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CHANGING MINDS OR TRANSFORMING SOCIAL WORLDS? RE-ENVISIONING MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION AS FEMINIST ARTS-ACTIVISM

Margaret Louise McGladrey

University of Kentucky, margaret.mcgladrey@gmail.com

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Margaret Louise McGladrey, Student

Dr. Claire M. Renzetti, Major Professor

Dr. Ana Q. Liberato, Director of Graduate Studies

CHANGING MINDS OR TRANSFORMING SOCIAL WORLDS?
RE-ENVISIONING MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION AS FEMINIST ARTS-
ACTIVISM

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Kentucky

By
Margaret Louise McGladrey

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Claire Renzetti, Professor of Sociology

Lexington, Kentucky

2018

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

CHANGING MINDS OR TRANSFORMING SOCIAL WORLDS? RE-ENVISIONING MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION AS FEMINIST ARTS- ACTIVISM

This dissertation project seeks to address the sociological processes, dynamics, and mechanisms inflecting how and why U.S. society reproduces a sexually dimorphic, binary gender structure. The project builds upon the work of sociologists of gender on the doing gender framework, intersectional feminist approaches to identity formation, and hegemonic masculinity and relational theories of gender. In a 2012 article in *Social Science and Medicine* presenting contemporary concepts in gender theory to the health-oriented readers of the journal, R. W. Connell argues that much public policy on gender and health relies on categorical understandings of gender that are now inadequate. Connell contends that poststructuralist theories highlighting the performativity of gender improve on the assumption of a categorical binary typical in public policy, but they ignore the insights of sociological theories emphasizing gender as a structure comprising emotional and material constraints of the complex inter-relations among social institutions in which performances of gender are embedded. According to Connell, it is the task of social scientists to uncover “the processes by which social worlds are brought into being through time – the ontoformativity, not just the performativity, of gender.”

This project explores the ontoformativity of gender in consideration of Patricia Hill Collins’ concept of the four domains of power. According to Collins, matrices of domination are intersecting and interlocking axes of oppression including but not limited to race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, nation, age, ability, place, and religion that reproduce social inequalities through their interoperation in the cultural, interpersonal, structural, and disciplinary domains of power. West and Zimmerman contrast gender as an axis in the matrix of oppression with site-specific roles, arguing that gender is a master status that is omnirelevant to all situations such that a person is assessed in terms of their competences in performing activities as a man or a woman. The doing gender approach has been accused of theorizing gender as an immutably monolithic social inequality. This project seeks to explicate the dynamics of gender ideology by probing its weaknesses in the interpersonal and cultural domains of power. As Collins and coauthor Sirma Bilge posit, for people oppressed along axes of gender, race/ethnicity, class, age, place, ability, and other binaries that constrain their actions in the structural and disciplinary domains of

power, “the music, dance, poetry, and art of the cultural domain of power and personal politics of the interpersonal domain grow in significance.”

Each of the three components of the dissertation project addresses a facet of mechanisms and processes of the interpersonal and cultural domains of power in (re)producing the binary gender structure in U.S. society. Paper #1, titled, “Integrating Black Feminist Thought into Canonical Social Change Theory,” explicates how people in marginalized social locations mount definitional challenges to their received classifications in the cultural domain of power by rejecting the consciousness of the oppressor and wielding rearticulated collective identity-based standpoints as contextually attuned technologies of power to recast historical narratives. Paper #2, with teenaged co-researcher Emma Draper, titled “Ordering Gender: Interactional Accountability and the Social Accomplishment of Gender Among Adolescents in the U.S. South,” maps how youth theorize interactional accountability processes to binary gender expectations in the interlocking social institutions of medicine, the family, schools, and peer social networks. Paper #3 is a book proposal comprising an introductory chapter. The book will tell the story of how young feminist arts-activists challenge the binary gender structure through resistance in the cultural and interpersonal domains.

KEYWORDS: Cultural Sociology, Feminist Participatory Action Research, Gender Theory, Girls’ Studies, Youth and Children

Margaret Louise McGladrey

April 23, 2018

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By

Margaret Louise McGladrey

Claire M. Renzetti

Director of Dissertation

Ana Q. Liberato

Director of Graduate Studies

April 23, 2018

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PAPER #1

Integrating Black Feminist Thought into Canonical Social Change Theory

ABSTRACT: Within social change theory, Black feminist thought has not been extended to how other marginalized populations interpret and resist institutional domination. This paper demonstrates how Patricia Hill Collins' (2009) work to synthesize the wide-ranging contributions of Black feminist thought could be employed to guide projects examining social change in more diverse populations and contexts, in addition to theorizing the lived experiences of U.S. Black women. To do so, I bring theories of power, representation, and resistance into conversation with what I argue is Collins' central explanation of how social change occurs: a three-phase progression from 1) the re-articulation and re-valuation of denigrated subjectivities to 2) the establishment of a collective identity-based standpoint and finally to 3) the mobilization of a broad array of meaning-making social action. I then demonstrate the utility of Collins' theory of social change by applying it to The Girl Project, an artistic-academic-activist program that provides teenaged girls with the creative tools and relational resources to challenge the misrepresentation of women and girls in U.S. media culture. I conclude by presenting an exploratory typology of activist strategies that goes beyond classifying social movements as "instrumental" or "expressive" to situate resistance in the cultural domain of power in relation to the forms, goals, and tactics of movements targeting state policy that sociological theories of social change typically seek to explain.

INTRODUCTION

Within social change theory, Black feminist thought has not been extended to sociological investigations of how other marginalized populations interpret and resist institutional domination. This omission may be the result of the predominance of a political process model that positions the state and its political and economic structures as the sole source of power, thereby rendering movements that do not directly target state policies less intelligible (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008). My arguments build on Elizabeth Armstrong and Mary Bernstein's (2008) articulation of a multi-institutional politics approach that broadens conceptualizations of social movements, politics, social movement actors, goals, and strategies to encompass not only struggles for more equitable distributions of resources but also challenges to cultural systems of meaning and social classification. Armstrong and Bernstein's multi-institutional politics approach interrogates state-centered assumptions about the nature, logic, and organization of power and resistance, suggesting that "social movement scholarship focus not only on the nitty-gritty *how* of collective action, but also on *why* social movements exist and what they tell us about the nature of domination in society" (2008:93). However, while re-orienting analytical attention to the "*why*" of social movements, the multi-institutional politics approach does not provide an explanation of *how* the kinds of culturally focused collective action this approach recognizes actually work. Here, Black feminist thought can contribute to theorizing how social change movements contest cultural and symbolic classifications of bodies and identities; Patricia Hill Collins summarizes Black feminist social change theory as follows:

Any individual Black woman who is forced to remain 'motionless on the outside' can develop the 'inside' of a changed consciousness as a sphere of freedom....By

struggling for self-defined womanist perspectives that reject the ‘master’s’ images, African-American women change ourselves. A critical mass of individuals with a changed consciousness can in turn foster Black women’s collective empowerment. A changed consciousness encourages people to change the conditions of their lives. (2009:129)

Collins’ work synthesizing the contributions of Black feminist thought should not only inform the work of sociologists committed to understanding the Black female experience in the U.S. and around the world, but also guide projects seeking to investigate social movements, social change, and agency and resistance. Toward the goal of incorporating Black feminist thought into the core of social change theory, this paper brings elements of feminist and critical theory into conversation with what I will argue is Collins’ explanation of the mechanism of culture change: a progression from 1) the re-articulation of denigrated subjectivities to 2) the establishment of a collective identity-based standpoint, and finally to 3) the mobilization of a wider range of meaning-making social action than sociological theories of social change typically acknowledge. I then will demonstrate the utility of this theoretical framework by applying it to The Girl Project, an artist-academic-activist collaborative. To complement Armstrong and Bernstein’s multi-institutional politics approach, I conclude by offering an exploratory typology that maps varying goals and strategies of social change activism onto the four domains of power – structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal – that Collins argues constitute the interlocking components of the matrix of domination.

THE STATE OF SOCIAL CHANGE THEORY

James M. Jasper (2014) outlines the trajectory of developments in social change theory via a typology that organizes previously prevalent explanations in terms of their level of focus (microsocial or macrosocial) and their conceptions of human motivation

(restricted incentives or diverse cultural meanings). He classifies the behavioral psychology theories that dominated social movement studies in the 1960s and 1970s, such as crowd theory, rational choice theory, and grievance theories, as microsocial perspectives informed by universal propositions regarding how individuals weigh rewards and threats, which make all-encompassing generalizations about how people will act in all contexts without accounting for cultural dynamics.

In the 1970s, social movement theories retained their orientation toward restricted incentives as the source of motivation for action, but shifted their level of analysis to the macrosocial, with structural approaches such as resource mobilization and political opportunity theories suggesting that movements pursue the opportunities that their access to resources opens to them. Bernstein (2005) observes that movements contesting cultural authority like the feminist and LGBTQI* movements are often minimized as mere “identity politics” in contrast with the “real” politics of activism targeting the state. An example of this type of macrosocial approach oriented toward restricted incentives is Janet Saltzman Chafetz’s contention that feminist theory in sociology has provided:

a comprehensive list of the myriad things that require change in order to achieve a gender equitable society....Despite their authors’ commitment to changing these systems, however, most feminist theories do a poor job of explaining how systems of gender inequality come to change, largely presupposing the existence of laws and policies mandating equal treatment and/or a gender-conscious segment of the population that actively works to produce change. (2001:627)

The limitations of Chafetz’s macro-level focus on change in legal and political structures are analogous to intersectional feminists’ critique of liberal feminism, which assumes that equality of women can be achieved within our existing society by passing laws and making incremental reforms to give women equal access to social, economic, and

political institutions, rather than challenging the racist, sexist, and classist values and logics that undergird these institutions.

According to Jasper (2014), both microsocial and macrosocial theories of social change that frame human motivation in terms of restricted incentives focus on the means of social change at the expense of exploring the motivations that persuade people to align with social movements, which macrosocial, “grand” theories like those of Alain Touraine and other European new social movement scholars address by retrospectively narrating the progression of historical stages in relation to changes in cultural meaning. Armstrong and Bernstein (2008) assert that new social movement theory offers a key corrective to political process approaches by focusing inquiry on the wide variety of forms domination takes in societies and on the relationship between these historically distinct forms of oppression and social movements’ responses. Jasper contends that microsocial cultural theories are more fruitful than these macro-level historical approaches in explaining the formation and actions of social movements because they center on causal linkages between microsocial interactions and the cultural repertoires that construct strategies of action (Swidler 1986) and thereby imbue those (inter)actions with meaning.

However, Jasper’s privileging of microsocial change motivated by diverse cultural meanings pits micro- and macro-level social forces against each other, neglecting theoretical advancements by Anthony Giddens (1984) and Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) to integrate the causal forces of agency and structure in explaining social continuity and change. In an attempt to unite the rarified theories of Bourdieu and Giddens with empirical research under the umbrella of a more general theory of social change and stability, Neil Fligstein and Douglas McAdam (2012) developed their theory

of strategic action fields as the fundamental units of collective action in society. According to Fligstein and McAdam, “A strategic action field is a constructed mesolevel social order in which actors (who can be individual or collective) are attuned to and interact with one another on the basis of shared (which is not to say consensual) understandings about the purposes of the field, relationships to others in the field (including who has power and why), and the rules governing legitimate action in the field” (2012:9). Resources, privileges, and influence are unequally distributed among actors in these fields, whom Fligstein and McAdam characterize as *incumbents* with dominant influence in fields due to their advantageous social locations, *challengers* with fewer resources and less influence who may or may not engage in open revolt, and *governing units* that ensure compliance with the field’s rules that sustain the advantages of incumbents. Whether the strategic action of incumbents or challengers is successful is contingent upon their social skill, or actors’ “cognitive capacity for reading people and environments, framing lines of action, and mobilizing people in the service of broader conceptions of the world and of themselves” (2012:17). In this way, strategic action field theory is consistent with Armstrong and Bernstein’s multi-institutional politics approach that recognizes transformations of fields’ classificatory systems and resource allocations as a central goal of social movements.

Improving on theories that foreground disparities in power and preferences to explain strategic action in instrumental terms, Fligstein and McAdams assert that the human capacity and need to craft shared meanings to ensure a viable intersubjective ground for cooperative existence is fundamental to the exercise of social skills, which they term the “existential function of the social.” In other words, “people do what they do

both to achieve instrumental advantage and to fashion meaningful worlds for themselves and others” (Fligstein and McAdams 2012:43). Skilled actors deploy narrative frames to create collective identities and shared meanings toward the goal of both inspiring cooperation from others to achieve their instrument projects and affirming group membership to foster the “lived experience of ‘we-ness’” that Fligstein and McAdam argue is one of the most important ways that individuals develop self-esteem and abate existential fears (2012:47).

According to Jasper, people employ three types of means in their strategic actions: coercion, money, and words; people “try to get their way through physical force or blockage, by paying people, or by persuading them” (2014:21). For Jasper, because creating new meanings is central to social change, social movements must be expert in persuasion, lest they shade into revolutionary armies that enforce their will with coercion or bureaucratic interest groups that rely on money. Jasper contends that persuasion involves deploying physical carriers of meaning (e.g., words, visual images, the built environment) and figurative carriers of meaning (e.g., frames, narratives, ideologies) to make new ways of thinking, feeling, and being possible. Cultural meaning work that dramatizes a moral battery—or “a pair of contrasting emotions, one positive and the other negative, that generates indignation and attracts people toward the good pole” (Jasper 2014:1)—catalyzes recruitment to social movements. Jasper posits that moral shocks (upsetting events or information that incite action) are key mobilizing moments for activists, as they create a sense of urgency (2014:98).

In this paper, I argue that the microsocial cultural approaches to understanding social change for which Fligstein, McAdams, and Jasper advocate are necessary but

insufficient in explaining the motivations and means of social change-seeking action. The most significant deficiency of these arguments and the work of the canonical integrative theorists from which they derive is their individualizing premise, which assume that cultural patterns and narrative frames are produced via a dialectic of power and individual action (Joas and Knöbl 2009:304). Another example of a social change theory grounded in this individualized premise is Social Identity Development theory. Drawing from Diane Goodman's work in *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups* (2011), Abby Ferber (2017) outlines the five stages of Social Identity Development Theory: Stage I (naive), which focuses on initial socialization into complex codes of "appropriate" behavior; Stage II (acceptance), which represents individuals' internalization of naturalized social hierarchies; Stage III (resistance), a paradigm shift that involves questioning and challenging the social factors that have shaped their identity; Stage IV (redefinition), which involves formulating an identity free from the constraints of their given social location; and Stage V (internalization) of one's new sense of social identity and consciousness. This theory presents the consciousness shifts that inspire social change as the product of individual cognition and emotion.

Armstrong and Bernstein's definition of social movements in their multi-institutional politics approach improves on this individualizing premise by explicitly excluding social action, like individual mobility projects, that is not collective. However, despite their important contributions that center social change in the microfoundations of collective meaning-making and classificatory systems, both strategic action field theory and the multi-institutional politics approach assume that individuals use culture

instrumentally to realize their political and legal objectives, their desired redistribution of resources, and their existential needs for belonging and community. The presumption that individuals with the social skill to forge collective identities by effectively commanding meaning-making resources are the source of social change neglects to account for the core insight of critical sociologies of knowledge: that collective identities are constructed from hierarchical categorical dualisms via which one group's achievement of "the existential function of the social" is founded on the derogation of the converse qualities against which their collective identity is defined. Stated differently, predominant theories of social change currently lack explanations of whether and how archetypal collective identity formations that provide for strategic action and belonging become controlling stereotypes that animate and legitimate social inequalities.

CONNECTING CULTURE WITH POWER: SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE AND CONTROLLING IMAGES

Bruce Link and Jo Phelan's (2001) conceptualization of the stigmatization process by which labels result in discrimination points to the need for a more relational approach to theorizing social change that considers this dialectic of hegemonic ideology. Although social psychologists like Link and Phelan readily acknowledge the historical and contextual specificity of which human differences are socially selected for salience in power relations, they recognize that their conceptualization of stigma falls short of exploring how the labels and stereotypes that animate discrimination arise and change. Postulating that the fundamental cause of stigma and resulting social inequalities is "the deeply held attitudes and beliefs of powerful groups that lead to labeling, stereotyping, setting apart, devaluing, and discriminating" (2001:381), Link and Phelan conclude that "we need to further understand the social processes that allow one group's views to

dominate so as to produce real and important consequences for the other group” (2001:378). Even the multi-institutional politics approach that treats cultural meanings and classificatory systems as constitutive of structure and positions them as targets for social change efforts tells us little about how some symbols come to be valued and others derogated.

Fortunately, scholars of power, knowledge, domination, and oppression such as Bourdieu, Paulo Freire, Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, R. W. Connell, and Patricia Hill Collins have supplied explanations of these processes, identifying interlocking classificatory systems of hierarchical dualisms mapped onto human difference as foundational tenets of ideologies that legitimize social inequalities. In particular, feminist sociologists like Collins have trained their attention on the “biological” categories of human difference that have been discursively aligned with the Cartesian binaries of mind/body and subject/object, including gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability, and age. Power and domination are the product of the dialectical, antithetical relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor; one cannot exist without the other, and both are dehumanized in the experience of deploying and being defined by hierarchical dualisms that delineate “us” versus “them” (Freire 2014). As such, Fligstein and McAdam’s (2012) concept of the existential function of the social—the desire to belong and to believe that the world is a meaningful reality—always already has a shadow, as belonging is predicated on the alienation and derogation of the “Other” who does not.

Critical to maintaining the upper hand in this dialectic of hegemonic ideology is the oppressor’s authority to name and categorize the “natural” world, which “tends to

transform everything surrounding it into an object of its domination....And the more the oppressors control the oppressed, the more they change them into apparently inanimate ‘things’” (Freire 2014:58). For Foucault (1995), power and knowledge are synonymous and co-constitutive (and therefore bound together with a hyphen), as the creation of knowledge requires the authority to name, classify, and objectify individuals, and power relations rely upon the legitimization that knowledge and its classificatory taxonomies confer. Thus, naturalizing and essentializing discourses that misrepresent human-created categorical frameworks as immutable aspects of nature are the indispensable tools of dominance. As Althusser (1970) posits, ideology is a representation of the imaginary or symbolic relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence, interpellating individuals into coherent subject positions via which they are capable of strategic action. Bourdieu explains ideology in terms of the symbolic violence that is committed with the very praxis of language:

Linguistic competence is not a simple technical ability, but a statutory ability. This means that not all linguistic utterances are equally acceptable, and not all locutors are equal. ...If a French person talks with an Algerian...it is not two persons who speak to each other but, through them, the colonial history in its entirety. (1992:146,144)

In this way, language as a physical carrier of ideology is implicated in the perpetration of the symbolic violence that sustains social inequalities.

The power-relational dynamics of symbolic violence are evident in Gramsci’s concept of hegemony, as applied to gender relations by Connell (2005). Originally postulated by Gramsci to explain economic class relations, hegemony refers to the consensus definition of reality that the dominant classes reify as “common sense” in order to secure the consent of subordinated groups instead of enforcing their authority

through coercion and state violence (Bates 1975). Hegemony is not the establishment of a monolithic upper class but rather a shifting alliance, or “historic bloc,” of forces and institutions with vested interests in social stability that exerts intellectual and moral leadership in specific historical contexts. Unlike traditional Marxists, who perceived the cultural superstructure as an effect of the economic base, Gramsci viewed mass culture as the site of political struggle between competing ideologies (Bates 1975). In applying Gramsci’s concept of hegemony to the asymmetrical gender order, Connell (2005) developed the theory of hegemonic masculinity, a configuration of social and discursive practices that offers the most contextually specific justification for the continued dominance of men and subordination of women.

Collins further extends this operationalization of hegemony and symbolic violence with her concept of controlling images. According to Collins (2009), controlling images of Black women as stereotypical mammies, matriarchs, welfare mothers, and jezebels/hoochies/whores supply symbolic justifications normalizing the intersecting oppressions that position Black women as the deviant “Other” in opposition to which hegemonic U.S. society imagines itself. Collins demonstrates that hegemonic ideologies about Black women that generate controlling images positioning them as devalued objects are the very vehicles through which power relations and oppression operate, as dominant groups claim the privileges afforded by belonging on the “right” side of the binaries of “white/Black, male/female, reason/emotion, culture/nature, fact/opinion, mind/body, and subject/object” (2009:77). The symbolic violence in what Collins calls the cultural domain of power naturalizes and normalizes the historical derogation of the oppressed in what Collins classifies as the structural, disciplinary, and interpersonal

domains of power: “the structural domain organizes oppression, whereas the disciplinary domain manages it. The cultural domain justifies oppression, and the interpersonal domain influences everyday lived experience” (2009:294). As such, Collins elaborates Armstrong and Bernstein’s multi-institutional politics approach by specifying the domains in which institutions organize power across an array of historical and contextual variations in societal structures.

The implication of Collins’ theory is that, in conceptualizing relational sites of social change and stability, sociologists must seriously attend to the cultural domain of power as a target of social movements because the power relations of signification are the causal pivot point on which social change hinges. Interrogating the assumption that the state constitutes the central source of power that is separate from and predominant to culture (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008) makes space for feminist theories that explicate the dynamics by which social change in the cultural domain of power occurs. Debates in feminist theory regarding praxis as a dialectic of knowledge and action are instructive in unpacking Armstrong and Bernstein’s prediction that “close attention to movement goals will reveal that demands for resource redistribution and challenges to cultural meanings are typically intertwined” (2008:93). Despite its important contribution to complicating the political process model by elevating the significance of culture as a source of institutional authority, the multi-institutional politics approach does not offer a theoretical explanation of how challenges to cultural systems of meaning and classification are mounted. To fill this theoretical lacuna, I bring feminist theories of cultural representation, agency, and resistance into conversation with what I argue is Collins’ central explanation of how social change occurs: a three-phase progression from 1) the

re-articulation and re-valuation of denigrated subjectivities to 2) the establishment of a collective identity-based standpoint, and finally to 3) the mobilization of a wider range of meaning-making social action than sociological theories of social change typically recognize.

COLLINS' THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Stage 1: Agency and Consciousness

According to Collins (2009), Black feminist thought emerged from a dialectic of oppression and activism by which Black feminists' intellectual work directly responded to the need for strategies to survive the economic, political, and ideological oppressions that have subjugated U.S. Black women. Her premise is that social structures are the result of historical oppressions and inequitable distributions of resources; she writes, "Oppression describes any unjust situation where, systematically and over a long period of time, one group denies another group access to the resources of society. Race, class, gender, sexuality, nation, age, and ethnicity among others constitute major forms of oppression in the U.S." (2009:6). These axes of oppression form the social structures Collins calls "matrices of domination" that are symbolically constructed on the foundation of hierarchical dualisms privileging whiteness over Blackness, men over women, the rich over the poor and working class, and heterosexuals over homosexuals, which are interlocking and inseparable in justifying social inequalities. Rather than resulting in a simple binary division of "the oppressors" and "the oppressed," these intersecting oppressions converge in the structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal domains of power of local contexts such that oppressors in one situation may become the oppressed in another. In other words, individuals are interpellated into distinct standpoints by the contextually specific and historically inherited structural

constraints within which they operate, with access to unequal amounts of resources, based on their categorization in either pole of the hierarchical dualisms salient to that situation.

Matrices of domination are shaped by a dialectic of oppression and activism via which Black feminists' work creates strategies to survive the long-standing injustices that have marginalized U.S. Black women. According to Collins:

Rather than seeing social change or lack of it as preordained and outside the realm of human action, the notion of a dialectical relationship suggests that change results from human agency. Because African-American women remain relegated to the bottom of the social hierarchy from one generation to the next, U.S. Black women have a vested interest in opposing oppression. This is not an intellectual issue for most African-American women – it is a lived reality. (2009:292)

An anti-functionalist premise is fundamental to Collins' dialectic of oppression and activism, as it undermines the assumption that structural factors over-determine agency. To change their unbearable positions within dominating social structures, U.S. Black women “make a way out of no way” via agential consciousness-raising: “Any individual Black woman who is forced to remain ‘motionless on the outside’ can develop the ‘inside’ of a changed consciousness as a sphere of freedom” (2009:129).

According to Audre Lorde (1984), the spark of this critical consciousness—which Freire (2014) defines as the moment of becoming a subject who acts in history and C. Wright Mills calls the sociological imagination that allows us to “grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society” (1959:3)—often occurs in the foment of affective response to injustice, particularly the conversion of fear into anger as a source of information and energy. Perhaps the potency of anger as an emotional response to the conflicts between one's interpellated identity category and the symbolic violence inherent to it is why the expression of anger, or what Brittney Cooper (2018)

describes as “eloquent rage,” by women and people of color is so thoroughly stigmatized (e.g., the “ugly feminazi,” the “angry Black woman), thereby serving as a form of social control. Islamic activist Hamza Yusuf Hanson asserts that converting anger into action is essential to challenging institutional authority, but that anger is most productive when it is disciplined and intelligently focused (*hamas*), as opposed to uncontrolled, misdirected rage (*hamoq*) (Monbiot 2018). Critical pedagogy can be a tool for catalyzing the righteous indignation of *hamas* as students interrogate the histories of taken-for-granted social classification systems (Collins and Bilge 2016; Freire 2014).

But for many Black women in the U.S. and around the world, no formal critical pedagogy is necessary to spark critical consciousness, as their basic survival requires making a way out of and through the unjust distributions of resources that Black women inherit by virtue of their bodies’ classification at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In this way, Black feminist thinkers demonstrate how agency can be understood as intrapersonal consciousness shifts in dialectical response to the oppressive structural conditions that always already embroil marginalized people in political struggles for self-determination and voice in social worlds that deny their right to exist and be heard. Collins’ elaboration of the under-theorized role of symbolic violence in social change demonstrates how marginalized people’s lived experiences of injustice inevitably politicize them to identify, deconstruct, and re-articulate the controlling images that serve as potent iconography for hegemonic ideologies about who marginalized peoples are and what they can do.

Stage 2: Collective Identity-based Standpoint

Collins argues that a shift in consciousness is a necessary but not sufficient condition for social change; individually constituted “spheres of freedom” must coalesce into a larger sphere of collective identity-based standpoint founded on shared lived experiences of domination. Jonathan Horowitz (2017) posits that formation of a collective identity involves defining a relationship between a social identity and an injustice frame (Gamson et al. 1982), which is the sense that current social arrangements produce injustice. In his analysis of interviews with long-time social justice activists, Horowitz asserts that, rather than importing grievances into a preexisting social identity, activists create new collective identities to match the evolving nature of their grievances and to delimit in-groups and out-groups within movements. Despite its utility in conceptualizing collective identities as relationships between social identities and injustice frames, Horowitz’s approach reduces activists’ re-articulations of collective identity to instrumental tactics for advancing movements’ goals. In contrast, for Collins, supplanting controlling images with shared self-definitions is the fundamental ontological challenge of Black feminism within the cultural domain of power, from which resistance and activism arise:

How do we account for the voices of resistance of Audre Lorde, Maria Stewart, Fannie Barrier Williams, and Marisa Bonner? What foundation sustained Sojourner Truth so that she could ask, ‘Ain’t I a woman?’ ... Their ideas and actions suggest that not only does a self-defined, group-derived Black women’s standpoint exist, but that its presence has been essential for U.S. Black women’s survival. (2009:109)

From this standpoint, Black feminist thinkers deconstruct naturalizing hegemonic ideologies about who Black women are and what they can do and then rearticulate an alternative vision for Black women’s identities and futures to “equip people to resist

oppression and inspire them to do it” (2009:22). In this way, we can consider Collins’ definition of a collective identity-based standpoint as a kind of “counter-social location” that disrupts and reconstructs the classificatory systems of hierarchical binaries by reclaiming and revaluing social identities that have been denigrated to legitimate the naturalness of structural inequalities.

Stage 3: Resistance and Activism

For Collins, the connection between Black women’s distinctive lived experiences and the consciousness they develop to survive these experiences fosters the formation of a collective identity-based standpoint from which a dialectic of thought and action produces diverse forms of resistance to social practices restricting them to inferior housing, neighborhoods, schools, jobs, and public treatment. To understand their strategies for survival and resistance, Black feminist thinkers have focused attention on the safe spaces – from their relationships with one another to the imaginative forums fostered by blues artists, filmmakers, writers, and academics – Black women create to give voice to self-defined, independent Black women’s standpoints that are muted in hegemonic cultural discourses. For instance, seeking to dispel the myth of the self-sacrificing Black mother created by both white men (in the form of the matriarch) and Black men (in the form of the “superstrong Black mother”), Black feminist thought has prioritized illustrating the diversity and complexity of how Black women experience motherhood around several themes identified by Collins: the expanded care-taking networks of bloodmothers, othermothers, and community othermothers; mothers’ socialization of daughters to survival through “visionary pragmatism” (2009:199); the politicization of othermothers to advocate for the needs of their communities’ children;

motherhood as a symbol of power and as a model of community service; and the personal costs, burdens, and fears that raising children in a matrix of domination exact from Black women. These forms of resistance to remake meanings of Black motherhood would be incomprehensible in a political process model that only recognizes struggles to change state policies as activism.

However, as Amrita Pande (2014) cautions, feminist theorists should temper our enthusiasm for detecting resistance at every turn, as this penchant fortifies the dualism of the dominating sphere of power relations and the empowering sphere of subversion. In succumbing to the “romance of resistance” (Abu-Lughod quoted in Pande 2014:10), feminist theorists fail to appreciate the “dual character of resistance, symbolizing both agency and loss, subversion and reification” (Thapan 2009, quoted in Pande 2014:169). In other words, because acts of resistance are made meaningful in distinct historical matrices of interlocking oppressions, they may lead to the unintended reification of controlling images and classificatory systems. This tendency is especially crucial to guard against in the present sociohistorical moment as the politics of representation unfold in the neoliberal marketplace of ideas (Thompson 2016), in which visibility has become a primary form of capital and feminism itself has been commodified as a brand to sell “empowerment” products (Banet-Weiser 2018).

This insight underscores the salience of Gayatri Spivak’s (1997) argument that a strategy for engaging in resistance and activism is not a theory. Although Collins (2009) provides a generalizable explanation of how individuals are inspired to rearticulate self-determined subjectivities, formulate collective identity into a shared standpoint, and leverage that standpoint to mobilize subversion of hegemonic culture and the institutions

it legitimates, the form that these acts of resistance take is dependent on the material, social, and cultural contexts where women's lived experiences play out. According to Spivak, "strategy works through a persistent (de)constructive critique of the theoretical...a strategy suits a situation...[the problem is] that strategies are taught as if they were theories, good for all cases" (1997:358). When strategies for resistance are crystallized into universal, prescriptive theories for action and activism, Spivak contends that they become essentialist positions, as "the situation that calls forth the strategy is seemingly resolved" (1997:358).

Therefore, while Collins' theory of social change supplies a framework through which scholars can explore and analyze social movements' work in the cultural domain of power, we must never lose sight of Chela Sandoval's (2000) imperative to situate manifestations of resistance within agents' embodied positionalities in historically specific matrices of domination. As Sandoval argues, "Differential consciousness and social movements are linked to the necessity to stake out and hold solid identity and political positions in the social world. The differential mode of social movement and consciousness depends on the practitioner's ability to read the current situation of power and self-consciously choosing and adopting the ideological stand best suited to push against its configurations, a survival skill known well to oppressed peoples" (2000:59). In this way, feminist theorists advocate that social movement scholars attend to how oppositional consciousness produces a wide variety of approaches to wielding resistant ideologies as contextually sensitive "technologies of power" (Sandoval 2000:61) to transform specific social and cultural conditions.

AN APPLICATION OF COLLINS' THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

One of these technologies of power that is under-theorized in traditional social change theories is arts-based activism. To explore the utility of Collins' theoretical contributions in understanding mechanisms for challenging cultural systems of meaning, I apply her explanatory framework to The Girl Project, an artistic-academic-activist social movement that provides teenaged girls with the creative tools and relational resources to challenge the misrepresentation of women and girls in contemporary American media culture. The 15 high school-aged Kentuckian girls who participate in The Girl Project every year participate in workshops by guest artists from around the U.S. to create an original performance piece that incorporates spoken word, poetry, movement, comedy, and multi-media. These workshops focus on fostering the sisterhood of the participating girls using the concept of a "closed container," where girls can ask anonymous questions, discuss current events, and share their stories and writing. The critical pedagogical space of the closed container helps deepen their understanding of the issues that women and girls face collectively and individually in navigating American media culture and how they can take action to foster change in themselves and their communities. The final performance is written entirely by the girls based on their workshop products and is presented to audiences in public theatrical venues and schools in Central Kentucky.

During The Girl Project workshops, participants experiment with a variety of creative modalities for deconstructing and rearticulating hegemonic images of American girlhood. For example, the following piece from the 2014 performance of The Girl Project (Class of 2014, 2015) delineates the contours of controlling images that constrain

these girls' lived experiences and channels their anger to establish a "sphere of freedom" in the space between their bodies and their reflections in the mirror:

Mirrors

ANNA: I hate it when you look at me like that. I know what you're thinking, I thought it this morning. Your eyes traveling up and down, and I know where your thoughts are headed. Fat, short, ugly, bad hair, messy eyeliner, fat, short, ugly, thighs, boobs, stomach, fat, short, ugly, fat...

ALL GIRLS: No! I don't want to hear it anymore.

ALISSA: Her hair is lovely

ANNA: I hate it when you look at me like that, when you talk to me like that. I hate it when you put those thoughts in my head. You make me want to scream! Rip through my flesh and transform it. Take my thighs and put them on my chest, slim my mouth and give the room to my eyes, replace my constant train of thought with a steady hand so it doesn't take as long for me to look.... flawless? Is that what you're telling me? I hate it when you look at me like that.

ALISSA: Her reflection is without fault.
Hush, whispers the mirror
You are loved
You are precious
You are complex and good

ANNA: I hate it when you look at me like that.

OLIVIA: I hate it when you laugh at me.

LEXIE: I hate it when you tell me I'm not perfect.

RENA: I hate it when you tell me I need to change.

KATE: I hate it when you compliment me.

ALL: No! I don't want to hear it anymore!

Although participants in The Girl Project are more racially and socioeconomically diverse than the area population as the result of extensive outreach efforts and financial scholarships, the majority of participants each year are racially categorized as white and grew up in middle-class households. They also share a common temporal, geographic, and socio-historical context, as they have grown up in a two-county region of Central

Kentucky and are of the same age identity (George 1980). As Brown and Rohlinger argue (2016), the effects of age identity and cohort, or “political generation,” on the function of social movements have been allocated limited scholarly attention. As such, an appreciation of these girls’ age identities in understanding the power of the mirror’s reflection as a controlling image reinforces the importance of Collins’ emphasis on contextualizing collective identity re-articulations within the material, historical, and cultural conditions of women’s lived experiences. In other words, just as agency and resistance are not intellectual issues for U.S. Black women in Collins’ dialectic of thought and action, the mirror’s oppressive surveillance and the consequences adolescent girls face in challenging hegemonic beauty practices are very materially and socially real (McGladrey 2014).

Tracing the second phase of Collins’ theoretical framework – in which individually constituted “spheres of freedom” coalesce into a collective identity-based standpoint – through The Girl Project highlights the function of the “supportive sisterhood” that girls create in the context of the closed container. Every year, the closed container environment is formed during an exercise that involves brainstorming a “girl code” of guidelines for how the girls want to relate to each other as members of The Girl Project. The girl code typically includes requirements that participants keep in confidence the information shared in the closed container, unless it indicates a threat to anyone’s safety; a mandate that girls refrain from judging their own creative work and the work of other participants; and a goal to avoid couching the quality of one’s work in disclaimers and apologies (e.g., “I know this poem is terrible, but here’s what I wrote.”). As Collins posits, “While domination may be inevitable as a social fact, it is unlikely to be

hegemonic as an ideology within social spaces where Black women speak freely. This realm of relatively safe discourse, however narrow, is a necessary condition for Black women's resistance" (2009:111). Similarly, the closed container and its self-determined girl code offer participants a safe discursive environment where they can share aspects of their lived experiences to which they could not safely give voice in other social contexts. The trust they develop in the closed container facilitates the formation of a collective identity-based standpoint, as girls realize that others share experiences that have made them feel isolated and ashamed, such as family problems, self-harm, disordered eating, depression, sexual assault, and abuse. This transformation of individual tragedy into collective resistance is exemplified in the following piece from the 2014 performance of *The Girl Project* (Class of 2014, 2015):

Consent

LEXIE: The vodka screamed my name as the couch opened its arms wide, soon I noticed I was WAY too drunk to stand. My stomach was too upset to make it upstairs, but my mind was telling me that everything was fine.

MADISON: No. Yes. Mine.

LEXIE: I could taste the vodka still burning my taste buds and I knew it was working because, honestly, I couldn't feel a damn thing. As I lay on the couch it moaned as to give off a warning signal, but my thoughts deceived me. The cold leather couch gave me chills I have never experienced.

MADISON: Body. Temple. Mine.

SHANNON: I carry a knife.

SHANNON: We are not as irrational and immature as people seem to think. Has no one ever seen that we are angry at the world we live in? I carry a knife.

LEXIE: Soon I could feel myself drifting off to sleep. What I awoke to I wouldn't dare wish on someone else, not even my worst enemy.

MADISON: Tank top. Short shorts. Mine.

LEXIE: His body next to mine, his cold hands on me, I yell “STOP” as the tears and horror arose within me.

MADISON: Bra. Panties. Mine.

LEXIE: My body dare not move, I was stuck.

MADISON: Temptation. Seduction. Mine.

SHANNON: In a world where this cynical over-caution is the only thing that ensures my safety, I’m no longer willing to take the risk. I carry a knife.

ALL: Hair. Mine.

OLIVIA: It is now years later, and I am still stuck, stuck thinking about what I could have done differently.

ALL: Eyes. Mine.

OLIVIA: So, I guess it’s my fault, right?

LEXIE: But wait, is it really? You tell me not to dress a certain way to protect myself?

MADISON: Tank Top. Short Shorts. Mine.

ALL: I carry a knife.

LEXIE: This now haunts my dreams, my thoughts, and my relationships, but does it ever haunt you?

SHANNON: I live my life with ever burning anxiety.

ALL: I carry a knife

OLIVIA: You are one of many who never asked consent, you just took.

(Crescendo to a climax, overlapping) ALL: No. Hair. Yes. Eyes. Body. Breasts. Temple.

LEXIE: Mine.

SHANNON: Mine.

OLIVIA: Mine.

MADISON: MINE.

ALL: I CARRY A KNIFE!

The power of The Girl Project's articulation of their collective identity-based standpoint derives from its anonymity for individual girls within the collective identity they express. Although perhaps only several of the girls wrote this piece and actually experienced sexual abuse, all of the performers claim this lived experience as their own, subsuming the stigma and shame that might prevent the expression of an individual girl's story into the narrative The Girl Project sisterhood wants to tell about American girlhood.

Finally, Collins enjoins scholars of social movements to situate the strategies for resistance that activists employ within contextually specific dialectics of thought and action. Because participants in The Girl Project are mounting a challenge to the gender-based power relations reified in media representations of girlhood, they deploy the resources and tactics of performance art, visualization, and voice to undermine the authority of hegemonic images of young femininity. Furthermore, as Angela Davis posits, "Art is special because of its ability to influence feelings as well as knowledge" (1989:200), and Frankfurt School theorists like Marcuse and Adorno emphasized that art challenges the hyper-rationalism and technical instrumentalism of the modern era with alternative ways of thinking and knowing. Unlike conventional media literacy programs that use cognitive techniques to didactically instruct passive participants (Diedrichs et al. 2015), The Girl Project facilitates girls' ability to give voice to their own creative, critical, and emotional responses to the media stereotypes of most relevance to their lives. In this way, The Girl Project participants leverage the instruments of the cultural domain of power — such as performance, art, and affect — to confront controlling images of

girlhood on their own terms, which are intelligible to audiences on the same frequency as affectively manipulating, sensory-rich media representations of femininity.

CONCLUSIONS

As is evident in this application of Collins' theory of social change to The Girl Project, Black feminist thought offers a well-developed framework that can be productively incorporated into broader social change theory to explain how people in marginalized social locations mount definitional challenges to their received classifications in the cultural domain of power. Despite the differences between the lived experiences of the U.S. Black women highlighted in Collins' work (2009) and of the teenaged, mostly white, middle-class girls who participate in The Girl Project, Collins' theory of social change parsimoniously identifies the three-stage progression through which people in denigrated subject positions reject the consciousness of the oppressor (Freire 2014) and wield rearticulated collective identity-based standpoints as contextually attuned technologies of power to re-cast historical narratives. It also opens conceptual opportunities to recognize activist goals and strategies in the cultural domain of power that sociological theories of social change typically overlook, such as arts-based activism. As Collins and Bilge contend, for people oppressed along axes of gender, race, class, age, place, ability, and other binaries that constrain their actions in the structural and disciplinary domains of power, "music, dance, poetry, and art of the cultural domain of power and personal politics of the interpersonal domain grow in significance" (2016:118). In other words, anyone whose social location marginalizes them to the extent that they must remain motionless in the structural and disciplinary domains of power can instigate social change by decolonizing their consciousness from hegemonic ideologies

and then artistically expressing alternative definitions of self and standpoint in the cultural domain of power.

Of course, understanding art as a form of activism for social change is not novel when we consider the cultural and media studies as well as the arts history, administration, and curation literatures (Esche and Bradley 2008; Lampert 2015; Mesch 2013; Reed 2005); it is just new to sociological theories of social change mechanisms and processes. The roots of arts-activism to dramatize social injustices and engage audiences in envisioning counter-narratives to controlling images trace to the Federal Theatre Project of the 1930s New Deal that told the stories of forgotten communities devastated by the Great Depression in “living newspapers” and “documentary theatre” (Schwartz 2003); Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed in mid-20th-century Latin America (Saxon 2018); and the feminist theatre of the women’s liberation movement of the 1970s (Aston 2008). Theatre of the Oppressed remains an influential source of inspiration, provocation, and consciousness-raising strategies for educators and activists, especially in empowering young people (Duffy and Vettraino 2010). Current examples of arts-activism that promote the re-articulation of denigrated social identities include the Pride Youth Theater Alliance and the Theatre Offensive that amplify the voices of LGBTQI* youth, the Girls Rock Camp Alliance that organizes music education programming teaching girls how to play rock and roll instruments, and the Performing Justice Project that mobilizes youth to interrogate social problems through theatre. The through-line connecting all forms of arts-activism and political art is their dedication to discovering untold stories and engaging alternative epistemologies to articulate them, which resist the hyper-rationalism of the capitalist logics animating contemporary matrices of domination.

Operating in an affective epistemological paradigm that centers emotion and embodiment makes arts-activism especially effective in converting fear and/or apathy into the anger that sparks critical consciousness.

However, integrating the breadth and historical depth of arts-activism strategies into theories of social change does not mean discounting more sociologically comprehensible forms of political and legal resistance. Instead, it makes visible the ways in which different goals and strategies to realize social change map onto various configurations of the four domains of power. As Armstrong and Bernstein observe, “Viewing repertoires of contention as specific to particular institutions complicates distinctions between ‘noninstitutionalized’ and ‘institutionalized’ action. What counts as disruptive will vary based on the institution targeted” (2008:86). By categorizing examples of strategies, tactics, and technologies of power from the feminist movement, the exploratory typology below (Figure 1) uses “reverse-engineering” to show how activists shift their deployment of technologies of power to maximize their disruptiveness to varying institutional targets. In the typology, designations of “low” and “high” refer to the relative levels of activist focus on each of the four domains of power, which are aligned into two vectors. The vector of authorization pervades the structural and cultural domains of power, as they supply the organization and justification of inequitable distributions of resources. The vector of enforcement operating through the interpersonal and disciplinary domains of power applies social and material consequences to ensure compliance with the institutional rules and rationalities produced by the vector of authorization.

Figure 1: Typology of Resistance Strategies and the Domains of Power They Seek to Influence

		AUTHORIZING	
		Low Cultural/ Structural Focus	High Cultural/ Structural Focus
ENFORCING	Low Interpersonal/ Disciplinary Focus	--Corporate feminism	--#metoo
	High Interpersonal/ Disciplinary Focus	--Women's March	--Black Lives Matter

In the first quadrant of low cultural/structural+low interpersonal/disciplinary focus, the example of corporate feminism (e.g., Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg's injunction to "lean in" and embrace the oppressive neoliberal logics of corporate America) presents the fewest institutional disruptions by design in order to shore up increasingly obvious representation problems in corporate leadership without substantively challenging either the authorizing or enforcing mechanisms of capitalist institutions. Moving to the second quadrant of high cultural/structural+low interpersonal/disciplinary focus, the #metoo movement illuminates the prevalence and wide-ranging manifestations of sexual harassment and assault by taking advantage of the combined anonymity and visibility of social media platforms to share stories that traditional commercial media structures typically do not authorize as "newsworthy." In the third quadrant of low cultural/structural+high interpersonal/disciplinary focus, the Women's March brought attention to the dissatisfaction of women in the U.S. and around the world with the 2016 presidential election results by employing the traditional social movement strategy of a march that prioritized contesting the disciplinary and interpersonal domains of national politics over dismantling cultural assumptions about women in leadership or the organization of electoral institutions. In the fourth quadrant of high cultural/structural+high interpersonal/disciplinary focus is Black Lives Matter, which takes on both the authorizing and enforcing vectors of the domains of power given the historical scope of the oppression the movement resists; according to co-founder Alicia Garza, Black Lives Matter is "an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks' contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience

in the face of deadly oppression” (2014:n.p.). As such, Black Lives Matter simultaneously attends to cultural misrepresentations of Black people as deviant criminals and discriminatory criminal justice practices.

As is evident with these examples, a typology that fits resistance strategies to the domains of power they seek to influence allows theorists of social change to analyze why activists deploy specific strategies to pursue their goals (Quadrants 2-4) as well as to identify “astro-turf” or faux-grassroots activism that reifies existing power relations (Quadrant 1). Collins’ theory of social change makes arts-activists’ efforts to combat symbolic violence by redefining cultural meanings through affective epistemologies intelligible to the strategic action field framework and multi-institutional politics approach. This typology demonstrates that arts-activism can be in a complementary dialectic with political and legal reform movements depending on which domains of power activists are seeking to challenge. Scholars of social change can use the Collins’ theory of social change and this typology as heuristic devices to unpack empirical data from social movements by “reverse-engineering” their goals based on the technologies of power they deploy. Social justice practitioners may find Collins’ theory of social change useful in honing their messaging and communication strategies to explicitly advance new visions of their collective identity-based standpoint that directly contrast with controlling images. They also may find the typology helpful in “diagnosing” whether their current tactics are targeting the domains of power that they wish to influence. By operationalizing the process by which resistance in the cultural domain of power occurs and contextualizing it within political and legal reform movements, the theoretical tools

presented in this paper widen the scope of both sociological theories of social change and the strategic repertoires of social justice activists.

PAPER #2

Ordering Gender: Interactional Accountability and the Social Accomplishment of Gender Among Adolescents in the U.S. South

ABSTRACT: This article presents the results of a participatory action research study, with adolescent boys and girls as co-researchers, exploring the contemporary U.S. gender order through the perspectives of social actors who have been recently socialized into its hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity ideologies. The co-researchers mapped the local gender regimes and underlying gender structures that shape the adolescents' social worlds in four distinct U.S. institutional settings – medicine, the family, schools, and peer social networks – that are hierarchically and temporally ordered in terms of their power to define the gender expectations of their contexts as youth in the U.S. South. The co-researchers found that processes of gender accountability are embedded in broader nets of accountability such that gender expectations interweave what it means to be a good child and a good student. Findings and analysis not only describe how intersecting power relations reproduce gender inequality in local interactions but also identify points of fissure in gender structures that might be exploited by youth-led feminist activism to undermine the socialization of children and youth to hegemonic gender ideology. The co-researchers' conclusions reveal opportunities to mobilize boys and young men as radical feminists who are as committed to deconstructing hegemonic gender expectations as their female peers.

INTRODUCTION

A defining assumption of hegemonic masculinity is that it is constructed in hierarchical opposition to femininity. As Kimmel explains, “The notion of anti-femininity lies at the heart of contemporary and historical constructions of manhood, so that masculinity is defined more by what one is not rather than who one is” (1994:119). R. W. Connell (1987) argues that emphasized femininity as the ideological counterpart of hegemonic masculinity is characterized by girls’ and women’s embodiments of oppressive images of feminine beauty that symbolize a disempowered stance relative to men. Despite the centrality of this hierarchical dualism in Connell’s theory, gender relations are seldom the topic of empirical investigations (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). To reorient attention toward gendered systems of power, Connell suggests replacing the static concept of “gender roles” with the “gender order,” which she defines as the “current state of play” in the dynamics of the power relations of sex, gender, and sexuality (1987). Although she commends the effectiveness of poststructuralist theories of gender in upending essentialist thinking by demonstrating the historical contingency of gendered discourse and social practice, Connell (2012) argues that gender structures are more than a set of cultural repertoires informing the presentation of self. The gender structure comprises the emotional and material constraints of the complex inter-relations among social institutions in which performances of gender are embedded. According to Connell, it is the task of social scientists to uncover “the processes by which social worlds are brought into being through time – the ontoformativity, not just the performativity, of gender” (2012:1678). To do so, Connell charges sociologists of gender to position gender orders (the structure of a society’s gender relations at a given time) and

gender regimes (the structure of gender relations in specific institutions) as our units of analysis in empirical studies.

This article presents the results of a participatory action research study, with adolescent boys and girls as co-researchers, that takes up Connell's call to explore the contemporary U.S. gender order through the perspectives of social actors who have been recently recruited to its hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity ideologies. Employing a dialectical praxis of reflection and action, the co-researchers map the gender regimes and underlying gender structures shaping their social worlds in four distinct U.S. institutional settings – medicine, the family, schools, and peer social networks – that are hierarchically and temporally ordered in terms of their power to define the gender expectations of their contexts as youth in the U.S. South. By complementing existing theoretical treatments of accountability in the sociology of gender with empirical data generated by both male and female youth, this study engages with adolescent co-researchers to theorize how their lived social experiences in interlocking institutional structures perpetuate the asymmetrical gender order. Our findings and analysis also identify points of fissure in gender regimes that might be exploited by youth-led feminist activism to undermine the recruitment and retention of children and youth to hegemonic gender ideology. Most promisingly, the co-researchers' insights reveal opportunities to mobilize boys as radical feminists who are as committed to deconstructing normative gender expectations as their female counterparts.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In applying Gramsci's theory of hegemony to gender relations, R. W. Connell (2005) developed the concept of hegemonic masculinity, which is the configuration of

gender practices that supplies the most historically salient justification of the continual dominance of men and subordination of women. Concurrent with Connell's development of hegemonic masculinity theory, West and Zimmerman advanced a social constructionist theory of "doing gender" as "a routine, methodical and recurring accomplishment" of social interaction (1987:126). In the doing gender framework, men and women's social competence is predicated on assessments of their accountability to the attitudes, activities, and behaviors consistent with their sex categorization. Unlike site-specific "roles," gender is a master status that is omnirelevant to all situations such that a person is assessed in terms of their competence in performing activities as a *woman* or a *man*. Yet the gender expectations to which people are held accountable are highly attuned to actors' intersectional standpoints (i.e., their class, race/ethnicity, age, sexuality, nationality, etc.) and their local, concrete social contexts (e.g., whether the actor is at home, at work in an office, at a sporting event, interacting with a child). Regardless of the configuration of social standpoints and contexts involved in doing gender, however, an actor's appearance, attitudes, activities, and behaviors must be socially intelligible in terms of commonsense expectations of how a woman or man *should* conduct herself or himself in a given situation, with the foundational premise that men's and women's self-presentations are naturally and essentially different (Hollander in press).

Among its many influences on the sociology of gender, the doing gender approach helped shift the focus in masculinity studies from gender as an individual trait or role to the rules and resources of situated social interactions that are oriented to its production. Schrock and Schwalbe (2009) contend in their review of the field of critical men's studies that scholars have lapsed into a form of categorical essentialism with the

men and literature documenting a diverse plurality of masculinities. To better theorize how doing gender privileges men at the expense of women, they argue that critical men's studies should refocus on investigating men's performances of "manhood acts" with which they claim membership in the privileged gender group by outlining the common themes that diverse manhood acts share (i.e., claiming privilege, eliciting deference, and resisting exploitation). Furthermore, as Schrock and Padavic (2007) contend, gender scholarship predominantly has addressed hegemonic masculinity as a cultural ideal and the ways in which men have negotiated this ideal, largely neglecting how local forms of hegemonic masculinity are constructed in interaction rituals. To support a more interactionist conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity, Schrock and Padavic define meanings and practices of masculinity as locally hegemonic if they consistently elicit deference from others in specific contextual settings. The link between sex categorization and gender in West and Zimmerman's framework connects these local interactions with institutionalized gender structures, as broader asymmetrical gender relations are (re)produced via face-to-face interactions constrained by participants' accountability to gendered expectations (1987:147).

According to Hollander (2013), this linkage between local interactions and the reproduction of gendered social structures has been under-theorized and neglected in empirical investigations because scholars have overlooked the significance of accountability to sex category membership in West and Zimmerman's original formulation. Hollander argues that scholars typically have used the concept of accountability in the lay sense of the term, that is, in terms of others' enforcement of gender expectations through social penalties for noncompliance. However, West and

Zimmerman (1987) initially employed the concept of accountability to describe the “orientation to accounts” that results from anticipation of assessment of one’s behavior and management of one’s behavior accordingly to influence those accounts.

To address this issue, Hollander (2013) introduced a three-part interactional system that facilitates clearer analysis of accountability in the social accomplishment of gender. The first of these three parts is orientation to sex category via symbolic ideals and local expectations that remind individuals their appearance, attitudes, activities, and behavior will be assessed in terms of conformance to their assigned sex category. Next, assessment involves continual monitoring, evaluation, and comparison of the appearances, attitudes, activities, and behaviors of oneself and others in relation to the gender expectations consistent with their presumed sex category for what is appropriate to specific situations and contexts. The third part of the system, enforcement, refers to the interactional consequences of conformity or resistance to gender expectations. The personal and collective fallout of violating normative gender expectations is potentially severe in terms of stigmatization, discrimination, and ostracization (Hollander in press). These “accountability rituals” call people to account for behavior that deviates from the types of gendered self-presentations expected based on one’s membership in a sex category.

Interactional enforcement mechanisms gain their pervasive potency as they knit together in “nets of accountability” connecting the accountability demands of interlocking, interacting social relations and contexts (Schwalbe and Shay 2014). Personal interactions are nested within institutional positions and roles, such that a teacher who disciplines a student’s unruly classroom behavior is activating the

institutional net of accountability comprising these actors' relationships with other teachers and students, school administrators, and parents as well as the configuration of roles and their relative power within a school system (i.e., the power of teachers over students, of principals over teachers, of school boards over principals) (Schwalbe and Shay 2014). In this way, nets of accountability determine "who can confidently demand deference from whom, who can claim the prerogatives of higher social value, who can safely express contempt for whom, and who can make demands of whom" (Schwalbe and Shay 2014:173) within and across situated interactions. Furthermore, the invocation of a single teacher's authority to demand an account for a student's conduct in one interaction reasserts the routinized nets of accountability coordinating expectations for interactions in educational institutions everywhere (Schwalbe and Shay 2014). As such, accountability is fundamentally a mechanism that allows actors empowered by historically privileged standpoints to exert social control by "claiming the power to define both the situation and the actors involved in it" (Hollander in press:11). In fact, accountability rituals may constitute the ultimate "manhood acts" in that they entitle the enforcer(s) to assert the power to define the situation as well as elicit deference from those anticipating assessment and enforcement based on gender expectations.

The ways in which adolescents do gender are especially essential in understanding accountability mechanisms. According to West and Zimmerman, "The transition from what Cahill (1986) terms 'apprentice participation' in the sex-segregated worlds that are common among elementary school children to 'bona fide participation' in the heterosexual world so frightening to adolescents is likely to be a keystone in our understanding of the recruitment process" (1987:142). Reframing the adoption of

gendered identities as recruitment rather than socialization underscores the ideological nature of sex categorization and accountability to gender expectations, marking it a human invention that changes with historical tides rather than natural and essential to children's healthy development. In other words, children's socialization to gender norms should be problematized as a political issue rather than accepted as necessary preparation to fit them for adult social life (Mayall 2000).

Unfortunately, researchers committed to investigating lived experiences of gender ideologies typically confine their studies to homosocial empirical sites and scopes of inquiry, particularly when working with minors as research participants. Journals entirely dedicated to studying the distinct lived experiences of boys and girls have been recently introduced, such as *Girlhood Studies* and *Boyhood Studies* that Berghahn Books began publishing in 2008. Homosocial environments certainly offer rich opportunities to explore gender expectations among youth, as the most vigilant assessors of one's accountability to normative gender expectations are peers classified in the same sex category (Jackson et al. 2013; Kimmel 2012; McGladrey 2015; Pascoe 2011). Yet, in terms of wider social practice, nets of accountability that reproduce gender structures implicate doing gender beyond the homosocial spheres in which hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity ideologies are incubated and bolstered.

Several recent studies have examined social spaces where hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity meet, specifically, boys' and girls' experiences of the sexual double standard that boys who engage in sexual behavior are socially rewarded for their exploits, while girls are expected to serve as sexual gatekeepers to control boys' "natural" excesses, with the corollary that girls who are sexually active are labeled as promiscuous

“sluts” (Currier 2013; Fjær, Pedersen, and Sandberg 2015; Ringrose et al. 2013; Ronen 2010; Tolman, Davis, and Bowman 2016). Importantly, these studies position enactments of hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity in relation to each other rather than limiting their scopes to either boys’ or girls’ experiences of the constraints of gender ideologies. However, these studies implicitly and sometimes explicitly frame the sexual double standard as the most damaging and pervasive aspect of the hierarchical gender order, thereby reinscribing the centrality of women’s sexuality to their identities and social interactions. One of the articles that explicitly makes this argument states, “The goal of reaching gender equity in many dimensions of young people’s lives has appeared ever more tangible recently, such as in education and participation in sports. Yet adolescents’ heterosexual relationships remain a conspicuous exception to this trend” (Tolman et al. 2016:4). But the arena of sexuality and heterosexual relations hardly constitutes the final bastion of sexism and gendered inequalities. As England (2010) has demonstrated, gender egalitarian trends have unfolded unevenly and, for lower-income women, stalled entirely. Although women have desegregated traditionally male workplaces, there has been little change in the devaluation of traditionally feminine activities and occupations, and men have neither made corresponding moves into traditionally female workplaces nor returned home to participate in child care (England 2010). Therefore, it is imperative that cross-gender studies of gender orders broaden their scopes from the sexual double standard to the nets of accountability sustaining gender regimes.

The Present Study

Nonetheless, projects investigating the hierarchical gender order run the risk of inciting the same backlash that rendered feminism a derisive term. As Schwalbe (2014:38) contends, scholars are loathe to directly criticize men's oppressive behavior for fear of professional marginalization. How, then, can researchers interested in understanding local gender regimes design studies that do not place men and boys on the defensive or let them off the proverbial hook? To answer this question, we must address another: who oppresses whom in the enactment of gendered power relations? Who is placed in the subject and object positions by the homosocial "boys and girls" literatures? If men are responsible for objectifying and oppressing women and girls, then why are media producers typically framed as the source and enforcers of gender stereotypes (e.g., Tolman, Brown, and Bowman 2013)? Conversely, if cultural discourses objectify and oppress women, then are men and boys simply conduits or vessels of immutable hegemonic gender expectations imposed by the media?

These questions are not merely academic abstractions. Adolescent participants in the study by Tolman et al. struggled to describe the origins of the sexual double standard: "While the sexual double standard was the firm constant against which they positioned their own experiences and observations of how heterosexual relationships and gendered sexuality are expected to 'work,' both girls and boys narrated conflict in attempting to make sense of it. Ryan described this gender hierarchy as 'unfair' and 'weird'" (2016:18). These informants' puzzlement about the source of gender inequality highlights the deft maneuvering of dialectically pragmatic hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity ideologies in distorting relationships between men/boys and women/girls to

remain salient as justifications for gender inequity in this postfeminist cultural moment (Pomerantz, Raby, and Stefanik 2013). The “fun house mirror” of gender ideologies refracts what girls and boys perceive when they look at each other through the prism of its normative expectations such that no one can be certain whether they are seeing a human being or an amalgamation of stereotyped role performances. Therefore, empirical research attempting to explore the reproduction of hierarchical gender regimes in local interactions should make the fun house mirror’s distortions visible through intersubjective triangulation of girls’ and boys’ perspectives. To isolate local gender regimes as the unit of analysis, researchers must create safe social spaces for participants to interrogate gender practices without risking personal accountability to the social consequences of non-conformance.

The goal of the present study was to create a forum for dialogue in which teenaged boys and girls could explore how gender expectations are assessed and enforced in their everyday interactions. Hollander (in press) posits that a reason for the lack of consistent attention to accountability in the sociology of gender may be that investigating accountability necessitates applying the theoretical framework to actual interactions in specific contexts, which cannot be easily accomplished using survey or interview methods. She argues that observational data may be required to make the ongoing, back-and-forth sequences of actual interactions involved in accountability processes perceptible to scholars. However, negotiating access to a social setting significant to contemporary U.S. adolescents and then entering the field as an adult observer attempting to tease out the intricacies of youth gender accountability rituals sounds about as productive as traveling to another country without knowledge of what language is spoken

there, much less how to communicate in that language. Instead, this participatory action research (PAR) study involves both the researcher and the researched in reflexive and reciprocal investigation, education, and action (Renzetti 1997). Recognizing the unexplored empirical terrain on which it treads, the study engages participants as co-researchers in what Swedberg (2011) terms theorizing in the context of discovery, rather than the testing of theory in the context of justification, using the interactional accountability framework of orientation, assessment, and enforcement (Hollander 2013) as sensitizing concept (Blumer 1954). The methods subsequently described were designed to heed Swedberg's injunction that "to theorize well, one needs inspiration, and to get inspiration one can proceed in whatever way that leads to something interesting and novel, and to theorize it" (2011:6).

METHODS

This study employed critical pedagogy as a strategy for establishing social environments conducive to constructive theorizing about gender accountability. As Giroux (1981) has systematically demonstrated, educational institutions tend to perpetuate the dominant rationality of expectations and beliefs that make the social worlds into which children will enter intelligible. Therefore, it is challenging to use schools as a recruitment site for a study that seeks to partner with under-aged students in interrogating taken-for-granted assumptions about social inequalities. This study could only be feasible if conducted in a social setting that facilitated critical reflection, defined by Freire as people "coming to see critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves" (2014:83). Creating a context for critical reflection in this PAR study of interactional accountability to gender expectations is especially

important given Tolman et al.'s (2016) findings that while their teenaged informants clearly experienced the sexual double standard, they struggled to describe the source and scope of hierarchical gender ideology.

This context emerged from The Girl Project (www.thegirlprojectky.org), a grassroots arts-meets-activism initiative in Kentucky that empowers teenaged girls to challenge the misrepresentation of women and girls in contemporary American media culture. Created by two local performing arts educators in 2012 and now preparing to begin its sixth year, The Girl Project introduces participants to guest artists from around the nation who serve as their teachers and mentors, guiding them in multi-media, dance, spoken word, movement, vocal music, and visual art workshops. The artists who teach these workshops help participants use creative expression to share what they think it is important for their communities to understand about young women's lives. During the first week of workshops, participants watch and discuss the documentary *Miss Representation* by the Representation Project that provides a comprehensive overview of how the media misrepresent women and girls in ways that sustain gender stereotypes. In the 2016 program, participants also watched the new documentary from the Representation Project on representations of masculinity called *The Mask You Live In*. Featuring prominent social scientists including Michael Kimmel, Carol Gilligan, and Jackson Katz, these documentaries supply an extracurricular framework of accessible scholarship that inspires students' critical reflection on the gender ideologies to which they are recruited via parents, teachers, institutional regulations, media discourses and pornography, and other sociocultural forces. Taken together, the documentaries, arts-educational workshops, and final performances offer the kind of critical media literacy

education guiding students to analyze relationships among media and audiences, information, and power in order to expose social injustices that is not currently available in U.S. schools and other traditional education settings (Kellner and Share 2006; Puchner, Markowitz, and Hedley 2015).

Theorizing with the Girls

Prior to taking part in these activities, Margaret, the first author and adult co-researcher, gave a brief presentation about the study to parents and the teenaged girls participating in the 2016 offering of The Girl Project and obtained consent/assent following Institutional Review Board-approved procedures. During the first workshop on July 6, 2016, participants in The Girl Project watched *Miss Representation*. In her capacity as Research and Advocacy Director for The Girl Project, Margaret led a workshop the following day in which the group watched *The Mask You Live In*. She then introduced interviewing as a strategy that can help girls learn more about what is happening in their social worlds. Their goal as interviewers was to observe something interesting or new occurring in their lived experiences that they wanted to better understand. For the purposes of this study, this “interesting event” was their viewing of *The Mask You Live In* about masculinity expectations while immersed in a feminist arts-activism program. Following Swedberg’s guidelines to use an interesting event as a catalyst “to get somewhere else, with the help of free associations” (2011:30), the girls built a list of focus group questions they thought would be interesting to their ask near-peer male relatives (i.e., brothers, close family friends) after the boys watched *The Mask You Live In* and a performance of The Girl Project 2016. They also completed a form prompting each girl to identify and provide parental contact information for boys in their

families or family friends older than age 10 with whom they have important relationships and to provide demographic and family composition data as well as a pseudonym of their choosing. The focus group questions generated by the female co-researchers included:

- What surprised you most about the performance and *The Mask You Live In*?
- What stuck with you about The Girl Project performance and *The Mask You Live In*?
- Do you relate to the issues the film and performance brought up? If so, then how?
- How do the messages in *The Mask You Live In* and The Girl Project differ? How do they compare?
- In what ways have you intentionally changed your behavior to be seen as more manly?
- When do you feel like you can and can't express your feelings?
- Do you know someone or are you someone who seems more open with emotions? How is that person treated compared with others?
- Have you seen one of your male friends cry? What was that like?
- Who do you feel like you can talk to?
- What men do you look up to? What qualities of theirs do you want to emulate?
- Do you think teachers and parents need to know more about where boys are coming from? If so, then what do they need to know?
- How do you think the issues boys face relate to the issues girls face?
- How can boys and girls work together to stop the social expectations we have set up?

After the workshop, the girls brought home hard-copy forms inviting their selected boys to participate in the study, including consent/assent documentation for participants and parents.

Theorizing with the Boys

On August 6, 2016, the boys nominated by participants in The Girl Project were invited to attend the same showing of the girls' final performance piece (the Sunday matinee). Before the performance, boys were served lunch and watched *The Mask You Live In* together. This study's critical media literacy education component (watching the documentary and the performance together) was designed to establish the shared vocabulary and safe social context necessary to facilitate a conversation about gender expectations among boys who had not previously known each other. The boys indicated that this strategy was successful, with one male co-researcher saying, "The documentary definitely provided information that wasn't there before, and a way of thinking and the initiation of a dialogue that would provide the kind of conversation that happened." Using the questions developed by their female relatives and family friends, Margaret facilitated a group interview that was audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed for the next step in the theorizing process.

Cross-gender Theorizing

After facilitating and transcribing the focus group conversation with the boys, Margaret prepared a "Q&A" document presenting each of the questions the girls had developed marked with the heading "The Girls Asked," followed by the boys' anonymized responses to each question marked with the heading "The Boys Answered." Then, Margaret convened the participating boys and girls (including girls who did not have teenaged male relatives but who designed focus group questions) for a cross-gender conversation about the dialogue they had created. Sitting in a circle with a copy of the Q&A document, participants read the questions and responses aloud to each other, and

then had a free-wheeling and wide-ranging discussion considering possible explanations for the social issues that this interesting event had illuminated. Margaret's role in this conversation was not to elicit specific data from the participants but to speculate and theorize with the co-researchers. Although Margaret prepared prompts to spur discussion if needed and interjected probes when she required further clarification, the teenaged co-researchers took charge of the direction and content of this theorizing conversation, using the aspects of the Q&A document they found interesting as their point of departure.

Analysis

One of the co-researchers (Emma, the second author) continued working on this study and refining the co-researcher's theorizing during the analysis and writing stages as part of her semester-long internship with Margaret through her high school's program for seniors to gain professional experience before pursuing post-secondary education. Emma's work included revisiting "data" that she had provided as a participant in the focus group conversations. Although the words of a co-author are not typically treated as data, in the PAR paradigm, the co-researchers who contribute insights during data collection ideally also should substantively participate in analysis and dissemination activities. After discussing the issue, Margaret and Emma decided that Emma's "data" should be included in the analysis because they were part of her longer-term theorizing process.

For the internship experience Margaret designed, Emma took the mandatory online human subjects protection course and was added to Margaret's Institutional Review Board protocol. She also read Margaret's original proposal for the study, re-read the questions the boys were asked and the transcript of their conversation, and spoke

extensively with Margaret about the study and the sensitizing concepts of interactional accountability that guided it. Next, Emma transcribed the two-hour cross-gender theorizing session. Then, Margaret selected sections of Saldaña's (2009) textbook on coding qualitative data for Emma to read and showed her how to use NVivo software to code the transcripts. Drawing from Hollander's (in press) definitions of concepts in intersectional accountability, Margaret developed a preliminary codebook (see Table 1) and further discussed the sensitizing concepts and their meanings with Emma until she felt she understood their subtle differences. In what she found to be a very intuitive process of deploying the draft codebook and creating her own, Emma analyzed and coded the transcripts using the constant-comparative method to compare each application of the code to previous passages labeled with the same code to ensure that codes were consistently employed and to refine or add codes that better captured the significance of each passage and observation (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

Table 1: Preliminary Codebook Derived from Doing Gender Concepts

Code Name	Definition	Examples
Power to Define Situation	Instances when it is clear who or what has the power to define the social situation and the appropriate roles of actors in it.	A teacher divides class competitions into boys vs. girls A parent buys only pink clothes for her daughter and compliments her on her appearance
Orientation	When a person talks about the gender expectations associated with membership in their assigned “sex category” (e.g., being a credible and intelligible boy or girl). Anticipation of imagined social consequences of not being “read” as a man or a woman and how others might respond to them failing to meet those expectations.	“Men are strong, so if I seem weak, then I won’t be recognized as a normal guy in my social circles.” “Women are nurturing, so if I don’t have children, then I won’t be recognized as a normal woman in my social circles.”
Assessment	Examples of an individual comparing their and other people’s attitudes, activities, and behaviors to their gender expectations for what is appropriate to the situation. People assess their own behavior as they evaluate others’ behavior in relation to gender expectations for specific contexts.	“He seems like too much of a fag to hang out with us.” “It’s hard to keep up with her because she doesn’t have kids, and all of the rest of us do.”
Enforcement	Attempts to control behavior through social consequences for a person’s attitudes, activities, and behaviors violating normative gender expectations of a situation, when a person’s gender presentation does not fit or align with orientations for that situation.	Anything from disapproving looks and disgust to exclusion, social stigma, and physical violence Boys being called a sissy and getting beat up
Individual Resistance	Instances in which someone consciously chooses to violate gender expectations and suffer the consequences in the hope of changing the expectations to which she is held accountable	A transperson decides to be “out” in her workplace, but her colleagues still hold her accountable to masculine gender expectations
Redoing Gender	Situations that transform gender expectations about how men and women should behave and provide new communities that share these expectations	Women’s self-defense classes that reframe girls sense of themselves as powerful and their expectations of physical boundaries

Co-researcher Positionality

Exploring the social interactions that (re)produce power relations requires reflexive examination of the social locations in which the co-researchers are situated and the angles of vision these standpoints engender. The demographics of the co-researchers involved in the study sample were not purposively selected, as the only inclusion criterion was being one of the 12 girls in the 2016 class of The Girl Project or one of their adolescent male relatives or close family friends. Ages of participants ranged from 12 to 18, with a mean age of 15.4 (the majority of participants were 15 or 16). Because The Girl Project provides scholarships and coordinates transportation to reduce financial and logistical barriers to participation, the composition of the first five classes of The Girl Project have been more racially diverse than the population of Central Kentucky (U.S. Census 2016), and girls' backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses vary widely. The demographic and family characteristics of the co-researchers contributing to this study are summarized in Table 2; six boys participated in either or both the "theorizing with the boys" and "cross-gender theorizing" conversations, and seven girls participated in both the "theorizing with the girls" and "cross-gender theorizing" conversations. In this group of 13 teenagers, one identified as Black/African-American and one identified as "Other" in terms of their race and ethnicity; this proportion of non-white participants (2/13, or ~15%) represents greater racial diversity than in the population of the counties where participants reside (Fayette, Woodford, and Madison Counties). Despite their relative racial homogeneity compared with the general U.S. population, the co-researchers are uniquely positioned in terms of place of residence as an aspect of their intersectional social location to reflect on gender inequalities, as they reside in Kentucky, which tied

with Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Florida, and Texas for the worst state for women in 2015 (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017).

Table 2: Co-researcher Demographics

Pseudonym	Relationship	Gender	Age	Grade	County of Residence	Race/ Ethnicity	Parents' Marital Status
Alex	Son of founder of The Girl Project	Male	15	10 th	Fayette	White/ Caucasian	Divorced
Adam	Family friend of Stella	Male	18	13 th	Woodford	White/ Caucasian	Married
Brad	Brother of Iris	Male	13	8 th	Fayette	White/ Caucasian	Married
Dillon	Family friend of Emma Draper	Male	18	13 th	Fayette	White/ Caucasian	Married
Billy Bob	Brother of Poppy	Male	12	7 th	Fayette	White/ Caucasian	Divorced
Jackson	Brother of Andromeda	Male	15	9 th	Madison	White/ Caucasian	Married
Poppy	Sister of Billy Bob	Female	15	10 th	Fayette	White/ Caucasian	Divorced
Meredith	No relative participated	Female	15	10 th	Woodford	Black/ African-American	Married
Stella	Family friend of Adam	Female	16	11 th	Woodford	White/ Caucasian	Married
Andromeda	Sister of Jackson	Female	15	10 th	Fayette	White/ Caucasian	Divorced
Iris	Sister of Brad	Female	16	11 th	Fayette	Other	Divorced
Hope	No relative participated	Female	16	11 th	Fayette	White/ Caucasian	Divorced
Emma	Family friend of Dillon	Female	16	11 th	Fayette	White/ Caucasian	Married

Co-author Positionality: Emma

In this section, Emma writes in the first-person voice to describe her standpoint in terms of her relationships with the other co-researchers and the intersecting facets of her social location that inflect her perspective. While participating in The Girl Project, I related to Margaret as a teacher, an adult figure whom I respected and enjoyed talking with but did not see as my equal, as she was the first person I had ever considered a true mentor to me. After The Girl Project, she no longer felt so much like an elder figure; she has continued to be a mentor to me, passing along valuable information and serving as an inspirational figure, but I feel we are more equal now. From the beginning, she has treated me like she would any colleague, allowing me to become as involved in her work as I want and answering all of the questions I have. As a member of The Girl Project class of 2016, my relationship with the other participants in The Girl Project is one of respect and friendship. We spent six intense weeks together, became fast friends, created a safe space that allowed us to talk about tough topics, and crafted a performance together. Both of my older brothers were away at college during this study, so my male counterpart was one of my best friends of almost two years, Dillon. We met during my sophomore year, when he was a senior, through our high school's theatre department. Because he is two years older than me, he has often served as a peer-mentor in addition to a friend, especially as a difference of two years is more meaningful in the world of secondary education.

The lives of the entire co-researcher team play out in Central Kentucky, which is central to our intersectional social location. In some aspects, I am shielded from some of the less progressive elements of Kentucky because I live in Lexington, the second-largest

city. For the past several presidential elections, Kentucky has voted Republican, but Lexington and Louisville stand out as Democratic havens. Lexington is not like most of the rest of Kentucky for more than political reasons. Lexington has an openly gay mayor, has hosted an annual gay pride festival for the last decade, and produces monthly showings of the queer cult classic *Rocky Horror Picture Show* that draw crowds from outside of the city. My high school has a lesbian principal and is more racially diverse than Kentucky itself. However, my friends living just 20 minutes away from me attend high schools where racism, sexism, homophobia, bullying, and intimidation run rampant, students wear Nazi and Confederate apparel and fly the Dixie flag on their trucks, and teachers do little to address these issues. Although Lexington is a more progressive place than most to live in Kentucky, even it poses problems for young feminists and their activism. Lexington recently became nationally known for the controversy surrounding a proposal to move the Confederate statues in front of the old courthouse. The proposal to expedite the process was issued just a day after the white supremacist rally and violence in Charlottesville, and members of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) threatened to visit Lexington next (Finn 2017). I was not allowed to go out that weekend for fear that the KKK would be holding an unannounced protest, and I could be caught in the cross-fire. Instances like this make me feel that there are few people living in my city who share my passion for social justice and equal rights. Living in Kentucky certainly makes it difficult to feel like I am making a difference in the field of gender and women's studies, especially as people who do not live in Kentucky have a very narrow perception of what type of person lives here. However, living in a more urban area and participating in The Girl Project helped me to find feminist community.

Another crucial aspect of the co-researchers' intersectional social location that shapes the social interactions and expectations in which our lives are embedded is our dates of birth, as we are members of what Twenge (2017) has termed "iGen" who were born in the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s and are the first generation to spend their entire adolescence in the age of the smartphone. My generation has nonstop access to social media. In the cross-gender theorizing conversation, we mainly discussed the negative consequences of social media. As one participant noted, "We always feel the need to post our lives," further noting that this oversharing is to "make us feel good about how hard we worked on whatever, to make ourselves more like these things that people have told us to be." Social media has become a source of self-worth as well as a weapon to enforce expectations relating to gender and other social norms. Even as someone who considers herself a self-aware and critical thinker, I cannot escape the desire for validation that social media can provide, nor the "fear of missing out" if I were to sever ties to social media. In our discussion, we concluded that there are numerous informal guidelines concerning social media accounts, which are elaborated in the findings section. Although I do not feel the same amount of pressure to conform to these guidelines as my peers do, I know all too well the dangers of having social media accounts. Throughout my schooling, I have been taught (often through state-mandated curricular materials) that the colleges to which I am applying and my future employers will "cyber-stalk" me, with the implicit threat that if they were to uncover anything scandalous, then my chances of getting an education and a job would be ruined. Instead of a place to post what I like and express myself, social media has become yet another piece of my college application, where I must carefully present my best, and only my best, self. Gone are the days when I

was safe to come across as anything other than a hard-working, selfless, perpetually happy student.

Co-author Positionality: Margaret

In this section, Margaret writes in the first-person voice to describe her standpoint as a young adult co-researcher with adolescent colleagues and mentees. The validity of the methods used in this study depended on my ability to self-reflexively craft an appropriate persona as a co-researcher with teenaged boys and girls. As a researcher who concurs with the consensus among feminist scholars that “conscious subjectivity” should replace attempts to achieve “value-free objectivity” because it not only provides for more externally valid data but also helps dismantle the power relationship between the researcher and researched (Cotterill and Letherby 1993), I did not attempt to achieve an etic detachment from participants but rather adopted a carefully considered emic role that best facilitated a safe space for participants to unpack their experiences of gender expectations. My role in relation to the female co-researchers was relatively straightforward, as I was one of several white, married, middle-class adult women who teaches workshops for the program. As such, the girls clearly understood my role and its relationship to the work we completed together, and my relatively young age (born in 1984) and investment in following youth culture contributed to my accessibility and credibility to the girls as a mentor and teacher.

However, because the boys were not participating in the documentary screening and focus group as a part of a broader program with role expectations that I could leverage, I was deliberate in creating a research persona and an open conversational space in which boys could talk with an adult woman whom they did not know well about

gender expectations. Several female sociologists have contributed methodological insights regarding their experiences gathering qualitative data from men and boys that informed my approach. In her interview-based study with divorced men, Arendell (1997) described the methodological challenges associated with her participants' relation to her on the basis of their expectations of her as a woman. On the one hand, men disclosed experiences to Arendell with a high level of emotional detail because they perceived her as "the token nurturing, caretaking woman, carefully listening to and prompting their stories and encouraging the expression of feelings" (1997:356). On the other hand, Arendell's participants complicated the interview dynamic with manhood acts, which included taking charge of the direction of the interview, challenging the protocol, and asking Arendell personal questions about her character and lifestyle. In her ethnographic work with high school-aged boys, Pascoe (2011) crafted a "least-gendered identity" that provided the rapport-building advantage of distancing her participant-observer role from the roles of other women in these boys' lives (e.g., mothers, teachers, and teenaged girls) but that resulted in ethical challenges related to boys' sexual advances and her natural alliances with non-heteronormative girls.

Neither of these cross-gender researcher-researched relationship settings are equivalent to the co-researcher context I created with the boys. However, based on their insights regarding the roles in which boys and men are accustomed to encountering women, I structured my role in facilitating the focus group interview as analogous to that of the young female teachers who have undoubtedly instructed these boys in their formal schooling experiences. Because the research design involved a specific critical media literacy education component, the focus group conversation resembled a classroom

setting, which I facilitated as an “instructor” rather than observing as an ethnographer as Pascoe did. Unlike Arendell in relation to her participants, I was in a privileged position in terms of my age in relation to my male participants, who were familiar with accepting adult women in the authoritative role of teacher. In the final theorizing conversation, one of the female co-researchers attested to the success of this approach: “I thought that some of the boys might not wanna really talk about their feelings as much, but then it kind of surprised me, the level that they got to, and how comfortable they were. It sounded like they had stuff inside that they wanted to talk about but maybe they hadn’t had a chance to talk about before with somebody that they thought would just take them seriously.” Because I was equipped with a focus group guide designed by my female co-researchers and an appropriate research persona, I was able to circumvent many of the gendered power dynamics that presented methodological and ethical challenges for other female sociologists studying men and boys.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

It is important to preface this presentation and analysis of the content of the co-researchers’ theorizing conversations with a reminder that interactional accountability to gender expectations is imbricated by intersecting social locations in nets of accountability. Although West and Fenstermaker’s (1995) attempt to extend the doing gender approach to race and class was met with significant criticism (Collins et al. 1995), Schwalbe (2000) and Hollander (in press) contend that accountability rituals enforce the consequences of social difference – including but not limited to gender – as the interactional operationalizations of structures of inequality. As such, “interactions are not simply the micro-level consequences of inequality; they are, quite literally, the way that

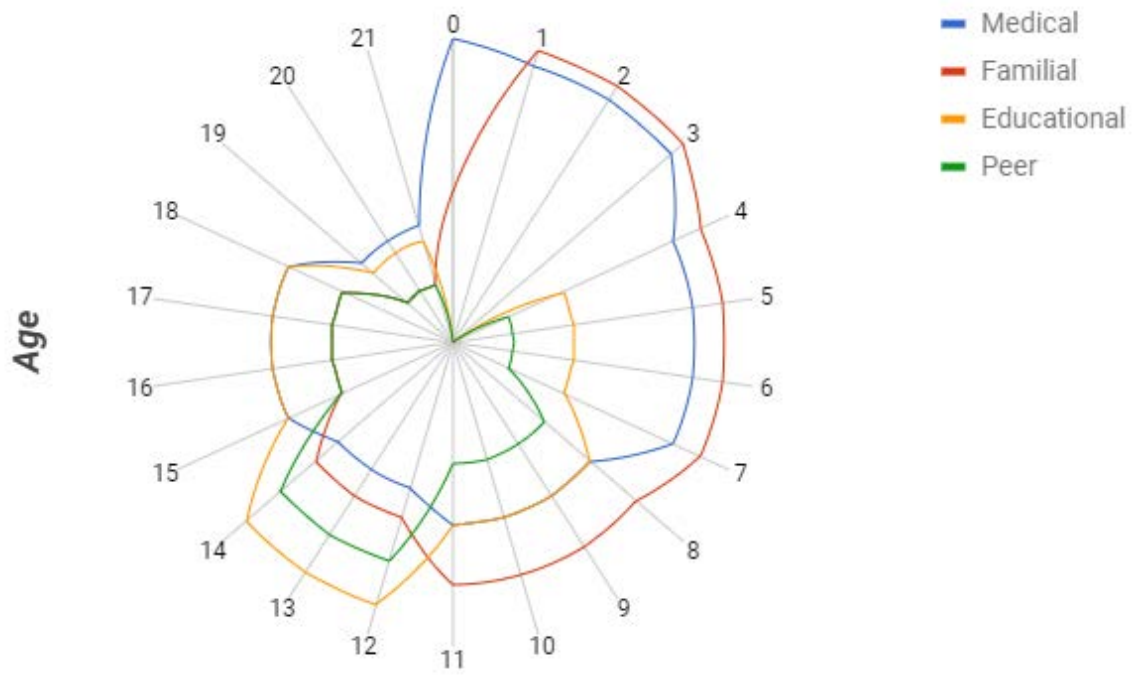
inequality, and the social structures that maintain it, happen” (Hollander in press:13). The extra-situational power relations and structures invoked when holding actors accountable to expectations in specific interactional contexts constitute the strands of nets of accountability (Schwalbe and Shay 2014).

As she coded the transcripts and developed her analysis, Emma realized that for minor-aged children and youth, it is impossible to extricate processes of accountability to gender from the broader nets of accountability in which they are embedded, as gender expectations interweave what it means to be a good child and a good student. Furthermore, Emma concluded that the power to define the social contexts and corresponding expectations in which youth live is hierarchically and temporally distributed. This analysis maps the net of accountability to gender expectations in which the co-researchers are enmeshed as minor-aged youth in four relational domains, or “strands,” which Emma ranked in descending order in terms of their power to define situations: 1) medical providers (most power), 2) parents and other family members, 3) academic and extracurricular (e.g., athletics) settings in educational institutions, and 4) friends and peers (least power). Moreover, her rankings of power-relational strands in the co-researchers’ net of gender accountability follow along the developmental trajectory of the age at which youth are bound up by these strands; the medical providers that initially sex infants and the parents who introduce gender role scripts have overdetermining power to define youths’ situations, and same-age friends/peers exert the least definitional power.

Additionally, Emma concluded that the definitional power of each strand constricts and loosens to different degrees as children age from 0 to 21 (illustrated in the theoretical diagram provided below as Figure 2), with the definitional power of all four

strands diminishing as children age and gain greater autonomy. This model presents a conceptual illustration of changes in the relative power of each strand in the net of gender accountability as children age. Lines further from the center exert more definitional power; for example, at age 7, the familial strand is the most definitionally powerful, and the peer strand is least definitionally powerful. Depicted by the lines' contraction toward the center of the diagram with age, the combined definitional power of all four strands decreases as children age from infancy and childhood to adolescence and young adulthood. The following section presents Margaret and Emma's collaborative analyses of the co-researchers' theorizing about how orientation, assessment, and enforcement processes play out in each of these four relational strands in their net of gender accountability.

Figure 2: Net of Gender Accountability



The Medical Strand in the Co-researchers' Net of Gender Accountability

Medical institutions have totalizing power to define situations and their corresponding gender expectations from birth, as doctors determine what sex organs a child will grow up with and how they will be categorized in the binary sex-gender system. One of the co-researchers, Andromeda, noted that her mother, a neonatal intensive care unit case manager, has been involved in cases of intersex babies in which the attending doctors had the power to assign an infant's sex if the child's body did not conform to traditional anatomical manifestations of male or female genitalia at birth. Because, according to Billy Bob, "it's not like the babies can do anything," obstetricians and the medical institutions authorizing their expertise reify with every birth the assumptions of sexual dimorphism: namely, that there are only two sexes with specific chromosomes and sex organs aligning with binary gender identities. Echoing feminist science scholarship on the logics of medical education on sex differences (Kessler 1990; Fausto-Sterling 2000; Jordan-Young 2010), Emma theorized that doctors, on behalf of the child and their parents, are oriented to anticipate the interactional consequences of a child not being read as solely "male" or "female" in a society where the sex-gender system is constructed as binary, and they consequently physically alter a child's anatomy to shore up "nature's intentions" for its gender. After medical institutional power classifies an infant's body "male" or "female" as immediately post-birth as possible (within the first 18 months of life [Kessler 1990]), interactional accountability recenters to the home and family. According to one of Kessler's informants, doctors must satisfy parents' "need to go home and do their job as child rearers with it very clear whether it's a boy or a girl" (1990:9). At this point in children's development, parents take over as the

most influential strand in the net of gender accountability although they still may rely on the authority of expert medical guidance as needed to assure their children's normatively dimorphic development of sex differences.

The Familial Strand in the Co-researchers' Net of Gender Accountability

Family members, especially parents, are largely able to define situations and orient children to gender expectations in infancy and early childhood. Even before a baby is born, increasingly popular gender-reveal parties reinforce the gender binary and the association of blue with masculinity and pink with femininity (Nehata 2017). Adam noted how his aunt and uncle oriented his cousin to gender expectations: "My little cousin, who...just likes girls' toys more. And his parents, they're don't agree with that, they don't support that, so they're trying to force it out of him." Parents are empowered to define appropriate self-presentations and discourage deviation from normative gender expectations because children depend on and learn from them almost exclusively during their formative years. In the same way that medical education presumes the sex-gender binary to be natural and desirable, parents – wanting their children to be successful and happy – recruit their children into normative gender appearances, attitudes, activities, and behaviors to protect them from the perceived social consequences of failing to meet gender expectations (Kane 2006; Kane 2012).

Conformance to gender expectations intersects with sexuality when parents assume people's sexual orientation based on their appearance and behaviors instead of their self-identification. The family of one of the co-researchers was in denial about her uncle being gay because he presented as traditionally masculine. As Poppy explained, "I had this gay uncle, and I didn't even know for the longest time, cause he was mayor of

the city, chief of the fire department. I think my whole family was in denial or something because his boyfriend would always show up at family gatherings, and I thought they were just friends. It's just so weird that my whole family was...so blind to the fact that he was gay because he didn't act like the typical gay man; he had a deep voice, he was very Southern.”

Parents also have the power to decide at what age it is appropriate for their children to be introduced to information about gender, sex, and sexuality. Iris noted her struggle with her father's decision on disclosing her sexuality to family members, saying, “I'm supposed to hide it when I'm down in Florida around the kids because they're young...My dad was just like ‘you know you can't really talk about that stuff in front of the kids,’ and I'm just like ‘What do you mean?’ and he was like ‘well they don't really know about that yet.’” In addition to perceiving their own children as being too young or immature to handle certain information about gender and sexuality, parents may assess whether other parents are raising their children appropriately, as they are caught in their own net of accountability to parenting expectations and norms. Emma observed this, saying, “my friend's family told them they were going to church and then brought them to a drag show. And my mom kind of had a problem with that because their son was in fifth grade at the time, and she wondered ‘why are they introducing him to a drag show?’”

Parents and family members are potent in enforcing gender expectations simply by virtue of the fact that they form the child's longest-standing social relationships. Poppy theorized that family expectations are particularly challenging to manage when she said, “I think oftentimes with friends and family, you feel more pressure because

you've known these people for so long that you feel like you have to be this person they've known you as, and if you feel like you need to change who you are to fit that, even if that's not who you are anymore, just because that's how you were years ago." The only gender expectation the co-researchers observed changing among family members as they aged was the assumption that they should bring home a "normal" heterosexual partner. Stella described her experience with this expectation, noting that "there's definitely this pressure to have a boyfriend. I have two grandmas. One grandma, at family gatherings, she'll come up to me and ask 'do you have a boyfriend yet?' and will say 'oh, well, eventually...' And then my other grandma, I'll get in the car after school and she'll tell me she was looking at the boys, trying to find me a boyfriend." In this way, the co-researchers underscored that they perceive family members in general and parents in particular to be central in recruiting children to the interactional accountability demands of gender, sex, and sexuality throughout infancy and childhood, with educational institutions and peers becoming more influential in preadolescence and youth.

The Educational Strand in the Co-researchers' Net of Gender Accountability

According to the co-researchers, the strands of parental and educational accountability demands reinforce each other's definitions of expectations for achievement that predict youth's future success as adults in terms of their current academic performance. The two distinct threads of expectations of achievement in academic settings and of homosocial extracurricular social contexts interweave to hierarchically order students' conformance to analogical normative standards for gender and academics. The co-researchers' theorizing about accountability in educational settings corroborates Thorne's (1994) assertion that knowledge producers tend to frame

children as incomplete adults-in-the-making whose present-day experiences are significant only to the extent that they predict or influence their adult futures. The public school system mandated that the co-researchers begin following Individual Learning Plans (ILP) in the fourth grade, based on standardized personality/academic testing that navigates them toward specific coursework, extracurriculars, and career paths. This focus on instrumental training in public education necessitates preparation for college- and career-readiness at ever-younger ages. As Emma observed, “They [educators] also make you think about, as a sixth grader, do you want to work to make lots of money, or are you fine not making money and just doing it to be a good person?” Andromeda directly connected indications of career readiness to gender expectations: “The reason I think that they’re trying to set it [career plans] in stone so much is because in the past there weren’t as many options, especially for girls: you could stay home or be a secretary. But it’s hard to do that, especially with kids so young and so many possibilities for jobs. Let them explore the jobs, but don’t tell them what they should be and know at ten years old.” Furthermore, the co-researchers perceived these instrumental coursework and career plans as fostering a competitive learning environment that magnifies differences among students. Emma explained this environment, saying, “I feel like there’s a competitive push to be unique, especially with the evolution of education and the job market. It is a lot more competitive, and so you have to be able to differentiate yourself from everyone else.” The co-researchers discussed that every activity in which they participate is calculated in terms of what they think will “look good” on their college applications and to future employers.

This orientation toward competition for differential advantage in academic metrics is compounded by the normative expectations of homosocial extracurricular settings. The power to define expectations for presentations of self that predict successful adulthood takes on explicitly gendered contours in contexts surrounding homosocial extracurricular activities, specifically athletics. A roller-derby athlete, Hope asserted, “If it was originally a guy sport and a girl went in it, they’d be like ‘just get out.’” According to the co-researchers, coaches’ positions of authority on the field and the court give them the power to dictate gender expectations for their athletes, and teammates become agents of that manhood act of definitional power by reinforcing the coaches’ gendered rules for self-presentation among each other. Comparing the orientations to gender in his two main extracurricular settings, Alex said, “And then when I’m around the football player/baseball player type friends of mine, I feel like I can’t be myself, and I have to hide specific things about me. Like I know that with my friends that play baseball, if I say that I do theatre, they think I’m automatically gay, and so I don’t say it around them...With my theatre friends, I can go and talk to them about anything and they’ll be open about it and they’ll let me just be me.” Although it might seem as though Alex is referring to the gender expectations of his peer network in this quote, his use of the extracurricular settings through which he knows these friends as adjectives (e.g., “my theatre friends”) reveals that he is talking about the normative expectations of the educational cultures that define the terms of their relationships. As such, the co-researchers found orientation in the educational strand of their net of gender accountability to be contextually layered in sometimes contradictory ways, with homosocial spaces requiring greater orientation to gender expectations, which are relaxed

in co-educational “queer” theatre settings but come with lower levels of social status (Pascoe 2011).

Given the prescriptive educational trajectories on which ILPs set students, the co-researchers noted that students assess themselves and each other in terms of their academic performance rankings, the social status of their assigned careers, and gender expectations for extracurricular activities like athletics that are important to college and career prospects. In their theorizing conversation, the male co-researchers concluded that homosocial athletic environments most rigidly enforce expectations for traditionally masculine self-presentations and denigrate femininity. Discussing his own experiences with these expectations, Brad explained, “At football practice, the coach will say ‘you hit like a girl’ We had two girls on the team, and they just stood off to the side and never got put in. They would have to just run extra, so they eventually just quit.” For boys like Brad who are less academically oriented and therefore rank lower in the educational achievement hierarchy, successfully conforming to coaches’ enforcement of traditional gender expectations in athletic environments becomes essential to their competitiveness for collegiate and professional futures. Andromeda explains that the salience of hegemonic masculinity in sports makes sense because “in sports, the big focus is what your physical ability is, so they’re automatically going to judge you based on how you look and sound. In other areas [specifically theatre, which she had just referenced], it just doesn’t matter as much.” In this way, the co-researchers delineated a social hierarchy ordered by students’ success in meeting accountability demands in educational institutions based on normative expectations for their minds and bodies, with more strict orientation to traditional gender expectations being characteristic of physical pursuits but

sufficient accomplishment in either/both the mental and physical arenas being expected as indicators of their preparation and competence to become “normal” adult social actors.

The Peer-Friendship Strand in the Co-researchers’ Net of Gender Accountability

In ranking peers and friends as the least definitionally powerful strand in her co-researchers’ net of gender accountability, Emma is not underestimating the importance of homosocial peer environments in shaping and enforcing gender expectations for young masculinity and femininity. Instead, she concluded that peer-group expectation enforcement is particularly volatile because, among friends who have no clear institutional position of authority over one another, the power to define situations is “up for grabs.” The co-researchers provided an example of this kind of playful jockeying for definitional power in the phenomenon of “roasting,” or insulting the physical appearance of friends and acquaintances (often online) to prepare them to anticipate “real” interactional consequences. Stella explained how she made fun of her friends in a social media challenge, but that it was okay because “it’s just with your friends. You can joke around with your friends like that. I said mean stuff, but it was my friends, and they knew we were both joking around.” In these instances, friends work together to re-negotiate the boundaries of acceptable behavior, of what is joking around and what is hurtful. However, peers have varying degrees of power in defining situations and their expectations based on their age, with younger children whose peer networks are controlled by adults having less control over peers’ social expectations than older youth with more autonomy. As Dillon observed as he advanced in his schooling, “Yeah, definitely, with that whole notion of moving from middle school through high school and onto college, you do progressively get more independence and autonomy. The more of

that you have, the less prevalent the expectations are. And a lot of that comes from you get to pick, more largely, who you are going to be around.” Specifically, the co-researchers concurred that middle school (grades 6-8) social life is much more restrictive in terms of accountability to gender expectations than is high school, where students can self-select into friendship groups and specialized extracurricular settings.

Regardless of these contextual variations as peers vie for definitional power over interactional situations, the co-researchers described the need for constant vigilance regarding their orientation to gender expectations. As Billy Bob argued, “You have to think about everything you say, or else people insult you.” Even orientation to expectations of emotional support from friends is gendered; Alex contends, “I know that a lot of my guy friends like, they think that guys don’t need to have emotions, they don’t need to cry, they don’t need to do that, so like if I go and rant to one of my girl friends about something, they’re way more like sympathetic about it and are able and more open to talk to you about it.” Consistent with Pascoe’s (2011) findings, the peer strand in the co-researchers’ net of accountability to gender expectations relies heavily on the fag discourse for its assessment functions. Male co-researchers described monitoring how they walk to school so as not to be judged effeminate, and observing other students call perceived gender deviants “gay” or “fags” based on how they walk or present was a universal experience for the co-researchers. The fag discourse manifests paradoxically for lesbian co-researchers, whose self-presentations are expected to align with masculinity tropes because they are sexually interested in other girls. As Hope shared, “Whenever I tell people I’m gay, they’re like ‘but you look straight’ and I’m like ‘what?’ And they’re like ‘you dress straight’ and I’m like ‘what? So I’m straight now?’” Meredith pointed out

that peers further expect lesbians' relationships to mirror hierarchical gender roles: "If you're a girl and you start dating a girl, people are like 'oh, you're both wearing dresses. So who wears the pants?'" In this way, even when their open-minded, tolerant generation of peers (Twenge 2017) ostensibly accept their friends' subversion of heterosexual norms, the co-researchers found that youth accountability rituals tend to simply reconfigure how binary gender expectations are assessed rather than deconstruct them.

Much ink has been spilled and government resources have been spent in addressing cyber-bullying (see U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2017) without understanding the broader online and in-person accountability demands among youth that underlie it as an enforcement strategy. For the co-researchers, social media, particularly Instagram (Facebook is for communicating with older members of their social circle, and the co-researchers do not use Twitter) has become an efficient means to gain information about actors and relationships in their "real-life" social networks. As Emma observed, the fear of missing out is a potent incentive to participate in this means of information-gathering, despite its shortcomings. However, there are strict codes of conduct for sharing information on social media, as Meredith explains: "Instagram, all around, is just trying to be perfect. People say your bio has to be perfect, you have to have the cutest picture, or your profile picture, a theme, likes, comments. You can't be following more people [than are following you]. You can't post too often or too little. There are so many guidelines." Furthermore, the co-researchers reported maintaining their "public" Instagram accounts with carefully selected pictures and corresponding visual themes to "advertise your best self," according to Emma, but also have private "Finsta" accounts for sharing what Hope calls "your unfiltered self." In this way, curation

of one's social media self-presentation is tightly connected to real-life accountability demands, and the co-researchers contended that social media simply intensifies and accelerates what already occurs at school. As Dillon hypothesized, "I think it gives it a platform more than anything, and that allows us to exacerbate it. Because I mean, obviously, this is a thing that's been around before social media." Meredith outlines the feedback loop between online and in-person enforcement with the following anecdote: "In eighth grade, there were three different hate accounts for one person, and she ended up leaving the school. On the page they were slut-shaming her, and they ended up calling her mom a slut. Her whole family. Hate pages screenshotted her bio. Not even focusing on her; they focused on her Instagram page, like 'she needs to match her theme' or 'her bio is ugly.'" Meredith also described an incident in which she posted a picture of herself with natural hair on Instagram, and then peers started calling her "black Annie" in real-life interactions at school. For the co-researchers, then, social media only influences the form and intensity of enforcement mechanisms, but not the substance of the normative gender expectations and their intersections with other categories of difference to which they are held to account in their social lives.

Accountability to Attempts at Individual Resistance to Gender Expectations

Emma also identified instances in which the co-researchers discussed individual-level resistance to gender expectations, concluding that consciously feminist self-presentations, attitudes, and behaviors are subject to their own specific enforcement mechanisms attempting to invalidate these challenges to the gender order. Some of these mechanisms are common to any feminist considering the interactional costs of violating gender norms. As with any form of politically charged social activism, the co-

researchers' feminism risks being characterized as angry, radical, and confrontational; Andromeda explained, "I don't want to just get really mad and blow up in their face because they'll be like 'oh, she's such a bitch, such a feminist, leave me alone.' So I try to be respectful because I want them to understand where I'm coming from." As such, the co-researchers' net of gender accountability circumscribes their feminist attempts to push back against these dynamics even in the peer/friend strand in which they have more definitional power, as individual resistance is met with redoubled enforcement mechanisms that frame "unladylike" feminist attitudes and behavior as socially punishable deviations from the very gender expectations they confront (Wilkins et al. 2014). Also, similar to the accountability demands with which all feminists contend, both male and female co-researchers who identify as feminists described anticipating defensiveness as they make decisions about how they approach their activism. As Dillon explained, "You can say 'this man is the enemy' but it's never gonna totally be removed from that '#notallmen2k16' because they're gonna see themselves in that whether they should or not. It's kind of unfair, too, because it puts an extra, unfortunate responsibility on people advocating for it to make the extra point that we're not saying you're terrible, we just want this to go this preferable way, and that's a hard thing to manage and should be an unnecessary one."

The co-researchers also faced enforcement mechanisms surrounding their feminist activism specific to their age as an aspect of their intersectional social location. According to the co-researchers, their age and perceived immaturity render their attempts to confront gender expectations less credible, especially when posing challenges to adults in positions of authority. As Emma argued, "You have to sound smart. Unfortunately,

you have to *not* identify with the age that you are. Because if you say ‘I’m 16 and I’m a feminist’ then they’re just going to write you off. You have to kind of pass over your youth and then people might actually listen to you.” Furthermore, the co-researchers made clear that their feminism cannot supersede more powerful strands in their net of gender accountability, particularly when it comes to intervening in younger children’s recruitment to gender ideologies. As Hope recalled, “I didn’t say anything [about feminism] ‘cause they were little kids, you know. You can’t say anything to them.” Additionally, the co-researchers described facing intense interactional consequences for identifying as feminists; Dillon said, “Like I was with some of my guy friends, who are generally accepting people, but they were still startled by the notion of me being a feminist.” In the co-researchers’ social worlds, then, feminism is completely feminized as a movement by and for women. From Alex’s perspective, “I feel like feminism is such a thing in today’s world, and it’s just not really talked about, that guys go through problems [with gender expectations], too. I feel like problems with guys are just pushed aside because they don’t have emotions, they don’t have feelings. But they just act that way because they feel like they *can’t*.” As exemplified in this quote, the male co-researchers came to consensus during their theorizing conversation that their concerns and frustrations about how hegemonic masculinity expectations limit who and how they can be as social actors in the four strands of their net of gender accountability are not on the agenda of the contemporary feminism movement.

This study has several limitations that should be noted. Most importantly, its exploratory and theoretical nature does not allow for empirical investigations of how well the co-researchers’ insights explain accountability to gender expectations across

variations in interactional contexts. Future studies should employ ethnographic methods to explore accountability rituals characteristic of youth positioned in different social locations (i.e., in terms of race/ethnicity, region, nationality, ability, age, etc.).

Additionally, future research should test the theoretical propositions advanced by the co-researchers through PAR with youth to design and validate survey instruments that then could be deployed to gather larger-scale data for quantitative analysis.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

If we were only to consider the co-researchers' theorizing about the omnipresence of accountability to gender expectations along relational strands in which they have little definitional power, then it would be tempting to view this study as exemplifying the charge that the doing gender approach necessarily involves investigating the perpetuation of inequitable gender relations (Deutsch 2007). However, their insights regarding each of the four strands in their net of gender accountability also reveal features of social contexts where it is possible to "redo gender," or create new communities that share reformed gender expectations of how men and women should behave (Hollander 2013). In contrast with individual resistance that requires sole actors to shoulder the interactional risk of being held accountable to normative expectations despite their desire to subvert traditional gender roles (Connell 2010), redoing gender involves groups of actors in local social contexts critically reflecting upon and changing gendered expectations of appearance, attitudes, activities, and behaviors to which they hold each other accountable. This concluding section will suggest possibilities for re-doing gender to loosen the constraints of the four strands of the co-researchers' net of gender accountability based

on their observations about social contexts in which gender differences are less salient (Thorne 1994).

Unfortunately, children and youth are not positioned with sufficient social and cultural capital to directly advocate for changes to medical education that naturalizes the sex-gender binary. But with the addition of a new psychological, social, and biological foundations of behavior section to the Medical College Admissions Test (American Psychological Association 2013), medical sociologists have unprecedented opportunities to educate pre-medical students about the social construction of gender and problematize the medicalization of binary sex differences. This effort could complement the movement advocating for structural competency, “a shift in medical education...toward attention to forces that influence health outcomes at levels above individual interactions” (Metzl and Hansen 2014:126). Structural competency has rightfully prioritized applying critical race theory and postcolonial thought to the healthcare context, which is absolutely vital given the dehumanizing abuses of biological determinism in medical research history. Although contributions to the growing structural competency literature typically address stigmas facing LGBTQI people, the social construction of the binary sex-gender system is not part of standard approaches to structural competency training (Bourgois et al. 2016). Therefore, medical sociologists can make contributions to redoing gender in the medical strand of youth’s net of gender accountability by helping reform medical education curricula that essentializes dualistic gender roles as normal and natural to human development. New elements of medical education could include drawing from recent applications of dynamic systems theory to biological sex difference that emphasize the interplay of embodiment and social environment (Fausto-Sterling, Garcia Coll, and

Lamarre 2012) and highlighting opportunities to prevent epidemic levels of intimate partner violence and sexual assault by reducing the prevalence of a dichotomous gender ideology that sexualizes hierarchy and domination (Kimmel 2008; Katz, Heisterkamp, and Fleming 2011).

The familial strand in the co-researchers' net of gender accountability may be especially unreceptive to efforts to redo gender, given parents' own accountability demands to other adults' expectations for raising boys and girls as well as to the ever-increasing standardization, commodification, and surveillance of child care routines (Kane 2012; Mose 2016). As Emma asserted, the cultural capital produced by gender-reveal parties and associated social media displays intensify commitment to the significance of gender difference among parents and family members even before birth. Yet efforts to redo gender in the familial strand of the net of gender accountability have gained momentum as developmental psychologists have produced insightful new resources in both book and blog form for parents concerned about reproducing gender expectations that could limit their children's potential, addressing a range of issues from gender-segregated birthday parties and schools to sports and emotional intelligence (Spears Brown 2014). These kinds of resources also could help equip parents to respond to Meredith's insight that "I feel like if parents sit kids down and tell them what it means to be gay, to be lesbian, to be bi, everything sexuality, then they'll actually start thinking about it, and you won't hear those words as much being said as insults." To facilitate this kind of conversation, the co-researchers suggested writing children's books that provide parents with accessible, age-appropriate narratives via which to explain gender expectations, gender identity, sexism, and sexual orientation; Emma mentioned an

assignment in her sociology class that involved writing such a book. Sociologists of gender could enhance the impact of these resources by partnering with developmental psychologists, primary school educators, and social workers to develop educational programming and networking spaces that create local communities of parental practice relaxing normative gender expectations for children and child-rearing.

Several promising strategies for redoing gender in the educational strand in the co-researchers' net of gender accountability are evident in their theorizing. First, as Pascoe has observed, theatre and drama classes in school systems provide opportunities for students to play with and try on alternative gender identities and characters; "instead of constantly policing their own and others' gender displays....it was as if, because they were in a space where they were all coded as fags anyway and couldn't be any lower socially, it didn't matter what they did. Such is the liberatory potential of the theatre" (2011:81). The co-researchers corroborated this finding that the interactional consequences of doing gender are suspended and disrupted in the social context of the theatre. Unfortunately, because the theatre is stigmatized as a "fag space" (Pascoe 2011) and imbues less social capital than sports participation, boys like Alex must manage not only which peers know about their drama participation but also how they self-present to different groups of friends with whom they associate through distinct extracurricular social contexts. Educators could extend the benefits of theatrical learning environments by creating contexts where students can redo gender beyond the socially denigrated realm of "drama class." This could involve drama instructors collaborating with colleagues in English and the social sciences to integrate theatre-based critical media education elements (perhaps following The Girl Project's model) into other required coursework.

Another of the co-researchers' insights points to the definitional power of coaches in establishing normative gender expectations in homosocial extracurricular athletic environments. Efforts to facilitate enforcement-free environments for students to redo gender in the educational strand of youth's net of gender accountability should involve partnerships with members of school athletics staff to implement programs taught by coaches like Coaching Boys Into Men that seek to promote gender-equitable attitudes (Miller et al. 2013). Ideally, coaches could offer this curriculum in conjunction with the type of comprehensive sexual health and gender education that Dillon suggested, as they are natural complements to coaches' intensive athletic programming to optimize physical performance and health.

However, as Billy Bob frankly stated, "a problem with that [approach] is, though, if they started talking about that kind of stuff in schools, parents would go crazy. Absolutely crazy." In other words, considering the co-researchers' perception of the relative power of the familial strand over the educational strand to define situations in their net of gender accountability, formal curricular offerings in the educational thread may be impossible without significant progress in redoing gender among parents in local social contexts. Fortunately, the co-researchers saw a variety of opportunities for redoing gender in the least definitionally powerful strand of their net of accountability: among peers and friends, especially at later developmental stages when peers become more influential. First, the co-researchers feel as though increased gender diversity in contemporary cultural discourse and media representations offers counter-narratives that are useful in redoing gender in peer interactions. As Dillon explained, "normalization [of gender diversity] would be beneficial in TV shows and just the kinds of things you'll be

exposed to regardless of what parents you have and the kinds of things that develop you.” In this way, media representations provide youth with portals to envision alternative ways of doing gender in social contexts beyond their own, thereby undermining the legitimacy of the definitional power of more traditional parents and educators. Meredith also cited the utility of documentaries like those produced by The Representation Project in supplying information and narratives that render the fun house mirror of traditional gender norms visible as historically persistent structures above and beyond individual experiences. As Dillon said, “I hadn’t necessarily thought about a lot of the stuff in [*The Mask You Live In*]. It all makes sense to me, but some of it, I hadn’t necessarily been presented with or thought of on my own.” Both male co-researchers who had simply watched a performance of The Girl Project and the female co-researchers who had participated in the program mentioned that the performances supplied useful cultural resources that equip youth to critically reflect upon gender inequality and initiate informed conversations with other audience members in support of redoing gender in the familial and peer strands of their net of gender accountability.

Second, the co-researchers discussed ways to reduce the impact of enforcement mechanisms on their feminist perspectives among their peers. For Andromeda, the diminishing influence of normative expectations as youth age and gain autonomy presents opportunities to redo gender among their peers in later high school and college, even if the parental strand in the net of accountability makes it difficult for youth to intervene in younger children’s recruitment to gender ideology. The female co-researchers also described their satisfaction with the opportunity to serve as mentors and near-peer teachers to middle school-aged girls through The Girl Project’s “Next

Generation” outreach program, in which high school-aged alumni of the program design and teach workshops inspired by their participation in The Girl Project to younger girls. Another strategy that Hope described for redoing gender in the peer strand of their net of accountability is deploying humor and satire to disrupt enforcement mechanisms against feminist perspectives. She said, “I think that the majority of people we’re trying to get to are the people who are ignorant about it. I think ignorant people respond well to satire and funny things....Because if we’re actually serious about it, they’re gonna take us not-seriously anyways, so might as well just not be serious about it and slide in some serious things so they can be brainwashed.” Stella agreed and shared an example of this kind of humor that Adam, her nominee to participate in the study, employed: “You know how people say ‘don’t be a pussy’? Well, Adam’s started saying ‘be a pussy’ because they go through a lot. They can take a beating, they bleed once a month.” Similar to the suspension of interactional consequences provided by the theatre environment, the tactics of humor and satire can help individual resisters recruit allies in reframing situational definitions and undermining accountability rituals in the peer strand of the net of gender accountability.

Finally, the co-researchers’ theorizing revealed missed opportunities for mobilizing boys to self-identify as and participate in the feminist movement. Both the male and female co-researchers found the net of gender accountability that binds their social interactions as well as the neoliberal logics of surveillance and academic performance quantification (Mayall 2000) with which gender expectations are interwoven in the educational strand as restrictive of the flourishing of their shared humanity. In their theorizing conversation, the male co-researchers confirmed that what

they had learned about hegemonic masculinity in *The Mask You Live In* resonated deeply with their lived experiences, but they did not feel as though the feminist movement encompasses the goal of helping youth challenge the negative emotional and social toll of hegemonic masculinity on men and boys' health and well-being. As Dillon mentioned during the co-researchers' discussion of whether and how a "Boy Project" analogue to The Girl Project could work, "I think a Boy Project might require more explaining than The Girl Project, even to the people involved....I probably had heard more stuff in The Girl Project performance than I had in the documentary about the gender that I am." The co-researchers' theorizing demonstrates that these young men feel as though feminism includes them as allies in supporting the equality of their female relatives and friends as well as intervening as active bystanders in abusive situations or sexist conversations, but not as direct beneficiaries of feminist activism.

This missed opportunity to engage boys as feminists may arise from the current lack of conceptual clarity regarding hegemonic masculinity, specifically, the debate concerning whether a healthy, equitable form of masculinity is possible and what this possibility might mean for the perpetuation of the hierarchical gender order. The players and terms of the debate include Anderson (2009), who advances a theory of inclusive masculinity to account for social contexts in which no overt masculinity hierarchies appear to exist, and Ezzell (2015), who problematizes "masculinity reconstruction" initiatives as examples of dialectical pragmatism that update and reform masculinity styles without fundamentally destabilizing asymmetrical gender relations. Anderson's theory of inclusive masculinity attempts to account for social contexts, such as the cheerleading associations he studied, in which multiple masculinities co-exist without

hegemonic stratification. According to Anderson, inclusive masculinity theory provides a more salient explanatory framework for masculinity practices in social contexts where explicit homophobia, aggression, and misogyny have receded, although Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity remains useful in explaining social relations during periods of high homophobia when masculinity is defined against homosexuality.

Prompted by Anderson's optimistic effort to identify inclusive forms of masculinity, Ezzell (2015) sought to guide scholars' attention away from stylistic trends in men's self-presentation practices and toward the materially and politically asymmetric gender order and what men do to maintain a dominant status within it. Ezzell frames his argument with a reassertion of the power differentials innate to gender performances, as "gender is not a matter of play, but a matter of power, a matter of life and death" (2015:189). He then elaborates how masculinity reconstruction campaigns serve to broaden the range of acceptable masculinity practices without confronting systemic gender inequality. As Ezzell reminds us, "a kinder, gentler patriarchy is still patriarchy" (2015:195), and inclusive manhood acts exhibiting a wider range of effeminately coded self-presentations simply make the patriarchy "more emotionally bearable" (Schwalbe 2014:159) for men. Individual masculinity performances – however subversive by virtue of their juxtaposition with the performer's biological attributes – invoke power-inflected symbols of the hierarchical dualism undergirding gender ideologies that individuals cannot alone alter. In other words, as long as the gender binary exists and people are held socially accountable to it, masculinity always already signifies relations of power and dominance, which only can be undermined via challenges to the relevance of gender ideologies in social interactions (Deutsch 2007; Hollander 2013).

The question of what constitutes a “healthy” masculinity extends beyond academic debates. “A Call to Men” is a violence prevention organization that conducts educational trainings with groups and outreach about the “principles of healthy, respectful manhood,” which include expressing a full range of emotions, help-seeking, valuing women and refusing to use language that denigrates women and girls, and developing non-sexual relationships with women (2018). In response to the #metoo movement, “A Call To Men” co-founder Ted Bunch urges men and boys to use their platform and influence to speak out against sexist banter and voice their support of survivors (2018). Similarly, violence prevention programs like Jackson Katz’s social justice-oriented Mentors for Violence Prevention (MVP) model for young men uses peer opinion leaders in athletics organizations to challenge the social acceptability of sexist attitudes and actions in male peer cultures (Katz in press). Although these initiatives seek to accomplish the important work of diminishing men’s accountability to hegemonic masculinity expectations in homosocial peer environments, it is not clear what remains of masculinity after these “toxic” elements are excised. In other words, what is the difference between the “healthy, respectful manhood” for which “A Call to Men” advocates and the basic democratic ideals of autonomy, self-determination, and mutuality for all humanity?

The co-researchers’ insights ask us to consider a more radical alternative: that feminism can and should seek to redo the legitimacy of the categorical essentialism of hierarchical gender ideology, such that the social expectations of hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity cease to be naturalized in coupling them with binary sex classifications. In other words, from the co-researchers’ perspective, the appearances,

attitudes, activities, and behaviors that are traditionally bifurcated into hierarchical dualisms and then reserved as the exclusive province of those people sexed as male or female should be equally valued and available to all without fear of social repercussions. Both the male and female co-researchers concluded that the normative expectations enforced in the medical, familial, educational, and peer strands of their net of gender accountability are comparably (if not equally) detrimental to boys and girls and wanted to be a part of feminism's project to loosen the net. The co-researchers' theorizing invites adult feminist scholars and activists to revisit current strategies that position men and boys as allies and bystanders with nothing directly to gain from the movement, by instead framing feminism as a project of knowledge production and activism to dismantle the definitional power of the gender binary in establishing social expectations to which both men and women are held accountable. Rather than advocating for healthy masculinity, then, the feminism of the future envisioned by the co-researchers should settle for nothing less than realizing a healthy, whole humanity liberated from the constraints of binary gender expectations.

PAPER #3

On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution: Youth Performance Arts-Activism and Feminist Social Change

ABSTRACT: The late 2010s are paradoxically the best of times and the worst of times to grow up as a girl in the United States. On one hand, it appears that feminism is everywhere and even *popular*. On the other hand, the gender revolution remains incomplete at best, with progress toward political, social, and economic gender equality uneven and stalled in many social arenas. Despite the media and political fervor surrounding these contradictions, there is very little scholarship about how girls understand, interpret, and resist what has been variously termed the current gender structure, the gender order, and the state of gender as a social institution. New sociological studies have contributed invaluable empirical data regarding how college-aged students enact feminism in everyday, interactional, and intersectional ways that are often unrecognized and how Millennial young adults experience gender politics and the inconsistencies of contemporary gender ideology. However, the Millennial generation generally refers to those born between the early 1980s and 1990s who are now in their twenties and thirties. A new generational cohort is emerging: iGen, which is defined as people born in 1995 and later who grew up with cell phones, had an Instagram page before they started high school, and do not remember a time before the Internet. As such, scholars of gender have limited information about how girls coming of age in this paradoxical sociohistorical moment perceive and resist the constraints and possibilities of the gender structure they have inherited and in which they are presently being socialized.

On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution fills this void by telling the story of a group of racially, sexually, and socioeconomically diverse high school-aged girls in Central Kentucky who wanted to understand how and why they and their friends enacted their feminisms by participating in The Girl Project (TGP). Created in 2012 by two performance arts educators, Vanessa Becker-Weig and Ellie Clark, TGP is an artist-activist program that provides girls with creative tools and relational resources to challenge media misrepresentations of women, girls, and gender identity. The 12-18 high school-aged Kentucky girls who participate in TGP every year are engaged in workshops by guest artists from around the nation in artistic forms such as creative writing, poetry, dance, and sketch comedy. The guest artists help participants use creative expression to convey what they think is important for their audiences to understand about their lived experiences as girls. The final public performances are written entirely by the girls. TGP activists place themselves on the frontlines of the gender revolution by directly confronting and deconstructing the paradoxes of their polarized social worlds. For example, Harper, a member of the 2017 class, poignantly asked why her father could not speak her girlfriend's name in her heart-wrenching poem about stigma and violence against young gay couples in Kentucky. Another member of the 2017 class who is a

pastor's child performed her monologue on the hypocrisies of conservative religious communities to an audience full of congregants from her father's church. In this way, TGP activists position themselves at the pivot-point between generations, dramatizing the ideological schisms that simultaneously divide Kentucky families, schools, and faith communities while spurring the gender revolution's progress through "red states" in the U.S.

Although the girls' work with TGP cannot represent the full diversity of iGen feminisms as they are practiced across the U.S. and the world, their arts-activism offers a microcosmic view of how iGen girls are currently navigating the singular tensions, contradictions, and conflicting social mandates of U.S. society in the late 2010s. Partnering with TGP alumni as my co-researchers who directed the design and analysis of this project, I go beyond facile assumptions that iGen members' feminisms extend only as far as their Instagram followers to illuminate how adult-youth feminist collaborations can establish social spaces in which girls are both inspired by feminist legacies and mobilized to envision new theories and strategies. *On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution* gives voice to girls of a rising generation of feminist activists whose paradigms, commitments, and practices have much to teach their mentors, teachers, parents, and fellow activists about how to advance the stalled, uneven gender revolution in these best and worst of times.

- **A description of the intended reader/audience for this book, including primary academic fields likely to be interested and courses for which the book could have potential adoption**

The intended reader/audience for this book is undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty members and researchers who are interested in the sociology of gender, girlhood studies, participatory action research, social change and social movements, and American media and cultural studies. (A separate popular press book intended to provide TGP-informed arts-activism concepts and strategies to lay audiences, practitioners, and activists is being co-authored with TGP's founders and alumni.) I write for an audience of academic readers who may be well-versed in the scholarship with which I engage but may not have access to the rich ethnographic data I am privileged to have gathered in partnering with TGP for close to five years. In this way, the book brings feminist activism and practice into critical yet constructive conversation with the academic literature on gender and society. This book has an interdisciplinary scope; therefore, primary academic fields likely to be interested include sociology, gender and women's studies, and communication and media studies. The book could be adopted by instructors of both upper-division undergraduate and graduate courses on feminist methods, girlhood studies, social movements and collective behavior, and critical media studies. For example, at NYU, this book could be adopted for use in undergraduate elective courses such as "Cultures & Economies: Uprising! Revolution and Resistance from Below" (SCA-US 234.001) in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis; "Sex and Gender" (SOC-UA 21) in the Department of Sociology; and "Youth Media and Social Change" (MCC-UE-1017) in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication. At the graduate level, this book could be adopted for use in NYU courses such as "Media

Activism” (MCC-GE-2153) and “Activist Art and Creative Activism” (MCC-GE-2155) in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication and “Qualitative Research” (SOC-GA2303) in the Department of Sociology.

• **A list of three or four competing books, and how your book will distinguish itself from the competition**

1. *Finding Feminism: Millennial Activists and the Unfinished Gender Revolution* by Alison Dahl Crossley (2017, NYU Press)
2. *Where the Millennials Will Take Us: A New Generation Wrestles with the Gender Structure* by Barbara J. Risman (Forthcoming in 2018, Oxford University Press)*
3. *Empowered: Popular Feminism, Popular Misogyny and the Economy of Visibility* by Sarah Banet-Weiser (Forthcoming in 2018, Oxford University Press)*
4. *Writing a Riot: Riot Grrrl Zines and Feminist Rhetorics* by Rebekah J. Buchanan (Forthcoming in 2018, Peter Lang Books)*

The first two books listed are sociological treatments of Millennials’ feminisms and perceptions of gender inequalities that address the crucial scholarly need for empirical investigations of the current state of the feminist movement and the U.S. gender structure from the perspectives of young American women and men. However, as stated in the abstract, these studies are not designed to shed light on the feminisms and perceptions of younger iGen girls growing up in the 2010s, a gap in the literature that *On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution* fills. Additionally, the objectives of these sociological titles are to provide empirical snapshots and analyses of contemporary feminisms and perceptions of gender inequalities; as such, although they feature rich data from Millennial participants, they do not make methodological contributions to participatory strategies for feminist activism and scholarship with youth as co-researchers, as does *On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution*. The third and fourth books listed (*Empowered* and *Writing a Riot*) represent competition in the cultural studies literature on girls’ mediascapes and media production efforts. *Empowered* supplies a compelling cultural analysis of the neoliberal political-economic dynamics giving rise to what Banet-Weiser terms popular feminism and popular misogyny, an ideological backdrop against which the activist agencies of TGP participants in *On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution* play out. However, it is beyond the scope of *Empowered* to include empirical data illustrating how women and girls receive and interpret the networked media texts and imagery it elucidates. Similarly, *Writing a Riot* provides a history of riot grrrls’ creation and circulation of zines as a form of feminist arts-activism in the 1990s that re-centers teenaged girls and young women as leaders of the gender revolution. However, it does not incorporate empirical data from the authors and readers of these zines, aside from Buchanan’s personal narratives about her experiences “zine-ing” as a younger woman. As such, *Empowered* and *Writing a Riot* address topical issues surrounding girls’ media cultures that are examined in *On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution* but do not present the voices and perspectives of the girls engaged with those media cultures as consumers and producers. To summarize, *On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution* is distinct from all four competitor titles because it focuses on younger iGen activists

compared with books on Millennials and uses participatory action research to foreground these activists' interpretations of their practices rather than studying them or their cultural environments in isolation.

*Note regarding forthcoming books: My assessment of *On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution* in comparison to these titles that are not yet published is based on the pre-publication coverage of these books, including author interviews and summaries, as well as draft portions of the monographs provided by authors.

- **Annotated table of contents, including brief chapter summaries**

Chapter 1 – The Missing Voices of Girls in Markets for Empowerment

The first chapter elaborates the paradoxical dynamics of the current sociohistorical moment as they apply to girls in terms of the tandem discourses of “Girl Power” and “Reviving Ophelia.” As two sides of the same coin of neoliberal subject positions, the Girl Power discourse envisions a self-determining, resourceful (white) girl adept at deploying consumer products to advance her “brand”; the Reviving Ophelia discourse interpellates a failed Girl Power girl, unsuccessful in her attempts at individuated autonomy who must be saved via therapeutic intervention, or a working-class girl of color susceptible to poverty, drugs, early pregnancy, and low ambition. Both non-profit organizations and academic researchers compete in a market for empowerment to sell neoliberal feminist products, such as individual leadership skills, self-confidence, and healthy self-esteem, to these two imagined girls. This chapter surveys the terrain of the market for girls' empowerment and locates TGP within it as a unique opportunity to study iGen feminisms. A complete draft of this introductory chapter is enclosed.

Chapter 2 – From the Inside Out: Redefining Rigor with Feminist Participatory Methodologies

The methodology for this book employed a “youth-adult partnership model” of youth-led participatory action research (YPAR) to mobilize TGP alumni as co-researchers who co-investigated and co-produced a program evaluation of TGP 2017. Chapter 2 elaborates the innovative methodological design of this study as well as justifies its epistemological assumptions, particularly whether my positionality as a scholar-activist with an undeniable commitment to TGP undermines my ability to rigorously facilitate a YPAR evaluation. Specifically, I address the ethical, scientific, and practical advantages and shortcomings of leading a YPAR evaluation effort as an “internal” (rather than an external, “independent”) evaluator to explore how this study operationalizes a feminist model of ethical, engaged evaluation to build activist organizational capacity and to promote incontestably normative feminist political and social objectives.

Chapter 3 – iGen Feminisms and Gender-Transformative Arts-Activism

Chapter 3 presents data gathered from participants, audience members, educators, parents, and guest artists to answer the co-researchers' research question regarding how "insiders" of TGP (i.e., participants and audience members who make an effort to attend a performance) conceptualize iGen's feminisms and the ways in which TGP inflects and inspires gender transformations. The chapter offers generalizable insights regarding what older feminists need to know to effectively mobilize and mentor iGen feminists in this paradoxical sociohistorical moment in the U.S., including consideration of the quotidian social-structural barriers (e.g., disadvantaged youth's lack of access to transportation in rural areas, food scarcity, precarious social networks, etc.) that adult feminists are compelled to alleviate in partnering with youth activists.

Chapter 4 – Girl Meets World: Youth Feminist Activism in a Polarized Political Climate

This chapter presents the co-researchers' conclusions about the social forces that encourage and undermine engagement in TGP as participants and audience members. It also illuminates how the countervailing backlash of popular misogyny manifests for iGen feminists working in politically and socially conservative areas of the U.S. like Kentucky. I situate these conclusions within their broader implications for understanding the challenges facing both iGen feminist activists and the feminist movement at large with the ascendance of the twinned popular feminism and popular misogyny discourses in U.S. media culture.

Chapter 5 – Are We “Bad Feminists”? Improving Activist Praxis while Sustaining Feminist Solidarity

The concluding chapter reveals the co-researchers' findings regarding intergenerational tensions between adult facilitators' program priorities and participants' more radical demands for bold action. It also describes quality improvement strategies identified by the co-researchers that are applicable to a wide variety of organizations promoting social justice. Although the social processes, dynamics, and mechanisms of feminist social change explicated by the co-researcher team are specific to TGP, this case study contributes best practices and lessons learned that are generalizable to other feminist community organizing, activism, and YPAR efforts. This chapter attempts to present these best practices without condemning or questioning the legitimacy of activist practices in other social locations, in an effort to foster coordination rather than competition among feminist scholar-activists.

- **Estimated length of the manuscript in words, including notes and bibliography**

60,000 words

- **number and type (color, b/w, maps, tables, etc.) of illustrations, if any**

1 table (participant demographics); 2 pie chart diagrams of social network data

- **estimated date by which the manuscript will be complete**

August 2019

Chapter 1 – The Missing Voices of Girls in Markets for Empowerment

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...” — Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859)

The late 2010s are paradoxically the best of times and the worst of times to grow up as a girl in the United States. On one hand, breathless media coverage has marveled at the spectacular pace of changes in the conversation about gender, gender identity, sex, and sexuality, both in celebrity culture and around dinner tables. For example, in a two-hour documentary for *National Geographic* titled “Gender Revolution: A Journey with Katie Couric” paired with a 2017 special issue of the magazine, Couric presented an optimistic narrative of progress toward gender equality by introducing viewers to experts in gender and sexuality as well as the stories of trans and non-binary Americans with the goal of demystifying terms and concepts related to gender identity to lay audiences (World of Wonder Productions 2017). Couric concludes, “I think this is a social movement brought together by greater visibility, social media and changing attitudes — primarily by the youth of America — that transcends politics. I don’t think we’re going to be putting the genie back in the bottle when it comes to a broader definition of what gender identity is” (Keveney 2017). In addition to this heightened visibility and acceptance of gender-nonconforming Americans, it appears that feminism is everywhere (Crossley 2017) and even *popular* (Banet-Weiser 2018). Examples of feminism’s recent public relations successes include the Girls Who Code movement, whose corporate sponsors tout teaching girls computer coding skills as the solution to the gender gap in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; the feminist blogosphere, Twitter, and Tumblr exploding with new consciousness-raising memes with every news cycle

(#metoo and #timesup being two recent and high-profile examples); *Teen Vogue* hosting a glamorous, star-studded summit in late 2017 to rally and mobilize young activists; and Christian Dior prominently quoting Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie by splashing “We Should All Be Feminists” across the entire spring 2017 collection. The 2010s certainly look like the best of times to be an American girl.

Not so fast. The 2010s simultaneously are permeated with the postfeminist discourse that “feminism is dead” (Crossley 2017) because the movement’s legal and political accomplishments over the past 50 years have rendered it irrelevant, a discursive move that robs women and girls of a vocabulary to identify the very real consequences of obdurate sexism and misogyny (Gill 2007; Pomerantz, Raby, and Stefanik 2013). Although second-wave feminism helped erode institutional barriers preventing women’s full participation in education, the workplace, and the military through legislative milestones like Title IX of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, Davis, Winslow, and Maume (2017) argue that the gender revolution remains incomplete at best, with progress toward gender equality uneven and stalled in many social arenas (England 2010). Examples abound, including the gender-typing of college majors and careers, the sex gap in pay, the prevalence of traditional beliefs about gender roles, the “second shift” (Hochschild and Machung 2003) women work to shoulder the vast majority of housework and child care tasks, and the under-representation of women in leadership positions in the economy, politics, religious institutions, and the military (Davis, Shannon, and Maume 2017). Davis, Shannon, and Maume’s (2017) volume of original research identifies entrenched gender inequalities in U.S. society’s core institutions – from the family and the workplace to higher education, religion, the military, sport, and healthcare – compounded by

intersections of inequality in terms of race and ethnicity, social class, sexuality, place of birth and residence, age, ability, and religion. Coupled with the ascendance of a backlash of popular misogyny aggrieved by the “feminism is everywhere” trope that women appear to be “taking over” space, jobs, families, and power to which men traditionally have been entitled (Banet-Weiser 2018), the combination of persistent gender inequalities and a postfeminist sensibility that denies their existence would seem to make the 2010s the worst of times to be a girl growing up in the U.S.

Despite the media and political fervor surrounding these contradictions, especially after the 2016 election of a U.S. president who embodies them, there is very little scholarship about how girls understand, interpret, and resist what has been variously termed the current gender structure (Risman 2018), the gender order (Connell 2005), and the state of gender as a social institution (Martin 2004). New sociological studies have contributed crucial insights and invaluable empirical data regarding how college-aged students enact feminism in everyday, interactional, and intersectional ways that are often unrecognized (Crossley 2017) and how Millennial young adults experience gender politics and the inconsistencies of contemporary gender ideology (Risman 2018). However, the Millennial generation generally refers to those born between the early 1980s and 1990s who are now in their twenties and thirties. The psychologist who coined the term “Generation Me” to describe Millennials, Jean M. Twenge (2017), contends that a new generational cohort is emerging: iGen, which she defines as people born in 1995 and later who grew up with cell phones, had an Instagram page before they started high school, and do not remember a time before the Internet. Twenge posits questionable generalizations from limited data, asserting that iGen’s unprecedented levels of “screen

time” translate into widespread antisocial behavior, prolonged childhood, and increased loneliness, depression and political disengagement. However, her contention that iGen’s lived experiences substantively differ from those of Millennials due to the new omnipresence of digital connectivity through smartphone technology highlights the lack of research on iGen’s feminisms and gender politics. As such, scholars of gender have limited information about how girls coming of age in this paradoxical sociohistorical moment perceive and resist the constraints and possibilities of the gender structure they have inherited and in which they are presently being socialized.

On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution fills this void by telling the story of a group of racially, sexually, and socioeconomically diverse high school-aged girls in Central Kentucky who wanted to understand how and why they and their friends enacted their feminisms by participating in The Girl Project (TGP). Created in 2012 by two performance arts educators, Vanessa Becker-Weig and Ellie Clark, TGP is an artist-activist program that provides girls with creative tools and relational resources to challenge media misrepresentations of women, girls, and gender identity. The 12-18 high school-aged Kentucky girls who participate in TGP every year are engaged in workshops by guest artists from around the nation in artistic forms such as creative writing, poetry, dance, and sketch comedy. TGP also creates an ensemble-building environment the directors describe as a “closed container,” where girls can ask anonymous questions, discuss current events, and share their stories and creative work. As the Research and Advocacy Director of TGP, I facilitate the closed container by using critical pedagogical techniques to introduce girls to key concepts in intersectional feminism and then partnering with girls who want to lead topical discussions on issues of their choice;

discussion leaders in the 2017 class focused on educational justice, reproductive health, and rape culture. During a three-week writing and rehearsal process following the two-week workshop period in July, the artists and students devise and rehearse a script in which the voice of each girl is represented. The guest artists help participants use creative expression to convey what they think is important for their audiences to understand about their lived experiences as girls. The final public performances are written entirely by the girls based on their workshop products.

Remember that these public performances take place in Kentucky, which tied with Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Florida, and Texas for the worst state for women in 2015 (Institute for Women's Policy Research 2017). As such, TGP activists place themselves on the frontlines of the gender revolution by directly confronting and deconstructing the paradoxes of their polarized social worlds. For example, the 2016 show featured an allegorical satire entitled "Circus of Sexism" in which an unmistakably Trump-like carnival barker character gave the protagonist a tour of his "freaks," including a "gender-deviant" magician, a body-shamed Fat Lady, and a snake-charmer who assures the audience she was "asking for it" when her snake bit her. Hope, a high school sophomore, devised and played the role of the carnival barker while her father, who voted for and staunchly supports Trump, stared her down in the front row. Harper, a member of the 2017 class, poignantly asked why her father could not speak her girlfriend's name in her heart-wrenching poem about stigma and violence against young gay couples in Kentucky. Another member of the 2017 class, Grace, who is a pastor's child, performed her monologue on the hypocrisies of conservative religious communities to an audience full of congregants from her father's church. In this way,

TGP activists position themselves at the pivot-point between generations, dramatizing the ideological schisms that simultaneously divide Kentucky families, schools, and faith communities while spurring the gender revolution's progress through "red states" in the U.S.

Although the girls' work with TGP cannot represent the full diversity of iGen feminisms as they are practiced across the U.S. and the world, their arts-activism offers a microcosmic view of how iGen girls are currently navigating the singular tensions, contradictions, and conflicting social mandates of U.S. society in the late 2010s. Risman (2018) calls for a fourth wave of feminism, but her empirical investigation of the state of the gender structure for U.S. Millennials by its design does not develop and test strategies to foment this kind of social change. Additionally, the contributors to Davis, Shannon, and Maume's (2017) volume offer "ideal-world" suggestions for policies and interventions to "uninstall" the gender revolution at the community, organization, and government levels (such as changing cultural norms about work and care, promoting comprehensive sex education, implementing diversity quotas in organizations, and passing legislation requiring paid maternity leave). However, these recommendations are largely conjectures arising from the empirical study of gender inequalities that have not been widely implemented and tested; furthermore, policy and programming suggestions absent concrete strategies for how to advance and realize them in the divided contemporary U.S. political environment can seem Pollyannaish at best.

So, how can feminist scholarship contribute to unstalling the gender revolution and catalyzing the fourth wave? Partnering with TGP alumni as my co-researchers who directed the design and analysis of this project, I go beyond facile assumptions that iGen

members' feminisms extend only as far as their Instagram followers to illuminate how adult-youth feminist collaborations can establish social spaces in which girls are both inspired by feminist legacies and mobilized to envision new theories and strategies. By resisting the tendency to graft adults' presumptions and fears onto adolescent girls' subjectivities and to conflate the experiences of Millennials with those of iGen members, *On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution* gives voice to girls of a rising generation of feminist activists whose paradigms, commitments, and practices have much to teach their mentors, teachers, parents, and fellow activists about how to advance the stalled, uneven gender revolution in these best and worst of times.

The Paradoxes of Contemporary U.S. Girlhood

In addition to the contradictory “feminism is everywhere” and “feminism is dead” cultural narratives, Crossley (2017) identifies a “girls can do anything” trope promising a girl-powered utopia of equal opportunities for young women who “lean in” and demonstrate sufficient grit and will-power. At the same time, girls' vulnerability to victimization and self-harm remains a pervasive moral panic among adults concerned by media accounts of how hook-up culture, sexting, sexual assault, suicide, and sexualization damage and diminish girls (e.g., Orenstein 2016; Sales 2016). According to Jordan and Mossman, “the messages girls in many societies continue to receive growing up present them with conflicting images of female agency juxtaposed with female victimization. While girls can now supposedly ‘do everything’, many forms of media imply they face perpetual risk from everyone” (2017:20). As such, the symbolic figure of “the girl” embodies the ambivalence about women's equality that seems characteristic of this sociohistorical moment in the U.S., in which girls have been allowed to develop

more “masculine” characteristics of leadership and physicality, while boys’ expressions of feminine qualities remain dangerously stigmatized (Risman 2018).

Cultural studies scholar Sarah Banet-Weiser (2018) argues that this ambivalence can be conceptualized as a product of the twinned discourses of popular feminism and popular misogyny pervading U.S. culture. Both feminism and misogyny have become popular in three ways: 1) they circulate throughout networked popular and commercial media, 2) they are admired by like-minded adherents, as *popularity*, and 3) their pluralized manifestations meet in a power struggle for ideological supremacy and visibility. However, while popular feminism is active in shaping culture, popular misogyny is reactive. Banet-Weiser asserts that popular feminism’s key themes – self-esteem, confidence, and competence – rely on a neoliberal logic pairing capacity and injury, in which women’s capacity is held back by sexism and men are injured by the “threat” that encroaching feminism and multiculturalism will emasculate their individual capacity for work, economic success, and confidence. Although the contest between feminism and misogyny has raged for centuries, Banet-Weiser contends that “the contemporary networked visibility of popular feminism, available across multiple media platforms, has stimulated a reaction, mobilizing misogyny to compete for visibility within these same mediated networks” (2018:5). The rise in feminism’s visibility and acceptability through networked platforms is eliciting a backlash of intimidation and harassment toward women via popular misogynies expressed and circulated in digital networks, which are structurally enforced through continued, systematic gender inequalities in the workplace, organized religion, and state politics.

Located at the uncomfortable juncture where popular feminism and popular misogyny meet, the symbolically ambivalent figure of “the girl” is bifurcated into diametrically opposed but mutually constitutive discourses of “Girl Power” and “Reviving Ophelia,” both of which surfaced in the early 1990s (Gonick 2006) and continue to animate the “girls can do anything” and “girls at risk” archetypes. The “Girl Power” discourse identified by Gonick (2006) imagines a “Riot Grrrl” unencumbered by the constraints of femininity to assert her individuality and right to self-determination. Although the Girl Power discourse emerged from the Riot Grrrl punk movement of the 1990s that rejected consumption, Riordan (2001) argues that the positive sentiment espoused by the Riot Grrrls (that American culture should value girls and girl activities in order to enhance girls’ self-esteem) was quickly appropriated by commercial producers of music (The Spice Girls), television (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*), and Internet sites (gURL sites). Riordan (2001) suggests that examining commodified Girl Power media texts allows scholars to identify the social relations that texts are designed to reproduce, as the “use value” of the concept (e.g., Girl Power) is transformed into an “exchange value” that illustrates acceptable forms of Girl Power (i.e., power through sexualization and command of the male gaze) and thereby promotes individual consumption rather than collective social change.

Opposing and mirroring notions of Girl Power, the “Reviving Ophelia” discourse presents girls as “vulnerable, passive, voiceless, and fragile” (Gonick 2006:2). Although the Reviving Ophelia discourse is an old trope within Western societies (as evidenced by the panic surrounding hysteria in the Victorian era), psychologist Mary Pipher (1994) rearticulated it for modern sensibilities, contending that adolescent girls are coerced by a

“girl-hostile culture” into defining themselves in terms of what they can do to please others, rather than in terms of who they truly want to be. While on the surface these two discourses appear to be contradictory, Gonick (2006) argues that they represent two different paths available to girls for navigating the neoliberal sociopolitical order. In the neoliberal context, it is not structural or sociopolitical constraints but rather “good choices, effort, and ambition....[that] separate the can-dos from the at-risks” (Harris 2004:16). The Girl Power discourse constructs the idealized form of a self-determining, consumptively constituted (white) female neoliberal subject; the Reviving Ophelia discourse interpellates a failed Girl Power girl, unsuccessful in her attempts at individuated autonomy who must be saved via therapeutic intervention, or a working-class girl of color susceptible to poverty, drugs, early pregnancy, and low ambition. Gonick (2006) argues that both sides of this binary of neoliberal female subjectivity require the extraction of the individual from the structural constraints imposed upon her by gendered, classed, and racial inequalities, making the individual girl responsible for her own successes and failures. Similarly, Riordan (2001) concludes that commodified pro-girl rhetoric empowers women and girls only at the individual level of consumption, obscuring the structural forces implicated in women’s inequality and preventing women and girls from collectively organizing to challenge these forces.

According to Banet-Weiser (2018), these two neoliberal subject positions gave rise to a very specific incarnation of feminism that addresses these two imagined girls’ needs. This popular feminism has become prominent because of its alignment with neoliberal capitalism and its networked platforms of women’s “aspirational labor” (Duffy 2017), the postfeminist sensibility that repudiates feminist politics as outmoded because

women have been sufficiently empowered by neoliberal entrepreneurialism (Gill 2007), and an economy of visibility in which “brands,” including brands of feminism, compete for attention in the mediascape. In Banet-Weiser’s theory of popular feminism, some feminist expressions and politics – such as those focused on the individual body, those equating social change with capitalist consumption, and those promoting individual confidence and self-esteem – become more visible than other contemporary feminisms because they are most readily commodified and branded, stealing the spotlight from women of color, working-class women, trans women, non-heteronormative women, and under-aged women. Unlike the politics of visibility in which marginalized communities struggle to be seen and accurately represented in cultural discourses as a strategy to advance social justice, economies of visibility capitalize recognition, such that “visual representation becomes the beginning and the end of political action. . . . Identifying oneself as someone who looks like a feminist becomes sufficient political action” (Banet-Weiser 2018:27). Economies of visibility comprise the following elements: networked and mostly corporate-owned mediated spaces (e.g., social media, film, digital media) where the economies’ forces of supply and demand play out; the “product” of the body, the value of which is ceaselessly judged and monitored; the “goods” of self-esteem, confidence, and competence for which demand is driven by the need to optimize the value of the “product”; the girls and women whose bodies as “products” are interpellated as consumers; the “markets” for industries that produce intangible goods like empowerment as well as skill-sets like coding that will putatively lead to empowerment; and “labor” in the form of feminized emotional labor, such as the self-care and care-

giving work involved in deploying “goods” to advance one’s self-brand, status, and marketability.

The Market for Girls’ Empowerment

These industries have taken the form of what Banet-Weiser (2015) has termed “girl empowerment organizations” (GEOs) in the U.S. funded by corporations, non-profit organizations, and states (e.g., Girls Who Code, Girls on the Run, the NYC Girls Program, the Confidence Coalition, Sexualization Protest: Action, Resistance, Knowledge) in tandem with international development efforts centered on girls’ empowerment, often referred to as the “Girl Effect” approach. In this “market for empowerment” within neoliberal economies of visibility, empowerment becomes a commodity sold by GEOs to the Reviving Ophelia discourse’s “girls in crisis” who must be rehabilitated from their low self-esteem and poor self-confidence as productive participants in neoliberal entrepreneurialism. Citing Hains (2012), Banet-Weiser (2015) argues this “crisis in girls” reached its apogee in the 1990s with moral panics around girls’ exclusion from math and technology fields, rising rates of disordered eating and body-image issues, and self-confidence deficits in response to hypersexualized media imagery. Concurrently, the Girl Power discourse positioned girls as important consumers in primary markets (making their own purchases), as influencers (sharing parents’ consumer choices), and in future markets (as brand-loyal consumers of self-care products).

Banet-Weiser (2015) contends that the Girl Power and Reviving Ophelia consumer subject positions created a market for empowerment and the neoliberal feminist products that GEOs supply, such as individual leadership skills, self-confidence,

and healthy self-esteem. In these markets for empowerment, confidence and self-esteem are commodified as products that girls can choose to invest in to improve their individual outcomes as neoliberal economic subjects. According to Banet-Weiser, “the commodification of empowerment through visibility reifies empowerment, justifying it as an end in itself rather than as a starting point for material change and social justice” (2015:4), a logic that inevitably neutralizes rather than activates a broader political consciousness. Furthermore, glossy testimonials attesting to the success of individual women within neoliberalism, rather than more structural changes in women’s material and affective conditions, serve as proof of the efficacy of empowerment products.

GEOs are not alone in tapping into the market for girls’ empowerment.

Academics also have joined the fray by designing and evaluating myriad (yet disconnected) forms of interventional programming for youth and college-aged students that seek to address sexual violence as an aspect of the crisis in girls, including but not limited to bystander interventions, empowerment self-defense classes, empathy-based rape prevention programming, and intimate partner violence prevention education. In this scholarly quadrant of the economies of visibility, peer-reviewed journals and grant competitions are the spaces where the forces of supply and demand play out as researchers make their most compelling cases for the “goods” their particular intervention supplies (e.g., self-efficacy to defend oneself, intervene in risky situations, set relationship boundaries) to insure the “products” of girls’ bodies against assault and abuse in the broader neoliberal marketplace. Briefly, bystander interventions (e.g., Green Dot, Mentors in Violence Prevention [MVP], interACT, Coaching Boys Into Men) teach participants how to recognize and intervene in situations or behaviors that may lead to

violence, with the objective of changing individual-level perceptions of willingness to intervene as well as peer-group social norms regarding risky situations (Coker et al. 2017) and the social acceptability of sexist attitudes and behaviors (Katz forthcoming; Rich 2010). According to Katz, bystander interventions vary in their levels of emphasis on the role of gendered social norms in perpetuating rape culture, with gender-neutral “events-based” programs like Green Dot focusing on building individuals’ skills in intervening in potentially abusive situations and “gender transformative” programs like MVP and interACT concentrating on facilitating interactions that increase “young people’s critical analytic skills to recognize the detrimental effects of conforming to rigid gender norms and toxic masculinities and to disrupt such behaviors and attitudes within their peer networks” (Miller forthcoming:5). Empowerment self-defense classes for youth (Jordan and Mossman 2017) and college-aged women (Hollander 2014) teach women a range of physical and verbal strategies to prevent and resist assault. Empathy-based rape prevention interventions (e.g., The Men’s Program) position participating men as potential helpers of women who might seek their assistance after surviving rape (Foubert, Newberry, and Tatum 2008). Dating and intimate partner violence prevention programs (e.g., Shifting Boundaries, the Safe Dates Project) teach students how to set and communicate boundaries and seek help in the context of domestic violence laws (Foshee et al. 2004; Taylor et al. 2013).

Trials and program evaluations have demonstrated the effectiveness of these programs in changing their targeted outcomes: for bystander interventions, less sexual violence perpetration (Coker et al. 2017; Miller et al. 2013) and reduced social acceptability of aggressive behavior (Katz, Heisterkamp, and Fleming 2011); for

empowerment self-defense, greater self-esteem, self-efficacy, assertiveness, and fighting skills and fewer sexual assaults (Hollander 2014); for empathy-based rape prevention, lower rates of perpetration of sexually coercive acts (Foubert, Newberry, and Tatum 2008); and for dating violence prevention, lower rates of sexual violence perpetration and victimization (Foshee et al. 2004; Taylor et al. 2013). However, perhaps because incentive structures reward academics for bringing new “products” to market far more than they do for implementing them in practice settings (Papoutsi et al. 2016), these interventions remain on parallel but siloed trajectories in terms of dissemination, implementation, and impact. As Miller notes, there is significant overlap among sexual violence, adolescent relationship abuse, bullying, homophobic teasing, and gender-based harassment; therefore, comprehensive, multi-level prevention approaches should include “transforming gender norms, addressing homophobia, integrating with comprehensive sexuality education, and acknowledging the unique needs of youth already violence exposed” (forthcoming:10). Without employing this kind of coordinated approach, academics risk losing sight of the long-term, systemic outcomes their individual interventions seek to realize while competing in their profession’s economies of visibility and prestige.

Furthermore, these disintegrated interventions have been exclusively designed by adult scholars and, therefore, are framed by adult feminists’ assumptions about the sources of persistent gender inequality. In an insight that applies equally to GEOs and scholarly empowerment programming, Banet-Weiser observes that although the source of empowerment varies in these programs, “their definition of empowerment generally denotes a transference of power, a flow from the powerful to the disempowered, here

recognized as girls” (2015:3). In other words, adult scholars define the scope of the gender inequalities their programming addresses (e.g., intimate partner violence, male peer culture norms) and create curricula that bestow on participants their expert knowledge of how young people should mitigate these issues without engaging participants in program design and evaluation efforts (Langhout and Thomas 2010).

Media Literacy Education and its Discontents

No other form of intervention into the “crisis in girls” exemplifies this tendency toward developing countless isolated programs uninformed by members of their target populations than media literacy education (MLE). According to the Center for Media Literacy website (2018), MLE “helps young people acquire an empowering set of ‘navigational’ skills which include the ability to: access information from a variety of sources; analyze and explore how messages are ‘constructed’; evaluate the media’s explicit and implicit messages against one’s own ethical, moral and/or democratic principles; express or create their own messages using a variety of media tools; and participate in a global media culture.” As such, inclusion of iGen and Millennial digital natives in MLE program design would seem to be highly useful, if not necessary, in understanding youth’s lived experiences in the mediascapes in which these programs seek to intervene. However, as with bystander and other interventional programming addressing sexual violence, MLE programs designed by academics have proliferated during the past 20 years with minimal engagement of children and youth in their design and implementation. A meta-analytic review (Jeong, Cho, and Hwang 2012) of the effectiveness of 51 MLE interventions indicates that while these programs are generally successful in achieving media-related outcomes, such as improving participants’

awareness of media influence and their perceptions of media realism, they do not significantly affect targeted behavioral outcomes, such as alcohol use, advertising and commercialism, body image and eating, drugs, sex, tobacco use, and violence. In other words, although the programs effectively teach students how to critique commercial media, they do little to undermine normative ideological messages about health, violence, and gender expectations embedded in media discourses.

By far the most popular topical focus of MLE interventions is girls' body image and disordered eating behaviors; in the meta-analysis by Jeong et al. (2012), 16 of the 51 MLE programs (31%) targeted improved body image and eating attitudes/behaviors as outcomes. The emphasis in MLE on this particular girlhood crisis is justifiable given the well-documented connection between media usage and negative mental health issues that disproportionately affect girls and young women. Meta-analytical reviews of psychological studies consistently demonstrate that media usage is directly linked to women's body dissatisfaction and disordered eating attitudes and beliefs (Grabe, Ward, and Hyde 2008; Levine and Murnen 2009). Formulated by feminist psychologists, objectification theory seeks to explain this relationship between media usage and gendered mental health disparities, positing that women and girls' lived experiences in a sexually objectifying culture fosters self-objectification, or viewing oneself from the perspective of a critical outside observer, and the internalization of media beauty ideals (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). Internalization of media ideals occurs when an individual assesses her body in relation to those ideals; body dissatisfaction results from the inevitable gap between the individual's real body and media ideals (Thompson et al. 1999). Internalization of media ideals and self-objectification increase body shame and

anxiety and diminish awareness of internal bodily cues, which lead to mental health problems that are disproportionately experienced by girls and young women, such as disordered eating, depression, and sexual dysfunction (American Psychological Association 2007; Moradi and Huang 2008).

To disrupt the internalization process, MLE interventions have been designed based on inoculation theory, which posits that education about how unrealistic media images are produced provides skills and information that will protect students against the adverse effects of media messages (Wilksch, Tiggemann, and Wade 2006). However, a systematic review by Yager et al. (2013) of 16 evaluations of body image MLE programs for adolescents that have been conducted since 2000 revealed that only seven of these programs were effective in improving body image on at least one measure, and these effect sizes were small ($d = 0.22-0.48$). Only two programs were marginally effective in improving body image or body dissatisfaction at 3-month (Richardson, Paxton, and Thomson 2009) and 6-month and 30-month (Wilksch and Wade 2009) follow-up evaluation.

There are three major conceptual problems with existing MLE programming to address girls' body image and disordered eating that will be considered in turn: 1) they center on training individuals to identify and critique mediated messages rather than engaging participants in challenging the social systems that produce unhealthy representations, thereby reifying participants' passivity in reforming the mediascape (Katsulis et al. 2013); 2) they seek to improve individual girls' ability to resist media ideals but do not equip girls with social resources to change the gender expectations that inform power dynamics in their interpersonal and institutional social worlds; and 3) they

do not engage youths as experts in the sociocultural dynamics they attempt to influence. First, MLE programs focused on body image outcomes present the solution to objectification and sexualization as a neoliberal self-help project for women and girls (Duits and van Zoonen 2011; Hasinoff 2014). Although their rationales differ, liberals and conservatives similarly pathologize sexualization and its effects (Best and Bogle 2014; Coy and Garner 2012; Gill 2009). As Hasinoff argues, moral panics around the crisis in girls unite interests across the ideological spectrum because they reinforce the following commonsense assumptions: “girls are passive media consumers; mass culture is an outside force that has a negative impact on individuals, primarily on those imagined to be vulnerable; sexuality is best restricted to so-called healthy expressions; only women who embody a particular version of class-marked femininity deserve respect or recognition as agents; and men and boys bear little responsibility or capacity for change” (2014:115). According to Hasinoff (2014), MLE efforts that mobilize girls as the “solution” to media sexualization by resisting its hyper-feminine prescriptions are so prominent because they do not represent any kind of substantive threat to the hierarchical gender system.

An example of this type of solution that has been widely celebrated in the girls’ studies literature is the Sexualization Protest: Action, Resistance, Knowledge (SPARK) movement (Tolman, Brown, and Bowman 2013). SPARK was inaugurated with a summit in 2010 that convened a group of media-literate girls, scholars, community organizations, media organizations, and policy groups to foster a movement protesting the sexualization of girls’ media environments, including hands-on workshops on media advocacy, blogging by young women, a social media presence that drew the attention of mainstream

news organizations, a research blog that distills peer-reviewed literature into accessible posts designed for teenaged readers, and a “SPARKit” curriculum that provides community organizations with tools to facilitate their own media literacy and activism activities against sexualization. Employing campaign-ready taglines like “we’re taking sexy back” and “being sexy isn’t a look, it’s a feeling,” the SPARK movement’s goal is to coordinate the activism of disparate academic, activist, and girls groups to turn the cultural tide against media sexualization by saturating media outlets during the week before Halloween (when the most egregious examples of sexualization are manifest in the form of costumes for girls and adults) with examples of how girls are protesting these representations. According to Banet-Weiser (2015), SPARK’s feminist politics are subsumed into a narrative of individual empowerment coherent with neoliberal feminism because SPARK seeks to compete in economies of visibility. As such, the logic of SPARK and many GEOs frames empowerment as an individual achievement rather than a collective feminist amelioration of structural barriers to gender equality.

Education scholars have advocated for a more critical MLE that focuses on unpacking implicit power-knowledge messages in the media as well as learning to resist and challenge those messages through media advocacy (Kellner and Share 2007; Puchner, Markowitz, and Hedley 2015). However, there is little empirical research testing the effectiveness of critical MLE in educating students about social justice issues (Puchner, Markowitz, and Hedley 2015). The outcomes of the curricula that do exist, such as the program designed and evaluated by Puchner et al. (2015) to reduce the gender-typing of careers among middle-school students, are only measured in terms of individuals’ post-program changes in attitudes and beliefs.

This observation leads to the second major conceptual problem with MLE interventions to improve girls' body image: they attempt to change individual girls' psychological responses to media ideals but not the interactional power dynamics of the social situations in which girls' adherence to media ideals is enforced. As Puchner et al. stated, "Our ultimate hope is that if boys and girls understand how media provides sexist messages about gender and jobs that influence girls' and boys' entrance into various professions, then both boys and girls will be better able to resist and counter such messages" (2015:32). This approach assumes that individuals' lack of awareness of sexist messages in the media is the only factor preventing change in sexist and misogynist cultures. As such, even pedagogical innovations like critical MLE focus on shifting individuals' knowledge and attitudes about sexist media messages but not the social contexts in which girls and boys are held accountable to hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity ideologies represented in media culture. The importance of social interactions in the maintenance of gender ideologies is underscored in the theory of "doing gender" (West and Zimmerman 1987) in which men's and women's social competence is based on how they align their attitudes, behavior, and appearance with the normative expectations of their sex categorization. According to Hollander (2013), the social assessment and enforcement of gender norms is central to both (re)producing and disrupting gender expectations, and she calls for research to explore interactional contexts that "re-do gender" by recalibrating the gender expectations and practices to which people are held accountable.

The insights of the theory of doing gender in terms of interactional accountability are consistent with the tenet of social norms theory that individual behavior is driven by

perceptions and misperceptions of others' attitudes and behaviors (Fabiano et al. 2003), which undergirds bystander intervention programs. This distinction in the "target" of MLE programs is particularly important to recognize in light of considerable empirical evidence that the most influential force socializing children to gender ideologies in early adolescence is boys' and girls' homosocial peer groups. In a recent systematic literature review (McGladrey 2015) of ethnographic girlhood studies, I demonstrate the influence of girls' homosocial environments in shaping their gender ideologies, as only their female peers are sufficiently expert in navigating girl culture to validate their self-presentations as indications of their mastery of archetypes of emphasized femininity. Furthermore, a large-scale psychological study of three different school grade grouping types (junior high of grades 7 and 8, middle school of grades 6-8, and extended middle school of grades 5-8) found that fifth and sixth graders who attend schools with older students reported more negative body experiences than their same-age counterparts in schools with younger students, demonstrating the importance of peer culture in shaping girls' social norms and expectations for gendered self-presentation and body image (Strauss et al. 2014).

Similarly, scholars in critical men's studies define masculinity as a "homosocial enactment" (Kimmel 2012:5), arguing that "most of men's relentless efforts to prove their manhood contain this core element of homosociality. From fathers and boyhood friends to our teachers, coworkers, and bosses, it is the evaluative eyes of other men that are always upon us, watching, judging" (2012:20). "Gender transformative" bystander intervention programs like MVP (Katz forthcoming) leverage the powerful impact of homosocial peer environments on boys' and men's adherence to hegemonic gender

ideology by deconstructing how status hierarchies inflect the gendered calculus that men apply when deciding whether to intervene weighed against the risks of violating the “guy code” of entitlement, silence, and loyalty to protecting other men from accountability for misconduct (Kimmel 2008). Although these bystander interventions to reform male peer cultures have been evaluated as effective in shifting gendered social norms (Katz, Heisterkamp, and Fleming 2011), girls’ peer cultures have not been the target of MLE programs, which exclusively rely upon psychological models of individual attitudinal and behavior change. However, girls’ peer cultures merit equivalent interventional attention, considering evidence that girls’ peer cultures also are characterized by gender-based bullying and harassment (Besag 2006; Brown 2005) as well as social pressure to use weight-control practices to conform to idealized body types and distance themselves from the stigma of “fatness” (Mueller et al. 2010; Taylor 2011).

Methods: Following Where Girls Lead

The third conceptual issue with MLE interventions is that they attempt to ameliorate social problems among youth without consulting the young people themselves regarding their perceptions of the social influences, mechanisms, and contexts that give rise to these problems. This adult-centric approach characterizes all of the programs reviewed here that seek to help young men and women navigate the gendered paradoxes and inequalities of contemporary U.S. society. The opening sentence of one program evaluation article exemplifies this generationally top-down impulse, stating “‘Is there anything we can do to protect today’s girls from physical and sexual victimization?’ is a question troubling many 21st-century feminists” (Jordan and Mossman 2017:1). This is the wrong question, as it positions girls as passive victims whom adults must save from

an epidemic of physical and sexual victimization about which we somehow presume to know more than the youth immersed in the social norms, media cultures, and institutional logics that perpetuate the social (re)construction of this epidemic every day. A better question might be, “How can adult feminists most effectively and ethically teach, mentor, and support younger feminists as they challenge the salience of traditional gender expectations that animate and legitimate continued gender inequality in the U.S.?”

On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution answers this question with a youth-led participatory action research (YPAR) project evaluating TGP as a case study of a gender transformative program that has responded to the crisis in girls by fomenting critical consciousness (Freire 2014) of social norms through performing arts education. Techniques and strategies from performance arts disciplines have been successfully deployed by teachers in under-served school systems to promote youth literacy and reading comprehension (Fiske 1999; Landay and Wootton 2012) as well as by health educators to address a wide range of youth public health issues, including nutrition (Cheadle et al. 2012; Colby and Haldeman 2007), safe sex (Guzmán et al. 2003), cognitive and behavioral functioning among adolescents with brain disorders (Agnihotri et al. 2012), HIV risk among African-American boys in the juvenile justice system (Lauby et al. 2010), and bystander intervention to prevent sexual violence (Ahrens, Rich, and Ullman 2011). However, all of the public health programs were evaluated based on their impact on audience members, as the performances were written and delivered by trained actors and other adults, and the Performance Cycle model used in arts literacy programming begins with an existing literary text as point of inspiration to which students respond. Although TGP was created by two adult arts educators and is facilitated

by a team of adults (including myself) and visiting adult guest artists, participating girls set the agenda of topics discussed in the closed container and author the entire script. But does TGP's unique model combining critical MLE and performing arts pedagogy meaningfully engage participants in deconstructing and transforming gendered social norms in ways that GEO- and academic-designed empowerment and prevention programs have not?

To assess if, how, and why TGP benefits iGen girls and could serve as a generative framework for catalyzing intergenerational feminist activism, *On the Frontlines of the Gender Revolution* presents the findings of a YPAR evaluation of TGP 2017. YPAR is a form of community-based participatory research (CBPR) that guides youth through an iterative process of collective research and reflection to investigate social problems affecting their lives and then deploy the knowledge they produce to advocate for solutions to the problems they studied (Ozer and Douglas 2015). Central to YPAR is the imperative to design methods that allow youth to exert power in making decisions about key aspects of the research and action process (e.g., topic selection, research methods, data analysis, action steps) (Ozer and Douglas 2015). For this project, I employed a "youth-adult partnership model" that drew from strategies designed and tested in a YPAR evaluation of Girls Inc. (Chen, Lazar Weiss, and Johnston Nicholson 2010) to mobilize TGP alumni as co-researchers who co-investigated and co-produced a program evaluation of TGP 2017. YPAR evaluation rejects age-based hierarchies and re-centers youth participants as experts with the most meaningful insights on how programs influence their lived experiences (Wheeler 2000). In June 2017, a team of eight co-researchers, comprising alumni from the 2014, 2015, and 2016 classes who dubbed

themselves the “PhDivas,” met to develop the three research questions guiding the evaluation and make decisions about what data would be needed to answer those questions, which included designing and refining survey instruments and interview questionnaires. Data collection included pre- and post-program surveys and interviews with TGP 2017 participants, field notes of the co-researchers’ observations of TGP 2017 workshops and rehearsals, and feedback from guest artists, audience members, local educators who recruit participants for TGP, and parents of participants. In January 2018, the PhDivas reconvened to collaboratively code and analyze their findings in terms of how the data answer their three research questions, and a group of three PhDivas joined me to present our work to the community in a panel discussion hosted in conjunction with TGP’s fundraising event in February 2018.

Where Do We Go From Here?

In chapter 2, I further elaborate the innovative methodological design of this study as well as justify its epistemological assumptions, particularly whether my positionality as a scholar-activist with an undeniable commitment to TGP and belief in its value undermines my ability to rigorously facilitate a YPAR evaluation in relation to the intersubjective social locations of both the PhDivas and TGP 2017 participants. To explain and respond to the positivist critique of feminist methodologies as “subjective,” this chapter compares positivism with feminist ontological and epistemological stances and outlines how feminist participatory methodologies address fundamental empirical standards, such as validity and reliability. In doing so, I demonstrate how feminist and YPAR methodologies not only satisfy positivism’s criteria for conducting “good social science” but also enhance the academic and social justice impact of sociological research.

Specifically, I address the ethical, scientific, and practical advantages and shortcomings of leading a YPAR evaluation effort as an “internal” (rather than an external, “independent”) evaluator to explore how this study operationalizes a feminist model of ethical, engaged evaluation to build activist organizational capacity and to promote incontestably normative feminist political and social objectives as an academic researcher.

The remaining chapters center on the PhDivas’ three research questions, the first of which is, “How does TGP shape girls’ feminisms, and how does TGP take audiences through the consciousness-raising journeys they have experienced in the program? What benefits does TGP offer to participants and audiences?” In addition to unpacking the PhDivas’ operational definitions of “social change” and “social activism,” Chapter 3 presents data gathered from participants, audience members, educators, parents, and guest artists to answer the first research question regarding how “insiders” of TGP (i.e., participants and audience members who make an effort to attend a performance) conceptualize iGen’s feminisms and the ways in which TGP inflects and inspires gender transformations. Mirroring Katz’s observation that programming targeting group-level social norms about gender “do not change men’s beliefs about gender as much as they provide them with a structured opportunity to gain permission from other men to act” (forthcoming:13), the PhDivas conclude that before participating in TGP, girls felt like they could not share their voices, even if they feel like they should, and after TGP, girls felt that they both can and should share their voices. The chapter offers generalizable insights regarding what older feminists need to know to effectively mobilize and mentor iGen feminists in this paradoxical sociohistorical moment in the U.S., including

consideration of the quotidian social-structural barriers (e.g., disadvantaged youth's lack of access to transportation in rural areas, food scarcity, precarious social networks) that adult feminists are compelled to alleviate in partnering with youth activists.

Chapter 4 addresses the second of the PhDivas' research questions – “Who participates in TGP, who does not, and why?” – that was designed to mitigate our ethical and practical inability to include a control or comparison group that would provide for more definitive causal inferences about the outcomes of TGP. To the PhDivas, it seemed unethical to recruit girls into a control group to contribute data without inviting them to fully participate in TGP, and no comparable MLE programs exist in the area that could provide a comparison group. As a result, the PhDivas decided to collect social network data during the post-program interview to gather information about whom participants invited to attend their performances, which of these invitees attended, and why participants chose to include or exclude members of their social networks in their TGP activism. This chapter presents the PhDivas' conclusions about the social forces that encourage and undermine participation in TGP as well as how the countervailing backlash of popular misogyny manifests for iGen feminists working in politically and socially conservative areas of the U.S. like Kentucky. I situate these conclusions within their broader implications for understanding the challenges facing both iGen feminist activists and the feminist movement at large with the ascendance of the twinned popular feminism and popular misogyny discourses in U.S. media culture.

The concluding chapter shares the PhDivas' data and conclusions regarding their final research question: “How can we make TGP more effective in offering its benefits and creating social change?” Their findings reveal intergenerational tensions between

adult facilitators' program priorities and participants' more radical demands for bold action as well as identify quality improvement strategies applicable to a wide variety of organizations promoting social justice. Although the social processes, dynamics, and mechanisms of feminist social change explicated by the PhDivas are specific to TGP, this case study contributes best practices and lessons learned that are generalizable to other feminist community organizing, activism, and YPAR efforts in this polarized political environment. Based on the PhDivas' analysis, I argue for a praxis to realize a fourth wave of intergenerational, intersectional feminist activism that coordinates progress toward gender equality in the structural, disciplinary, interpersonal, and cultural domains of power (Collins 2008). The praxis for which I advocate is only possible if scholars of gender critically examine their personal and institutional positionalities as well as their criteria for rigor in relation to the normative feminist goals they nominally espouse and activist communities they ostensibly serve. The next chapter considers what the design of the present study can tell us about the methodological and ethical demands for academics who want their scholarship to make meaningful contributions to a fourth wave of feminism in the context of countervailing mandates in institutions of higher education.

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VITA

Margaret L. McGladrey, A.B.D.
Curriculum Vitae
Spring 2018

EDUCATION

- 2018 Ph.D. (expected), Sociology, with a Graduate Certificate in Gender and Women's Studies

University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky

Advisor: Dr. Claire Renzetti
- 2011 M.A., Communication, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
- 2006 B.A., Summa cum Laude, Magazine Journalism, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS HELD

- 2018-2019 Postdoctoral Fellowship, Tisch College of Civic Life and Department of Sociology, Tufts University
- 2013-2018 Adjunct Faculty, Department of Health, Behavior, & Society, University of Kentucky College of Public Health
- 2012-2017 Assistant Dean for Research, University of Kentucky College of Public Health
- 2006-2009 Marketing Coordinator, Anderson-Perry & Associates, Inc., La Grande, Oregon

AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2017 John A. O'Donnell Award for Outstanding Academic Performance, Department of Sociology, University of Kentucky
- 2017 Doris Wilkinson Award for Outstanding Paper in Work, Medical and Social Inequalities, Department of Sociology, University of Kentucky, for "Examining the Implications of the Relational Dynamics of Sex Role Orientation for Mental Health"
- 2015 American Sociological Association Student Forum Paper Award, for

“Studying Sexualities in Girls’ Social Worlds: Ethical and Effective Methodologies for Research with Preadolescent Girls”

- 2014 Staff Employee of the Year, University of Kentucky College of Public Health
- 2006 Outstanding Senior Woman of the Year Award, School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon
- 2006 Outstanding Magazine Student of the Year Award, School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon
- 2005 Warren C. Price Award for Best Communication History Paper, University of Oregon

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Journal Articles

- 2017 Gustafson, Alison, **Margaret L. McGladrey**, Emily Liu, Kelly Webber, Nicole Peritore, Brooke Butterworth, and Ann Vail. “Examining Key Stakeholder and Community Residents’ Understanding of Environmental Influences to Inform Place-Based Interventions to Reduce Obesity in Rural Communities, Kentucky 2015” *The Journal of Rural Health* (ePub ahead of print) doi 10.1111/jrh.12254.
- 2017 DeWitt, Emily, **Margaret L. McGladrey**, Emily Liu, Tammy Stephenson, Kelly Webber, Nicole Peritore, Brooke Butterworth, Alison Gustafson, and Ann Vail. “Social Marketing Campaign at Farmers’ Markets to Encourage Fruit and Vegetable Purchases in Rural Obese Counties.” *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* 49(7):S109.
- 2017 Carman, Angela, and **Margaret L. McGladrey**. “Facilitating Community Health Improvement Capacity through Non-governmental Public Health Partners.” *Journal of Public Health Management & Practice* 23(5):496-8.
- 2016 **McGladrey, Margaret L.**, and Angela Carman. “Evidence for the Role of Resource-sharing Networks in Coalition Development.” *Frontiers in Public Health Services and System Research* 5(1):28-33.
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- 2015 **McGladrey, Margaret L.** “Lolita is in the Eye of the Beholder: Amplifying Preadolescent Girls’ Voices in Conversations about Sexualization, Objectification, and Performativity.” *Feminist Formations* 27(2):165-90.
- 2015 **McGladrey, Margaret L.,** and Richard Crosby. “Reducing Cervical Cancer Incidence Using Evidence-Based Programs in Community Settings.” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 49(2):297-300.
- 2015 Carman, Angela, **Margaret L. McGladrey,** Anna G. Hoover, and Richard Crosby. “Organizational Variation in an Evidence-Based HPV Intervention Implementation.” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 49(2):301-08.
- 2015 Wackerbarth, Sarah, **Margaret L. McGladrey,** and Laura Fanucchi. “Taking the Pulse of a Target Population: Assessing Change Readiness.” *Quality Management in Health Care* 24(3):129-34.
- 2015 Cohen, Elisia L., Katherine J. Head, **Margaret L. McGladrey,** Anna G. Hoover, Robin C. Vanderpool, Colleen Bridger, Angela Carman, Richard A. Crosby, Elaine Darling, Mary Tucker-McLaughlin, and Nancy Winterbauer. “Designing for Dissemination: Lessons in Message Design from ‘1-2-3 Pap.’” *Health Communication* 30(2):196-207.
- 2014 **McGladrey, Margaret L.** “Becoming Tween Bodies: What Preadolescent Girls in the U.S. Say About Beauty, the ‘Just-Right Ideal,’ and the ‘Disney Girls.’” *Journal of Children and Media* 8(4):353-70.
- 2014 Ricks, JaNelle M., Angelica Geter, **Margaret L. McGladrey,** Richard A. Crosby, Leandro A. Mena, and John M. Ottmar. “ ‘I Don’t Have A Problem With It, But Other Guys Do’: An Exploration Of Condom Negotiation Among Young Black Men Who Have Sex With Men In The South.” *Journal of Black Sexuality and Relationships* 1(1):1-10.
- 2012 **McGladrey, Margaret L.,** Seth M. Noar, Richard A. Crosby, April M. Young, and Elizabeth Webb. “Creating Project CREATE: Lessons Learned and Best Practices for Developing Web-Based Resources for Public Health Practitioners.” *American Journal of Health Education* 43(6):341-49.

Book Chapters

- 2013 Cohen, Elisia L., Robin Vanderpool, Richard A. Crosby, Seth M. Noar, Wallace Bates, Tom Collins, Katherine J. Head, **Margaret L.**

McGladrey, and Baretta Casey. "1-2-3 Pap: An HPV prevention campaign to reduce cervical cancer in Eastern Kentucky." In Dutta, M.J. & Kreps, G.L., (Eds.), *Reducing health disparities: Communication interventions*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing. ISBN: 1433119056

Conference Proceedings

2016 Kurzynske, Janet S., **Margaret L. McGladrey**, Janet T. Mullins, Nicole Peritore, and Ann Vail. 2016. "Using a Socio-Ecological Framework for Community-Based Obesity Disparity Reduction Strategies," Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, No: SOC2016-1927