oppression. Differences also highlighted the relationships between privilege and oppression, especially with how individuals and communities divided themselves into privileged and oppressed communities. Frank related particular examples that demonstrated an ironic tension showcasing the incongruity with how he would act in a classroom situation or with the types of inconsistencies with individuals' actions in a classroom. Frank identified an issue within one of his classes, where he analyzed the following:

> They're more comfortable when we're talking about oppression, such as, um, you know, LGBT communities. They're, they're more comfortable in having that conversation, or having a conversation on SES. And the difference is…Or even immigration, but when it comes to race, and um, that professor, you know, being in a privileged role, um, it's, it's generally…Oftentimes, they're not…I see the ball dropped.

In this moment, Frank identified the incongruities with a White faculty member who was not willing to provide the feedback to a White student. Instead, the White faculty member relied on students of color to assume responsibility for educating the White student on problematic issues of race.

Brian reflected the irony in his experiences upon several occasions, but he referred to a prime example when discussing issues with a particular professor and the methods she implemented regarding pedagogy and grading. Brian related the incongruity of the activity in class and, subsequently, the grading process, considering the grading was focused more on the amount students shared about their privilege rather than analyzing their experiences. Brian explained the irony in the following passage:

> And when it becomes that subjective, who am I as a future counselor educator to tell someone else about their experiences should or should not be. In fact, I…I wouldn't do that. But that was kind of how, the class I felt that that time went and as result, people got various grades. And even in the syllabus, the syllabus tells you share as much as you're allowed, but again, the class was not meant to be a counseling session, but if you're integrating counseling techniques to teach students how to get other people or clients, future clients to speak and to share, I'm not quite sure that the way that it was done that it was the most effective in terms of grading.

Brian highlighted this experience as a foundation to interpret meaning-making in light of privilege and oppression. He found a counselor educator incongruent with using influence and power to perpetuate an understanding of privilege for specific communities.

To relate this pattern of irony, Jared recalled a particular moment where he received far less feedback than his female colleagues. He noted he did much less work than his other colleagues on a specific publication. With this experience, Jared was ready

to engage in a long meeting with a severe amount of feedback for his writing. He provided more context on the irony in this situation with the following explanation:

> And I got, like, this subtle one or two sentences, and then we moved on to the next thing we were working on. And so, just like that type of feedback feels so different to me where I walked in, I was ready to have a conversation of what are the things you need us to change if you really want this article or this book chapter or whatever you want it to be to be submitted, and I didn't get nearly as harsh or negative a feedback as I thought I was gonna receive.

Jared used this irony to make sense of the differences that typified his privilege in relation to his experiences of oppression. Describing that moment, Jared interpreted the irony to expand on social positioning by examining differences in power and majority with social identities.

Theme Six: Congruity/Change for the Future

The participants deeply reflected on the connections throughout their interview experience and current experiences within the doctoral program to identify aspects meaningful to their experiences, identities, and future. Specifically, the participants contextualized their future professional roles by noting problematic issues that existed within their own experiences. However, participants connected their intersecting social identities as facets of future professional roles, especially in light of power and social context. This overarching theme was especially vital in relating to experiences and interpretations from participants regarding powerful influences as they made sense of their experiences along with ascertaining their identity for the future. Capturing a wide

breadth of their interpretations, the participants aligned their identities to maintain clarity and congruity for future professional roles.

Congruity. An analysis of the pattern of congruity discusses the experiences of participants in which they made sense of their intersections, privilege, and oppression in a cohesive manner. Congruity also related to patterns where participants aligned their future identities to their experiences in the moment. They recognized in their experiences that they could remain congruent and authentic to their intersections and experiences while maintaining a pathway for their future professional roles. Congruity also layered into remaining congruent with identities, values, and understanding of self and future professional roles. While congruity intertwines with connections between beliefs, values, and identities, it also accounts for the latitude for the congruence between experiences of privilege and oppression and crystallizing future professional roles. The pattern of congruity included insight and recognition used from the participants to make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression.

As an example of the pattern of congruity, Brian recognized the role as an educator and future faculty member mirroring his experiences. He reflected a deeper understanding of his identities as a more authentic method to access and make sense of his future professional role as an educator. Using this interpretation of his doctoral program experiences, Brian reflected on the contextualization of privilege, oppression, and intersectionality through his personal and professional lens while more fully understanding himself in multiple contexts (e.g., class, workplace). Brian also made sense of this interpretation as an analysis for understanding his own pedagogical strategies. He emphasized these perspectives in the following interpretation:

> And also, in my similar classes, in my preparing future faculty classes, in determining interventions and…but then, also, just looking within myself especially as the concept of privilege, oppression, and intersectionality comes up, in being able to understand the concepts of those words, but also looking to see where I fit personally, but also where I fit professionally in terms of the people that I work with every day. Which is I work with college students. And so…but then, also, how doctoral students are treated in the program.

Brian also focused on the primary experience of power as a future faculty member. Reflecting on his experiences navigating privilege and oppression in his doctoral program, he noted the problematic issues with regards to admissions, graduation, and retention. He used his personal experiences with privilege and oppression to enact recognition of his future professional role as a faculty member. Emphasizing admissions, graduation, and retention, Brian desired to remain conscious of historically marginalized and minority communities within academic programs. With his own experiences of privilege and oppression in academia, he reflected on this idea to consider how he would operate with the power to facilitate a stake in the admissions, retention, and graduation**:**

> I mean, so…so there is privilege in that if I become a member of the academy, I too will probably end up being a part of the circle of people who make decisions on who comes into the program and then who…who continues to persist in the program, and then those who…who actually graduate. And, um, you know, admissions, acceptance, uh, persistence, retention and then graduation, uh, is…is necessary, but then someone, I imagine who has the authority at…at the professional level are paying attention to the number of students hopefully that are

coming in and out of master's and doctoral programs for counselor education and supervision.

With this interpretation, Brian highlighted increased congruency with the linkage to his current experiences and the possibilities embedded in a future professional role.

Frank, on the other hand, highlighted the congruity in his intersections through identifying the recognition of authenticity and connection. In particular, his intersections and subsequent experiences connected to the confluence of privilege and oppression conveyed an understanding that more deeply empathizes with the communities and clientele he serves. Frank emphasized his experiences of oppression within his intersecting identities as the major factor for attuning to his role as a counselor and his services to communities: "Uh, so I think my- my, um, my oppressive experiences, um, has afforded me an opportunity to not only, um, truly empathize but also create authentic connections with my clients, build like strong, uh, clinician client, rapport." Frank also reiterated this interpretation to infer the connection with his own social identities in conjunction with his role as a counselor. He provided another observation to exemplify this understanding of his experiences: "I think that, um, my oppressive experiences have really afforded me with a connection with, um, the population that I serve primarily, uh, that I think is necessary, um, and- and rewarding."

Jared used his identities and experiences to reflect and mirror the context grounding his intersections. Informing this recognition, Jared pinpointed his faith and ideas embedded within a "larger narrative" to make sense of his intersections, privilege, and oppression.

> Um, yeah, yeah, I think some of that, some of the privileges of having conversations, some of the privileges of having that strong faith foundation, um entrusting in a, you know, a god, a deity that says like you know, r-even in the midst of your oppression like you, like you have work, you matter, you're mine, right? Like having that ownership and feeling like I'm a part of this larger narrative helped me, and still helps me to put all the pieces of who I am together. Um, and to resist and to remain and to move forward.

With this reflection, Jared began to contextualize his experiences as part of a "larger narrative" that was essentially much more consistent with his beliefs, values, and experiences. Intertwined with his interpretations and experiences of privilege and oppression, identifying how his social identities systematically and relationally fit into a specific context provided a moment of recognition, congruity, and grounding.

In a compelling manner, the participants negotiated the crystallization of their future professional roles and career paths. All participants identified a connection between their experiences of privilege and oppression in their doctoral program as a juncture for making sense of their options and future career pathways. Brian, for example, integrated a connection of "best fit":

> …you know, as I think about impact, I think about fit. I think about looking at places that say one thing and yet the surface looks different than what is being presented in terms of the content, and that right there makes me weary. In fact, I did apply for an opportunity in [state removed], and interviewed and was going to be asked to come to the campus, and…but I recognized that the mission, the beliefs, the values and the attitudes were inconsistent with my personal beliefs,

> my spiritual beliefs, and my professional values and beliefs. It just wasn't going to work because the institution kept talking about social justice access, but then it wanted to tell faculty how to live their lives.

Jared concurred with this interpretation by alluding to the fact that his intersections will likely give him less options, but allowed for a more purposeful and intentional process to use in the job search:

> I imagine that on some level it might make my job search a little bit smaller. Um, just because I can fine tune a little bit better to what I wanna see and then who I wanna be encouraged by and influenced by. Um, and that's not, it doesn't feel sad at all; that actually gives me a lot more clarity to my professional journey. So, yeah, I'm very excited about what's next and where I'm going. Um, even though I have no idea, and I don't know who I'm going to sit down with and talk.

Frank amplified this type of congruity in a much more different interpretation, but discerned further clarity on his future career prospects and pathways. For example, he shared this explanation:

> …in the same token, I love my private practice. I literally go there and I deal with myself, by myself and I literally go for the work. I'm not going for, um, the fellowship with other, like, coworkers or anything like that. I'm literally going to do what I love without the politics, without the drama. And so, for me, I think it's shifted from wanting to be on the tenure track and not have a private practice to have mainly a private practice to maybe doing some adjunct work.

In contrast with Brian and Jared, Frank entertained a further clarity with more ideas to enhance his private practice opportunities and produce as an adjunct faculty member

rather than aim for a tenure-track faculty position. Based on his experiences of "politics" within his doctoral program, he felt it was more congruent to continue his private practice and focus on contributing as an adjunct.

Motivation. The pattern of motivation operated as a basis for participants to explore future professional roles as a context for the experiences of privilege and oppression embedded throughout their life narrative and, most importantly, from their doctoral programs. The pattern across the participants' experiences pinpointed a multiplicity of factors (e.g., role models, empowerment, and resilience) to capture the variability of influences upon future professional roles. They identified insight for their future professional roles and careers as a process emanating from their consciousness around experiences of privilege and oppression.

Brian, for instance, analyzed sources of motivation to make sense of his experiences of privilege and oppression while incurring empowerment for the future. In multiple examples, he identified sources outside his institution to energize his motivation to envision his future professional roles and pathways along with the connection to his own experiences of privilege and oppression. One example included connections with colleagues and mentors outside his current institution:

> …making sense of it, I…for me is being able to have reflective conversations with people who are like minded or have gone through similar experiences, and those who may have not gone through similar experiences because I think talking these things through, uh, helps to not keep it inside. Um, trauma that is wrapped up inside provides no release for a person to vent or to share, and if triggered later in one's own work, it's possible without coping skills to turn around and do that to

somebody else. So, making sense of it for me is more of talking with people outside of my department, outside of my institution, uh, and…and hearing those stories in, um, through reflection, discerning, okay, how do I work through this without having to…without adopting the same types of…of bad practices.

While illustrating this experience, Brian shared the idea of "reflective conversations" to engage more fluidly with his experiences of his intersecting identities. Within the interpretation of his experiences, Brian continued mapping possibilities to alter, change, and make sense of his practices in the future as a counseling professional and faculty member. Another example identified connections on social media to re-energize his motivation while making sense of his experiences of privilege and oppression.

I think the impact is…is…is, um, trying not to…to adopt practice personally and professionally. It's hard because you want to do the right thing, and then I don't think if it wasn't for additional support, like I'm a part of a virtual or online group on Facebook of African-American Black professionals who may be going through very similar things. So, I mean I'm a part of one for mental health and then I'm a part of one for student affairs. And, you know, it's like a space for us to communicate with each other, even if we don't know each other, to let each other know you're not alone because you don't have time to go to a support group and there are not any to my knowledge, any support groups specifically for doctoral students.

Through this particular source of support on social media, Brian received support, but more importantly, he received community to contextualize his experiences and expand

his perspectives. In contextualizing with his intersections, he also utilized the support to continue and progress within his program, despite his experiences of oppression.

Brian also indicated a particular motivation of how he envisioned his future role pedagogically predicated on a salient current experience of privilege and oppression within the classroom. This identified experience provided an interpretation for methods to engage future students inspired from his own experiences of oppression within the classroom. Referring to a particular experience within the classroom, Brian relayed multiple experiences where he felt the professor misconstrued his experiences of his own social identities. He was invalidated for not sharing heavily about male privilege when he noted the contrast regarding his own intersections as a Black gay male. Brian indicated that his ability to share and grades were influenced by the power of this professor. Brian shared the following discussion to exemplify this motivation:

> And so, if I'm ever, you know, honored to have that opportunity to teach, I wanna make sure that I let students know that what I'm researching and what I do is related to what I'm interested in, but I should not project that onto them. I should not tell them this is what you have to believe. That's not my…my role. My role should be to facilitate their learning and to be able to help them understand the concepts as they apply those concepts to the populations that they may serve in the future.

Similarly, Jared identified his own motivation influencing his professional role grounded in "resilience" and "community." Noting the connection between "resilience" and "community," Jared encountered a message of survival to continue persevering and staying congruent to his experiences within his doctoral program:

> …and for me, like that resilience is brought on by community, um, I didn't get it on my own. I can very much say that if it was just my stuff, I would not be there. Um, I would not be here, doing this.

In conjunction with "resilience," Jared identified a plethora of interpretations to capture motivation within his experiences to crystallize his future professional roles and contributions. Jared noted that his intersections focused on delivering contributions to a variety of communities associated with his social identities:

> I'm continuously going right back to saying, ooh, so how does this look from a Black, queer, Christian, southern, male lens, right? Then all the other identities are strolling around in here. Um, yeah, I think it influences just how might that look different for me, or might that look similar to the archetype of what that role is. Um, and how can I uplift the strength that I add to that space, that identity, and how do I supplement, um, the things that I feel anxious about and nervous and cared about with those, maybe again, those protective factors, those privileged identities, um, that might help reinforce some of that fear that I experience.

While acknowledging the uniqueness of his lens, Jared discussed the changes that he can sustain through navigating his identities. To amplify this narrative, Jared discussed the motivations to expand a platform for intersectionality by helping other individuals recognize their intersections to make sense and thrive in their identities. One of Jared's explanations channeled this perspective:

> Um, and to acknowledge and affirm that every individual that comes into this process is also going through that. And that we're doing this work concurrently. This is not just about me, like, I have identities and stuff like that, but every single

> person that goes through this program has that. And whether they're aware of it, or not, that's a whole different thing. Um, perhaps that could also be a part of my role, to help people recognize the complexities of their identity? No, that's gonna be- sorry. Let me take that back. That will be a part of my future professional role, um, helping people to see the complexities of who they are in their practice and their- like it exists, it's a thing.

Jared used this energy to interpret his future professional role as a counselor, supervisor, and counselor educator. Fundamentally, Jared hoped to reify the visibility and existence of the "complexities" underscoring the linkages among individuals' social identities. Another statement from Jared also demonstrated the magnitude of this motivation associated with becoming more conscious of his social identities:

> I think it helped me realize what matters in my world. Where my mattering lies, right? Um, by taking some time to understand these feelings of oppression and these feelings of privilege like I recognize their inequalities and I have a passion and a drive to fight for these, for the reconciliation of inequalities. Umm, yeah, it's-it's influence that, like the best way that I know how to do that is to use my skills of listening well. To engage with people, um, intentionally on a one-on-one basis or in groups or multiple different ways. Yeah, I-I think it's just helped to define what my career is gonna be, um and that's really cool.

Jared's experiences of his intersections granted a form of empowerment to serve as a catalyst for changes he hoped to contribute as a counseling professional.

Similar to Jared, Frank identified that his intersectional experiences of privilege and oppression motivate him to continue fighting for communities representing his social

identities. He established this commitment to build on a platform to continue advocating for marginalized communities in solidarity. In relation to this motivation, Frank shared this perspective:

> On the same, in the same token it- it can sometimes be- be like a fight. So, a fight meaning, fighting alongside with the people of color, but also fighting, um, for my- my intersectional experience, uh, not only as a person of color, but also as a gay male. And like really creating a voice and a platform for myself to where, um, not only we're learning from it, but we're also understanding.

Frank hoped to continue making sense of his intersections by representing his voice and advocating for change alongside other communities sharing his identities and his experiences. In conjunction with a motivation to represent his intersections, Frank identified motivations emerging from life experiences and sources outside of the program. He identified friends and family as supports to continue advocacy and change while engaging with a platform to evolve and interpret his understanding of his intersecting social identities:

> …because when you go into a PhD program, you're- you're learning um…your- your awareness is heightened. So, there are things that you're- you're learning about yourself and learning about the community that family members and friends aren't privy to. So, like at- at that point you almost…sometimes you may become like a change agent- a change agent for everyone else. So, it- it often makes me think of the saying like when you're in a PhD program, your whole family's pretty much in a PhD program too 'cause you- you talk about these things and you're changing so much. And they're used to you a year and a half ago. So, when you

bring things up, they may be resistant to it and how does that affect their relationship.

Frank notably highlighted the increase of his awareness by interacting with communities outside of his doctoral program while concurrently enrolled in a doctoral program. This interaction continues to enact his growth, development, and contributions for change.

Summary

For this chapter, I addressed findings from the data to respond to the guiding research question: How do Queer Men of Color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in counselor education doctoral programs? Consequently, findings correspond to the purpose of this research study to understand how queer men of color make sense of privilege and oppression in counselor education and supervision doctoral programs. Findings from the data organized into six superordinate themes: (a) Multiple Dimensions of Privilege; (b) Multiple Dimensions of Oppression; (c) Context/System; (d) Complexities of Intersections; (e) Critical Incidents/Conflict; and (f) Congruity/Change for the Future. Using rich, thick data to exemplify components of the superordinate themes, I have supplemented excerpts from each participant to demonstrate and examine the convergence and divergence across the lived experiences of the participants. Each superordinate theme identifies major themes of convergence while excerpts from the nine 90-minute interviews across all three participants generated divergent experiences and interpretations toward the superordinate theme. Across all three participants, there was increased depth to feature numerous excerpts of rich, thick data to expand more systematically and intuitively to the overarching superordinate themes. The next chapter will focus more deeply on interpretations from the findings,

especially in relation to future directions for research, practice, doctoral education, and counselor education.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter entails the theoretical, professional, and contextual implications emerging from the findings to address the guiding research question. The purpose of this research study is to understand how queer men of color make sense of privilege and oppression in counselor education and supervision doctoral programs. As a result, the findings operate in response to the guiding research question: How do Queer Men of Color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in counselor education doctoral programs? Across nine interviews from three participants (i.e., three interviews per participant) identifying as Queer Men of Color in doctoral programs of Counselor Education and Supervision, rich, thick qualitative data stemming from interpretations conflated with experiences converged into the following themes: (a) Multiple Dimensions of Privilege; (b) Multiple Dimensions of Oppression; (c) Context/System; (d) Complexities of Intersections; (e) Critical Incidents/Conflict; and (f) Congruity/Change for the Future. Specifically, implications interconnect with overarching movements in the counseling profession in conjunction with the roles of counselor educators, counselor education and supervision doctoral programs, and doctoral education. The content of the chapter emanates primarily from interpretations of the findings interconnected with extant literature, broader context of counselor education and doctoral education, and the praxis of pedagogical strategies and curriculum foci within counselor education. I discuss recommendations and future directions for practice in counselor education (e.g., pedagogy, curriculum), changes for the context of counselor education, and research.

A Researcher Bursts Forth: Researcher Reflexivity, Subjectivity, and Social Positioning

Encountering the research process featured an intertwined comprehension resulting from the complexity of my social location embedded within the study as an insider researcher (Chavez, 2008; Greene, 2014; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013). Weaving facets of my paradigmatic approach of intersectionality, I engage underlying principles of intersectionality to amplify my positionality and privilege as the researcher while collaborating with my participants. Positing privilege does not exclusively remain a passive process, but rather an iterative, active process with intentionality and consciousness. This type of conscious thinking harkens back to the challenges embedded not only within the system involved in multiple layers of counselor education and doctoral education, but also includes the types of challenges inferred for researchers. Consequentially, such critical analysis woven into the reflection is much more magnified for researchers occupying the spaces of insider researchers.

Framing my positionality within the study as an insider researcher broadened my access and connection to the participants' narratives, yet involved my own social positioning and narrative in critical self-reflection and thinking. More intuitively, cautions to misinterpret such findings within the lens of an insider researcher require an iterative process of reflexivity fully engaged in vulnerability and authenticity. In enacting critical consciousness and motivations behind the dissemination of the findings, I encountered a delicate balance throughout the research process while grounded in an intersectional paradigm infused with principles consistent with critical theory, CRT, and feminist theory. Predominantly, I observed the axiological claims grounded within my positionality as an insider researcher. I remain transformed by the research and the narratives of the communities, and my interactions with stakeholders and participants

magnified a sample of how I critically analyzed context and power within the counseling profession and within the process of research.

Documenting observations and reflections throughout my engagement with data collection and data analysis procedures, I noted the challenges inherent in participant recruitment as a key site of critical reflexivity. The first issue I encountered was contacting department chairs and doctoral program coordinators who simply indicated that there were no men of color in their programs or individuals who fit into the criteria. Although a valid claim, I considered the interpretations emanating from my experience. As a queer person of color, I contextualized this experience with curiosity, wondering about the power and influence of stakeholders in higher education along with the development of the counseling profession. I wondered immediately about the context of counselor education and the power stakeholders claim upon determining the social identities of students. Within an internal dialogue, I reflected on these questions that seemed to flood my own understanding of these communities in the context of the counseling profession and, more importantly, in the context of counselor education doctoral programs:

- Have we decided and determined other individuals' social identities based on what we have seen?
- How do we know other individuals' social identities if we have not accounted for the possibilities of passing as cisgender and heterosexual, particularly if an individual identifies as trans, non-binary, gender nonconforming, or genderqueer? Have we redefined or silenced their complexities?

- What do these interactions explain as a message of affirming practices in the counseling profession and counselor education? Are we not practicing what we are preaching?

The second is my connection and disconnect with communities based on multiple layers integrated with my position as a researcher and member of the community of interest. Namely, I continued to interrogate my own location as a researcher by understanding the ways in which my identities inform my lens, my power, and my values while involved in a stance of researcher privilege. Reflecting through my own internal dialogue, I understood my connections to other queer men of color within the profession and access to solicit participation in this research study. On the other hand, the reflection on my own internal dialogue pinpointed the axiological claims embedded in my paradigm as a researcher and my own ethical standpoint. I feared the amount of undue influence embedded in these relationships with sampling directly from the connection, the biases, and the dual relationships that emerge within that complexity. Without allowing participants into self-selecting into this study, I would have already placed assumptions on members of this community. Additionally, I would have already instrumentally imposed my own values and my own assumptions that they shared my intersections and, subsequently, my experiences, which would ultimately shape the data to fit my narrative. The axiological claims within my paradigm continues to increase my consciousness, attention, and prioritization of this interaction with participants.

I had to take a step back to fully reintegrate and understand my intersections while consciously interrogating my social identities linked to both privilege and oppression. It is in this consciousness that I attempt to understand the fullness of who I am, the ways I

can empower, and the ways I can disempower. I make sense of my world and my relationship to other individuals and communities in a manner that disentangles my social identities, but also fortifies my privileges as a researcher. It is my positioning as an insider researcher that connects me to communities of interest, but complicates the power derived in illustrating narratives of these communities. I resonate with the narratives of pain and oppression, but wrestle with its coexistence in various forms of privilege. I find myself constantly bridling to remove, yet integrate myself with this lens. I iteratively make sense of my response to the questions posed by Fine (1994, 2006): For whom? For whom is this research? For whom are these stories shared and analyzed? For whom am I writing? Realizing the work of scholars (Fine, 1994; Fine et al., 2003; Humphrey, 2007; Wagle & Cantaffa, 2008; Weis & Fine, 2012) who critically analyzed researcher reflexivity in conjunction with the costs and motivations of performing such research, I contextualize the interpretations of the findings by grappling the safety held in my privilege as a researcher, yet meshes together in a manner that makes sense with my connections to the community as an insider researcher. I parallel this notion of "bursting forth" (Vagle, 2009, p. 585) to fully integrate an intentional approach of making sense of the participants' experiences predominantly as an iterative, conscious, and evolving exercise.

Interpretations of Findings in Relation to Research Question

While detailing the magnitude of interpretations provided by all three participants across the six major superordinate themes, each superordinate theme specifically expands on individual and contextual meaning holding value for altering the system, representation, and praxis of specifically counselor education programs. The

interpretations of the key findings operate in response to the guiding research question, yet exist as sites of critical consciousness, social action, and social change. Consistent with an intersectional paradigm, the findings operate according to major underlying principles grouped together to define the complexities of intersectionality and, hence, intersectional experiences. Reiterating some of those key principles, Collins and Bilge (2016) organized six key aspects defining intersectionality as a tool to access its theoretical lens and revolutionary intellectual promise: (a) social context; (b) power; (c) social justice; (d) relationality; (e) complexity; and (f) social inequality. Understanding these values in conflation for intersectionality derives a more intuitive understanding to the participants' experiences and interpretations. Furthering the ways in which participants make sense of their interpretations and experience, expanding the findings operates on the basis of philosophical underpinnings captured in summary by Smooth (2013). Smooth noted a variety of principles that concomitantly weave multiple pieces of an intersectional approach in tandem. The first principle focuses on identity categories as "intersecting" and unique rather than exclusively reflecting an "additive" model that flattens categories (Smooth, 2013, p. 21). Additionally, Smooth (2013) emphasized the importance of antiessentialism as a major basis to examine diversity and unique experiences within and between social identities. Coinciding with Smooth's (2013) perspective, the meanings integrated with social identities and the network of power relations can change over history, time, and location. Smooth channeled the perception that privilege and marginalization are simultaneous within experience, not "mutually exclusive" (p. 21). Lastly, Smooth (2013) observed that intersectionality largely operates on an approach to alter social conditions and location responsible for the production of

inequalities while aiming for goals of social justice. The confluence of these principles informed the research design, but also captured the systematic manner in which participants' interpretations and narratives emerged. Reflecting on the six superordinate themes developed from the richness of the data from participants, these findings create points of critical thinking in response to the guiding research question: How do Queer Men of Color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in counselor education doctoral programs? The following sections integrate a dialogue to elaborate more deeply on the findings while employing the lens of a "double hermeneutic," where I as the "researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 3). The infusion of tenets of an intersectionality paradigm and strategies from an IPA methodological framework enact an exploratory vehicle to excavate interpretative, critical thinking.

Exploring multiple layers of privilege and oppression. Consistent with the guiding research question, making sense of experiences of privilege and oppression simultaneously provided points of departure for critical examination, where participants reflected on dimensions within and between privilege and oppression. Critically examining privilege and oppression in conjunction and separately broadened the sources of experiences and knowledge to retrieve. As a result, the findings unify together to build a framework to refer to how queer men of color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in their doctoral programs. The aspects of privilege were multidimensional within the narratives of the participants and the holistic vantage point offered within this study. Making sense of privilege referenced multiple layers and interactions within the context of participants' experiences. Recalling experiences from

the histories of life narratives while rejoining with experiences in the present, participants from this study illuminated a variety of expressions, interpretations, and permutations regarding how privilege affected their lives and how privilege continues to emerge. These moments exacted a particular dynamic and interaction between participants and their understanding of privilege. Interpreting privilege required in-depth recall and forethought to relay rich experiences, narratives, and interpretations. Participants noted several layers of identity interwoven into a network sustained by both privilege and oppression. More commonly, participants identified patterns of privilege regarding education, social class, and socioeconomic status operating in conjunction with their other salient social identities (e.g., queer man of color). Of particular note, participants briefly mentioned that the centrality of education as a social identity helped them to more fully understand their intersections and multiple social identities. There is a challenging notion of education as privilege while education functions to bolster access and power to groups, communities, and resources. Given the fact that privilege functions to benefit individuals with access and power, education can operate as a privileged identity. Additionally, education meant financial opportunities for the participants to further their own needs, development, and options, namely in acquisition of knowledge and career pathways. Aside from naming education as a privileged identity, education establishes status and provides pathways for the acquisition of knowledge, which fortifies the consciousness through which participants begin to make sense of the events, contexts, interactions around them. Gaining a consciousness can mitigate the tendency and act as a buffer to disengage and to deny privilege.

The interpretations of privilege align closely with extant literature focused on operationalizing and defining privilege. Specifically, Bonds and Inwood (2016) identified privilege as "taken-for-granted benefits and protections" (p. 716). Privilege also reifies hierarchical structures illustrating distribution of power in social structures and, subsequently, the contrast of subordination (Bonds & Inwood, 2016; Collins, 1990). Eckerd and colleagues (2016) also operationalized privilege as both experiences and systems that elicit advantage. Similar to definitions of contextualizing privilege, participants from the current study interpreted privilege as an experience defined by advantage, access, power, and relationships. Deeply capturing an alignment with the literature, one of the participants referred to privilege as "unearned benefits." Comparing to advantages, benefits, and access, the participants also defined interpretations of privilege as relationships, power structures, and influence to conform, realizing the scholarly interpretations of privilege as a pathway to brutality, imperialism, and exploitation (Bonds & Inwood, 2016; Collins, 1990; Tuck & Yang, 2012). As participants reflected on privilege as a way to maintain status and use power to perpetuate narratives and messages, interpretations of privilege from scholarship revealed further lived experiences operating uniquely within the context of individual narratives from participants.

Participants also communicated the difficulties in recognizing privilege, primarily since privilege can bias perspectives to remove accountability from realizing the effects and impact of privilege on other communities. Contextualizing privilege in their own experiences, participants combined an understanding of privilege and oppression together, which reinforces an invisibility upon experiences and identities of privilege.

Integrating the fluidity of these complexities, the findings suggest privilege is much harder to access than oppression. Oppression can also involve an element of obscuring privilege due to the increased sensibility and emotionality around oppression. In conjunction, oppression operates within a heavy salience that alters the manner in which privilege is seen and heard. This dynamic occurring within the lives of participants holds a relationship with Corlett and Mavin's (2014) argument that the conflation of oppression in conjunction to privilege can render privilege more invisible as a result of multiple dimensions of social identity.

As captured within the findings related to the superordinate theme on multiple dimensions of oppression, oppression can emerge in a variety of explicit and implicit forms shaped by power, context, and other stakeholders involved within a particular experience. Oppression operated as a significantly complex construct, demonstrating the multitude of variations oppression has incurred on the lives of the participants. As a result, oppression was considerably multifaceted and multisystemic, attached to institutional oppression, political oppression, and interpersonal oppression. Oppression covered numerous types of acts and events, including microaggressions, invalidation, subjugation, powerlessness, silence, and vicarious discrimination. Integrating the participants' interpretations of oppression cohesively, they identified implicit and explicit experiences with oppression. Oppression operated in subtle, visible, and invisible representations. Vital to realizing oppression thematically, one of the participant's interpretations of oppression capturing that oppression meant to be "kept down" or "put down" and also emphasized the magnitude of oppression on the lives of participants. This particular statement also conceptually related the operationalization of oppression

within the idea of subordination captured in the discourse of multiple scholars (Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Singh & Salazar, 2010b; Taylor, 2016; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Oppression is not solely discrimination, as it can intertwine with multiple forms. Since oppression results in feelings of subordination (Cho, 2013; May, 2014), a multiplicity of representations signifies variability of oppression. Participants explicated the realities in which systemic representations of their identities placed them as problematic. A participant, for example, related to the idea that he was seen as "disposable" within society adding to a sense of fear and trepidation. Other experiences from participants demonstrated the differences of power with other stakeholders (e.g., faculty) in their contexts. With recognition of the power of stakeholders, participants' social identities became far more obscured. Participants related experiences in which faculty as stakeholders did not have conversations around some of their identities, notably sexuality and affectional identity. In other experiences, participants considered the ramifications of stakeholders, predominantly faculty, using power and influence to perpetuate distinct narratives about individuals and communities reflecting their intersections. These narratives were not necessarily positive. One participant identified the issue of silence by explaining he had to "suppress to survive."

As all participants divulged the multiplicity of experiences in which they were censored or silenced, the findings captured two different aspects about power and social context from participants' experiences that highlighted the simultaneous connection between privilege and oppression. To maintain power, status, and privilege, marginalized communities can feel the pressure to assimilate with individuals and groups who occupy a position of domination and privilege. This concern was reflected in one

participant's example reflecting a faculty member who wanted him to see male privilege exclusively without ascertaining more about his life history, complexities, and intersections. Additionally, history plays a role in shaping social context and, hence, the conglomeration of privilege and oppression. However, the findings suggest another possibility of considering the context and time in which an incident is taking place. As a result, this example from the classroom could have been contextualized with the historical influences on the disconnect between the participant and his faculty member, but a perspective that can also be considered in that moment was how his intersections had been represented at the time of the class. Eliciting this perspective aligns with the participants' recognition of societal images, demonstrating how their intersections have been positioned in broader contexts and systemic levels outside academia.

The relationship between male identity and privilege. Although the confluence of male identity and privilege operated as a site of convergence for participants, their experiences and, consequently, their interpretations varied, which showcased the variability and divergence across their experiences. This divergence, based on participants' narratives, was potentially a representation of the conflation of life history and experience in conjunction with multiple interactions involving stakeholders and contexts associated with power. Male privilege could have informed interpretations of privilege broadly for queer men of color, but the representations of their intersections varied. Not all intersections, despite the homogeneity in the sample, could appear the same. Other pieces from the participants highlighted a history of age, social class, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and nationality. A major difference to excavate from the participants' diverse experiences and interpretations regarding male

privilege could also refer to the status the participants had within their doctoral program. All three participants were at different stages (i.e., writing dissertation; pre-comprehensive exams; first year of study). The length of time within a program could have also shifted the characterizations of privilege and oppression within their programs. Sexual and affectional identities played a major role in discerning how to make sense of their intersections and how their positions in privilege altered in a specific environment. The primacy of sexuality and affectional identity in the experiences of the participants accentuated the silence some of the participants faced since race and gender were highly prominent. These patterns attune to the mixed findings across multiple studies regarding the idea of male opportunities and male privilege, given that other social identities (e.g., sexuality) and their resulting intersections alter traditional forms of masculinity (Isacco & Morse, 2015; Michel et al., 2015; Williams, 2015). Reflecting specifically on the Michel et al. (2015) study, there were mixed findings about whether male privilege was a major factor in opportunities for men in the counseling profession. The conflicting nature of the findings also relate to both the Isacco and Morse (2015) and Williams (2015) studies that highlighted the lack of support and opportunities for men who adopt nontraditional masculinities. Forsman and Barth (2017) also supported this concern recognizing the lack of academic support for men who did not represent traditional masculinity ideologies.

Tokenism was a relatively influential part of the process of the participants. To make sense of their experiences, participants referred to tokenism in a variety of different contexts. Tokenism emerged as a much more prominent form of oppression, although it can seemingly offer benefits to participants as an underrepresented population within the

context of doctoral education, counselor education, and the counseling profession. Although they were highlighted for their rare presence in counselor education programs, participants problematized their experiences of tokenism. One participant referred to tokenism as a privilege, but also an oppression. Other participants referred to the issue that their intersections provided unique opportunities, but incurred a heavy amount of pressure to perform in the program or radically change the program. This sense of performativity was also related to the crossroads of their identities: it highlighted problematic issues about traditional aspects of masculinity that a plethora of researchers frequently problematized (Isacco & Morse, 2015; Michel et al., 2015; Williams, 2015). Additionally, one participant identified the issue that organizations (e.g., workplace; academia; higher education) use their intersections to reflect a token minority to essentially amplify an image of diversity, although the organization may not necessarily practice diversity effectively. Related to intense pressure to perform, participants also critiqued the amount of scrutiny and examination they faced throughout their doctoral programs. They were frequently examined as to their progress and contributions. Facing the issue of tokenism, participants also indicated a relevant issue connected with representation and societal images in the program. Participants referred to themselves as "the only one," where they would not see many individuals with their social identities entering and graduating from programs. Among the participants, this issue notably extended to fears about survival within the institution, but also fear for one participant in navigating future employment opportunities and faculty positions. Within this interaction of tokenism, they also relayed the concern of fulfilling a narrative sustained by systemic contexts—both their doctoral programs and broader society—creating a connection with

negative images. Participants noticed they were steeped in a constant pattern of comparison to other Black males regarding performance in the program and stereotypes from society. This pattern was particularly evident when participants remained concerned that their actions might represent a stereotype or preconceived notion already held about their positioning as a Black man.

Salience of intersections. Consistent with Collins's (2004) perspectives of the "outsider within" (p. 122), participants used various processes to help them navigate both their intersections and social identities to deconstruct problematic issues, formulate congruence and understanding, and generate valuable knowledge. Using their own narratives reflecting intersectionality, participants identified the complexities attached to their identities, experiences, and social structures mirroring the acquisition of knowledge and consciousness. Their unique perspectives provided insight for personal self-understanding and social context. While making sense of these complexities attached to their experiences, participants integrate perspectives from navigating their intersections that retain worth and value. In addition to their intersectional experiences, participants located knowledge and empowerment particularly within those intersections. Their intersections provided the participants a unique voice that highlighted recognition, congruity, and motivation, as participants emerged diversely with connections to communities and future professional roles.

Participants integrated the exemplification of intersecting social identities with the implementation of intersectionality as vital to making sense of their narratives, histories, and contexts. They fortified their own conscious understanding of themselves and what was happening to them in specific experiences. Participants had useful interpretations

that demonstrated the range of social identities while operating primarily at the centrality of race and gender. Conversely, participants noted that dialogues about their sexual and affectional identities created far less visibility. Their intersecting social identities played a large role in contextualizing this disparity in visibility, given that some of the participants referred to the prominent visibility of sexuality and affectional identity for White men. It is possible that the salience of race and gender was far more amplified for queer men of color, especially in light of privilege and oppression. However, sexuality and gender identity was a key identity in shaping their own knowledge while the methods of navigating social identities, privilege, and oppression increased authenticity. For many of the participants, their understanding of sexuality and affectional identity altered their interpretations of their social positioning, added more depth to the complexities integrated into their intersections, and accentuated an authenticity to fully express their identities cohesively.

Collins (1986, 2004) provided powerful seminal work applied to women of color specifically within the discipline of sociology, but more importantly, she identified the majority of White men within academia operating systemically on a platform of domination. Generating an outsider within perspective linked value to narratives for individuals occupying multiple marginalized identities (Collins, 1986, 2004). Although Collins (1986, 1990, 2004) critiqued academia, she inferred the promise of radically altering social conditions by recognizing the vital perspectives and contributions integrated from the intellectual and cultural capital of her own social identities. It is the outsider within perspective that allowed her to begin a process of refusing and interrupting the norms historically predetermined by the antecedents of majority

communities and domination (Collins, 1986, 2004). Aligning with the interpretations of participants from this current study, participants utilized their intersections to access methods to navigate problematic social structures and to cohesively make sense of what was happening to them in their specific contexts.

Salience of context. Making sense of privilege and oppression operated within the confines of social context, which heavily helped participants to make sense of the differences that positioned them in privilege or oppression within a particular context or system. This particular finding was vital to understanding the alignment between privilege and oppression in association with their identities. Participants explored further understanding on majority-minority relationships and gave context to more accurately center their experiences of privilege and oppression. Some of the participants had social identities with histories as majority groups, but when contextualized into another setting, these social identities sometimes organized into a minority group. Formatively, they gained insight by thinking about tiers of intersections and hierarchies of structures influencing relationships of power. Social context also influenced the salience regarding specific social identities, as one participant noted that cultural norms within his community did not allow for a more explicit conversation on sexuality. Making sense of findings related to social context was especially useful in the context of intersectionality's exploration regarding hierarchies of structures centering domination for marginalized communities and, more importantly, for multiply-marginalized communities (Carastathis, 2016; Collins & Bilge, 2016). Bowleg and Bauer (2016) also epistemologically captured the importance of social context, considering that intersectionality derives an analysis interwoven into both social context and power.

Critical incidents and conflict create consciousness. The participants gleaned a deepened understanding of identities, power, and context by identifying several critical incidents highlighting the disconnect and differences embedded in the coexisting nature of privilege and oppression. Realizing the simultaneous nature of privilege and oppression, participants pointed to key experiences that demonstrated conflict and challenged their critical thinking. In events that created discomfort and conflict, participants were able to access an understanding about the social structures situating their identities while learning about the social positioning of certain identities. They were also more able to fully engage the complexity of privilege and oppression. When participants explicated their interpretations, they highlighted antithesis and irony to discern the differences in a systemic context, layering into an individual or community's social positioning. External conflicts elucidated an explicit form of privilege and oppression comprising individual nuances and experiences associated with privilege and oppression. Participants used these conflicts—external to themselves— with other individuals and communities to make sense of these forms of privilege and oppression. Internal conflicts reflected the interpretations that the participants used to make sense of their experiences, which especially challenged their critical thinking about their individuality and their social identities. As Hammer and colleagues (2016) postulated, realizing conflict discerned whether individuals became the agent or target of oppression, which provided a sense of the relationships involving the simultaneous nature of privilege and oppression. Consistent with the perspectives of Hammer et al. (2016), the disconnect in relationships helped individual participants more fully grasp the complexities and complications involved in their interactions.

Motivations to change the system. While the participants critically analyzed their experiences in depth, they recognized the capabilities and possibilities inherent in their increase of consciousness about their intersections and the systems influencing their representation. With a critical examination of both their social identities and social structures, participants in this study fluidly crystallized their own perspectives on future professional roles and their actions to change the system. Using the complicated nature of their mutually constitutive identities formulated a sense of empowerment aimed at transforming systems woven into a fabric of power relations. Fully recognizing and deconstructing their identities incurred an authenticity that allowed for congruency and clarity. With congruency and authenticity, participants felt more encouraged to fully represent themselves in a manner that was liberating and transformative for self and for communities attached to their intersections. Notably, one participant realized a responsibility to utilize his power and privileged identities to alter systems to be more affirming for other identities and communities (e.g., differently-abled communities). Additionally, participants expressed a more intuitive understanding of intersectionality and how the framework bridges to empathy for a diversity of individuals with their own unique intersecting identities. It is through the participants making sense of privilege and oppression cohesively together that they realize an empathy for the intersections of other individuals and, subsequently, a connection to a variety of communities. As counselors and counselor educators, participants also reported the motivation to help clients and students recognize their intersections by creatively engaging multiple dimensions of identity and to help them gain a critical consciousness that fosters congruency and empowerment.

Intersectionality's major underpinnings focus extensively on social action as much as its approaches formulate a critical analysis of social identities and social context (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Hancock, 2016; Smooth, 2013; Warner, 2013). Hence, findings from the study extend particular dialogues on the manner in which participants interpreted their capacities to enact social change, social action, and empowerment. Similar to the essence of personal narratives in intersectional approaches (Anzaldúa, 1987; hooks, 1981, 1984, 1989; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983), participants developed counternarratives grounded in their intersections that mirrored complicated issues within social structures and, ultimately, derived potential forms of action to change the system.

Recommendations for the Systemic Context of Counselor Education

Since the nature of counselor education and supervision doctoral programs is located within the auspices of both doctoral education and an institution of higher education, there are implications for multiple layers reflected in a network of social structures and, subsequently, power relations. Contextually complicating a synthesis of counselor education and higher education, doctoral programs of counselor education and supervision are grounded in the history, evolution, and values of the counseling profession and counselor professional identity (CACREP, 2016; Kaplan et al., 2014). Elaborating on interpretations of the findings expressed by the participants requires an examination of influences among counselor education contextualized in academia, but also in the counseling profession. Interpretations from the participants regarding their experiences broadened the contexts of their reflections capturing the social contexts of counselor education and supervision doctoral programs and the counseling profession.

Their interpretations were based both in the meaning held for the future of the counseling profession and the future of counselor education and supervision doctoral programs.

The tenets woven into the *MSJCC* (Ratts et al., 2016) elicit a relationship with the findings from this study regarding participants critically examining their intersections to hone in more congruently on their professional and personal development. The *MSJCC* (Ratts et al., 2016) notably highlights disparities of privilege, oppression, and power associated with communities, contexts, and social identities. Participants from the study used their experiences and interpretations to formulate narratives that could transform potential applications of the *MSJCC* from a theoretical framework to lived experiences. Participants from the study identified the utility of engaging their intersections to mirror critiques of academia and counselor education. Focusing on this relationship and application can also fortify a more comprehensive method of understanding how counseling professionals synthesize their social identities, contexts, communities, and power differentials. This synthesis can remain useful from an evaluative standpoint for engaging students in counselor education to make sense of their worldviews and experiences that intertwine cohesively with privilege and oppression. A vital interpretation from the finding in relation to the *MSJCC* highlights the method in which the participants creatively utilized their intersections to interact with power, privilege, and oppression. Of particular note, the participants identified that the conflation of their social identities influenced their lens to empathize with historically marginalized communities. With this interpretation from the findings, the participants used their intersections and, more specifically, their experiences of oppression to connect with historically marginalized communities.

As participants reflected deeply about their experiences within their doctoral programs, they highlighted the difficulties layered into their experiences with academia and counselor education. Some of their interpretations offered a point of departure for recommendations to consider within the counseling profession and, more specifically, within counselor education. Utilizing the interpretations focused on participants' experiences of tokenism, there is significant value in re-evaluating the importance of supporting queer men of color from admissions to graduation (i.e., admissions, recruitment, retention, graduation). Counselor education programs could also focus on the mechanisms that cause individuals to compartmentalize or parse out some of their intersections in order to survive. This issue was particularly relevant for some of the participants in which they needed to censor or silence themselves. Consistent with the findings in a variety of scholarship and research studies (Forsman & Barth, 2017; Isacco & Morse, 2015; Michel et al., 2015; Williams, 2015), the social location and positionality of queer men of color are quite complex, considering the histories and power found in specific social identities. Although queer men of color may be highly sought out during the admissions process, their oppressive experiences tended to emphasize a stronger salience during their doctoral programs. The context of counselor education and supervision doctoral programs may still require systematic and programmatic enhancement to increase understanding and support for communities reflected by multiple sites of marginalization. The narratives presented from the participants continue to reflect a need to fully realize the intersections of queer men of color and provide a context of safety to systematically integrate the perspectives from their intersections while maintaining attention to the needs and support for queer men of color in doctoral

programs of Counselor Education and Supervision. Systemically, this interpretation coincides with the Michel et al. (2015) study that explicitly identified perceptions of male positioning, recruitment, and retention in the counseling profession, yet involved the need to support men in counseling programs. Although men have a historical narrative of power and privilege, the messiness of other intersecting identities attached to historical narratives of marginalization requires a sense of performativity. They are expected to perform according to ideologies and scripts established by histories of patriarchy and heteronormativity. If men defy narratives established by patriarchy and heteronormativity, they are viewed as a problem. This issue of performativity was specifically highlighted as an issue within Isacco and Morse's (2015) study reporting that refusing traditional masculinity ideology resulted in lack of academic support. Additionally, Williams's (2015) study highlighted the problematic heteronormativity, patriarchy, and hegemony interwoven into educational and work spaces.

Admissions, recruitment, and retention were addressed in relation to some of the participants' experiences, particularly a participant who wished to use his knowledge and consciousness to change the inclusion of graduate counseling programs. Although the counseling profession has noticed the low numbers of men enrolling in counseling programs, it is more a concern to realize the complications established by other intersecting identities for men enrolling in counseling programs. Admissions plays a key role in the entry and access to graduate degree programs in counseling, but as a participant emphasized, survival, retention, and graduation are equally important to consider when analyzing the population of individuals with particular intersections.

Recommendations for Pedagogy and Praxis

The reflections from participants on the nature of their experiences of privilege and oppression in their doctoral programs portrayed particular moments and images that connect with the manner in which pedagogy and praxis exist in counselor education. As participants contextualized specific events occurring within their classrooms, they related in-depth examples of problematic issues within their experiences and interactions as a catalyst for future professional roles and commentary about counselor education practices. I provide examples to relate more fluidly to recommendations integrated into counselor education practices and pedagogical strategies.

As one of the participants (Brian) indicated, limiting the amount of space for individuals to make sense of the fullness and congruence of social identities and intersections can be entirely detrimental. Consistent with Brian's experience, he highlighted the power and influence of a professor who determined the manner in which his intersections were positioned in the class. This example alluded to a power differential and a method of censorship to indicate a broader narrative about communities associated with a singular social identity. Consequently, Brian felt as though a stakeholder and individual in power perpetuated a particular narrative about him that did not account for his other intersecting social identities and did not fully relate to his life experiences. Accounting for this event also raised potential issues about utilizing power and positionality to define narratives for other marginalized communities.

This example highlights the influence and power that instructors infuse with their pedagogical practices. Coinciding with this example, participants integrated other examples that conveys ideas for pedagogical practices in counselor education. Another participant (Frank) highlighted the issues with a faculty member failing to give feedback

to a student within the class, but instead, relied on the students of color to provide feedback in a group dialogue regarding the student's work and contributions. Instead of a faculty member providing feedback in an uncomfortable situation, the faculty member disengaged with the process and placed the burden on students originating from historically marginalized communities, specifically students of color. In comparison, the participant recognized that he would have not been subject to the same "coddling" as a White student in his class.

Similarly, another participant (Jared) pinpointed an identifiable example about a faculty member utilizing "epithets" in classroom to provide examples about historically marginalized communities and overt discrimination. However, the participant sat with this sense of the conflict initiated in his role as a doctoral student under the supervision of a counselor educator, yet in authority and power over students (i.e., Master's students). In this conflict, he became immediately conscious that the faculty member perpetuated particular narratives through derogatory comments elicited for a teaching moment, but felt restricted to confront the faculty member due to this social positioning.

Extending from these examples, there are a plethora of recommendations useful to consider with the enhancement of counselor education practices and pedagogies. Additionally, counselor educators have a largely central role in facilitating the tone of classroom settings within counselor education with power and influence over the context and atmosphere of the classroom. Counselor educators can incorporate specific pedagogical tools that would allow for additional dialogue and critical analysis that identifies intersections. Assignments outside of class can infer in-depth analyses across their individual experiences within the classroom, but class activities fortify a key aspect

of interactions conflating the amalgamation of social identities within and between individuals. Designing a counselor education course to facilitate increased consciousness of the complexities and linkages among identities requires attention given to both assignments and activities, demonstrating the importance of how identities show up across settings, time, history, and contexts. Counselor educators can utilize critical incidents either with moments of conflict and disagreement in the classroom or in case studies that challenge students on their biases. Instead of avoiding conflicts in the classroom, counselor educators could generate a teachable moment and offer context about the interactions by leaning into the experience. Regarding classroom interactions, the findings suggest that counselor educators can use power and influence to determine specific images imposed distinctly on historically marginalized communities. Similarly, if a faculty does not intervene within the classroom, they determine the norms and safety of the classroom. With intentionality, counselor educators should direct additional attention to the pedagogical methods in which they might portray or send messages about specific social identities and communities. In tandem, intentionality plays a key role in the reflexivity of counselor educators as they represent, interact, and influence based on their own social identities. Considering an interpretation from one of the participants, deconstructing the intersections operating within the linkages of social identities allows narratives to fully emerge in a manner that can be liberating and transformative in spite of marginalization. Suggested by the findings, counselor educators can iteratively and reflexively interrogate their own social identities in the ways they show up in classroom settings and how they interact with their students' social identities. Utilizing an

intentional and critical reflexivity is a major point integrated into the process of understanding self in relation to community, context, and power.

As counselor educators integrate reflexivity and awareness of their own intersecting social identities, they play a major role in negotiating the awareness of their students. As supported by Chao (2012), this particular recommendation emanating from the findings is useful in that students who enter multicultural counseling courses frequently have more issues with developing an increase in awareness. Consistent with the Malott et al. (2014) study, White students had a more difficult time with misconceptions about and their own self-awareness of bias, privilege, and dominance, especially with how they involved these constructs with their counseling practices and roles as counselors. In contrast, Haskins and Singh (2015) noted in their conceptualization of counselor education that most models are based on a White student lens, which provides students of color few strategies to access a more fluid and dynamic understanding of multiculturalism, social justice, and their intersections. Findings from the current study captured the difficulties in those reactions from the lens of participants identifying as queer men of color. To consider the accessibility of these strategies, counselor educators can consider the following key strategies to inform their practices in counselor education:

- Consider interactions as part of a larger social context (i.e., counselor educators must consider how certain interactions with students are reflective of histories of power relations, where counselor educators can perpetuate further marginalization or silence students)

- Consider group interactions between students as part of a larger social context (i.e., reflecting on linkages and interactions among identities shows a social structure in the classroom, where some students may be harmed or silenced)
- Prevent complicity (i.e., failing to act when students are marginalized sends a message to those students)
- Reflect on messaging (i.e., explaining certain constructs about specific historically marginalized communities can provide an incongruent message and stereotype without providing enough context for students)
- Reflect on the mutual existence of privilege and oppression (i.e., take into account how counselor educators can maintain privilege in some identities while experiencing oppression in other identities; reflect this coexistence for students within historically marginalized communities)
- Focus on marginalization within the marginalization (i.e., counselor educators can pinpoint experiences of marginalization within historically marginalized communities)
- Iterative reflexivity (i.e., consistently interrogating social identities, power, and how these relationships influence interactions with students)

Interpreting their experiences, counselor educators could use suggested strategies to critically think about and enhance pedagogical tools to assist students across multiple social identities with interpreting their own intersections.

Recommendations and Future Directions for Research

In the broad scope of intersectionality research, the bridge between conceptual and empirical research beckons for more empirical applications of intersectionality to

further its utility. A priority of intersectionality research details an immense amount of promise for weaving radical and revolutionary principles of social justice while extending perspectives on the experiences of multiply-marginalized individuals (Bowleg, 2013; Singh, 2013). Based on the paradigmatic grounding in this study, empirical investigations using intersectionality could be much more philosophically aligned with an intersectionality paradigm, using its histories, tenets, and analysis (Cho et al., 2013; Collins & Bilge, 2016; McCall, 2005; Chan et al., 2017b). Despite intersectionality's intertwined approach among critically-informed paradigms, such as Queer theory (Chevrette, 2013; Gedro & Mizzi, 2014; Lugg, 2003; Lugg & Murphy, 2016; McCann, 2016; Misgav, 2016) and CRT (Bernal, 2002; Carbado et al., 2013), aligning methodological strategies with intersectional tenets, leading to distinct ontology, epistemology, and axiology, emphasizes a much more attuned and intentional process that relies on the heart of the theory rather than an extension of another paradigm. To proliferate the discourse surrounding intersectionality stemming from prioritizing its seminal contributions and predecessors, future research can gain heavily by more explicitly articulating an intersectional paradigm as the basis for its design.

Research can also gain heavily from the implementation of an intersectionality paradigm. Intersectionality theory has served as an instrumental catalyst to expand and inform scholarship, research, and the praxis of social justice (Bowleg, 2012; Chan et al., 2017; Cho, 2013; Cho et al., 2013; Cole, 2009; Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Hancock, 2007a, 2007b; McCall, 2005; Warner et al., 2016). Its radical intellectual promise alters the manner in which critical thinking applies to issues and movements of social justice and liberation, but researchers can amplify its implementation by formulating research

designs entrenched in a historical understanding and primary tenets. Its variability in tandem with empirical research applications focuses increasingly on the conceptualization of additive models, which may not necessarily fit more deeply with the underlying principles of intersectionality. A commitment to the concurrent group of history and principles of intersectionality showcases the synergistic applications, which could more fully engage interactions among social identities, power, social context, and the evolving praxis of social justice and social action. With a history of additive models (Bowleg, 2012; Chan et al., 2017; Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Hancock, 2007b), intersectionality research has perpetuated more common applications of research studies involving a single type of narrative that invites a double-jeopardy hypothesis—one where a hypothesis on two marginalized identities results in increased outcomes of oppression (Bowleg, 2008). However, there is a movement to focus more intensely on applying intersectional approaches as opposed to additive and multiplicative models (Bowleg, 2008; Corlett & Mavin, 2014; Hancock, 2007b), given the unique experiences of multiply-marginalized individuals navigating experiences of oppression in conjunction with resilience (Brockenbrough, 2013, 2015; Singh, 2013). Additive models, commonly grounded in quantitative methods, have value in exhibiting a type of valid narrative about intersectionality (Meyer, 2010, 2014), given that the history of intersectionality constructed its foundation primarily to elicit narratives of multiply-marginalized communities. However, researchers should reserve some caution on the types of narratives and conclusions perpetuated with exclusively quantitative designs about the communities reflecting these intersections of social identities: qualitative methods might provide more intuitive, richer, and more comprehensive access to the complexities

embedded within participants' experiences of their social identities (Corlett & Mavin, 2014). Creating an additive model allows for generally one type of narrative to remain examined and tested (Bowleg, 2008). This challenge was a notable feature of the Bostwick et al. (2014) study using a purely quantitative design, where the researchers suggested that more research is necessary to recognize the plausibility of resilience and how individuals navigate their experiences of multiple overlapping forms of oppression. On the other hand, Bowleg and Bauer (2016) argued that the possibilities of mixed-methods designs could ideally excavate unique experiences and meaning, yet operate in tandem to emphasize strengths from both quantitative and qualitative traditions. Given the expansion of the current research study, future studies could not only amplify the current study's scope due to its qualitative design, but also engage possible future opportunities to investigate, develop, and test measures to broaden experience and meaning.

Furthering this attention to intersectional approaches and, hence, intersectional phenomena, it is significant to understand the ontological and epistemological considerations to more critically engage the differences between quantitative methods and qualitative methods, especially with how particular methodologies would ultimately unearth the types of experiences and data for the purpose of research and scholarly contribution (Bowleg, 2017; Bowleg & Bauer, 2016; Cho et al., 2013; Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016a, 2016b). Enacting the utilization of intersectionality's foundational principles would garner more meaningful findings that can grapple with the complexities embedded both in participants' intersecting identities and their experiences (Bowleg, 2017; Bowleg & Bauer, 2016). Future intersectional research studies attending to its

philosophical underpinnings would be incomplete without examining both power and social context (Bowleg & Bauer, 2016). Highlighting the integration of an intersectional paradigm accentuates a recommendation from Corlett and Mavin (2014) regarding intersectionality research, where "researchers should place emphasis not only on *who* is studied but also *how* intersectionality is studied" (p. 272).

Observing the limitations in this study, researchers can also note the challenges and potential future directions for sampling and representing more intersections across multiply-marginalized communities. In the context of this study, researchers can gain from focusing on other intersections not represented within the findings and sample in this study. For example, queer men of color as a sample could include a number of racial and ethnic identities (e.g., Native American, Asian American, Black, African American, Latinx) in conjunction with sexual, affectional, and gender identities (e.g., queer, gay, bisexual, pansexual, transgender, trans, gender nonconforming, non-binary). Since this current study focused particularly on marginalized identities regarding the conflation of (a) racial/ethnic identities and (b) sexual, affectional, and gender identities, it can present a potential direction to model for the depth of investigating complexities, social context, and intersectionality. Researchers can extend potential research studies magnifying experiences for other specific intersections (e.g., queer Asians, pansexual Latinx) for individuals within doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision. Although much of the discourse emanating from this study focuses on investigating intersections among queer men of color in doctoral programs of Counselor Education and Supervision, researchers should also note the rising need to voice the narratives and provide a platform for trans people of color. Gender identity has been given far less attention within the

larger context of advocacy for queer and LGBTQ+ communities and studies (ALGBTIC, 2009; Griffith et al., 2017). This issue is even far more magnified for individuals at the intersections of trans communities and communities of color, given the explicit amount of violence and oppression sustained upon these communities recently and historically (Griffith et al., 2017; Singh, 2013; Singh & McKleroy, 2011; Singh & Shelton, 2011). With trans communities underrepresented in research and the lack of trans-specific research (Singh & Shelton, 2011), gender identity in association with the needs and visibility of trans communities are frequently collapsed into the predominant voice of larger LGBTQ+ communities (Blumer et al., 2012; Griffith et al., 2017). Since none of the participants from the current study necessarily identified as trans, non-binary, gender nonconforming, or genderqueer, future research studies can hone in on the complexities embedded across gender identity and racial/ethnic identities. Although studies on women of color continue to proliferate across extant literature, particularly in counselor education (Haskins & Singh, 2015; Ramirez, 2016; Shavers & Moore, 2014a, 2014b), future research studies can also create a platform with qualitative designs to more explicitly target the complexities of their intersecting identities and how such complexities emerge contextually in their doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision. Women of color and queer women of color have contributed a significant foundational history as intersectionality's predecessors (Anzaldúa, 1987; Collins, 1986, 1990, 2004; Crenshaw, 1988, 1989, 1991; hooks, 1981, 1984, 1989; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983), where investigating the phenomenon of privilege and oppression could grasp the utility of an intersectional approach while deconstructing other layers of social identities.

Since this study was also grounded in counselor education, other disciplines can utilize a similar design to inform experiences of queer men of color in other doctoral programs to contextualize more comprehensively about doctoral education (e.g., higher education, LGBTQ studies, queer studies). The training models, curricula, and pedagogical tools operate much more differently in other disciplines, where there might be even further disconnect with integrating and accessing the research and praxis of intersectionality. Conversely, other disciplines may have had a more entrenched history and relationship with intersectionality, where students may have already engaged and accessed the discourse about intersectionality's ideologies more actively.

Limitations

The current research study operates within the philosophical viewpoints and guiding strategies necessary to augment qualitative data. One limitation stemming from the findings of this study relate to the caution of transferability. This study emerges as a vehicle to critically analyze the process of doctoral education and, primarily, counselor education. However, researchers should take caution with generalizing the findings to apply effectively across communities and identities.

Notable within the findings, it is necessary to highlight the homogeneous sample. Although I intended for sampling strategies to remain expansive and broad for invitation to potential participants while purposefully paring down on a more focused community of interest, it is essential to highlight that Queer Men of Color can cover a wide range of identities. Within the groupings of identities, they can exhaust racial and ethnic minorities in confluence with sexual, affectional, and gender minorities (e.g., Trans Men of Color; Queer Asian-Americans; gay Latinx men; Native American bisexual men).

However, the sample included three Queer Men of Color who also identified specifically with similar ranges of identities as Black and Queer while exemplifying nuances in their identities, contexts, and experiences. Consequently, I caution on the use of the findings that may not distinctly transfer to the experiences of other Queer Men of Color who may have vastly different interpretations and experiences. The conflation of other intersections within these communities may breed similar, yet diverse experiences necessary to distinguish. It is highly notable that none of the participants identified as transgender, gender nonconforming, genderqueer, or non-binary. Additionally, the limitation of transferability as a result of intersections relates prominently to essentialism. Based on the intersectional paradigm grounded in this study, the findings cannot forcibly cover the entire experience of communities of Queer Men of Color. Implementing an essentialist viewpoint on transferability would remain predominantly counterintuitive to the principal tenets of intersectionality.

Strategies for sampling revealed another type of limitation within the study. Although sampling strategies were purposive and intentional, the outreach to participants passed through stakeholders who determined whether the calls for participant recruitment would be relayed to students in their programs. For example, there was no guarantee that department chairs, doctoral program coordinators, and LGBT resource center coordinators had contacted students eligible for the study. Conversely, department chairs, doctoral program coordinators, and LGBT resource center coordinators could also filter their own meanings associated with the study. For example, these stakeholders determined who might be eligible for the study with claims that there were no queer men

of color in their programs, although individuals may pass or may have not outed themselves within their programs.

Although the sample entails similarities based on racial, sexual, affectional, and gender identities, there is a notable limitation based on the location of the participants. Two participants were currently located in the Southern region while one participant was located in the North Atlantic region. Regional context can serve as a particular factor in shaping political and affirming climates for certain historically marginalized communities. The relationship between context and the interactions of social identities connects with the shifting nature of power and the complexity of majority-minority group membership situated within temporal, systemic, and historical forces. Regional context may have shaped the meaning and interpretations of participants' identities differently dependent on the political climate of the institution, surrounding communities, and regional location.

An additional perspective on the limitations of transferability from the findings refers to the context of counselor education. The participants were sampled specifically from CACREP-accredited doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision. Although there are relationships with doctoral education and higher education grounding the systemic layers of Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs, the findings cannot necessarily apply to doctoral students in other disciplines due to differences in philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy, and praxis.

Other limitations including the involvement of IPA as the major basis for strategies involved in data collection and data analysis. To utilize IPA more cogently, the study must involve hermeneutics, idiography, and phenomenology while examining

convergence and divergence across participants (Allan & Eatough, 2016; Smith, 2011; Smith et al., 2016). To integrate the philosophical tenets of IPA cohesively, it is important to highlight the decreased likelihood of working with extensively large samples. Although working with extensively large samples is possible, yet uncommon, it impacts the types of data produced in a study for the purposes of transferability. There may not be a significant amount of latitude with the findings due to the specificity of a homogeneous sample. Additionally, this increased specificity serves as a caution to consumers of research upon arbitrarily applying findings from a study to communities sharing some intersections, but not all intersections with the participants in this study.

The last particular limitation involved the notion of bias in the study. In particular, I recognize the bias intertwined with my positionality as an insider researcher. Carrying my particular sets of social identities, it is possible that participants could have altered or filtered their responses to connect with me as the researcher. Although my connection as an insider researcher provides a foundation for engaging as a key informant and attending to the richness of the experience, it is possible that my social identities and positionality could have influenced how participants responded to interactions with me as the researcher and interview questions.

Conclusion

This chapter expanded on a comprehensive discussion regarding weaving together the meaning of the study and its findings. Major features included researcher reflexivity and subjectivity, interpretations from the major themes in the findings, and limitations of the study and its findings. The study integrated the implementation of an intersectionality paradigm to inform the development of the study and the research design, including

ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology. Methodologically, the study involved strategies from IPA (Allan & Eatough, 2016; Brocki & Wearden, 2006; Smith, 2011; Smith et al., 2009) to support tools for data collection and the process of data analysis. Using the Seidman (2013) three-interview series model, I interviewed three participants across nine semistructured interviews approximately of 90 minutes for each interview. All three participants identified as Queer Men of Color currently enrolled in CACREP-accredited doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision with, at least, one experience of privilege and, at least, one experience of oppression. Generating data across nine interviews approximating 90 minutes each to elicit rich, thick data, findings from all three participants were organized into six major superordinate themes systematically identifying the creative methods through which they make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression: (a) Multiple Dimensions of Privilege; (b) Multiple Dimensions of Oppression; (c) Context/System; (d) Complexities of Intersections; (e) Critical Incidents/Conflict; and (f) Congruity/Change for the Future. The findings of the study elicit a process of critical thinking and analysis to continue interrogating the complexities of social identities, privilege, and oppression, particularly as these components apply to the social structures of counselor education, doctoral education, and higher education.

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Appendix A: Data Matrix

Research Questions What do I need to know?	*Why do I need to know this?*	*Sampling Decisions Where will I find this data?*	*Data collection methods—What kind of data will answer these questions?*	*Whom do I contact for access?*	*Data analysis*
How do Queer Men of Color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in Counselor Education Doctoral Programs?	There is a shortage of conceptual and empirical research giving voice to multiply-marginalized groups within the counseling profession with an increased paucity of research extending far more into counselor education research. Prior research has explicated oppression has been broadly defined in theoretical language without direct access to in-depth examination as an intersectional complexity.	Queer Men of Color Doctoral Students in CACREP-Accredited Counselor Education and Supervision PhD or EdD Programs; purposive; snowball	Interviews	Department Chairs, Doctoral Program Coordinators, Professional Listservs in Counseling Profession, Participants that self-identify	Overall reading Case-by-case analysis Re-reading In vivo coding Narrative coding Pattern coding

Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview #1 Protocol – The Life Narrative

Thank you again for taking part in this study. For the purpose of this study, I intend to explore how queer men of color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in counselor education doctoral programs. I would also like to share a little bit about myself with you: I identify as a queer man of color currently in a doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision. I am also a queer, multi-ethnic, second-generation Asian American and Catholic cisgender male that grew up in a middle-class family in the southern California area. This interview will be the first of three separate interviews. The first interview is intended to provide an in-depth understanding about several experiences from Queer Men of Color on privilege, oppression, and its subsequent intersections of privilege and oppression before enrollment into doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision. As I would like to learn about your experiences and how you interpret these concepts, I intend for our interview time to be much more of a conversation today. There are no right or wrong answers, so you can answer the questions in any way that feels comfortable for you. I also want to remind you that I am going to keep your participation in this study confidential, so only I, as the researcher, will know that you participated in this study.

Foci: Opening on Privilege and Oppression
For the first part, we are going to speak a little bit about what privilege and oppression mean to you.

1. How do you define privilege?
    a. Subset Questions
        i. What does privilege mean to you?
2. How do you define oppression?
    a. Subset questions
        i. What does oppression mean to you?
3. How would you define intersectionality?
    a. Subset questions
        i. What does intersectionality mean to you?

Foci: Life Narrative on Doctoral Student in Counselor Education
For this next part, we are going to speak about your life before your doctoral program and what brought you to the doctoral program in counselor education and supervision.

1. How did you become interested in counselor education?
2. What brought you to the doctoral program where you are currently studying?

Foci: Life Narrative on Privilege. Oppression, and Intersectionality
For this next part, we are going to discuss how you experienced privilege, oppression, and intersectionality before you came to your doctoral program.

4. How have you experienced privilege before your doctoral program?
    a. Subset questions – Prompts
        i. Prompts – Tell me about a moment when the idea of privilege became apparent to you.

ii. Prompts – Walk me through that moment.
iii. Prompts – Can you tell me more about that experience?
iv. Prompts – Can you walk me through that experience?
v. Prompts – Can you tell me more about what you were feeling in that experience?

5. How have you experienced oppression before your doctoral program?
    a. Subset questions – Prompts
        i. Prompts – Tell me about a moment when the idea of oppression became apparent to you.
        ii. Prompts – Walk me through that moment.
        iii. Prompts – Can you tell me more about that experience?
        iv. Prompts – Can you walk me through that experience?
        v. Prompts – Can you tell me more about what you were feeling in that experience?
6. How have you experienced intersectionality before your doctoral program?
    a. Subset questions – Prompts
        i. Prompts – Can you tell me more about that experience?
        ii. Prompts – Can you walk me through that experience?
        iii. Prompts – Can you tell me more about what you were feeling in that experience?

Appendix C: Semi-Structured Interview #2 Protocol – Current Representations of Phenomena

Thank you again for taking the time to speak with me. In the last interview, we spoke about your life before your doctoral program, including how you made sense of your experiences on privilege, oppression, and intersectionality. For the second interview, I want to learn about and talk through your intersectional lived experiences of privilege and oppression currently in your doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision. Similar to the first interview, I would like today to be a conversation. There are no right or wrong answers, and you can feel free to answer the questions in any way that feels most comfortable to you. Again, your information will be kept confidential, and only I, as the researcher, will know you participated in this study.

Foci: Privilege and Oppression in the Doctoral Program

1. How have you seen the concept of privilege come up in your program, if at all?
    a. Subset questions – Prompts and probes
        i. Prompts – Can you tell me more about that experience?
        ii. Prompts – Can you walk me through that experience?
        iii. Prompts – Can you tell me more about what you were feeling in that experience?
        iv. Probes – Tell me about a time that you have seen privilege come up in your program.
        v. Probes – Walk me through that time.
2. How have you experienced privilege in your doctoral program, if at all?
    a. Subset questions – Prompts and probes
        i. Prompts – Can you tell me more about that experience?
        ii. Prompts – Can you walk me through that experience?
        iii. Prompts – Can you tell me more about what you were feeling in that experience?
        iv. Probes – Tell me about a time that you have experienced privilege in your program.
        v. Probes – Walk me through that time.
3. How have you seen concept of oppression come up in your program, if at all?
    a. Subset questions – Prompts and probes
        i. Prompts – Can you tell me more about that experience?
        ii. Prompts – Can you walk me through that experience?
        iii. Prompts – Can you tell me more about what you were feeling in that experience?
        iv. Probes – Tell me about a time that you have seen oppression come up in your program.
        v. Probes – Walk me through that time.
4. How have you experienced oppression in your doctoral program, if at all?
    a. Subset questions – Prompts and probes

i. Prompts – Can you tell me more about that experience?
ii. Prompts – Can you walk me through that experience?
iii. Prompts – Can you tell me more about what you were feeling in that experience?
iv. Probes – Tell me about a time that you have experienced oppression in your program.
v. Probes – Walk me through that time.

5. How have you seen intersectionality come up in your doctoral program, if at all?
    a. Subset questions – Prompts and probes
        i. Prompts – Can you tell me more about that experience?
        ii. Prompts – Can you walk me through that experience?
        iii. Prompts – Can you tell me more about what you were feeling in that experience?
        iv. Probes – Tell me about a time that you have seen intersectionality come up in your program.
        v. Probes – Walk me through that time.
6. How have you experienced privilege and oppression intersectionally in your doctoral program, if at all?
    a. Subset questions – Prompts and probes
        i. Prompts – Can you tell me more about that experience?
        ii. Prompts – Can you walk me through that experience?
        iii. Prompts – Can you tell me more about what you were feeling in that experience?
        iv. Probes – Tell me about a time that you have experienced privilege and oppression intersectionally in your program.
        v. Probes – Walk me through that time.

Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol #3 – Reflecting on Meaning and Change

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me again. In the last interview, we discussed your experiences of privilege and oppression in your doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision. For the third interview, I would like to learn about and talk through your interpretations, the meaning, and how you make sense of those experiences. Again, I intend for this interview to be more of a conversation. There are no right or wrong answers, and you can answer the questions in any way that feels comfortable for you. I am also keeping your participation in this study confidential, so only I, as the researcher, will know that you participated in this study.

Foci: Meaning-Making on Privilege and Oppression

1. Given our discussion about your experiences of privilege in your doctoral program, how have these experiences impacted your life within your doctoral program?
2. How do these experiences of privilege influence your future professional roles, such as counselor and counselor educator?
3. Given our discussion about your experiences of oppression in your doctoral program, how have these experiences impacted your life within your doctoral program?
4. How do these experiences of oppression influence your future professional roles, such as counselor and counselor educator?

Foci: Meaning-Making on Intersectionality

5. Recognizing that privilege and oppression can be intersectional and simultaneous, how has this impacted your life within your doctoral program?
6. How does this understanding of intersectionality influence your future professional roles, such as counselor and counselor educator?

Closing

Is there anything that I didn't ask which you would like to share?

Appendix E: Informed Consent

Title of Study: The Lived Intersectional Experiences of Privilege and Oppression of Queer Men of Color in Counselor Education Doctoral Programs: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
IRB #:
Researcher: Christian D. Chan, MA, NCC
Principal Investigator Name: Dr. Sam Steen
Version Date: 4-25-17

You are invited to participate in a research study under the direction of Dr. Sam Steen of the Department of Counseling and Human Development, George Washington University (GWU). You are being asked if you want to take part in this study because you identified with all of the following inclusion criteria: (a) 18 years or older, (b) currently enrolled in a CACREP-accredited doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision, (c) male-identified (cisgender, transgender, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, genderqueer), (d) identifies as a member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of racial/ethnic identity, (e) identifies as a member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of sexual, affectional, or gender identity, and (f) identifies as having, at least, one experience of privilege and, at least, one experience of oppression in the doctoral program.
Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary. Your academic standing or the status of your employment will not, in any way, be affected should you choose not to participate or if you decide to withdraw from the study at any time. For further information about this study, you may contact the principal investigator Dr. Sam Steen (202-994-2339; slsteen@gwu.edu) or the researcher Christian D. Chan (626-378-1339; cchan530@gwmail.gwu.edu), a doctoral candidate in the Counseling PhD program of the Counseling and Human Development Department.

Purpose
The purpose of this study is to understand how queer men of color make sense of privilege and oppression in counselor education and supervision doctoral programs.

Procedures
If you choose to take part in this study, you will take part in the following activities: (a) completing a demographic questionnaire; (b) three semistructured interviews consisting of 90 minutes; and (c) brief member-checking meetings of no more than 30 minutes each. These semistructured interviews will take place over Skype or in person depending on your preference, convenience, location, and proximity. During the interviews, you will be asked about (a) your life before and up to the doctoral program; (b) your current experiences in the doctoral program; and (c) how you have made meaning of your experiences in the doctoral program. As a result, you can expect the following structure for procedures in this study:

- Sign informed consent document
- Complete demographic questionnaire
- Receive all three interview protocols from researcher
- Participate in semistructured interview #1 (90 minutes)
- Participate in member-check meeting about transcribed interview #1 (no more than 30 minutes)
- Participate in semistructured interview #2 (90 minutes)
- Participate in member-check meeting about transcribed interview #2 (no more than 30 minutes)

- Participate in semistructured interview #3 (90 minutes)
- Participate in member-check meeting about transcribed interview #3 (no more than 30 minutes)

For the purposes of this study, only the audio portions of your interviews will be recorded. Including the member-checking process, where you will review your transcriptions of your interviews, the total amount of time you will spend in connection with this study is six hours total over a span of six to eight weeks. For each member-check and prior to the subsequent interview, you will be sent your transcribed interview directly to your email and invited to participate in a brief non-recorded meeting consisting of no more than 30 minutes each to discuss any additions, changes, or removal of your transcribed interview portions.

Risks
Possible risks or discomforts you could experience during this study include: a possible loss of confidentiality, emotional stress, and negative emotions. If you become uncomfortable at any time during the study, you can choose to refrain from answering the question or stop the interview. You may refuse to answer any of the questions, and you may stop your participation in this study at any time without any consequences. If you feel the need to talk to someone about the emotions you are feeling after participation in the interviews or the study, you may consult with the provided list of resources that are anonymous, toll-free, online, and supportive. As a trained counselor with a background in clinical mental health counseling, the researcher will also be willing and able to assist you with finding referrals for mental health professionals in your local area.

Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential, however, this cannot be guaranteed. All identifying information, including your names and institutions, will be removed from the transcription and data. Pseudonyms of your choice will be used in their place. There may be minimal risk in communicating with you over email and transmitting transcriptions to you directly over email. Before transmitting your transcription to you through email, all identifying information will be removed, and the transcription will be transmitted to you directly. The interview recordings will subsequently be destroyed after transcription. Upon communication with the researcher Christian D. Chan, please directly email at his secure email account at cchan530@gwmail.gwu.edu to protect the privacy of communication purposes. If results of this research study are reported in journals or at scientific meetings, the people who participated in this study will not be named or identified.

Upon transcription of each interview, all audio recordings will be deleted. All signed documents, transcriptions, and audio recordings will be stored on a secure, password-encrypted external drive in a locked location in the researcher's office.

Resources:
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1-800-273-8255 (1-800-273-TALK)
Website: https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/#
The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides a 24-hour, toll-free hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Helpline
1-800-662-HELP (4357)
TTY: 1-800-487-4889
Website: https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

The SAMHSA National Helpline provides 24-hour free and confidential treatment referral and information about mental and/or substance use disorders, prevention, and recovery. Services are provided in English and Spanish.

The LGBT National Hotline
1-888-843-4564
help@GLBThotline.org
The LGBT National Hotline provides services from Monday through Friday from 4 PM to midnight (Eastern Standard Time) and Saturday from noon to 5 PM (Eastern Standard Time). All services are free and confidential. The services include private telephone, online chatting, and email support to connect with LGBT-friendly support groups, counseling services, organizations, and businesses across the United States.

Benefits
You will not benefit directly from your participation in the study. The benefits to science and humankind that might result from this study are an understanding of how queer men of color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral programs. This research would (a) supplement literature on intersectionality; (b) expand the social context of doctoral education specifically for counselor education and supervision doctoral students; and (c) inform the execution of multiculturalism and social justice domains in the 2016 Standards for the Council for Accreditation on Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

Compensation
To compensate you for your time and effort, you will receive a $40 electronic gift card to one of three vendors of your choice: Starbucks, Amazon, or Target.

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact the principal investigator Dr. Sam Steen (202-994-2339; slsteen@gwu.edu) or the researcher Christian D. Chan (626-378-1339; cchan530@gwmail.gwu.edu).

The Office of Human Research of George Washington University, at telephone number (202) 994-2715 and email ohrirb@gwu.edu, can provide further information about your rights as a research participant.

If you agree to take part in this study, please sign below:

_____
Printed name of subject

_____ _____
Signature of subject Date

_____ _____
Signature of person obtaining consent Date

After you sign this Consent form, the research team will provide you with a copy. Please keep it in case you want to read it again or call someone about the study.

Appendix F: Participant Recruitment Email for Listservs

Dear colleagues,

My name is Christian Chan, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counseling PhD program at The George Washington University. Under the direction of Dr. Sam Steen, I am currently working on my dissertation study entitled The Lived Intersectional Experiences of Privilege and Oppression of Queer Men of Color in Counselor Education Doctoral Programs: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to fulfill the degree requirements for the PhD in Counseling at The George Washington University. The purpose of this study is to understand how queer men of color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in their doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision. This study has the potential to inform the evolving development of intersectionality scholarship; navigating multiple overlapping forms of oppression; advances for the social context of higher education, especially doctoral education; and critical thinking on the application of multiculturalism and social justice domains in the 2016 Standards of the Council for Accreditation on Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

If you are interested in participating in or learning more about the study after reading the details below, please contact me at cchan530@gwmail.gwu.edu.

To compensate you for your time and effort, you will receive a $40 electronic gift card to one of three vendors of your choice: Starbucks, Amazon, or Target.

I am seeking participants who meet the following inclusion criteria:

- **(a)** 18 years or older
- **(b)** currently enrolled in a CACREP-accredited doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision
- **(c)** male-identified (cisgender, transgender, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, genderqueer)
- **(d)** identifies as a member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of racial/ethnic identity
- **(e)** identifies as a member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of sexual, affectional, or gender identity
- **(f)** identifies as having, at least, one experience of privilege and, at least, one experience of oppression in the doctoral program.

If you choose to take part in this study, you will take part in the following activities: (a) completing a demographic questionnaire; (b) three semistructured interviews consisting of 90 minutes; and (c) brief member-checking meetings of no more than 30 minutes each. These semistructured interviews will take place over Skype or in person depending on your preference, convenience, location, and proximity. During the interviews, you will be asked about (a) your life before and up to the doctoral program; (b) your current experiences in the doctoral program; and (c) how you have made meaning of your

experiences in the doctoral program. The three semistructured interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed. Audio recordings will be destroyed after the completion of transcription. Through the member-checking meetings, participants will have the opportunity to review their transcriptions for additions, deletions, or changes before the researcher moves forward with the data analysis process.

While there is minimal risk in this study, you may withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Participation or withdrawal will not affect student standing or employment in respective programs. Every effort will be made to make your information confidential with the removal of identifying information, including names and institutional affiliations, in conjunction with the substitution of pseudonyms. Additionally, documents in the study will be individually password-protected and kept in a secure, password-encrypted external drive within a locked location of the researcher's office.

This study is approved by The George Washington University Institutional Review Board (IRB#051735).

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact the principal investigator Dr. Sam Steen (202-994-2339; slsteen@gwu.edu) or the researcher Christian D. Chan (626-378-1339; cchan530@gwmail.gwu.edu).

Please feel free to forward this email message to any colleagues or students that may be eligible to participate or may be interested in the study. Thank you very much for your gracious time and consideration to support this study!

Thank you,
Christian

Appendix G: Participant Recruitment Email for Department Chairs, Doctoral Program Coordinators, and LGBT Resource Center Directors

Dear [insert name],

I hope that my message finds you well. My name is Christian Chan, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counseling PhD program at The George Washington University. Under the direction of Dr. Sam Steen, I am currently working on my dissertation study entitled The Lived Intersectional Experiences of Privilege and Oppression of Queer Men of Color in Counselor Education Doctoral Programs: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to fulfill the degree requirements for the PhD in Counseling at The George Washington University. The purpose of this study is to understand how queer men of color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in their doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision.

I am writing to ask you for assistance in disseminating my study to students in your doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision. With the message approved by my Institutional Review Board (IRB#051735) at The George Washington University, I have listed the message for participation recruitment below for your review. I would gladly appreciate you passing this information to your doctoral students for me. As I recognize the busy schedules at this time of the year, I am very grateful for your gracious time and consideration to support my study.

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact the principal investigator Dr. Sam Steen (202-994-2339; slsteen@gwu.edu) or the researcher Christian D. Chan (626-378-1339; cchan530@gwmail.gwu.edu).

Thank you,
Christian
--
Dear colleagues,

My name is Christian Chan, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counseling PhD program at The George Washington University. Under the direction of Dr. Sam Steen, I am currently working on my dissertation study entitled The Lived Intersectional Experiences of Privilege and Oppression of Queer Men of Color in Counselor Education Doctoral Programs: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to fulfill the degree requirements for the PhD in Counseling at The George Washington University. The purpose of this study is to understand how queer men of color make sense of their experiences of privilege and oppression in their doctoral programs in Counselor Education and Supervision. This study has the potential to inform the evolving development of intersectionality scholarship; navigating multiple overlapping forms of oppression; advances for the social context of higher education, especially doctoral education; and critical thinking on the application of multiculturalism and social justice

domains in the 2016 Standards of the Council for Accreditation on Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

If you are interested in participating in or learning more about the study after reading the details below, please contact me at cchan530@gwmail.gwu.edu.

To compensate you for your time and effort, you will receive a $40 electronic gift card to one of three vendors of your choice: Starbucks, Amazon, or Target.

I am seeking participants who meet the following inclusion criteria:

- **(a)** 18 years or older
- **(b)** currently enrolled in a CACREP-accredited doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision
- **(c)** male-identified (cisgender, transgender, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, genderqueer)
- **(d)** identifies as a member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of racial/ethnic identity
- **(e)** identifies as a member of historically marginalized or minority group on the basis of sexual, affectional, or gender identity
- **(f)** identifies as having, at least, one experience of privilege and, at least, one experience of oppression in the doctoral program.

If you choose to take part in this study, you will take part in the following activities: (a) completing a demographic questionnaire; (b) three semistructured interviews consisting of 90 minutes; and (c) brief member-checking meetings of no more than 30 minutes each. These semistructured interviews will take place over Skype or in person depending on your preference, convenience, location, and proximity. During the interviews, you will be asked about (a) your life before and up to the doctoral program; (b) your current experiences in the doctoral program; and (c) how you have made meaning of your experiences in the doctoral program. The three semistructured interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed. Audio recordings will be destroyed after the completion of transcription. Through the member-checking meetings, participants will have the opportunity to review their transcriptions for additions, deletions, or changes before the researcher moves forward with the data analysis process.

While there is minimal risk in this study, you may withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Participation or withdrawal will not affect student standing or employment in respective programs. Every effort will be made to make your information confidential with the removal of identifying information, including names and institutional affiliations, in conjunction with the substitution of pseudonyms. Additionally, documents in the study will be individually password-protected and kept in a secure, password-encrypted external drive within a locked location of the researcher's office.

This study is approved by The George Washington University Institutional Review Board (IRB#051735).

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact the principal investigator Dr. Sam Steen (202-994-2339; slsteen@gwu.edu) or the researcher Christian D. Chan (626-378-1339; cchan530@gwmail.gwu.edu).

Please feel free to forward this email message to any colleagues or students that may be eligible to participate or may be interested in the study. Thank you very much for your gracious time and consideration to support this study!

Thank you,
Christian

Appendix H: Demographic Questionnaire

1. First Name: _____
2. Age: _____
3. Gender Identity: _____
4. Racial/Ethnic Identity: _____
5. Sexual/Affectional Identity: _____
6. Highest Degree Attained: _____
7. Region (Please select one)
    a. Southern___
    b. North Atlantic___
    c. North Central___
    d. Rocky Mountain___
    e. Western___
8. Current semester of doctoral study (Please select one)
    a. First or second semester___
    b. Third or fourth semester___
    c. Fifth or more semester___
9. Current phase of doctoral study (Please select one)
    a. First year of study___
    b. Pre-comprehensive exams___
    c. Post-comprehensive exams/Pre-dissertation___
    d. Working on/in progress with dissertation___