AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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Title: Higher Education Diversity Work and its Discontents: Theorizing Student Social Media Activism as Counter-hegemonic Network of Practice

Abstract approved: ____________________________

Gloria E. Crisp

Diversity and inclusion represent central challenges and opportunities in the transnational field of higher education, as the number of students enrolled in higher education has expanded exponentially over the past century and universal access to tertiary education has emerged as a development imperative. Within this context, diversity has emerged as a dominant focus in an inclusion agenda propelling contemporary higher education transformation. Consequently, colleges and universities around the world have established institutional initiatives and practices that aim to increase the participation of diverse groups. Critical incidents of student activism beginning in 2014 and defined by activists’ use of social media, reveal discrepancies between institutional commitments to diversity and inclusion and student experiences of exclusion. The aim of this project was to critically examine the productive tension between student activism and institutional diversity work in higher education. This dissertation is comprised of two studies, reported in manuscript form. In the first manuscript I employ a critical theoretical lens and use student activism as an analytical counterpoint to explore the logics of diversity work. I draw from Bourdieu and Gramsci to conceptualize the dynamics of power and change at work in
higher education and to question the ways that institutional diversity work might serve to maintain regimes of exclusion. To identify the logics of institutional diversity work, I reviewed media archives and academic literature on the #MustFall and #ITooAm movements and the critical scholarship of institutional diversity work and inductively coded this literature, developing themes that intersect student activism and institutional diversity work. Four overarching logics emerged and are described: 1) tensions in diversity discourse, 2) a bureaucratic approach to diversity practices, 3) an institutional diversity capital paradox, and 4) “thin” institutional responsiveness to student resistance. The second study examined a single critical incident of student activism at an accessible Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), defined by the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion. Adopting a Community of practice theoretical model, this study utilized social network analysis (SNA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) to explore the networked interactions of student activists around a common concern and to examine the ways that activists used social media as an instrument of resistance within the context of diversity discourse and practice. Research findings indicate that student activists used #DiversityisNotInclusion to create and maintain (organize) an inclusive social space within which they narrated their experiences of identity-based exclusion at SU (counter storytelling). Additionally, students used the hashtag to circulate their counter-stories in order to pragmatically amplify their demands for institutional change (amplifying). This dissertation extends the literature on student activism by examining activists’ use of social media as an instrument of resistance. In addition, it contributes to the critical scholarship of diversity work in higher education and offers an agenda for researchers interested in pursuing the emergent line of inquiry at the intersection of student activism and institutional diversity work.
Higher Education Diversity Work and its Discontents: Theorizing Student Social Media Activism as Counter-hegemonic Network of Practice

by

Rebecca Robertson

A DISSERTATION

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Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

Rebecca Robertson, Author
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Chapter 1: Introduction

I wish to propose that a better way to understand transformation might be through the study of critical incidents. The argument presented is that one understands transformation much better when someone throws the proverbial 'spanner in the works.' An institution provoked through crisis tells us much more about the nature and extent of transformation than any official documents or quantified outputs. For it is in the response of the institution to such critical incidents that important clues are given away about how far that institution has travelled in the direction of what it may call 'transformation'. (Jansen, 1998, pg.106)

The twentieth century saw a dramatic increase in higher education enrollment worldwide, from 500,000 (less than one percent of the adult population) to 100 million in 2000 (about 20% of the adult population) (Schofer & Meyer, 2005). According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2019), today there are 200 million students in higher education globally. Longitudinal research demonstrates that the benefits of higher education accrue both to the individual as well as society. Individuals with a college degree are shown to have higher earnings, better health, fewer children, and longer lives. College educated individuals also exhibit greater levels of civic participation, pay more in taxes, and drive innovation (OECD, 2019). In 2015, the United Nations in concert with world leaders established a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that include ensuring universal access to inclusive and equitable quality vocational and tertiary education by 2030 (United Nations General Assembly, 2015).

Within this context of widening participation and the drive for universal access as a development imperative, diversity has emerged as a dominant focus in an inclusion agenda propelling contemporary higher education transformation (Beckham, 2000; Blessinger, 2016; Eggins, 2014; Smith, 2014, 2014; Worthington, 2012). Though diversity is a central focus in the inclusion agenda, its definition is clumsy and contested - fundamentally, diversity refers to a multiplicity of identities and characteristics that one might bring to higher education and is often used as a shorthand for historically underrepresented groups including, but not limited to,
students of color (Ahmed, 2007a; Iverson, 2007; Smith, 2014). The salience of identities and characteristics associated with diversity varies across regional and national contexts, however, these particularities intersect around a remarkably unified inclusion agenda that foregrounds the economic, social, and individual benefits of diversity. Colleges and universities around the world have established institutional initiatives and practices that aim to increase the participation of diverse groups (Blessinger, 2016; Eggins, 2014; J. Jansen, 2014; Smith, 2014). This institutional diversity work is iterative, and involves making commitments to diversity through institutional statements and action plans, creating institutional structures and programs dedicated to diversity, recruiting and incorporating diverse bodies into the institution, and measuring institutional diversity (Ahmed, 2007a; Hurtado et al., 1999; Iverson, 2007; Worthington, 2012).

Concomitant to what I have described as institutional diversity work, student activists call for a reorientation of higher education to represent the experiences, values, and knowledge of diverse peoples (Blessinger, 2016; J. Jansen, 2014; Rhoads, 1998; Smith, 2014). The recent wave of student activism on university campuses around the world represents what Jonathon Jansen (1998), in the epigraph of this chapter, categorizes as “critical incidents” that reveal “more about the nature and extent of transformation than any official documents or quantified outputs” (p. 106). Review of the extensive media coverage of these campaigns suggests that a common aim of this activism was to draw attention to the discrepancy between institutional conceptions of inclusion, evidenced in diversity work, and student experiences of persistent exclusion (Chaudhuri, 2016; Haidrani, 2014; Schulte, 2015).

It is valuable to contextualize the concerns that animate student activists today within a broader arc of student activism around issues of diversity in higher education. Activists have long challenged higher education as an exclusive institutional space structured to discriminate. In
the 1960’s, student activist movements, like the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, demonstrated on college campuses for Black psychological liberation. In the United States and the United Kingdom, student activists staged ‘sit-ins’ and ‘stand-ins’, demanding institutional change toward racial inclusiveness (Carson, 1991; Puwar, 2004). Rhoads (2016) contended that the first Black studies programs were established in response to student activism. San Francisco State University created the country’s first Black Studies Department in 1968 after the longest campus based student strike in U.S. history (Rhoads, 2016). From the late-60’s through 1990’s there was an expansion of activist concerns to include gender and sexuality (Rhoads, 2016).

Building on the concepts of self-identity and empowerment that were the foundation of the Black Power and Black Consciousness movements, women as well as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community engaged in campus based protests (Beemyn, 2003; Echols, 1989). For example, in the late 1960’s students at Cornell University organized the Student Homophile League, “dedicated to educating the Cornell community about homosexuality and the homosexual, working to achieve full equality for the homosexual, and to be of service to the homosexual in achieving a healthy self-image.” (Beemyn, 2003, p. 212).

Contemporary student activism builds on this long history and uses social media to engage in new forms of resistance. Emergent scholarship indicates that the current surge of student activism focuses on students’ lived experience and utilizes social media to connect and maintain local movements across time and space (Benson & Morgan, 2014; Gismandi, 2015; Hernández, 2015; Wong, 2015). These movements give voice to students who feel alienated and underrepresented by university structures, curricula, and hegemonic practices (Chaudhuri, 2016; Haidrani, 2014). Their discontent sheds critical light on the discourse, practices, and impacts of diversity work. My dissertation extends scholarship on student activism and addresses a gap in
the literature regarding contemporary student activists’ concerns and their use of social media as a tool of resistance and collective practice. In the following sections I provide an overview of my dissertation project - I define my research objective, describe my research paradigm, and discuss my proposed methodology. In addition, I detail my dissertation structure and methods by outlining the upcoming chapters.

**Project Objective**

This dissertation focuses on the recent transnational wave of student social media activism. My aim is to explore how student activism represents a collective practice that is in productive tension with diversity work in higher education. I am interested in documenting the critical insights and new knowledge produced through student activist resistance to institutional diversity discourses, practices, and structures. Through this project I address the following:

Within the context of widening participation and the drive for universal access as a development imperative, what logics of institutional diversity work are exposed by the wave of university student activism that began in 2014? In what ways does this activism, defined by the circulation of hashtags, represent a collective practice in response to institutional diversity work?

This inquiry is oriented by a critical theoretical stance, discussed in the next section. It builds upon the critical literature of diversity in higher education and represents an emerging line of scholarship at the intersection of student activism and institutional diversity work.

**Research Paradigm**

In keeping with the constructivist epistemological assertion that knowledge cannot be separated from its production (methodology) or its producer (researcher), I approached this project reflexively (Bourdieu, 2004; Creswell, 2014). To make explicit my positioning relative to my project, I will briefly share the experiences that brought me to it (Creswell, 2014). At the
end of 2013 I spent a semester as a research student in the Anthropology Department at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg, South Africa. During my time at Wits there was growing student unrest, with demonstrations held regularly to protest fee increases, exploitation of student labor, and the inaccessibility of institutional resources. Shortly after I left South Africa, the #MustFall campaigns began at University of Cape Town, eventually spreading to the University of Witwatersrand. I arrived back to my home institution to resume my work as a longstanding faculty member in a regional comprehensive university in rural California. As a faculty member, I participate with intention in institutional diversity work, I have written department diversity reports and participated in diversity dialogues. In addition, between 2014 and 2017 I bore witness to a series of student protests on my campus that engaged social media to draw attention to institutional exclusion. I am a White, American, cis-gender female faculty member at a public comprehensive university in the United States. I have spent extensive time in South Africa, including the months preceding the #MustFall movement, during which time I was on the margins of the growing student growing unrest on university campuses and witnessed student protests. My positioning and experience define the scope of my inquiry and shape my perspective of student activism and diversity in higher education. I bring to bear on this project my experience as an international student in South Africa at the margins of the #MustFall movement, my participation in institutional diversity work, and my longitudinal faculty insight into a specific institutional context and the temporal development of student activism around diversity and inclusion. These experiences led me to consider student activism in a global context and sensitized me to the transnational connections between students, they also prompted me to think about the concerns that these activists share, and the ways that students use social media in their activist practice. However, my experience also drew me to focus on particular aspects of
this phenomenon, while potentially ignoring equally important facets such as conflicts between activists and tensions within student movements. In addition, the constraints of my identity and experience limit my insight into and analysis of the lived experiences of students of color. For these reasons, I endeavored to foreground the voices and perspectives of student activists.

I take an ethnographic approach to examining student social media activism and diversity work within its historical, institutional, and geographic context. Ethnographic research endeavors to generate a holistic account of a particular phenomenon in order to understand its internal logic (Johnson, 2004). Drawing from Bourdieu’s example of methodological flexibility, my research shifted between a focus on the global and the local, and between scholarly and empirical inquiry (Bourdieu, 2004; Marginson, 2008; Rawolle & Lingard, 2013). I began this project by exploring the discourse of diversity and transnational examples of diversity work and activism. Subsequently, I examined a local case to gain insight into the phenomenon of student activism in relation to specific institutional diversity practices. Adopting the network ethnography methodology described by Howard, I used quantitative and qualitative analysis in, “a synergistic research design for the study of the organizational forms built around new media” (Howard, 2002, p. 550).

**Dissertation Structure and Methods**

This dissertation is divided into two stand-alone manuscripts (Table 1) bound together by my overarching research objective. I address my research questions through two papers: 1) a scholarly paper that reviews and analyzes extant literature to explore the central logics of institutional diversity work that are brought to light by student resistance, and 2) an empirical inquiry that employs social network analysis and critical discourse analysis to explore how student activists use social media as an instrument of resistance within the context of institutional
diversity work. I conclude my dissertation with a summary of the project that integrates the findings from both manuscripts, discusses their implications, and explores future directions of this research.

Table 1: Outline of Dissertation

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<td>Scholarly Paper: Literature Review</td>
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<td>Three</td>
<td>#DiversityisNotInclusion: Anatomy of a Higher Education Student Activist Network of Practice</td>
<td>Empirical Study: Social Network Analysis (SNA) and Critical Discourse Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Conclusion and Implications</td>
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Chapter 2 is a scholarly paper addressing my first research question: within the context of widening participation and the drive for universal access as a human right, what logics of institutional diversity work are exposed by the wave of university student activism that began in 2014? In this paper I consider the transnational field of higher education and within in it, the dialectical relationship between institutional diversity work and student social media activism. While there is a robust body of literature on diversity work in higher education (Worthington, 2012) and a long standing scholarship of student activism (Rhoads, 1998; 2016), the intersection of these lines of inquiry represents a gap in the literature. This scholarly paper addresses this gap using critical literature review to outline the logics of institutional diversity work. I employ a critical race theory lens and draw from the work of Bourdieu and Gramsci to examine the
relationship between student activism and diversity work within the field of higher education. I question the ways that diversity work might serve to maintain regimes of exclusion, and seek to understand how student activism exposes the logics of diversity work (Bourdieu, 1990; Habermas, 1984; Hubain et al., 2016; Marginson, 2008; Mayo, 2010; Murphy, 2013).

There is a burgeoning scholarship focused on the #MustFall and #ITooAm campaigns. In addition, there exists a body of critical scholarship of diversity work in the United States, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. I therefore focused my scholarly inquiry on these two activist campaigns and the national contexts that frame them, as a means of gaining insight into global patterns of diversity work and student resistance. To identify the logics of institutional diversity work, I reviewed academic literature on the #MustFall and #ITooAm movements as well as the critical scholarship of institutional diversity work. I inductively coded this literature for themes related to diversity and inclusion. These codes were then developed into themes that intersect student activism and institutional diversity work. Four overarching logics emerge and are described, 1) tensions in diversity discourse, 2) a bureaucratic approach to diversity practices, 3) an institutional diversity capital paradox, and 4) “thin” institutional responsiveness to student resistance.

Chapter 3 comprises an empirical study that applied critical race theory and a community of practice model to understand the structure and practices of student activism and its relation to institutional diversity work. The aim of the study was to explore the networked interactions of student activists around a common concern and examine ways that they used social media as an instrument of transformational resistance within the context of diversity work in higher education. According to Wenger (1999), communities of practice (CoP) are groups of people who share a concern for something and develop a common identity as they interact regularly
around their concern. The three characteristics that distinguish CoP’s from other forms of social organization are: the community’s identity is defined by its members common interest (domain); in pursuing this interest members interact and learn from each other (community); through sustained interaction members develop a repertoire of shared resources (practice) (Wenger, 1999).

I applied the *domain-community-practice* structure of community of practice theory to examine a critical incident of student activism defined by the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion that took place at an accessible Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)\(^1\), referred to as State University. This study tackled the second of my research questions: how does the wave of university student activism that began in 2014, and is defined by the circulation of hashtags, represent a collective practice in response to institutional diversity work? I addressed the following two sub-questions:

1) What were the contours of the #DiversityisNotInclusion student activist network?

2) How did student activists use #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of resistance within the context of diversity discourse and practice at SU?

This study examined an activist campaign that began at one accessible HSI in a large state university system using the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion. Drawing on a campaign that originated at an accessible HSI addresses a gap in the literature regarding diversity activism, to date most research has focused on elite highly selective universities and predominantly white institutions (PWIs) (Mwangi et al., 2016). To address my research questions, I analyzed a sample of social media content defined by #DiversityisNotInclusion. I utilized social network analysis (SNA) to visualize the communicative connections between activists and to examine the types of

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\(^1\) defined by the U.S Department of Education as a university with an undergraduate full-time enrollment of at least 25 percent Hispanic students
discursive acts that comprised these connections (sub-question 1). SNA applies the tenets of graph theory to the study of social relations, specifically focusing on ties between actors to understand the structure of the network that these ties created (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005; Lorentzen, 2014; Stewart & Abidi, 2012). Tracing these ties can provide evidence of a community of practice (Biddix & Park, 2008; Hanneman & Riddle, 2005; Stewart & Abidi, 2012; Tremayne, 2014; Xu et al., 2015). Next, I used a critical discourse approach to explore student activists networked resistance practices and specifically how they utilized the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of resistance (sub-question 2) (Biddix & Park, 2008; Greenhalgh et al., 2018; Ince et al., 2017; Jackson & Welles, 2016; Lewis & Rush, 2013; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Polletta & Jasper, 2001; Postill & Pink, 2012; Stewart & Abidi, 2012; Xu et al., 2015).

Chapter 4 draws together insights that I gained through the dissertation process. In this final chapter I summarize the project and integrate the findings from the constituent articles in order to bring together the key ideas. I then discuss the significance and implications of the project and conclude by exploring future research directions. This project contributes to the literature by bridging the scholarship of diversity work in higher education with the scholarship of student activism. I contend that examining student resistance and the knowledge it produces, can shed valuable light on higher education diversity work and has the potential to inform institutional practice. Insights from this research are expected to contribute to a reconceptualization of diversity work in higher education by documenting student activists’ experiences of institutional discourse and practices, providing empirical evidence of collective incidents of resistance, and bringing to light student activists’ counter-conception of institutional
diversity and inclusion. To conclude, I articulate a research agenda to guide future scholarship along this promising line of inquiry.
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Chapter 2: Transnational Student Social Media Activism and the Hegemonic Logics of Diversity Work in Higher Education

In March of 2014, students at Harvard University premiered #itooamharvard, a social media photo campaign that explored the experiences of Black students as a means of “speaking back” and claiming space on campus (Butler, 2014; Lee, 2014; Mwangi et al., 2016). A year later, students at the University of Cape Town in South Africa initiated the #RhodesMustFall movement, calling for the university to tear down a campus statue of colonialist, Cecil Rhodes, in the name of university transformation and an end to institutionalized racism (Boroughs, 2015; Mangcu, 2017; Oxlund, 2016). Student activists at Oxford University, inspired by #itooamharvard, organized a parallel campaign in 2014, and in 2015 they undertook a #RhodesMustFall campaign (Chaudhuri, 2016; Haidrani, 2014). These campaigns are punctuation points in a transnational activist wave catalyzed by student frustrations with institutional transformation, with the discrepancy between the promise of a diverse and inclusive university, and the reality of persistent exclusion.

Diversity and inclusion represent central challenges and opportunities in the transnational field of higher education as the number of students enrolled in higher education has expanded exponentially over the past century and universal access to tertiary education has emerged as a development goal. From the beginning of the twentieth century to 2019 the number of students enrolled in higher education globally has increased from 500,000 to 200 million, in fact this increase appears to have accelerated in the 21st century with enrollment doubling from 100 million between 2000 and 2019 (OECD, 2019; Schofer & Meyer, 2005). World leaders, working under the auspices of the United Nations, have set a Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target to achieve universal access to “inclusive and equitable quality vocational and tertiary education”
by 2030 (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). This goal is informed by research indicating that there are significant individual as well as social benefits of post-secondary education. Specifically, individuals with a college education live longer and healthier lives than those without. In addition, they earn more money, pay higher taxes, are more civically engaged, and drive economic and technological innovation (OECD, 2019).

Widening participation in higher education and the framing of universal access as a development imperative has given rise to a transnational higher education inclusion agenda that foregrounds the economic, social, and individual benefits of diversity, which is defined as the divergent identities and characteristics that an individual might bring to higher education (Beckham, 2000; Blessinger, 2016; Eggins, 2014; Smith, 2014, 2014; Worthington, 2012). In the context of the inclusion agenda, diversity is typically used to refer to identities that have been historically excluded or marginalized in higher education, including, but not limited to race (Ahmed, 2007a; Iverson, 2007; Smith, 2014). Although there are a wide range of identities and characteristics associated with diversity across global contexts, a remarkably unified inclusion agenda has emerged. Transnationally, universities engage in institutional diversity work, comprised of discourses and practices that aim to increase the participation of historically excluded/marginalized groups (Blessinger, 2016; Eggins, 2014; J. Jansen, 2014; Smith, 2014).

Unfortunately, discrepancies in higher education enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates endure (OECD, 2019). Globally, socio-economically disadvantaged students and students from historically underrepresented groups enroll in and graduate from university at significantly lower rates when compared with higher income students and students from historically advantages groups (OECD, 2019). South African public scholar Jonathon Janson (1998) asserted that “critical incidents”, like eruptions of campus activism, are a measure of institutional
transformation toward inclusiveness, they provide insights that official assessments overlook or are ill-equipped to measure (p. 106). As such, this study is an exploratory inquiry premised on the assertion that attending to student experiences within the context of diversity work, as reflected in activism, has the potential to provide critical insight into the institutional environments shaped (or left untouched) by diversity work.

Diversity work in higher education has stimulated vigorous scholarship, with dedicated journals such as the *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* and *The International Journal of Diversity in Education* focused on empirically measuring and documenting it impacts (Worthington, 2012). In addition, research on student activism has produced a robust body of academic literature (Rhoads, 1998, 2016). However, the intersection of these two strands of scholarship represents an emergent opportunity to explore the insights that critical incidents of student activism provide into the ways diversity is defined, organized, and deployed in higher education, which in short, comprise the logics of institutional diversity work. There is a nascent line of scholarship that examines recent student activism and serves as a foundation for this paper. This scholarship focuses on the #ITooAm, #MustFall, and #StandWithMizzou movements. The “I, Too, Am Harvard” and “I, Too, Am Oxford” movements were the subject of Mwangi’s 2016 qualitative study that examined how students used social media to build collective consciousness across settings and to narrate their experiences of exclusion in higher education. Scholarship on the #MustFall campaigns in South Africa placed this activism within the context of the anti-apartheid and post-apartheid drive to forge an inclusive educational system (CMoloi et al., 2017; J. Jansen, 2014; Luescher et al., 2017; Oxlund, 2016). Anderson (2018) and Byrd et al. (2019) considered institutional responses to student activism and student activism’s potential impact on institutional policies and practices. Using ethnographic and
philosophical methods, Anderson (2018) documented the institutional response to an activist campaign on a state university campus and proposed an ethical framework for future incidents. In 2019, Byrd et al. published a quantitative study that applied a college impact approach to examine the potential of students’ demands for change to impact institutional policies, practices, and structures (Byrd et al., 2019). Together, these recent studies lead me to theorize that there is a dialectical relationship between institutional diversity work and the recent wave of student activism. My aim in this paper is to explore this relationship, to use critical incidents of student activism as an analytical counterpoint and a means of gaining insight into the logics of institutional diversity work in higher education.

**Project Objective and Framework**

Postcolonial feminist scholar, Sara Ahmed (2012) states that it is imperative to “follow diversity around” in order to understand what it does (pg. 1). Sociologist, James Thomas (2018) asserts, “Instead of documenting diversity’s success or failure by counting the number of minority faculty and students…we ought to ask how is diversity articulated: how is diversity defined, organized, produced, and deployed” (pg. 141). The objective of this inquiry was to articulate the logics of institutional diversity work and to explore what student activism reveals about the ways diversity work reinforces hegemonic configurations of power and oppression in higher education. Due to the wealth of media and burgeoning scholarship focused on the #MustFall and #ITooAm campaigns (described in upcoming section), as well as the well-developed critical scholarship of diversity work in the United States, South Africa, and the United Kingdom, I use these as defining foci for this paper (Eggins, 2014; Smith, 2014).

Critical race theory (CRT) challenges the way that racial power is codified (both explicitly and tacitly) in social institutions and interrogates how racial regimes are constructed and maintained, with the aim of working to dismantle these through counter narrative social
action (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993, 2013; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Patton, 2016). One of the main tenets of this theory is the assertion that racist discourses are thoroughly entwined in seemingly neutral/objective social practices and institutions (like higher education diversity work). In this manner, a function of education is to reproduce and legitimate social inequalities. Just as education is often misrecognized as a neutral field, so too is diversity work misrecognized as a set of neutral discourses and practices (Delgado, 1989; Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Extending this first tenet of CRT, diversity work is comprised of a set of institutional discourses and practices that serve to reproduce and maintain white patriarchal, and fundamentally colonial, configurations of power and control in higher education. In this way diversity work represents a form of symbolic violence. Green (2013) wrote, “The concept of symbolic violence can be used to track the exercise of power and explore how particular cultural practices...are recognized and legitimated to validate and preserve control in the social field” (p. 143). Symbolic violence is hegemonic, drawn from the work of Antonio Gramsci, when it entails naturalizing the ideological domination of one group through suppression of alternate ways of constructing and explaining reality (Gramsci, 1988; Mayo, 2010).

A second tenet of CRT emphasizes questioning the constitution of social structures to understand how they represent and reproduce colonial relationships of power and oppression (Delgado, 1989; Patton et al., 2015; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). I apply a CRT lens to examine the ways that majoritarian power is tacitly exerted through ostensibly transformative higher education diversity discourse and practice, and how the hegemonic logics of this work, serve to maintain regimes of exclusion (Anderson, 2018; Hubain et al., 2016).

Bourdieu provides a set of conceptual “thinking tools” with which I explore the dynamics of power and resistance in the field of higher education, as pertains to institutional diversity
work. I apply these tools (specifically the terms agent, field, practice, and capital) to conceptualize relations of structure and agency in student activism and diversity work within higher education (Bourdieu, 1990; Marginson, 2008; Murphy, 2013; Rawolle & Lingard, 2013; Wacquant, 1989). Bourdieu held that education comprises a socially delineated domain (field) within which individuals (agents) inhabit particular roles (administrator or student activist) to which they bring collective experiences and habits of mind (habitus) that shape their practices (institutional diversity work or activism). Higher education as a social domain is concurrently global/transnational, national, and local (Bourdieu, 1990; Marginson, 2008). At the global level, the field of higher education is held together by flows of information, knowledge, people, and capital. With the advent of information communication technology (ICT), these flows have accelerated, connecting national systems of higher education as well as functioning externally from them, as in the case of student activist social media engagement (Marginson, 2008). I focus this inquiry on the transnational domain of higher education, and specifically the dialectical relationship between institutional diversity work and student activism within this field. I posit that through social media, student activists expand their practice beyond the field of higher education into the global media field and harness digital capital, circulating narratives of institutional exclusion. These narratives serve as a point of entry for understanding the hegemonic logics of institutional diversity work. To provide context for my analysis, I will briefly describe the discourse and practices of institutional diversity work within the transnational field of higher education, focusing on the United States, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. I will then provide a brief historical overview of related student activist practices.
Method

To identify the logics of institutional diversity work I reviewed academic literature on the #MustFall and #ITooAm movements and relevant critical scholarship of institutional diversity work. I searched peer reviewed literature using Google, EBSCOhost Academic Search Premier, and JSTOR. The following terms were used in various combinations to run Boolean searches: higher education, diversity, equity, inclusion, diversity in education, diversity discourse, campus diversity, diversity work, student activism, social media activism, student protest, campus activism, decolonization, and transformation. Searches were delimited to scholarship after 1977, the year that the diversity rationale originated in the United States, with Justice Lewis Powell’s opinion in the University of California Regents v. Bakke. I focused my review on literature produced subsequent to the development of the diversity rationale, which seeded institutional diversity discourses and practices. Materials were retrieved and evaluated for inclusion based on relevance to project aims; to be included in the corpus and analyzed, material had to focus on student activism from 2014 to the present, specifically the #MustFall and #ITooAm campaigns and include content that related this activism either directly or indirectly to issues of diversity and inclusion in higher education. In addition, I included in the corpus material that did not focus on student activism but that critically examined issues of diversity and inclusion in higher education in the United States, the United Kingdom, or South Africa. Relevant materials were stored by category in Zotero and reference lists were recursively mined for additional items. A final corpus of 37 peer-reviewed articles, academic texts, and media items were selected for analysis, with an additional 40 items reviewed to provide context.

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2 Diversity discourse and practice in the United States preceded such work in the United Kingdom and South Africa and was therefore used to delimit this study.
My analysis entailed a two stage thematic coding strategy (Bernard, 2011). I began by reviewing media and scholarly literature related to #MustFall and #ITooAm campaigns. I inductively coded this material, generating concepts regarding student experiences of diversity work and exclusion in higher education. I subsequently reviewed and applied these concepts to deductively code my sample of critical literature on institutional diversity work. I then grouped concepts into categories that intersect student activism and institutional diversity work and generated themes representing the logics of diversity work.

To provide background and context to my assertion of the logics of institutional work, I begin by describing institutional diversity work within the global field of higher education, I discuss how this work is taken up by higher education institutions, and provide a brief historical overview of student activism. I then present my analysis of the logics of diversity work: 1) tensions in diversity discourse, 2) a bureaucratic approach to diversity practices, 3) an institutional diversity capital paradox, and 4) “thin” institutional responsiveness to student resistance. I conclude by discussing the implications of scholarship at the intersection of student activism and diversity work and future directions for research.

**Higher Education Diversity Work**

Through my review of literature pertaining to diversity in higher education I developed a working description of higher education diversity work that subsequently informed my critical analysis. The term *diversity* has been adopted by university administrators to denote the process, and product, of incorporating historically underrepresented identities into the academy (Ahmed, 2006). The salience of identities associated with diversity work varies across regional and national contexts. For example, in India, diversity work has focused on caste, language, geography, and religion as salient characteristics of identity (Beckham, 2000; Smith, 2014).
Alternately, in Brazil, class was initially the primary concern of diversity efforts which have subsequently broadened to address race (Smith, 2014). In the United States, South Africa, and the United Kingdom, race and ethnicity are the dominant identities of diversity work and diversity scholarship. However, within the South African context, language, as an extension of race and ethnicity, has salience as an identity marker that has served to reinforce boundaries of exclusion in higher education. Students at the University of Stellenbosch joined the #RhodesMustFall movement in 2015 using the hashtag #OpenStellenbosch to protest the university’s Afrikaans language policy (Jansen, 1998; Peterson, 2015). Further, gender, sexuality, and ability are identity categories with transnational salience, though the degree to which they are explicitly addressed differs contextually and attention to these identities in diversity work and scholarship is eclipsed by a focus on race/ethnicity (Worthington, 2012). As the history of diversity work and activism demonstrates, identity, and therefore identity salience, is not static and new identities emerge as salient in all contexts (Smith, 2014).

My review found that diversity is used, both institutionally and in the scholarly literature, in association with other terms, such as inclusion/inclusive, equality, equity, multicultural/ism, underrepresented groups/minorities (Ahmed, 2012; Berrey, 2011; Iverson, 2007; Thomas, 2018). Institutional diversity work in higher education aims to increase representation of minoritized\textsuperscript{3} identities in academic spaces (Ahmed, 2012; Berrey, 2011; Iverson, 2007; Thomas, 2018). Diversity work is iterative and involves: making commitments to diversity through institutional statements and action plans, creating institutional structures and programs dedicated to diversity, recruiting and incorporating diverse bodies into the institution, and measuring institutional

\textsuperscript{3} Using the term minoritized connotes exclusion as a social process, as opposed to the term minority, which implies that numerical differences are a product of underrepresentation or demography. South Africa, with a majority Black population (80.9%), exemplifies the impacts of minoritization in higher education (Black students comprised 32% of post-secondary students in 1990, 60% in 1998) (Anderson, 2018; CIA Factbook, n.d.; Harper, 2012; J. Jansen, 2014)
diversity (Hurtado et al., 1999). Despite divergent national and institutional histories, a remarkably unified transnational diversity discourse has emerged. This discourse foregrounds the economic and social benefits of diversity.

In the United States, the discourse of diversity emerged as a result of backlash against race conscious admissions policies (Berrey, 2011; Iverson, 2007; Thomason, 2017). From the 1977 United States Supreme Court case, *University of California Regents v. Bakke*, through the 2003 cases of *Gratz v. Bollinger* and *Grutter v. Bollinger*, and more recently the 2016 case of *Fischer v. University of Texas at Austin*, there developed a rationale regarding admissions at highly selective colleges and universities that is the foundation of diversity discourse across higher education (Berrey, 2011; Kennedy, 2016; O’Connor, 2003; Powell, 1977; Rehnquist, 2003). The diversity rationale originated with Justice Lewis Powell’s opinion in the *University of California Regents v. Bakke* (1977) case where he asserted that there are institutional and national benefits to a diverse educational environment, namely, that a rich exchange of ideas is produced vis-à-vis diversity. He defined diversity as including, but not limited to race and asserted that it was acceptable to consider diversity in the admissions process but universities could not set aside a specific number of seats to be filled based on race (Kennedy, 2016; O’Connor, 2003; Powell, 1977; Rehnquist, 2003). This opinion was affirmed in the rulings of *Gratz v. Bollinger*, *Grutter v. Bollinger*, and *Fischer v. University of Texas at Austin*, and is the core of race-neutral diversity discourse in higher education in the United States.

South African higher education is undergoing a similar shift in regards to race consciousness. South Africa’s goals and policy position regarding higher education transformation were inscribed in the 1997 post-apartheid White Paper on Education, the 2001 National Plan on Higher Education and the 2012 Green Paper on Post-School Education and
Training (J. Jansen, 2014). These documents established higher education access and success for Black South African’s as a national priority. However, universities are moving away from race-based affirmative action and towards policies that view race as one among many factors that should be taken into account in university admissions and programs (Mangcu, 2017). Xolela Mangcu (2017) wrote in regards to the University of Cape Town’s policy shift, “This formulation signaled a shift from racial identity as the main consideration to making it only one among a number of factors, as part and parcel of a broader liberal discourse that delegitimized the concept of ‘race’ as the sole basis of real social identities” (pg. 247). Mangcu asserted that the #RhodesMustFall campaign was generated in response to this shift, student anger over the move towards a “race-neutral” university and the lack of meaningful institutional transformation were couched in their demands for removal of the statue of Cecil Rhodes.

Equality legislation has been the driving force behind diversity work in the United Kingdom (UK). The Equality Act of 2010 established the responsibility of higher education institutions to eliminate discrimination, advance equal opportunity, and foster integration (Eggins, 2014). This legislation delineated the following salient identity characteristics as the focus of diversity work: age, ability, gender, maternity, race, religion. The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) superintends the diversity work of higher education in the UK, undertaking research and providing resources to support the Higher Education Funding Council for England’s (HEFCE) “Equality and Diversity Scheme”. Higher education institutions submit Annual Monitoring Statements addressing their progress towards meeting diversity targets. Further, each institution must establish its own equality scheme and report annually on progress towards its objectives (Eggins, 2014). Eggins (2014) wrote that while equality legislation includes a broad array of marginalized identities, institutions primarily collect and report data regarding progress
on race, class, and gender. Further, UK policy language has shifted, as noted in the 2011 ECU strategic plan, from a conception of equity that was linked to eliminating discrimination towards a focus on the “benefits” of diversity.

In spite of increased attention and resources being funneled toward diversity work in higher education, student activism at colleges and universities signals failures of this work to create inclusive educational environments (Rhoads, 2016). The recent wave of student activism focused on students’ identity-based experiences of campus microaggressions, bias, harassment, and exclusion. In addition, student activists used social media as a platform to call for the reorientation of higher education to reflect and serve diverse peoples, knowledges and experiences. Reviewing and analyzing critical scholarship on diversity work and student activism can therefore serve as a means of interrogating the hegemonic logics of diversity work. I use hegemonic to refer to institutional diversity practices, including statements, policies, and initiatives that support existing regimes of power and exclusion (Mayo, 2010).

**Student Activism in the Context of Diversity**

Student activism has long been a hallmark of the university experience, it predates contemporary institutional diversity work and can be seen, dialectically, as key to diversity related reforms in higher education (C. J. Broadhurst, 2014; Reynolds & Mayweather, 2017; Rhoads, 1998, 2016). To gain insight into the evolving concerns and increasing globalization of student activism it is useful to examine its history divided into three broad eras – the 1960’s, 1960’s-1990’s, and the contemporary era. Each of these eras is defined by the particular issues that activists addressed, the practices they employed, and their specific demands for reform. To contextualize contemporary activism, I briefly review the history of student activism in the context of diversity and the emergence of social media as an activist platform.
Broadly speaking, the 1960’s saw Black student resistance and empowerment campaigns that were tied to wider civil rights movements. Student activists in the United States and United Kingdom staged Ghandian nonviolent civil disobedience, “sit-ins” and more confrontational Black Power “stand-ins”, using their dissonant bodies to challenge White configurations of social space (Carson, 1991; Klemenčič, 2014; Puwar, 2004). Black Power reflected the idea that empowerment and solidarity were necessary for effective social action. Only by claiming space for Black bodies and experiences would oppression be redressed (Carson, 1991; Hayes, 2005). In the late 1960’s student activists in the United States began to form campus based Black Student Unions at Predominately White Institutions (PWI’s) and to push for Black studies programs. In South Africa, the South African Students’ Organization (SASO) emerged under the leadership of Steven Biko. Members of SASO formed the Black Consciousness Movement with the aim of psychological and physical liberation of Blacks from the apartheid regime (Hadfield, 2017). Student activists held campus demonstrations, gave consciousness raising lectures, and developed Black studies courses (Reynolds & Mayweather, 2017; Rhoads, 1998). As Robert Rhoads (2016) writes, “The fact that the earliest Black Studies programs were advanced primarily by student activists offers evidence of the power students hold when committed and well organized” (p.192). In the United States, ethnic studies as a discipline and specific programs such as Latino Studies, African American Studies, and Native American Studies programs were established in the 1960’s in response to student activism within the context of the civil rights movement (Escobar, 2018).

The late-60’s through 1990’s era was marked by the expansion of activist concerns to include gender, sexuality, and an international focus on issues like apartheid in South Africa; (Rhoads, 2016). Towards the end of the 1960’s and into the 1970’s, drawing on the practices and concepts
of self-identity of the Black Power movement, women, as well as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community engaged in campus based protests to contest higher education as an institutional space that was structured to discriminate (Beemyn, 2003; Echols, 1989). As a result of this activism, women’s studies programs as well as intersectional approaches to examining structural oppression emerged in higher education (Beemyn, 2003; Echols, 1989).

Broadhurst (2014) wrote, that the international Divestment Movement of the 1980’s built on the activism of 1960’s in its fight against apartheid in South Africa and higher education’s support of this system through the mechanism of financial investment. Resistance strategies included building and occupying shanties on college campus campuses; the shanty, a symbolic representation of apartheid’s structural oppression of Black South Africans. Bradford Martin (2007) wrote, “…the shanties were a form of protest that involved the contestation of public space . . . in which student activists…transformed campus space in ways that left them much closer to Habermas’s idealized version of public space as a maximally inclusive and accessible space for wide-ranging discourse” (p 330). Student activism in the 1990’s focused more explicitly on emerging ideals of diversity and multiculturalism. For example, in the US, two events in 1996 especially drew activists together around diversity, the National Day of Action and the National Week of Action from March 27 to April 7th. Activists on campuses across the nation adopted the practices of the 1960’s including teach-ins, marches, and rallies to call on universities to increase educational access and foster positive campus climates for students of color, women, and the LGBT community (Rhoads, 1998).

The contemporary era is demarcated by the emergence of social media as a platform for activism. According to Broadhurst (2014), student activism in the 21st century builds on long
practiced tactics and strategies and uses social media to engage in new forms of protest. Existing scholarship suggests that contemporary student activism can be defined by a focus on student’s lived experience, specifically identity-based local campus issues, and the use of social media to connect and sustain local movements across time and space (Benson & Morgan, 2014; Gismandi, 2015; Hernández, 2015; Theocharis, 2012; Wong, 2015). As Gismandi and Osteen argued, “Calling for equity and justice, student activists around the world are learning, motivating, and communicating their messages of and strategies for change through mobile and social media” (2014, p. 63). Evoking the themes and strategies of the Black Consciousness, Black Power, and Divestment movements, minoritized students used #ITooAm, #MustFall... to demand transformation (Boroughs, 2015; Mangcu, 2017; Oxlund, 2016). These movements aimed to give voice to students who felt alienated and underrepresented by university structures, curricula, and practices (Chaudhuri, 2016; Haidrani, 2014). Their discontent sheds light on the logics of diversity work.

The #ITooAm movement began in 2014 at Harvard, with a social media campaign aimed at exposing students racialized experiences (Butler, 2014; Lee, 2014; Mwangi et al., 2016). Students used the hashtag #itooamharvard to share (via Tumblr, Twitter, and Facebook) microaggressions they had experienced on campus. Over the course of months I, Too, Am spread across the United States, Canada, Brazil, England, and South Africa where students created sites that reflected local concerns while also demonstrating the transnational prevalence of institutional exclusion in higher education (Mwangi et al., 2016). Mwangi et al. contended that through #ITooAm students created spaces where they could counter “institutional hegemony” (pg.146) and build solidarity across institutional and national contexts. At the University of Cape Town in March of 2015, student activists began using the hashtag #RhodesMustFall to demand
institutional transformation. By 2016 the #MustFall movement emerged at universities throughout South Africa and subsequently extended transnationally to campuses in the UK, US, Scotland, and Nigeria (Boroughs, 2015; Bosch, 2017; Chaudhuri, 2016; Mangcu, 2017; Oxlund, 2016). Students protested, “tuition fees, housing schemes, languages of instruction, and symbolic tributes to colonial stalwarts” (Oxlund, 2016, pg.1) using hashtags such as: #FeesMustFall, #PatriarchyMustFall, #TuksUprising, #OpenStellis, #SteynMustFall, #TheTransCollective, and #ReformPukke (CMoloi et al., 2017; Luescher et al., 2017).

**Hegemonic Logics Diversity Work**

Using student activism as an analytical counterpoint to diversity work helps to illuminate the logics that are integral to how diversity is defined and deployed through institutional diversity work. Through thematic analysis of relevant literature on higher education diversity work four broad logics emerge: (1) tensions in diversity discourse; (2) a bureaucratic approach to diversity work; (3) an institutional diversity capital paradox; and (4) “thin” institutional responsiveness to student resistance. These logics are interconnected and mutually support the hegemonic configuration of institutional diversity work. For example, administrator’s “thin” use of non-performative speech acts, such as issuing diversity statements in response to student activism, is a form of bureaucratic diversity work. Just as the bureaucratic tracking and measuring of diversity along racial lines reflects and reinforces the ambiguous logic of diversity. Each of the aforementioned logics is described and unpacked in the following section to provide insight into the ways that these logics contribute to the maintenance of institutional exclusion.

**Tension in Diversity Discourse.** As documented above, the specific cultural and legal contexts that shape diversity discourse differ transnationally, and are based on historical circumstances, however, the discourse of diversity is pervasive across the field of higher
education (Mwangi et al., 2016). This discourse is based on the ambiguous logic of diversity, as including but not limited to race (Ahmed, 2012; Berrey, 2011; Hikido & Murray, 2015; Iverson, 2007; Jones, 2014; Mangcu, 2017). Tensions in diversity discourse can be traced in part to this ambiguity, the term diversity is deployed as a proxy for racial inclusion that also blankets other forms of diversity (e.g., geographic origins, economic background, gender and sexual orientation, differences in ability…) (Berrey, 2004, 2011). Additionally, the discursive focus on the benefits of diversity - namely that interaction across racial and other lines produces marketable skills and knowledge - results in diversity practices that do not address the needs of minoritized students but instead serve majority students.

Sociologist Ellen Berrey (2011) stated that, “The push for diversity entails, at once, a focus on race and a shift away from race. ‘Diversity’ connotes racial minorities yet is also a vague, plastic referent… In contrast to the logic of remedying racial disadvantage, which relies on a structural explanation of racial exclusion, the logic of diversity provides a cultural explanation of inclusion” (pg.574). Thomas (2018) used the term “Condensation” to refer to how the definition of diversity both ties its work to race while simultaneously dissociating diversity work from race consciousness. Subsequently, in practice, the discourse of diversity often works counter to the intent of diversity action plans, and reinforces exclusion. For instance, Chief Diversity Officers (CDO’s) and other diversity administrators who work to improve diversity and inclusion on their campuses are under institutional pressure to adhere to race-neutral guidelines (Chang, 2013; Jones, 2014; Sabbagh, 2011).

While a shift towards race-neutrality erodes the focus on redressing issues of race, equity, and access in higher education, there is continued institutional emphasis placed on counting minoritized bodies and measuring academic performance that is based on the racial connotations
of diversity (Eggins, 2014; Iverson, 2007; J. Jansen, 2014; Thomas, 2018). For instance, once admitted to the university, minoritized students are often differentiated from the majority as underrepresented groups (URG), and institutionally tracked with discussions of disparities in success focused along the URG/non-URG line. Tracking students has multiple and contradictory implications. On the one hand, it serves as a mechanism for identifying and addressing disparities as well as distributing resources. In this manner, it can be argued that tracking is a race-conscious practice intended to decrease equity gaps. However, tracking also signals a perception of student deficit and it groups students of color into a category of other. Assessing URG success against a majoritarian norm, as opposed to interrogating the hegemonic facets of existing measures of assessment, is a deficit model that reifies higher education as an exclusive space. In other words, the practice of labelling and tracking students reinforces a binary of insider/outsider that preserves universities as exclusive educational environments (Eggins, 2014; Iverson, 2007; J. Jansen, 2014; Thomas, 2018).

The tension in diversity discourse that is related to its focus on the benefits of student interaction along racial and other lines can be understood within the broader economic ideology of neoliberalism. Applying market logic, diversity is seen as a resource to be deployed in social interactions that ultimately have economic value, as they enhance learning and generate marketable skills (Berrey, 2011; Iverson, 2007; Thomas, 2018; Thomason, 2017). The underlying assumption is that diversity is a form of capital that can be converted into economic advantage for students, faculty, university, society. As a result, institutions present diversity by strategically deploying diverse students in recruiting materials that give the impression of inclusion. Staging diversity is a marketing strategy, as a diverse student population is a marker of institutional diversity capital (Iverson, 2007; Thomas, 2018; Thomason, 2017). Student activist campaigns
reveal the dichotomy between the ideal of a diverse and inclusive university, which appears in university marketing materials, and students’ lived experiences of exclusion on campus.

**Bureaucratic Approach to Diversity Work.** Institutional images and statements reflect commitments to diversity that often create an imaginary sense of social action. These statements do not represent a diverse and inclusive institutional reality nor do they serve as a form of action towards achieving those goals. Heidi Mirza, Professor of Racial Equality Studies at Middlesex University in the UK, named “a bureaucratic approach to diversity”, stating, “We now have glossy brochures with our multi-coloured faces and wonderful policies and institutional statements that promise inclusion and change…Good intentions remain locked in an institutional paper trail” (Mirza, 2006, p. 16). The bureaucratic approach to diversity work is manifested in diversity statements/reports and the concentration of diversity practices at the administrative level (Ahmed, 2012; Anderson, 2018; Elliott et al., 2013; J. Jansen, 2014; J. D. Jansen, 1998; Mirza, 2006; Smith, 2014; Thomas, 2018).

In regards to institutional diversity work in the UK and Australia, Sara Ahmed (Ahmed, 2006, 2007b) wrote about institutional speech acts as statements that make claims “about” or “on behalf” of an institution. She focused specifically on institutional statements (contained in documents, publicity/recruiting materials, policies…) regarding diversity and race-equality. Ahmed asserted that diversity statements are non-performative when they do not do what they say, when they fail to represent or produce the effect that they name. According to Ahmed (2006), non-performativity is not a failure of intent, instead “we can see that such descriptions create fantasy images of the organizations they apparently represent. The document says we are diverse, as if saying it makes it so” (pg. 124, 2006). University diversity statements identify diversity and inclusion as institutional goals, however, once a statement is written it often
functions to stand in for actual work towards achieving the objectives that it established. Statements are praised and seen as a measure of the university’s good performance in addressing diversity (Ahmed, 2006; Elliott et al., 2013). Ahmed (2006) wrote about her experience drafting diversity policy, “having a good race-equality policy quickly got translated into being good at race equality. Such translation works to conceal the inequalities that the documents were written to reveal…its very existence is taken as evidence that the institutional environment documented has been overcome…” (pg. 109).

In line with Ahmed’s critique regarding the distance between higher education diversity statements and action, Elliott, et al. (2013) found incongruities between the stated goals of inclusion and the lived experiences of members of the campus community. This mixed-methods study undertaken in the San Francisco Bay Area, aimed to examine the effectiveness of institutional diversity efforts, focusing on their breadth and depth, and the extent to which members of the university community experienced inclusive change, as promised by the institution’s mission, vision, and values statements. The authors found that 49% of staff, 43% of faculty and 27% of student participants had witnessed or experienced insensitive or disparaging behavior. Further, diversity work was largely invisible to students.

Diversity work’s invisibility can be attributed to its concentration at the administrative level (Anderson, 2018; Thomas, 2018). While participants in the Elliott, et al. (2013) study felt that faculty and students are primarily responsible for creating an inclusive environment, they perceived that most institutional diversity work and diversity statements are generated outside of faculty purview. In the United States, diversity work is often overseen by Chief Diversity Officers (CDOs) who manage Offices of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) and are tasked with coordinating diversity work on campuses (Jones, 2014; Wilson, 2013). The CDO model is
borrowed from private industry and was first adopted by highly selective universities (Wilson, 2013). There has since been a growing trend of CDO positions created across the spectrum of higher education, including at broad access institutions and community colleges (Wilson, 2013). In an article analyzing institutional responsiveness to student activism, Anderson (2018) wrote, “While there is a central diversity office administered by a chief diversity officer (CDO), there are hundreds of offices, initiatives, programs, and committees across campus forming the larger apparatus of institutional diversity work” (pg.7). However, transformation does not suffuse institutional culture and is insufficiently inculcated into pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment (Ahmed, 2007b; J. D. Jansen, 1998). The bureaucratic approach to diversity work, focused on shifting and documenting demography, concentrated at the administrative level, leaves hegemonic configurations of knowledge and power unchanged.

**An Institutional Diversity Capital Paradox.** As Daryl Smith (2014) discussed, staging diversity is a form of tokenism, students from salient identity groups are highly visible in marketing – advertising an institution’s diversity capital, but are largely invisible as individuals within the institution. The tracking and measuring of students along identity group lines is a manifestation of individual invisibility, wherein students are subject to the deficit gaze instead of being viewed as individuals with unique sets of experience and knowledge, as well as individual challenges (Eggins, 2014; J. Jansen, 2014; J. D. Jansen, 1998; Smith, 2014). Tokenism lends itself to a campus culture where biases are not interrogated, and dominant values and norms do not shift. Through social media posts student activists call attention to the microaggressions, negative climate, and marginalization that they experience on university campuses (Mwangi et al., 2016). This activism provides insight into the logic created by a diversity practice that
focuses on shifting campus demographics, as opposed to dismantling structures and attitudes of exclusion.

Unfortunately, there is a paradoxical myth predicated by the diversity discourse, namely, that tokenism can be overcome and a diverse and inclusive institution realized by achieving a critical mass of diverse individuals. The central conceit of the myth is that once critical mass is reached (variously defined as 20% and 35% of a population), members of salient identity groups are more likely to be seen as individuals, overcome stereotypes, have greater voice within the institution, and all members of the institution will then enjoy the benefits of the institution’s diversity (Smith, 2014). In this manner, minoritized students are seen as agents of change which reinforces bureaucratic diversity work in the form of diversity accounting that focuses on shifting and measuring demography.

Jonathan Jansen, who served as the first Black Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Free State, a historically white Afrikaans-language university (fully desegregated in 1996), wrote in 1998 of the focus on demography and therefore diversity accounting in South African higher education, “This narrow interpretation of transformation in terms of racial accounting is becoming meaningless as universities inescapably begin to reflect in their student composition their regional race distribution and as issues of social class become more salient in determining what kinds of students gain access to what kinds of universities” (Jansen, 1998, p. 109). The lesson that can be drawn is that institutional transformation cannot be realized demographically, building an institution’s diversity capital and achieving a critical mass of minoritized students does not result in an inclusive institution. Today Black students comprise more than 60 percent of post-secondary enrollment in South African higher education (J. Jansen, 2014), yet
#RhodesMustFall and its extension campaigns like #FeesMustFall and #OpenStellenbosch, demonstrate that a diverse institution is not consequently inclusive.

**“Thin” Institutional Responsiveness to Student Activism.** Student activists demand that their experiences are acknowledged and that administrators follow through on institutional commitments to transformation (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016). Administrative responses to activist demands frequently contradict stated institutional values in regards to inclusion. Institutional responses include using vague language that expresses an abstract commitment to diversity that has the effect of dismissing students’ experiences. Typical responses refer to diversity documents as evidence of the institution’s commitment to diversity and assurance that diversity work is being done (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016). In what Anderson termed, “thin” responsiveness, administrative responses are ostensibly supportive of diversity and inclusion, however, because they fail to produce meaningful change, they actually “work” to maintain existing structures and to prevent meaningful institutional transformation (Ahmed, 2006; Anderson, 2018; Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016).

Anderson (2018) drew from the philosophical work of Bentley and Owen (2001) to formulate an ethical framework for institutional responsiveness to student activism. In Bentley and Owen’s work, responsiveness (as opposed to avoidance or suppression), of a majoritarian community to minoritized community demands, entails listening to and engaging with subaltern voices based on belief in, and respect for, minoritized communities’ “reasonableness”, in whatever form it takes. Anderson extends this definition of responsiveness to include “thin”/“thick” responsiveness. He applies this framework to an analysis of the institutional response at State University to a student protest campaign using the hashtag #ThisisStateU.

“Thin” responsiveness is dialogic engagement with no action, administrative recognition with no
substantive positive change, or, with change that is negative. At State University this responsiveness took the form of meetings, forums, and discussions organized by campus leaders to engage with activist concerns. When activists expressed frustration via #ThisisStateU, regarding protracted conversations that did not appear to lead anywhere, administrators responded using #ThisisStateU to state that they were listening. “Thin” responsiveness taxes the endurance of student protestors, reinforcing inequity and exclusion. Alternately, “thick” responsiveness is predicated by dialogue but must be operationalized into action that results in shifts in power relations, decision–making processes, and/or resources. Thick responsiveness frames activism as a potentially generative and institutionally enriching form of political deliberation. In this way, thick responsiveness fosters an increased sense of belonging, or inclusion, the stated goal of diversity work (Anderson, 2018).

**Discussion and Future Research Directions**

By engaging with student activists through thick responsiveness, institutions have the opportunity to address discrepancies between the institutional ideal and the lived experiences of students, to reconceptualize diversity discourse and its attendant work. Inviting and amplifying a full range of stories would provide a more nuanced conception of diversity. Additionally, “Examining the (in)congruence between problems and solutions articulated in policy, coupled with an awareness of the discursive construction of diversity, can provide a different lens through which to view diversity.” (Iverson, pg. 606, 2007). Administrative engagement with student activists has the potential to increase student agency in the transformation process and develop students’ sense of emotional belonging. However, this engagement must be based on deliberative dialogue and a public reciprocal exchange of ideas that results in decisions that are both binding and open to future challenge (Anderson, 2018, Habermas, 1984).
Hurtado, Mile, Clayton-Pederson, and Allen (1999) asserted that there are four dimensions that diversity work must attend to in order to create an inclusive institution: historical, structural, psychological, and behavioral. In short, diversity work must redress the historical legacy of exclusion at the institution; increase the structural representation of historically excluded identities; address the psychological perceptions and attitudes held by members of the campus community; and transform curriculum, pedagogy, programs, and spaces (Hurtado et al., 1999). Because the aforementioned dimensions are interconnected, if an institution focuses diversity work on increasing the structural dimension by increasing enrollment of previously excluded identities but does not address the historical, psychological, or behavioral dimensions, then this work reinforces the institution as an exclusive social and educational space (Hurtado et al., 1999).

Consequently, diversity work has been critiqued as a “diversity project” that focuses on numerically increasing minoritized identities on campuses without dismantling historical structures of control and exclusion (Ahmed, 2012; Thomas, 2018). Diversity work must expand substantively beyond a focus on demography and diversity accounting, it must differentiate between and explicitly address institutional racism (as well as sexism, ableism…), diversity, and inclusiveness. Examining diversity work and activism in a transnational perspective demonstrates that identity salience is not static and new identities emerge as salient in all contexts, diversity and inclusion should therefore be embraced as practice rather than a fixed goal. Further, institutional leaders must establish the expectation that all members of the institution are required to take up the work of institutional transformation. Involving all members of the campus community in ongoing dialogic explorations regarding their conceptions of transformation could comprise an inclusive practice that helps move the institution beyond
hegemonic configurations of diversity work (Habermas, 1984). To date, university diversity work has increased the number of minoritized bodies on campuses, but in terms of institutional transformation, it has focused more on demography than effecting systemic change (Ahmed, 2006; Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016). There is an assumption promulgated by diversity discourse and manifested in diversity work that admitted diverse individuals will act as agents of change on campus, initiating interactions that will result in an inclusive institution (Iverson, 2007). Institutional diversity work has not effectively redressed the historical legacy of exclusion, addressed the psychological perceptions and attitudes held by members of institutional communities, or transformed curriculum, pedagogy, programs, and spaces.

Higher education diversity work is a transnational phenomenon, a result of widening participation and the drive for universal access as a development goal. It is important to note that student activist concerns and practices have long been transnational, students around the world have exchanged ideas, worked at parallel purpose, and at times, labored in concert to transform institutions of higher education. A principal goal of this activism has been to dismantle higher education as a primary engine of hegemonic knowledge production and social reproduction, and to reassemble it to reflect the bodies, experiences, ideals, and needs of a heterogeneous society.

In spite of increased attention and resources being funneled toward diversity work in higher education, the concurrent proliferation of student activism at colleges and universities around the world signals the failures of this work to realize the stated goal of creating diverse and inclusive educational institutions. Activist campaigns represent a force calling attention to the hegemonic logics of diversity work (Gramsci, 1988; Mayo, 2010; Rhoads, 2016). As CMoloi, Makgoba, and Miruka write, “The students who are united on these issues across universities
have correctly identified a simple but obvious common story. This is one hallmark of leadership, that is, identifying a common story” (2017, pg. 221).

Building from this synthesis of literature on student activism with the critical scholarship of diversity work, more empirical research is needed to understand the recent wave of student activism in relation to institutional diversity work. Research is needed that focuses on a specific case of student activism, defined by a particular hashtag, in order to understand how this activism is catalyzed, how students interact via social media student, and what their social media activist practices are. Due to the data rich nature of social media content both quantitative and qualitative analysis could be applied to examine student activist concerns and practices. Reviewing the extent literature on student activism indicates that this scholarship has focused primarily on highly selective institutions, there is a gap in the literature of student activism examining activism at broad access institutions (Mwangi et al., 2016). This is an important gap to fill in terms of understanding the logics of institutional diversity work, as broad access institutions enroll the majority of students in higher education and they have attained relatively higher levels of compositional diversity. It is therefore through examining activism on these campuses that researchers could gain critical insight into student experiences of bureaucratic diversity work and the myth of critical mass. Additionally, there is a need for researchers to widen their focus to examine both student activism and institutional diversity work within the transnational field of higher education. Expanding global participation in higher education and the emergent inclusion agenda demand scholarly attention. Empirical research at the transnational scale entails adopting innovative research methodologies such as network ethnography (Howard, 2002), which couples quantitative network analysis with qualitative methods in order to develop a holistic account of a large scale phenomenon like transnational
student activism. Finally, while there is a robust body of literature on diversity work in higher education and a long-standing scholarship of student activism, this paper represents an intersecting line of inquiry rich with opportunity for future scholarship.
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Chapter 3: #DiversityisNotInclusion: Anatomy of a Student Activist Network of Practice

In 2014, student activists at Harvard drew from the title and intent of the Langston Hughes’ 1926 poem *I, Too, am America*, to claim space on campus through the #itooamharvard campaign (Butler, 2014; Lee, 2014; Mwangi et al., 2016). This campaign spread through social media and university campuses around the world became sites of resistance where students used the hashtag #ITooAm to call attention to their experiences of institutional exclusion. At the University of Cape Town in March of 2015, student activists began using the hashtag #RhodesMustFall to demand decolonization and a fundamental transformation of the university toward universal access and inclusion. By 2016 #MustFall movements emerged at universities throughout South Africa and subsequently extended transnationally to campuses in the UK, US, Scotland, and Nigeria (Boroughs, 2015; Bosch, 2017; Chaudhuri, 2016; Mangcu, 2017; Oxlund, 2016). The #ITooAm and #MustFall movements are transnational examples of a phenomenon that includes regional and local manifestations. For example, the #StandwithMizzou movement originated at University of Missouri and spread to more than 50 campuses across the United States with students standing in solidarity against institutional oppression (Schulte, 2015). As quoted on the news site HuffPost, a student protester stated, “We are fighting back against the institutions which have oppressed us and our people for centuries. We are telling these institutions that we will hold them accountable. We are demanding change, now.” (Workneh, 2015).

Each of the aforementioned campaigns was sparked by specific local circumstances, however, reviewing the social media content of these campaigns indicates that they hold in common a shared call for the reorientation of higher education to represent the experiences, values, and knowledge of diverse peoples (Robertson, 2019a). In addition, a preliminary
exploration of activist content suggests that students utilized social media as a tool of resistance. This wave of student activism took place within the context of the broad institutional drive for diversity and inclusion in higher education (Becker, 2017; Blessinger, 2016; Smith, 2014). Diversity, loosely defined as the multiplicity of identities and characteristics that one might bring to higher education, is integral to the higher education inclusion agenda. This agenda is undergirded by the conception that diversity conveys economic, social, and individual benefits. To operationalize the inclusion agenda, aimed at increasing participation of diverse groups in higher education, institutions have adopted the discourse of diversity and established institutional practices, the combination of these I term diversity work, (Blessinger, 2016; Eggins, 2014; Givan et al., 2010; J. Jansen, 2014; Robertson, 2019b; Smith et al., 1997).

In order to gain insight into the current phenomenon of student activism, I applied critical race theory (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002) and a community of practice model (Wenger, 1999) to empirically examine a campaign that took place at an accessible Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and employed the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion. In the following sections I describe my research objective and outline my study. I then contextualize my project within critical race theory, community of practice theory and related empirical work. Finally, I describe my methods, data collection, and analysis.

**Research Objective**

The aim of the project was to explore the networked interactions of student activists around a common concern and examine the ways that they used social media as an instrument of transformational resistance within the context of diversity work in higher education. This was an empirical study that examined a critical incident of student activism, defined by the hashtag
#DiversityisNotInclusion, that took place at State University (SU), an accessible public university that is Hispanic-serving. The following questions drove my inquiry:

1) What were the contours of the #DiversityisNotInclusion student activist network?
2) How did student activists use #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of transformational resistance within the context of diversity discourse and practice at SU?

To address my research questions, I framed my inquiry with critical race theory (CRT) and applied a community of practice model to conceptualize the network and subsequently explore its practices and concerns. I employed social network analysis to visualize the communicative connections between activists and to examine the types of discursive acts that comprised these connections (question 1). In addition, I used a critical discourse approach to qualitatively analyze the social media content produced and circulated by student activists to gain insight into their resistance practices and specifically how they utilized the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion as a tool of resistance. This study contributes to the scholarly literature by, 1) filling a gap regarding student activists use of social media, 2) exploring the relationship of student activism to institutional diversity work, and 3) bridging the scholarship of diversity work in higher education with the scholarship of student activism.

**Theoretical Framework**

My approach to this project was oriented by the tenets of critical race theory (CRT) and Solorzano and Bernal’s (2001) theorizing of transformational student resistance. CRT has five guiding tenets in relation to education (Delgado, 1989; Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). The first tenet of CRT is that racism and intersectional oppression are central to the constitution and function of education as a social structure, a critical race methodology addresses questions related the experiences of minoritized people within
education. A CRT approach challenges the hegemonic logics of education which operate to misrepresent education as meritocratic, objective, and equitable. The central objective of CRT driven research in education is social justice through working to eliminate intersectional oppression and exclusion. Inquiry framed by CRT centers the experiences and voices of minoritized students and includes their counter-stories. And finally, CRT informed research uses interdisciplinary methods in order to examine a phenomenon holistically (Delgado, 1989; Delgado & Stefancic, 1993, 2013; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Solorzano and Bernal’s (2001) theorization of transformational resistance was based on their study of Latinx student resistance motivated by students’ aspiration for equitable education. Solorzano and Bernal asserted that student activists worked for transformation as agents within the structure of education, their oppositional practices intended to catalyze change toward more socially just institutions. Further, they contended that through transformational resistance, student activists engaged tactics that countered ineffectual and oppressive educational practices. Solorzano and Bernal’s theorization informed my approach to examining student activists’ use of social media as a tool of transformational resistance within the context of institutional diversity work in higher education. In addition, CRT guided my collection of social media content produced and circulated by student activists as a means of accessing the experiences and stories of minoritized students in higher education.

I used a community of practice theoretical model to conceptualize the structure and practices of the #DiversityisNotInclusion student activist network. According to Wenger (1999), communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern for something, interact around their concern, and through their interaction engage in a shared repertoire of practices. Communities of Practice develop through a range of activities and are comprised of members
who have different levels of participation, knowledge, and mastery (Wenger, 1999). Key to the function of communities of practice are boundary objects, either material (pamphlets, maps, texts..) or conceptual (such as hashtags), that circulate through the community and link its members (Star & Griesemer, 1989; Wenger, 1999). Boundary objects are malleable and can be altered to fit the needs of individuals, yet are also resilient enough to maintain their integrity across the broader community. In this way, boundary objects serve as tools of collective practice and meaning making for the whole community. Prior research has explored the creation of communities of practice through online engagement around shared interests such as health and politics (Çoban, 2016; Xu et al., 2015). Lewis and Rush (2013) asserted that while community membership is often formally defined, for example, by employment in an institution or registration in a course, it is possible to identify informal communities. Through research related to online community formation, the term “network of practice”, emerged to describe the structural fluidity and looser ties that characterize informal interest based social groups that arise through social media interaction (Lewis & Rush, 2013; Wasko et al., 2009). Research on hashtags and “hashtag activism” has indicated that these function as a means of spreading ideas and tying individuals together in a network (Bonilla & Rosa, 2015; Xiong et al., 2018). In this project I analyzed student activists’ use of the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion to construct and maintain a network of practice. In addition, I examined how activists deployed the hashtag as a boundary object and instrument of transformational resistance.

Related Empirical Work

This project builds on the scholarship of student activism and specifically the line of inquiry that has examined this activism within the context of diversity in higher education. Rhoads (1998, 2016) contended that student activism has been crucial to higher education
transformation and that this activism preceded diversity as discourse and formal institutional practice. For instance, in the United States students activists in the 1960’s organized Ghandian ‘sit-ins’, Black Power ‘stand-ins’, and ‘teach-ins’ to demand the reconfiguration of university bodies, spaces, and curricula (Carson, 1991; Hayes, 2005). Rhoads (2016) documented that student activist concerns subsequently expanded to address gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and disability. Additionally, Beemyn (2003), Broadhurst (2014), Echols (1989) found that student activists in the 1970’s and beyond, adopted the strategies and concepts of earlier student movements to challenge higher education as an inhospitable and exclusive institutional space. This scholarship demonstrates that student activists have long exchanged ideas and built a shared repertoire of practices, which is further evidenced by the research of Soule (1997), McAdam and Rucht (1993), and Tilly (2013).

Empirical evidence of student activist collective practice comes from Soule’s (1997) quantitative study of the 1980’s Divestment Movement, defined by students building and occupying campus shantytowns to protest higher education’s financial investment in apartheid in South Africa. Soule used an event history model to examine the diffusion of the shantytown as a protest tactic, finding that media attention played a significant role in the diffusion and uptake of shantytown campaigns. Soule’s work built on McAdam and Rucht’s (1993) scholarship of social movements and specifically their findings that social movement groups tend to borrow from successful forms employed by other movements. This is in keeping with Tilly’s concept of “flexible repertoires of contention” (2013) which are the set of tactics that activists use to assert claims. According to Tilly, these repertoires are flexible due to the tendency of groups to adopt tactics used by other activist groups, which leads to waves of particular types of protest (Givan et al., 2010; Soule, 1997; Tilly & Wood, 2013). While this scholarship explains the diffusion of
activist tactics it does not specify how these repertoires are built, the study here will address this
gap by examining student activists’ use of social media to exchange ideas and build a shared
repertoire of contention.

With the 21st century advent of the internet and mobile communication technology
(ICT/MCT), social media emerged as an activist platform. Student activism in the 21st century
builds on long practiced tactics and strategies and uses social media to engage in new forms of
Existing scholarship indicates that contemporary student activism is defined by identity-based
campus issues (Benson & Morgan, 2014; Gismandi, 2015; Hernández, 2015; Wong, 2015).
Emerging scholarship on the recent wave of student activism has focused primarily on the
#ITooAm and #MustFall movements presented in the introduction to this paper. Through the
circulation of hashtags in conjunction with campus-based action, students brought to light their
identity-based experiences of microaggressions and exclusion.

Mwangi et al. (2016) examined the “I, Too, Am Harvard” and “I, Too, Am Oxford”
campaigns and asserted that students used social media to create counter-spaces as a means of
narrating their racialized experiences of exclusion at their institution. The #MustFall movements
have been examined empirically within the context of the South African post-apartheid struggle
to forge an inclusive educational system and as a transnational manifestation of student demands
for a fundamental reorientation of higher education (CMoloi et al., 2017; J. Jansen, 2014;
Luescher et al., 2017; Oxlund, 2016; Robertson, 2019a, 2019b). Anderson (2018) wrote about
the institutional response to a student protest campaign using the hashtag #ThisisStateU and
formulated an ethical framework for institutional responsiveness to student activism.
My project serves to expand the literature of student activism in higher education by exploring the relationship between institutional diversity work and student activism. In addition, I fill a significant gap in the literature by focusing my study on an activist campaign that began at an accessible Hispanic-serving Institution (HSI), defined by the U.S. Department of Education as a university with an undergraduate full-time enrollment of at least 25 percent Hispanic students. The vast majority of research on student activism and also on diversity work, and in fact most higher education research, has been undertaken at elite and highly selective universities (Garcia, 2018; Hoxby, 2009; Kirst et al., 2010). This is an important gap to fill in terms of understanding student experiences within the context of diversity work, as accessible institutions enroll the majority of students in higher education and they have attained relatively higher levels of compositional diversity when compared with highly selective institutions (Hoxby, 2009; Kirst et al., 2010). HSIs represent 15 percent of all institutions of higher education in the United States and are one of the fastest growing sectors in post-secondary education today (Garcia, 2019). In addition, HSIs typically have higher levels of overall compositional diversity than non-HSIs, meaning that they not only serve Latinx students but minoritized students more broadly (Garcia, 2017) Garcia (2019) asserts that, “As HSIs become more important there is a need to understand them as organizations striving to serve underserved populations…HSIs are redefining what it means to serve minoritized students”. By examining activism at an accessible HSI this study provides critical insight into minoritized student experiences of diversity work.

Method

There is a line of empirical research that combines social network analysis (SNA) and qualitative analysis as a means of exploring social media networks of practice (Lewis & Rush, 2013; Stewart & Abidi, 2012; Tremayne, 2014; Xu et al., 2015). Following the methodological
examples of Stewart and Abidi (2012) and Xu et al. (2015), this study used to SNA to explore the #DiversityisNotInclusion student activist network (research question 1) and critical discourse analysis to examine its practices (research question 2). I drew from the example of Biddix and Park’s (2008) application of SNA to study the structure of social movements. Social network analysis applies graphing theory to the study of social relations, specifically focusing on relational ties between actors to understand the structure of the network created by these ties (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005; Lorentzen, 2014; Stewart & Abidi, 2012). There are two fundamental components of social relations that are examined in SNA, nodes (which denote members of the network) and edges (communication ties). SNA maps the ties between nodes, focusing on their structure and flow (Biddix & Park, 2008). SNA can be used to measure aspects of the entire network such as the density of the its structure (meaning how many ties the network contains in relation to all the ties possible between members of the network), SNA also measures reciprocity between nodes, which is defined by the number of ties, or in this case social media posts, that garner a response. Reciprocity is an indication of mutual engagement and interaction within a network. SNA can also provide insight into individual or node level attributes of the network. For example, centrality measures calculate the ties linking to a particular node. Additionally, betweenness is a measure of how frequently a node serves as a connection point between two other nodes. These two measures can be used to gain insight into particularly influential or central nodes in the network. In this study, I explored the communicative ties created between actors using #DiversityisNotInclusion in order to answer my first research question (i.e., What are the contours of the #DiversityisNotInclusion social media network?). SNA also provided insight into activists’ discursive practices using #DiversityisNotInclusion, practices that comprised student activists’ social media repertoire of contention during a critical
incident at State University (Biddix & Park, 2008; Hanneman & Riddle, 2005; Stewart & Abidi, 2012; Tremayne, 2014; Xu et al., 2015).

To answer my second research question (i.e., How did student activists use #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of transformational resistance within the context of diversity discourse and practice at SU?) I undertook critical discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is undergirded by the assertion that social life is discursively constructed through collective acts of language, in other words, language is a form of social action. Critical discourse analysis (CDA), in line with critical race theory, focuses on the dynamics of power, oppression, and resistance through examining the context and content of discursive products, or texts (Blommaert, 2004; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). I used Fairclough’s (2013) three components of critical discourse analysis as a methodological guide. First, I began by describing the object of my analysis, namely the text produced by the network of practice defined as #DiversityisNotInclusion. Next, I considered how the text was produced by coding and analyzing the networked discursive ties that comprised it. Finally, I analyzed the content of the text within the social context of institutional diversity work at State University and identified patterns and themes in the uses of #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of transformational resistance.

**Sample.** The hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion was generated by students at a public comprehensive university, referred to as SU, that is part of a larger state university system. SU is located in a rural, predominantly white, community and is considered an accessible institution – meaning that it is deemed affordable (in-state tuition is under $10,000) and it accepts a majority of its applicants (76% acceptance rate). SU is a residential campus (89% of first-time students live in on campus housing) with enrollment between 7,000 and 8,000 students. A majority of its first-time undergraduate students are drawn from metropolitan areas that are between 270-600
miles away. SU is designated by the U.S. Department of Education (2016) as a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI). In 2013, when SU garnered the designation, its Latinx enrollment was 26 percent. In 2018/19, 47 percent of the SU’s students identified as non-White (Latinx students made up just under 34% of first-time undergraduates, Black students 3%, Asian American students 3%, American Indian students 1%, and 7% of students identified with two or more racial/ethnic categories). In addition, 56 percent of first-time undergraduates were first generation college students and 53 percent low-income.

A challenge facing SU is the unease that many students feel on campus and in the surrounding communities. An article published in SU’s student run newspaper asserted that the campus and surrounding communities are unsafe spaces for students of color, reporting that while there were no documented incidents of “blatant racism” on campus in the past few years, there were verbal and physical attacks reported in the surrounding communities. Beginning in 2014, conflicts between the administration and students, expressed in critical incidents of student activism, exposed disjunctures in institutional conceptions and practices of diversity and inclusion and student experiences of exclusion.

In late 2016, students generated a Facebook community page, @DiversityisNotInclusion and the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion, in reaction to an e-mail sent to the SU community by the university president titled, Standing Together for an Inclusive Community. This e-mail addressed reports of students being harassed off campus. The president wrote, “In a number of incidents, members of our university community have been subjected to racial bias as well as

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4 The #DiversityisNotInclusion campaign took place in the weeks just prior to the election of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency. While the presidential election was not explicitly addressed by activists, it is valuable to note the broader sociopolitical context within which the campaign unfolded.
racially motivated acts of violence...I know that racism is not the norm on our campus or in our neighboring communities. This is a caring place, with many thoughtful, open-minded, and well-intentioned people”. The president’s statement that, “racism is not the norm on our campus or in our neighboring communities”, sparked students to create #DiversityisNotInclusion.

The stated goal of #DiversityisNotInclusion was to create “a forum where People of Color can choose to share an instance of our lived realities which make visible the race-based experiences... that we survive at SU as a norm”. Using this hashtag students of color shared personal stories and experiences, including the account of a student who organized a Black Lives Matter protest on the SU quad. This student related that he and a fellow organizer were interviewed by a local news outlet. When the news story was published online there were racist remarks and death threats posted in the comments section. Another student shared their sense of isolation as a student of color, writing “When you are a Black student in your creative writing class and you dread going in fear that every detail you write and share is being scrutinized or judged as not good enough, #DiversityisNotInclusion”. Students also posted stories of being assaulted or harassed off campus and they confronted the university’s commitment to serving minoritized students. For example, one post reads, “WE need to address that SU is NOT a Hispanic Serving Institution, in practice students of color are the ones doing all the work for eachother, #DiversityisNotInclusion”. Responses included, “It’s always been this way!!#DiversityisNotInclusion”. Other posts described the institution as “Hispanic enrolling” rather than serving and indicated that the institution recruits and enrolls students of color, especially Hispanic students, for the money they represent and once enrolled leaves the them to fend for themselves.
#DiversityisNotInclusion was active for four weeks when its creators posted that the goals of the hashtag had been met or were being actively addressed by the university. They stated that in addition to providing a forum for students to share their stories, the aim of the hashtag was to compel the SU President to issue a public recognition of the exclusionary effects their letter had and an apology for the harm it caused, and to induce the administration to enact “real institutional transformation”—through hiring a director for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; creating a permanent seat on the Executive Council for said Director; and working with the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to develop a plan that holds accountable people in positions of leadership.

**Data Collection and Preparation.** To address my research questions I collected text, visual, and audio-video content posted to the @DiversityisNotInclusion Facebook community page. All content posted to the page was manually scraped and entered into an Excel spreadsheet, every post and comment was counted as a communicative tie (edge) and recorded. In addition, the name of the account from which the tie was sent was recorded as sender and labelled with a two-letter convention (e.g., RR) to protect the identity of individuals whose names typically served to identify their account. The intended recipient of each tie was also recorded; the recipient was determined either by direct association, as with response comments, or by interpreting the content of the post. For example, the post, “President --your silence will not make us go away. Your silence will only strengthen our voices as we demand the education we deserve! We have the right to live and learn without the fear of violence, from anyone, for any reason! The ball is in your court. What are you going to do?”, was interpreted as being addressed to both the #DiversityisNotInclusion community and the SU President, and thus two communicative ties were recorded. Posts made to the community page as well as posts made by
the administrators of the page were interpreted as being directed to the #DiversityisNotInclusion community, with the recipient labelled as COM. Each communicative tie was coded as an illocutionary act, meaning a communicative act that was intended to “do” something (Austin, 1975; Searle, 1969). Drawing from Austin’s (1975) linguistic taxonomy the following types of illocutionary acts were deductively coded for:

1. **Directives**: advising, admonishing, asking, begging, dismissing, excusing, forbidding, instructing, ordering, permitting, requesting, requiring, suggesting, urging, warning
2. **Constatives**: affirming, alleging, announcing, answering, attributing, claiming, classifying, concurring, confirming, conjecturing, denying, disagreeing, disclosing, disputing, identifying, informing, insisting, predicting, ranking, reporting, stating, stipulating
3. **Commissives**: agreeing, guaranteeing, inviting, offering, promising, swearing, volunteering
4. **Acknowledgements**: apologizing, condoling, congratulating, greeting, thanking, accepting

Additional quantitative data collected for each tie included the date, the number of times a post or comment was shared, the number of reactions⁵ each post or comment received, and other evidence of participation/interaction (such as the number of times a posted video was viewed). In total, 134 communicative ties, 89 shares, 1704 reactions, and 233 other acts of participation were collected and recorded.

From the data collected in Excel, I manually created an edge list of all communicative ties in NVivo. First, each network member, including senders and recipients was entered as a

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⁵ Facebook reactions include: like, love, laughter, wow, sad, angry
node (called a case in NVivo). A total of 39 nodes were created. Next, each communicative tie was entered by creating an edge (called relationship in NVivo) between the sender and recipient. The direction of the tie: one-way, reciprocal, or undirected, was determined by interpreting comments, shares, and reactions as reciprocation. In this way, ties sent to the #DiversityisNotInclusion community were interpreted as reciprocal when either a comment was sent in return, the post was shared, or the post elicited reactions. A tie was considered one-way when there were no response comments, shares, or reactions. A total of 134 edges were entered into NVivo – 22 one-way, 112 reciprocal, and no undirected. The edge list was used to run social network analysis in NVivo. In addition, the data was subsequently reviewed, coded, and qualitatively analyzed to gain insight into student activists’ social media practices and the knowledge produce through their interactions.

**Data Analysis.** Using NVivo’s social network analytical package, the communicative ties between network members were analyzed in order to understand the connections between members and to gain insight into the contours of the network (RQ 1). Data visualization was run to generate a network sociogram that displayed the communicative ties between network members as a diagram, with each node a member, connected by edges (lines) representing the ties (Robins, 2015). Network metrics of density (the count of node pairs that are connected in a diagram, divided by the total number of possible connections that could exist) and reciprocity (the percentage of edges in the network that are reciprocated) were applied to the sociogram to gain insight into the level of connectedness and interaction in the activist network (Adams, 2020; Robins, 2015). In addition, for each node, measures of degree centrality were calculated. Measures of both in-degree (number of in-bound ties) and out-degree (number of ties sent) were calculated to determine the level of connectedness of each node. Both betweenness and closeness
measures were calculated to provide insight into which nodes held central positions in the network. Betweenness measures were applied to determine the number of times a node lay on the shortest path between other nodes. Closeness measures were used to calculate the shortest path between nodes and assign each node a score based on its sum of shortest paths (Adams, 2020; Robins, 2015). Descriptive statistical measures were used to gain insight into the network edges. These measures were applied to the communicative ties that were sent as well as reciprocal reactions received.

To analyze the way that student activists used #DiversityisNotInclusion as a discursive instrument of transformational resistance (RQ 2), within each illocutionary category the content of ties were reviewed and inductively coded, wherein data were reviewed and themes developed related to the activist practices that were reflected in the text (Biddix & Park, 2008; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Stewart & Abidi, 2012). Analysis of the coded data in conjunction with the network sociogram provided insight into the practices that connected activists, and how these practices comprised activists’ social media repertoire of contention (Biddix & Park, 2008; Lewis & Rush, 2013; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Stewart & Abidi, 2012; Xu et al., 2015).

**Ethical Considerations.** This study was based on social media content collected from a public account, potential harm to student activists was minimal given the public nature of social media activity as well as activists’ express purpose in using social media to broadcast their ideas and demands as widely as possible. However, the content that comprised my data set was not created for research, student activists did not intend for their media to be collected and analyzed. My data set represents the lives and knowledge of students who experience marginalization in higher education, one of my aims in undertaking this project was to amplify these experiences through scholarship. In this vein, I hope that my research findings will be applied to inform
institutional policies and practices so that they better align with activists’ goals. That said, I also took steps to reduce the potential harm of exposing individual activists by removing identifying information from data.

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of my study, I provide here detailed accounts of my theoretical construct, sample selection, data collection, and analysis procedures to facilitate review or replication of this study. While the reliability of social media generated data is widely accepted, there are concerns regarding the relative opacity of the algorithms that underlie social media platforms, such as Facebook, and how these algorithms might shape or curate data in ways that the researcher is unaware (Adams, 2019). To address this issue of algorithmic opacity, it has been suggested that researchers use methods of triangulation, in this study I use archival materials, including news media and institutional media from the SU website, to ensure that the social media content that comprises my data set adequately represents the events, timeline, and practices being studied (Adams, 2020). Further, I engaged with this project and observed multiple critical incidents of student activism at SU over the course of more than two years, including the #DiversityIsNotInclusion campaign, this observational experience provided me with longitudinal insight into the reliability of my data set. In addition, my qualitative analysis was subjected to tests of intracoder reliability. Specifically, I engaged in two rounds of inductive coding, separated by a period of time (Bernard, 2011). In the next sections I summarize my research findings by addressing each of my research questions in turn. I then discuss the implications of this study and explore future directions for research.

**RQ 1: What are the contours of the #DiversityIsNotInclusion social media network?**

The #DiversityIsNotInclusion network was established on Facebook by SU students in response to the SU President’s campus wide e-mail statement that, “racism is not the norm on
our campus or in our neighboring communities. This is a caring place, with many thoughtful, open-minded, and well-intentioned people”. It was a communicative network whose members participated by posting narrative content to the Facebook community page and interacting by: 1) posting, 2) sharing the original post, 3) responding to posts by commenting/reacting, or 3) reacting/responding to comments. It is likely that there were individuals who engaged in passive participation by reading posts and comments, though because viewing posts without responding or reacting does not leave a trace, passive membership was not accounted for or examined in this study. There are various quantitative measures that provide insight into size and level of engagement of the network. The Facebook community page had 758 followers, there were a total of 1927 posts, comments, shares, and reactions made to the page over the course of 28 days. There is evidence that the community page was administered by more than one person, as posts made by @DiversityisNotInclusion use the plural pronoun we. In addition to the administrators, there were 38 unique members of the network that originated communicative ties, sending a total of 133 discursive content ties. The average number of original discursive ties sent by each member was 3.5 (Figure 1).
The #DiversityisNotInclusion network had a low measure of density at seven percent but a very high measure of reciprocity (95%). Degree centrality measures range from one to 23, with the administrators of @DiversityisNotInclusion having the highest measures of both in-degree (22) and out-degree (21) as indicated by the size of the @DiversityisNotInclusion node depicted in Figure 1 above. These measures of degree centrality indicate that the administrators of @DiversityisNotInclusion played a central role in broadcasting to the network as well as tying other members of the network together by serving as the link between other nodes. As evidenced
by @DiversityisNotInclusion’s betweenness measure of 765.5, members of the network were primarily indirectly linked to each other through the communicative ties produced by @DiversityisNotInclusion, though it is evident from the sociogram (Figure 1) that there were also ties linking some members directly to each other. The node defined as the #DiversityisNotInclusion Community had an in-degree measure of 21 (see Figure 1). The Community node played a central role in the network as a recipient of ties, also linking other nodes in network by being a conduit through which members accessed each other’s communicative ties.

The SU president had a degree centrality score of two, with an out-degree measure of zero and an in-degree measure of two, meaning that the president’s membership in the network was predicated on being a recipient of ties, including the directive:

As for the next steps. "The upcoming Campus Dialogue on Race will be an important opportunity to consider how we can move forward (together)". TOGETHER. This means you should be present President. We are holding u accountable to your words and actions discussed at our meeting with you.

While the president did not reciprocate by sending a tie back to @DiversityisNotInclusion, the case might be made that their attendance at the forum as well as their #DiversityisNotInclusion related communicative acts, such as issuing a public apology, are a form of reciprocity, though these are outside the scope of this inquiry and therefore were not included as network ties.

The network edges (ties) were analyzed to gain insight into the types of discursive interactions that characterized the network. Sixty-six percent (n=88) of the communicative ties in the network were constatives, these ties consisted primarily of statements and stories regarding individual’s experiences of racism and exclusion at SU. Acknowledgments comprised 13 percent (n=17) of
the communicative ties sent, these ties acknowledged the individuals who shared their stories and included content such as, “I am so proud and humbled to see the work you all are doing. It's hard to be an activist in general, but to take the stand that you are in this community is bravery and integrity personified”. Eight percent of network’s communicative ties (n=10) were commissives, comprised of invitations to related events on and off-campus. Finally, Thirteen percent (n=17) of the communicative ties sent in the network were directives, 47 percent of these (n=8) were sent to the #DiversityisNotInclusion community and were calls to action like this,

“TIME SENSITIVE ACTION. Hey ya'll! The University Senate is considering a resolution on Tuesday, November 1st at 3:00 p.m. in the G Forum. This resolution would amend the Constitution of the University Senate to Include the Director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion as an Ex-Officio Member of the Senate. PLEASE ATTEND THE MEETING TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT OF THE RESOLUTION. IF you cannot attend, you can email the following people expressing your support. We have included a template of what an email in support of the resolution might look like.

To gain insight into network reciprocity it is instructive to analyze the reactions to communicative ties. There were a total of 1704 reactions to the 133 discursive content ties, the range of reactions for each tie was from zero to 111 reactions, with the mean number of reactions 17, eight was the median number of reactions, and two the mode. The tie with the most reactions was the constative, “SU is not a Hispanic serving institution, students of color serve each other”, which garnered 7 percent of the total number of reactions (n=111). Another tie impugning the SU administration and stating that minoritized students serve each other, received 19 reactions:

An administration and community unwilling to reflect and make major changes.

AFRAID to take on their own privilege and ignorance and much more willing to hug a
tree than support communities of color. And yet throughout, SU students of color have always been willing to educate others, to engage in difficult conversations, to be patient with those who spew hate. Perhaps it's time for a different approach, perhaps patience should no longer be an option. NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE

Further, of the 28 ties that received more than the mean of 17 reactions, 25 percent (n=7) were statements and stories regarding experiences of racism and exclusion at SU and in the surrounding community. The following example provides insight into these ties, “When I can't write all the glimpses of my racialized experiences because I don't have the time or the space” (36 reactions). A story that was shared anonymously received 52 reactions as well as follow up comments of support from other members of the network:

When you go to the health center because you feel like you're spiraling into depression again and all they want to do is test you for pregnancy and diabetes because you're an overweight black woman. Then when the blood work comes back normal, they still prescribe your diabetes medicine because it's absolutely impossible for you to be a larger woman and not diabetic.

There were three acknowledgment ties that received strong reactions, these ties were shared beyond the #DiversityisNotInclusion community page. The first such tie stated, “We'd like to acknowledge how powerful y'all are for sharing your stories. We also would like to provide an alternate option for those of you who might not feel comfortable or safe sharing your story publicly, so you can email your post to xxxx and we will anonymously share your story here on this page” (32 reactions and 4 shares). The second acknowledgement tie that received a strong reaction, “You matter, and so do your emotions and your well-being. One of our goals is to provide a space in which we may openly address our norm and lived realities in XX, but we
definitely must acknowledge that this can also be triggering” (32 reactions and 2 shares). A third acknowledgment tie sent to the #DiversityisNotInclusion community received 54 reactions and was shared by six individuals, “Pictures of the crowd last night! Thank you all so much for coming. It really meant a lot that folks came out to support and share their stories. Hope to see you all at the next meeting! Let's make sure Prz knows we can't be ignored anymore!”. This tie provides insight into the connection between the online #DiversityisNotInclusion network and the offline activism that members were engaging in within the broader campus community.

A series of connected ties (comprised of a parent tie and follow up comments) received a combined total of 82 reactions, the content of this series related to the SU president’s public apology for the harm that their statement that racism is not the norm at SU might have caused members of the campus community. The constative statement (50 reactions) that “President X has issued out an apology to the public. This is a start. There is still a lot of work to do, on her part and State University”. To which the response “Regarding that "apology", pretty sure she meant sorry, not sorry”, garnered 26 reactions, and “She was basically like ‘sorry if you got offended by what I didn't mean, go see this event I have nothing to do with. Kbye’” (5 reactions) and “Precisely. Thought I was tripping for a second” (1 reaction).

Finally, the post (with 101 reactions) that established the #DiversityisNotInclusion page as a community forum was also shared by 15 individuals. In addition, the following post that marked the end of the campaign received 78 reactions:

In roughly three weeks 5 of the 6 original goals of # have been met! This is tremendously exciting and we should recognize and honor these accomplishments! Today, the president announced that the Executive Director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion will have a permanent seat in the President's Council. Another monumental step in a long and
arduous road ahead of us. We cannot, however, afford to delude ourselves into thinking that the work is done for it is not done, not even remotely.

Analyzing the contours of the #DiversityisNotInclusion network indicates that the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion served as a boundary object, its use tied individuals together in a discursive network. In addition, as I will detail in the upcoming section, the hashtag functioned as an instrument of transformational resistance and was used in a variety of ways to engage both network members and institutional actors around issues of racism and exclusion at SU.

**RQ 2: How did student activists use #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of transformational resistance within the context of diversity discourse and practice at SU?**

The #DiversityisNotInclusion network was comprised of individuals, primarily students of color at SU, who came together around their shared concerns regarding racism and exclusion at SU. Through posting to the @DiversityisNotInclusion Facebook community page using the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion they discursively constructed and participated in a network of practice. Based on the assertion that language is a form of social action, the communicative ties that comprise the #DiversityisNotInclusion network were intended to do things within the context of diversity discourse and practice at SU, specifically to mobilize institutional change toward inclusion. Through analysis of the content and context of the ties in the network a set of discursive practices emerge. The practices employed by members using #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of transformational resistance include: organizing, counter-storytelling, and amplifying. In the following section, I define each practice and describe how it functioned as part of the network’s repertoire of contention.

**Organizing.** Student activists used #DiversityisNotInclusion to create and maintain an inclusive social space as well as to execute a campaign of resistance. Organizing practices
included creating a social space where students could interact around their shared concerns, coordinating collective action, and keeping network members apprised of progress towards campaign goals. The social space was established first through the creation of the Facebook community page @DiversityisNotInclusion, and the initial post stating that this was to serve as a space were students of color could “choose to share an instance of our lived realities which make visible the race-based experiences, as well as other forms of oppression, based on our multiple identities that we survive at SU as a norm”. Second, it was rhetorically marked as an inclusive social space with the statement that, “Race exists alongside a multitude of social identities that shape and are themselves shaped by the way in which race is given meaning. We live race through class, religion, nationality, gender, sexual identity, and so on, #DiversityisNotInclusion”. In addition to creating an inclusive social space, this discursive act also brought the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion into being as a boundary object, to be subsequently utilized by members as a means of maintaining the space as supportive and inclusive, evidenced by the following:

I just want everyone to notice that the majority of the people posting in # are women, queer, trans, gender non-conforming, non-binary, or some combination thereof. These are the people who bear the brunt of racialized violence and often do the emotional, psychological, and spiritual labor of putting our communities back together when racist transgressions occur. I am proud of all the folks who have used #DiversityisNotInclusion so far, especially those who face multiple intersecting forms of oppression.

As demonstrated in the excerpt above and acknowledgements shared in the previous section, #DiversityisNotInclusion was deployed to share individual stories as well as to acknowledge the stress, isolation, fear, exclusion, and pain experienced by students of color.
Further, the hashtag was employed to provide pragmatic support and opportunities for healing, for example, “You matter, and so do your emotions and your well-being. One of our goals is to provide a space in which we may openly address our norm and lived realities in XX, but we definitely must acknowledge that this can also be triggering. With that said, we are facilitating two Healing Circles this coming week. But if you cannot make these two events, please take some time to take care of yourself #DiversityisNotInclusion”. To which another member of the network responded, “So happy this was created! <3 all the healing ya'll are creating with this space”.

Within and beyond the social space, the hashtag served as the key organizing instrument for the campaign of resistance against the SU president and administration. Members were called to action on campus using #DiversityisNotInclusion to invite network members to attend an institutional senate meeting, to participate in a campus wide chalking event, and to send e-mails to key university administrators demanding action on a resolution to amend the constitution of the University Senate to add the Director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion as an Ex-Officio member of the Senate. For example, the hashtag was deployed in the following, to mobilize network members, “As for the next steps. The upcoming Campus Dialogue on Race will be an important opportunity to consider how we can move forward (together), #DiversityisNotInclusion”. In addition, #DiversityisNotInclusion operated to keep network members apprised of progress, as with the following, “We want to be transparent and let y'all know that we are currently meeting with the president, #DiversityisNotInclusion”. The primary actors that used the hashtag as an organizational tool were the administrators of the Facebook community group, these individuals served as the communicative hub for the network, as demonstrated in the network sociogram (Figure 1) and their high degree centrality measures.
Counter-storytelling. In addition to using #DiversityisNotInclusion as an organizing tool, the hashtag operated as a vehicle for counter-storytelling. Minoritized students at SU shared personal stories of their lived realities to, “make visible their race-based experiences at SU and in the surrounding community”. Through social media, students interacted and utilized #DiversityisNotInclusion to circulate stories that challenged SU’s institutional conception and practices of diversity and inclusiveness. These stories employed the hashtag as a means of indexing, or referencing, and countering the SU President’s assertion that SU is an inclusive institution. Further, through the common indexical use of #DiversityisNotInclusion a collective counter-narrative emerged - comprised of the amassed individual stories, response comments, and reactions. By using #DiversityisNotInclusion as an indexical instrument of transformational resistance, individual student stories and the collective narrative, drew attention to the nonperformativity of the SU president’s constative statement that SU is a “a caring place, with many thoughtful, open-minded, and well-intentioned people”. While the intent in making the statement was likely to assure students that the institution was an inclusive space, the contradiction between the intent of the statement and student experiences had the opposite effect. The statement actually worked to reinforce student feelings of exclusion. In addition, the counter-narrative produced by #DiversityisNotInclusion contested the broader institutional conception that the university and surrounding community are inclusive spaces, a conception promoted through institutional marketing materials, recruiting tactics, and administrative speech acts, such as the SU president’s statement that, “racism is not the norm on our campus or in our neighboring communities”.

Amplifying. In conjunction with use of the hashtag as a vehicle for counter-storytelling, members of the network employed #DiversityisNotInclusion to amplify their counter-stories and
demands for institutional response. Using social media as their platform and #DiversityisNotInclusion to strengthen the illocutionary force of their narrative, student activists’ intended their stories and demands to reach beyond the temporal and physical confines of SU institutional space and also to have an increased impact upon institutional actors, namely the SU President.

Student activists’ intention to extend their reach beyond the institution is indicated by the following tie, “Hey y'all to insure that your story gets shared, make sure you change your privacy setting to public for your post”. Another tie reads, “Look out for chalking tomorrow and this coming week on campus with the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion and if you can, take a pic, upload it and tag us on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. You may also share your story along with your image if you feel comfortable”. This tactic was meant to gain the attention of the local community, to bring to light the connection between campus and community, specifically the impact that off-campus experiences played in students’ sense of exclusion at SU. “I encourage you all to tag various media outlets outside of campus. We need to raise awareness and we cannot be ignored ANYMORE. I support you all!!!”. While only of three network’s communicative ties were explicitly directed to the SU president, many, if not most, of the ties generated by network members using #DiversityisNotInclusion were sent with the intention that the president and other administrators would receive them, as evidenced by the following statement:

This hashtag originated with 3 goals in mind. We wanted to create a forum where People of Color could choose to share an instance or glimpse into their lived realities in order to make visible the race-based experiences we survive at SU. We also wanted the president of State University, to issue a public recognition of the exclusionary affects her letter had
on People of Color and an apology for the harm it caused. Finally, we wanted President
to enact institutional transformation

Using social media as an amplifier pragmatically strengthened the illocutionary force of
students’ stories, their demands for institutional change, and their assertions that they should be
included in institutional decision-making processes. This social media amplification was further
enhanced by repetition of the phrase contained in the hashtag, diversity is not inclusion, which
served to rhetorically augment the content of posts.

Discussion

A central tenet of critical race theory is that racism and intersectional oppression are
central to the constitution and function of education as a social structure, conversely, CRT posits
that educational institutions have emancipatory potential. Applying a CRT lens in this study to
center the experiences of students of color at SU brought to light the emancipatory aims of the
#DiversityisNotInclusion campaign. Findings from this research build on Solorzano and Bernal’s
(2001) theorization that student activists work for transformation as agents within the structure of
education, their oppositional practices meant to catalyze change toward more equitable and
inclusive institutions. In line with Mwangi et al.’s (2016) research on the #ITooAm campaigns at
Harvard University and the University of Oxford, findings here suggest that student activists
used social media to create an inclusive social space within which they narrated their experiences
of exclusion at SU. Additionally, they used the hashtag to circulate their counter-stories beyond
this space and to amplify their narratives and demands to mobilize institutional change.

Garcia’s seminal research on HSIs (2016,2017, 2019) indicates that there is no single
model for what Hispanic ‘serving-ness’ means or entails in terms of organizational culture,
practices, or structures. An evaluation of HSIs ‘serving-ness’ attends to both institutional and
cultural characteristics and is based on an institution’s production of Latinx graduates as well as its enhancement and support of Latinx student identity and cultural development. Students at SU called out the institution for being Hispanic-Enrolling, which according to Garcia’s typology means it is designated an HSI but does not produce equitable outcomes for Latinx students nor does it provide an identity supporting or enhancing organizational culture. Based on the number of responses and reactions, the most salient point regarding the shortcomings of institutional diversity work at SU was the assertion that “WE need to address that SU is NOT a Hispanic Serving Institution, in practice students of color are the ones doing all the work for each other”. Given that HSIs are amongst the most diverse institutions in higher education, the significance of this post might be extended indicate that SU’s institutional conceptions of diversity and inclusion may not serve minoritized students more broadly.

**Implications**

The use of #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of transformational resistance produced knowledge regarding student conceptions and experiences of diversity and inclusion at SU. While these insights are not transferable, this knowledge has potentially broader implications for scholarship and institutional practice. First and foremost, students’ asserted and exemplified that diversity is not inclusion, increasing the number of diverse students at SU did not in itself create an inclusive educational experience or space, nor did assuring students that SU was inclusive reflect an institutional reality or constitute an means of achieving that reality. Alternately, acknowledging student experiences of exclusion, isolation, fear, and pain as members of #DiversityisNotInclusion did and providing pragmatic support as well opportunities for healing was a means of creating an inclusive space. Albeit, students of color created this
space for each other, which is part of the problematique of institutional diversity work brought to light here, namely, that minoritized students are tasked with serving each other.

In addition, using #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of resistance, students at SU brought to light the inexorable connection between campus and community. Students’ experiences of racism, bias, harassment and exclusion off-campus, in the communities surrounding SU were an integral component of their educational and social experience. Universities are not islands and in order for students to feel a sense of belonging and safety during the course of their higher education experience, institutional diversity work must address both campus and and community.

There is evidence that from the #DiversityisNotInclusion campaign leaders’ perspective, the stories and demands posted by the members of the activist network and amplified by social media, mobilized a response from the president and SU administration. The SU administration responded to #DiversityisNotInclusion by holding a series of open forums to address equity, diversity, and inclusion. The aim of the first campus wide discussion was to collect student experiences and many members of the #DiversityisNotInclusion network shared their stories of discrimination on campus and in the surrounding community. These stories were subsequently transcribed by university representatives and uploaded to the SU website where they were made publicly available. Including these transcripts as a public document on the SU website appears to have signalled to #DiversityisNotInclusion activists that their stories were being institutionalized and would exist in the same space and counter the statement made by the president regarding racism not being the norm. A network tie noted, “We are humbled by the tremendous courage of all who posted their stories as well as by the thoughtful response by the university’s leadership”. The following suggests that the students of #DiversityisNotInclusion see themselves and future
students activists as connected in the struggle for institutional transformation and also as key agents in the process:

We believe there is still a lot of work that needs to get done. This is only a small beginning to an ongoing conversation followed by action and reflection… Only through collective work can we manifest our dreams and make our campus and community, indeed our world, a better one. Take care of yourselves and each other. This movement is ongoing, and so is our resistance. Spread love and compassion, always, with our siblings of Color.

Student activists using #DiversityisNotInclusion demonstrated that they saw themselves as key institutional agents, they sought to participate in institutional practices and processes with the aim of transforming the institution towards equity and inclusion. As the above excerpt demonstrates, students welcomed the opportunity to work in partnership with the SU administration. For example, through the mechanism of a university senate resolution they participated in binding communicative action that produced what activists termed “real” progress. Student activists are engaged students, students who could be viewed as institutional partners in diversity policy planning and diversity practice.

This study examined an activist campaign at a single accessible HSI in a large state university system. Further research that applies social network analysis to a broader activist network, perhaps examining the #I,Too,Am or #MustFall campaigns, would be a valuable extension of this line of inquiry. Extent scholarship suggests that the current wave of student activism is global in scope, research applying the construct and method used in this study on a larger scale could provide important insight into the globalization of student activism in higher education related to issues of institutional diversity work. Further, this project focused on the
intersections between contemporary student social media activism and institutional diversity work, studies that focuses more specifically on contemporary activist practices, or social media activism, or that broaden their focus beyond diversity work would make valuable contributions to the scholarship of student activism. The reliance in this study on social media traces as a proxy of student activist community and practice may have limited the depth of analysis regarding students’ subjective experiences. Future studies might produce greater depth of insight by incorporating participant observation and interviewing as a means of understanding student activist networked practice. Finally, this project builds on a nascent line of inquiry and opens opportunities for future empirical study at the intersection of student activism and diversity work in higher education.
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Chapter 4: Conclusion

This final chapter draws together the cumulative insights gained through the two manuscripts that comprise this dissertation project and explores future directions for research along this line of inquiry. I begin by summarizing the project aims and the objectives of each manuscript within. I then reflect on the findings from the constituent articles and discuss the implications of the broader project for practice. To conclude I outline three directions for future research.

Project Summary

This project was framed within a transnational context, specifically the widening participation and the drive for universal access to tertiary education as defined by the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals and taken up at the national and institutional level (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). Within this context, diversity has emerged as a dominant focus in an inclusion agenda propelling contemporary higher education transformation (Beckham, 2000; Blessinger, 2016; Eggins, 2014; Smith, 2014, 2014; Worthington, 2012). While the identities and characteristics associated with diversity vary across regional and national settings, diversity is broadly defined as the divergent identities and characteristics that an individual might bring to higher education, including but not limited to race. Consequently, a common transnational diversity discourse that foregrounds the economic, social, and individual benefits of diversity has emerged.

In the first chapter, I established that despite concerted diversity work, disparities in enrollment patterns and educational outcomes persist globally, with students from historically advantaged groups continuing to enroll in and graduate from university at a higher rate (OECD, 2019). Further, I described the recent wave of student activism that began in 2014 and is defined
by the use of social media and specifically hashtags such as #RhodesMustFall and #itooamharvard, as representing critical incidents. These incidents reveal discrepancies between institutional commitments to diversity and inclusion and student experiences of exclusion.

My aim in this project was to critically examine the productive tension between institutional diversity work and student activism in higher education. To achieve this aim I undertook two studies. I approached this project with a critical race theory lens and shifted my scale from transnational in the first study to local in the second, wherein I examined a critical incident of student activism at an accessible Hispanic–serving Institution (HSI). The first study was a scholarly inquiry (Chapter 2) in which I reviewed and synthesized the critical literature related to diversity work in higher education in relation to the #ITooAm and #MustFall movements. My second study was empirical and explored networked connections between activists in order to examine their use of social media as an instrument of resistance.

In Chapter 2, I reviewed extent scholarly literature to critically examine institutional diversity work in relation to student activism (Blessinger, 2016; Eggins, 2014; J. Jansen, 2014; Smith, 2014). I defined institutional diversity work as comprised of discourses and practices aimed at increasing the representation of minoritized identities in higher education. Further, I asserted that this work is iterative, and involves making commitments to diversity through institutional statements and action plans, creating institutional structures and programs dedicated to diversity, recruiting and incorporating diverse bodies into the institution, and measuring institutional diversity (Ahmed, 2007a; Hurtado et al., 1999; Iverson, 2007; Worthington, 2012).

I subsequently explored the I, Too, Am and Must Fall movements in the United States, the United Kingdom, and South Africa. Review of the extensive media coverage of these campaigns had suggested that a common aim of these campaigns was to draw attention to the
contradiction between institutional conceptions of diversity and inclusion and student experiences of persistent exclusion. Further, my initial explorations of the social media content of these campaigns indicated that student activists were interacting with one another transnationally, across institutional contexts. My objective in this chapter was to examine student activism as a means of critically interrogating the logics of institutional diversity work, to explore what this activism revealed about the ways in which diversity work might reinforce hegemonic configurations of power and oppression in higher education. The scale of this study was transnational as a means of gaining global insight into institutional practices as well as the flow of ideas across social landscapes via the use of hashtags. I framed my research and analysis with critical race theory and drew conceptually from the scholarship of Bourdieu and Gramsci to theorize the structure and relationships of power and oppression in higher education. My scholarly inquiry resulted in four main findings regarding the hegemonic logics of institutional diversity work in higher education. The broad logics that emerged were: 1) tensions in diversity discourse, 2) a bureaucratic approach to diversity work, 3) the paradox of diversity as capital, and 3) “thin” institutional response to student activism. Findings indicated that tensions in diversity discourse are a product of the dual connotation of diversity as both signaling race as diversity’s salient identity marker while simultaneously referencing the multitude of other identity characteristics that one might bring to higher education. Further, student activists problematized the conceptualization of an individual’s experience and knowledge as comprising a form of capital that can be deployed for the benefit of others through interaction. The bureaucratic approach to diversity work, focused on shifting and documenting demography leaves exclusive and unequitable configurations of knowledge and power unchanged. The logics of diversity work are manifested through practices that do not serve diverse students, do not
address educational inequity, and fail to redress the historical legacy of racism and exclusion in higher education. These logics are not discrete, they intersect to mutually support the hegemonic configuration of institutional diversity work.

In Chapter 3, I shifted the scale and scope of my inquiry to examine a single critical incident of student activism at an accessible HSI, specifically, I collected data from a campaign defined by the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion that took place over the course of four weeks at State University. The aim of this study was to explore the networked interactions of student activists around a common concern and examine the ways that they used social media as an instrument of transformational resistance within the context of diversity work. I posed two research questions to guide my inquiry: 1) What were the contours of the #DiversityisNotInclusion student activist network?, and 2) How did student activists use #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of transformational resistance within the context of diversity discourse and practice at SU?

To address my research questions, I framed my inquiry with critical race theory (CRT) and applied a community of practice model to conceptualize the network and subsequently explore its practices and concerns. I employed social network analysis to visualize the communicative connections between activists and to examine the types of discursive acts that comprised these connections. I subsequently undertook critical discourse analysis to qualitatively examine the social media content produced and circulated by student activists. My use of critical discourse analysis was based on the supposition that social life is discursively constructed through collective acts of language. The goal of the critical discourse analysis was to gain insight into students’ resistance practices and specifically how they utilized the hashtag #DiversityisNotInclusion as a discursive tool of resistance.
My research findings indicated that the student activist network had a low measure of density but a very high measure of reciprocity, 95 percent of the communicative ties sent by participants in the network were reciprocated. There were a variety of communicative intents that encompassed the ties between network members - including directive, constative, commissive, and acknowledgment. With constative intent comprising the vast majority of ties sent. Findings further indicated that student activists at SU used #DiversityisNotInclusion as an instrument of resistance by deploying the hashtag through the following practices: organizing, counter storytelling, and amplifying. Specifically, student activists used #DiversityisNotInclusion to create and maintain (organize) an inclusive social space within which they narrated their experiences of exclusion at SU (counter storytelling). Additionally, they used the hashtag to circulate their counter-stories beyond this counter-space and amplify their narratives and demands to mobilize institutional change (amplifying). I concluded Chapter 3 with a discussion of the knowledge regarding diversity work at SU that was produced by the student activist network of practice. This activism countered institutional assumptions regarding the causal connection between diversity and inclusion. In addition, activists brought to light the connection between campus and community - students’ experiences of racism, bias, and harassment off-campus, were an integral component of their sense of exclusion at SU. Finally, research findings revealed activists’ self-conceptions as stakeholders in and agents of institutional change towards equity and inclusion.

**Implications**

Critical incidents of student activism provide valuable insight into institutional discourses, practices, and structures that have not been meaningfully transformed by institutional diversity work, and which in fact reinforce inequity and exclusion. Integrating the findings from
both of the studies that comprise my dissertation, I posit that through circulation of social media hashtags, student activists harness digital capital, connect in networks of practice, and exercise narrative agency – productively countering the hegemonic logics of institutional diversity work. In this way, documenting student discontent within the context of institutional diversity work opens up possibilities for addressing the hegemonic logics of this work and revising institutional discourses and practices to be emancipatory, equitable, and inclusive. In conclusion I present a conceptual diagram theorizing the dialectical relationship between institutional diversity work and student activism, this figure is meant to serve as a model that can be applied to help administrators recognize the productive potential of activism in institutional transformation.

Figure 2. Conceptual diagram of the dialectical relationship between institutional diversity work and student activism.

My recommendations for practice are focused on the third phase of this dialectical process, specifically on administrative responses to student activism. I contend that even institutions that have not experienced local critical incidents can respond to the broader wave of activism across
higher education. I call on administrators and institutional leaders to reflect on their institutional discourses and practices in light of the insights that student activism provides, and to thoughtfully revise their discourses and practices to incorporate the knowledge, experiences, and demands of activists.

First and foremost, I urge administrators to acknowledge that racism, inequity, and exclusion are the norm in higher education, in their institutions, and in the communities that surround their campuses. The widespread production of non-performative speech acts by administrators in higher education, who seek to assure students that their institutions are equitable and inclusive, further reinforces exclusion. As I documented in both Chapters 2 and 3, these assurances do not reflect an institutional reality and they do not serve as a means of realizing the goals of equity and inclusiveness. Acknowledging minoritized students’ lived experience is an inclusive act, it signals authenticity and a willingness to confront the monumental task of dismantling entrenched institutional and social structures.

Acknowledging the persistence of exclusion and racism can lead to emancipatory change only if it is accompanied by listening to, learning from, and applying student experiences to revise institutional diversity work. The recent wave of student activism provides an opportunity for administrators to listen, learn, and apply. Insights into the hegemonic logics of institutional diversity work brought to light by student activists should serve as a guide to help administrators assess institutional diversity discourses and practices, with the aim of revising diversity work to ensure that it does not reinforce inequity and institutional exclusion. Further, it is vital at the institutional level, to develop comprehensive and nuanced discourses of diversity that decouple the benefits of interaction between diverse individuals from the imperative to redress racism and exclusion in higher education.
Additionally, institutional leaders must listen to and learn from student activists’ assertion that diversity is not inclusion. Conflating diversity with inclusion places the burden on minoritized students to serve each other, it is a fundamentally inequitable practice, and absolutely reinforces the institution as an exclusive social space. This is especially salient at accessible institutions and HSIs, which serve the majority of minoritized students in higher education. Fostering an inclusive educational community requires that institutional leaders grapple with their “serving-ness” as it pertains to organizational culture, I would like to stress the importance of listening, learning, and applying as a form of serving.

The recent wave of student activism is characterized by students use of social media as a means of claiming space and exercising voice within and beyond institutional contexts. As I documented in Chapter two, administrative responses to activist demands typically entail an abstract commitment to diversity by referring to diversity documents as evidence of the institution’s commitment to diversity and assurance that work is being done. An equity-based administrative response includes engaging students in communicative action. Such action entails providing space for students to share their stories, assert their needs, and make demands as embodied institutional agents. Administrators must listen across difference, with awareness that students may not speak with one voice, and allow alternative discourses of diversity and inclusion to “emerge through hegemonic registers” (McCleod, 2011). Allowing alternative discourses to emerge requires that administrators extend their listening beyond campus dialogues and forums (which seem to be the pro forma administrative response to critical incidents of student activism), and incorporate listening as an integral component of their institutional practice. Further, they must follow listening with action by applying alternative discourses to replace or revise bureaucratic conceptions and practices of inclusion. In line with Anderson’s
(2018) notion of “thick” responsiveness presented in Chapter 2, communicative action requires that listening be followed by institutional learning, and subsequent action that results in shifts in power relations, decision–making processes, and/or resources.

**Future Directions**

In closing, I will detail a research and publication agenda aimed at critically interrogating institutional transformation in higher education, with a focus at the intersection of student activism and institutional diversity work. This agenda is divided into two major projects. The first project includes the studies that comprised this dissertation and is centered on examining student activism within the context of institutional diversity work. A third study, *Interrogating the Productive Tension Between Student Activism and University Diversity Work: A Network Ethnography*, will explore the series of Must Fall campaigns that began at the University of Cape Town and subsequently extended to universities throughout South Africa and around the world. My intention with this study will be to gain a deeper understanding of the transnational connections, practices, as well as constructions and circulations of knowledge produced by student activists. I am especially interested in expanding insight into activists’ use of social media and specifically hashtags as instruments of transformational resistance within the context of diversity work in higher education.
Figure 3. Conceptual diagram of the dialectical relationship between institutional diversity work and student activism. Stage 3 is highlighted to indicate the focus of my next research project within this line of inquiry.

The second direction I intend to take this line of inquiry is to attend to administrative responses to this activism, and specifically to investigate how institutional discourses and practices are impacted by activism (see Figure 3). I will concentrate less on the immediate responses to critical incidents of student activism, and instead focus on longer term impacts. This second major project will be comprised of two main studies (see Table 2 below).
Table 2: Future Research

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<th>Year</th>
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| 2021 | Comparative Analysis of Institutional Statements in Response to Critical Incidents of StudentActivism | Semantic Network Analysis/ Critical Discourse Analysis | • Present at AERA or ASHE, 2021  
• Article manuscript submission, Summer 2021 |
|      | #OpenStellies: An Ethnographic Examination of Institutional Transformation within the Context of Student Activism | Field-based Ethnographic Research           | • Spencer Foundation grant proposal, July 2020  
• 3 field trips, Winter 2021, Summer 2022 and 2023  
• Conference Presentations: ASHE, AERA, 2022 and 2023  
• 3-4 article manuscripts |

The first study will be a comparative analysis of discursive institutional responses to student activism. I anticipate collecting institutional diversity initiatives/statements drafted subsequent to critical incidents of activism. I will employ semantic network analysis and critical discourse analysis as a means of identifying and critically examining patterns and themes in responses across institutional contexts.

The second study in this project will be field-based and employ an ethnographic methodology to explore shifts in institutional culture post critical incident. The Must Fall campaign at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, defined by the hashtag #OpenStellies, resulted in the university changing its language policy, shifting away from Afrikaans as the sole institutional language, adopting English as a language of instruction, and committing to developing Xhosa as an academic language. This shift has had cascading implications for all facets of the institution - as institutional communication and policies have
been or are being changed, curriculum and pedagogy transformed, and students, faculty, as well as administrators’ linguistic competency and flexibility tested. I am interested in gaining ethnographic insight into this shifting institutional culture and the implications for institutional equity and inclusion. I plan to secure grant funding to support three field trips over the course of two years. The first trip will be largely logistical, including pilot interviews with administrators with the aim of generating preliminary themes that will help to define and drive research activities and data collection. The two subsequent summer field trips will focus exclusively on data collection. I plan to publish articles subsequent to each field trip and foresee generating and publishing at least three article manuscripts out of this study, as I will have a rich and complex dataset. My seven-year goal for this research agenda is to publish a book manuscript focused on institutional transformation toward equity and inclusion in higher education that centers the relationship between student activism and institutional diversity work.
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https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-014-0051-6
Appendix A: Oregon State University IRB Approval

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DETERMINATION: RESEARCH, BUT NO HUMAN SUBJECTS

It has been determined that your project, as submitted, does meet the definition of research but does not involve human subjects under the regulations set forth by the Department of Health and Human Services 45 CFR 46. Additional review is not required for this study.

Please do not include HRPP contact information on any of your study materials.

Note that amendments to this project may impact this determination. Please submit a new request if there are changes (e.g., funding, data sources, access to individual identifiers, interaction with research subjects, etc.).

The federal definitions and guidance used to make this determination may be found at the following link: Human Subject
### Appendix B #DiversityisNotInclusion Network Density Table

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## Appendix C: Research Agenda

### Institutional Transformation for Equity and Inclusion:
A Research Agenda at the Intersection of Student Activism and Higher Education Diversity Work

#### Higher Education Diversity Work and its Discontents

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Method</th>
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| 2020       | Student Social Media Activism and the Hegemonic Logics of Diversity Work in Higher Education | Scholarly Paper: Archival Research and Literature Review | • Presented at ASHE, Fall 2019  
• Article manuscript in revision, resubmit Spring 2020 |
| 2020       | #DiversityisNotInclusion: Anatomy of a Higher Education Student Activist Network of Practice | Social Network Analysis/Critical Discourse Analysis | • submit Summer 2020  
• Present at ASHE, Fall 2020 |
| 2020-2021  | Interrogating the Productive Tension Between Student Activism and University Diversity Work: A Network Ethnography Approach | Network Ethnography                               | • Present at AAA, Fall 2020  
• Anthropology and Education Quarterly, submit early 2021 |

#### Institutional Responses to Critical Incidents of Student Activism

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| 2021       | Comparative Analysis of Institutional Statements in Response to Critical Incidents of Student Activism | Semantic Network Analysis/ Critical Discourse Analysis | • Present at AERA or ASHE, 2021  
• Article manuscript submission, Summer 2021 |
| 2021-2024  | #OpenStellies: An Ethnographic Examination of Institutional Transformation within the Context of Student Activism | Field-based Ethnographic Research                | • Spencer Foundation grant proposal, July 2020  
• 3 field trips, Winter 2021, Summer 2022 and 2023  
• Conference Presentations: ASHE, AERA, 2022 and 2023  
• 3-4 article manuscripts |

**5-7 year goals:** 8-10 peer-reviewed articles published. Two major research projects completed on Institutional Transformation for Equity and Inclusion with multiple studies/publications each. Begin outlining a book project that addresses the overarching themes in 2023 with the goal of securing a book contract by 2025 and publishing by 2027