White Racial Awakenings:

Understanding How Turning Point Narratives Create White Allies

Jacob Elijah Robinson

Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science
In
Sociology

David Brunsma
Ashley Reichelmann
Ellington Graves

May 4, 2022
Blacksburg, VA

Keywords: allyship, turning points narratives, definitions, practices

White Racial Awakenings:
Understanding How Turning Point Narratives Create White Allies

Jacob Elijah Robinson

ACADEMIC ABSTRACT

Over the past few years, White Americans have been exposed to moments of "racial reckonings" –where America was forced to realize racial injustice—often caused by police killings of Black Americans. The summer of 2020 sparked various discussions about White allies and their role in racial justice. Previous scholarship has explored White racial awakenings, also referred to as turning points, when White allies transition into allyship; however, little is known about how these narratives affect White allies' definitions and practices of White allyship. By interviewing self-identifying White allies in college, I examine types of turning point narratives and how they correspond to understandings of ally definitions and practices. I argue that experiencing turning points led White allies to similar definitions and practices of White allyship depending on whether these points occurred in routine or non-routine White experiences. Turning points that arise from typical White experiences (exposure to diversity and education) led White allies to common allyship failures and complicity with racialized structures. Alternatively, turning points resulting from uncommon White experiences (exposure to protests and diverse families) led allies to definitions and practices representing non-complicity with racialized structures.

White Racial Awakenings:
Understanding How Turning Point Narratives Create White Allies

Jacob Elijah Robinson

GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

Over the past few years, White Americans have been exposed to moments of race related dialogues, often caused by police killings of Black Americans. The summer of 2020 sparked various discussions about White allies and their role in racial justice. Previous scholarship has explored White racial awakenings, also referred to as turning points, when White allies transition into allyship; however, little is known about how these narratives affect White allies' definitions and practice of White allyship. By interviewing self-identifying White allies in college, I examine types of turning points and how they correspond ally definitions and practices. I argue that experiencing turning points led White allies to similar definitions and practices of White allyship depending on whether these points occurred in routine or non-routine White experiences. Turning points that arise from typical White experiences (exposure to diversity and education) led White allies to common allyship failures. Alternatively, turning points resulting from uncommon White experiences (exposure to protests and diverse families) led allies to beneficial definitions and practices of allyship.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and best friend. Thank you for guiding me through this thing called life and encouraging me to keep moving forward.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Brunsma, Dr. Reichelmann, and Dr. Graves, for their continued support throughout this project. Without your guidance, it is likely this project would have never happened. I express my sincerest appreciation for all you've done.

Table of Contents

Title i
Academic Abstract ii
General Audience Abstract iii
Dedication iv
Acknowledgements v
List of Tables vii
Introduction 1
Theoretical Framework 2
  Racialized Structures 2
  Turning Points Theory 3
Literature Review 4
  Defining Allyship 4
  Complicit Allyship 6
  White Turning Points 8
Methods 10
  Data Collection 10
  Data Analysis 12
  Reflexivity 13
Results 13
  Turning Point Narratives 13
  Ally Definitions 16
  Ally Practices 19
Discussion 22
Limitations 24
Conclusion 25
References 27
Appendix 31

List of Tables

Table 1: Respondent Demographics

Introduction

From the stories of slave liberation struggles to the recent expansion of surveillance on Black and Brown bodies, the United States continues to struggle with racial equality. As the United States grapples with these ongoing intersections between race and inequality, the idea of "wokeness" is becoming a part of everyday language. Wokeness, a popularized term that emerged heavily over the past eight years of protests, points to the process of becoming aware of racialized structures. This awareness of racialized structures strengthens the authenticity of White allyship and the intentions behind it through its ability to allow White individuals to conceptualize how their practices maintain or challenge white supremacy.

Over the past several years, scholars have often focused on the practices of allies, why allyship should be considered a verb and not just a noun, and how allies might become socially aware. Allyship scholarship revolves around the idea of allies being self-reflexive social actors in the process of changing racial status quos (Atkins et al., 2017; Becker, 2017; Case, 2012; Spanierman and Smith, 2017; Suyemoto et al., 2020), but at the same time refraining themselves from being central to racial justice movements (Becker, 2017; Bourke, 2020; Carlson et al., 2020; Gachago, 2018). This creates a limited space for White allies to occupy as they consider their roles in taking on racial inequalities. The limitation of White allies requires further examination of White ally positionality and perceptions of allyship that lead to limited participation in racial justice movements.

The literature continuously establishes definitions of allyship and how allies should perform, but it fails to link turning point narratives to definitions and practices. Turning points, or "racial awakenings," represent the narration of experiences whereby White individuals become "woke" to racial configurations. Social factors including the influence of social movements, the words of a peer, or a liberal upbringing serve as potential turning points addressed in current allyship scholarship (Gonzales et al., 2015; Klandermans and Oegema, 1987; Peterson and Rollins, 1987; Smucker, 2017; Wright et al., 1997). While literature touches on these ideas as generating racial awakenings (Atkins et al., 2017; Spanierman and Smith, 2017), it lacks further investigation into how these turning points could influence the ways Whites Americans define and practice allyship. Turning points, in this case, could align with the development of non-complicit allyship and create critical understandings of White ally positionality.

The purpose of this study is to understand the turning point narratives of White self-identifying allies and how this reflects their definitions and practices of allyship. I focus in this thesis on the following research question: how do White allies' turning point narratives impact their understanding of themselves as White allies and their practices of allyship in the fight against racial inequality? To gauge how White allies become socially aware and active in the fight against racial injustice, this paper will be using interview data from an ongoing study.

Theoretical Framework

The framework of this study advances allyship as a demonstration of rebellion against racial status quos, representing non-compliance with racialized structures. White allyship can be viewed as rebellion because it often entails a move from an advantaged position to one that opposes structures that reinforce white dominance. Since the move is perceived as against one's self-interest, Brown (2002) views it as a form of deviance. Conceptualizing this shift as deviance provides a unique frame to view the practices and definitions of White allies and whether their understandings of allyship lead to complicity or non-complicity with racial status quos. White allyship as deviance requires an understanding of the structures of whiteness under white supremacy as part of a racialized structure (Bonilla-Silva 1997; Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Furthering allyship as a form of deviance allows for Turning Point Theory to address how allies define and practice allyship (Sampson and Laub, 1995).

Racialized Structures

Racialized structures are social structures created and maintained by white supremacy (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). These structures are often hidden in everyday thoughts and attitudes, thus individuals maintaining them may not be labeled as complicit in them. Racialized structures, like the one that functions in the United States, allow race to serve as a category that places individuals into a hierarchy. These positions of race in the hierarchy thus limit a racial group's structural position, which drastically affects the acquisition of basic resources like education, jobs, and even life itself (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). As competition for necessities becomes arranged racially, ideas based on race become guides of distinction. As whiteness sits atop this hierarchy, White individuals are compelled to act in accordance with racialized structures, and thus making authentic White allyship difficult to accomplish.

Conceptualizing White allyship as deviance rests on the basic assumption that White allies are actively moving against racialized structures. Without such movement, allyship serves as a badge to divert attention away from privilege (Bourke, 2020). White allies labeling themselves as allies, without active opposition to racialized structures, allows for the construction of an allyship that maintains racial hierarchies (Sumerau et al., 2021). Research by Sumerau and colleagues found that allyship presented by their White respondents is illustrative of non-challenges to racialized social structures (complicity), and instead focuses on racial justice in individual level settings. For example, micro-level interventions, like "calling out" a racist individual, does not reflect deviance as these instances fail to attack racism on a macro-level scale. Though these practices fall short of challenging racialized structures, they do have some impacts and should not be entirely disregarded. Micro-level practices may result in the changed behavior of a single individual but do nothing to rid society of racialized social structures.

Turning Points Theory

One of the central questions that deviance scholars wrestle with is the ways that individuals either move into (Agnew and White, 1992; Sutherland, 1947) or out of (Sampson and Laub, 1995) deviant roles and behaviors. Since this study conceptualizes allyship as a form of deviance, I utilize Sampson and Laub's (1995) Turning Points Theory. In this perspective of deviance, we see that certain events (turning points) shape an individual's decisions, attitudes, and behaviors. These points deal overwhelmingly with social ties including family dynamics, the type of schooling they receive, and the influence of friends/peers. Sampson and Laub (1995) originally constructed this theory to understand the movement of juveniles away from delinquency. However, by using this theory to understand the movement towards deviance, we can explore how White allies become deviant in attempts to break the status quo.

Arguing non-complicit White allyship as deviance requires further investigation into how allies, like deviant individuals, can alternate into and out of behaviors efficiently. Whiteness is afforded leniency in racialized social structures thus allowing for the ability to casually travel a line between deviance against structures and compliance. In instances of behaviors to challenge these structures, White allies may be convinced to move back into complicity instead of being labeled "troublemakers," which is often the result of similar practices enacted by Black,

Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). BIPOC individuals are not able to move between complicity and non-complicity nonchalantly because they are perceived as a continual threat to racialized structures. White allyship as deviance focuses on allies conflicting with racialized social structures; it is not meant to establish the notion that these individuals are perceived as similar to BIPOC individuals who challenge the same social structures that directly impact and restricts their bodies. A differential perception lies in the idea that BIPOC individuals are always in combat with racialized structures, thus they will always be the "outsider."

These two frames allow us to see the racialized structures that exist within the world and how allies are deviant by challenging them. White self-identifying allies, if wanting to rid the world of racism, should practice acts of deviance to challenge racialized structures. Turning points serve as movements in which allies begin the practice of such deviant actions. Scholars have begun to address White ally practices and how these might serve to challenge social structures and exhibit non-complicity.

Literature Review

Recent research has extensively focused on allyship and the need of the White ally community to provide support for BIPOC individuals in their efforts to create social change (Anicha et al., 2018; Edwards, 2006; Gachago, 2018; Jenkins, 2009). White allies hold a vital role in creating social equality and supporting the destruction of racialized structures. Advancing our understanding of White allyship, previous work has defined what allyship is, what makes definitions and practices useful, and the styles of how White allies become awoke to racial transgressions (Ford and Orlandella, 2015; Gachago, 2018; Helms, 1997).

Defining Allyship

To understand allyship, one can utilize two basic orientations: 1) allyship as an identity, or 2) allyship as an action. Identities are often defined as "self-definitions at the individual level of goals, values, beliefs, and other individually held self-evaluations and expected future selves" (Patton et al. 2016, p. 72). It may be true that identification as an ally itself could be seen as a social act attempting to create racial equality, but solely expressing one's identity does not pose a threat to racialized structures unless those identities are not White. Conveying one's ally identity in the United States is often greeted with positivity and encouragement from other White

individuals. The approval of these identities may seem to conflict with racialized structures but has served as a veil to hide the roots of racism in the structure. Since allyship as identity holds no practice of challenging racialized structures, they can function as an additional layer to hide white supremacy. Although goals and values of allies may aspire to create social equality, a mere allyship identity does not create substantial change (Becker, 2017).

Allyship with an absence of practice also leads allies into common failures like moral grandstanding. Moral grandstanding refers to allies not providing any substantive action to movements against racial inequality; instead allies only reiterate the feelings of others or define themselves as allies and continue to uphold racialized structures (Tosi and Warmke, 2016). Moving allyship into an active practice will allow allies to prevent themselves from falling into moral grandstanding pitfalls.

To avoid maintaining the status quo, many have suggested that White allies should become accomplices with BIPOC activists. This would allow them to assist in establishing the solidarity needed to fight against racial inequality (Bourke 2020; Carlson et al., 2020; Ortiz and Reyes, 2017; Suyemoto et al., 2020). This framework makes allyship action-oriented rather than an identity because it is associated with action and accountability. As Ortiz and Reyes (2017) convey, this seemingly new understanding of allyship would require White allies to take risks (losing privileges) and establish a strong connection with those who suffer from inequalities.

As Becker (2017) illustrates, allyship should ultimately result in practice rather than solely an identity label. Allyship as a practice can be defined as "…a person who is consciously committed, attitudinally and behaviorally, to an ongoing, purposeful engagement with and active challenging of white privilege, overt and subtle racism, and systemic racial inequalities for the purposes of becoming an agent of change in collaboration with, not for, people of color" (Ford and Orlandella, 2015). This definition allows for an analysis of allyship as an active practice and collaboration with BIPOC individuals to combat racialized structures.

Allyship as an active practice demonstrates how allies are linked to a continual process of self-reflection and evaluation of social realities (Atkins et al., 2017; Becker, 2017; Case, 2012; Spanierman and Smith, 2017; Suyemoto et al., 2020). This role of evaluation takes place on both an individual and structural level. On an individual level, one can wrestle with their own role in maintaining White privilege and racial attitudes. Structurally, one can reflect on how White privilege is maintained collectively resulting from society rather than particular individuals. As a

result, not only are micro levels of racism attacked, but institutionalized racism (as defined by Jones (2002) as structures, policies, practices, and norms that create different access to services, goods, and opportunities based on race) also becomes apparent to the ally.

Allyship as an action establishes the idea of collaboration with racial and ethnic minorities while also preventing ally pitfalls and white savior complexes. Collaboration creates an avenue for accountability and practices of allyship through maintaining the centrality of BIPOC voices. Labeling allies as accomplices sets the tone of a co-conspirator and social actor, which sets the basis for non-complicit allyship (Carlson et al., 2020). Scholars and activists have illustrated the need to hold White allies responsible for tearing down structures of inequality and taking on social action, which is consistent with the term accomplice (Suyemoto et al., 2020). As an accomplice in a crime is held responsible for the actions that took place at a scene, the White ally as accomplice becomes responsible for the destruction of racial structures (Jones, 2021). This new level of accountability not only shows strong support for the demise of racial structures but also encourages the dismissal of the White allies' own privileges and broadcasts their willingness to leave them behind.

Additionally, defining allyship as a verb demonstrates the need to understand the ways that allies act to challenge racialized structure. While much of the literature simultaneously agrees with social action being beneficial, some dive into reasons why not all action is crucial, and in fact, could be harmful (Bermudez, 2020; Garis 2020; Nuru and Arendt, 2018). White allies in this scholarship are encouraged to become supporters rather than central to combating social injustice. By avoiding centrality, the configuration of White allyship can formally divorce itself from the failures of white savior complexities. These complexities emphasize the important but limited role of the ally, as savior complexes express little of the needs and wants requested by those who suffer from racialized structures (Cole, 2012). These entanglements often are linked with insufficient challenges to racial structures and fail to acknowledge that oppressors cannot liberate the oppressed (Freire, 2000).

Complicit Allyship

By reviewing the literature on what allyship is, one can sense a dialogue related to the complicity of allyship with racialized structures. This section reviews allyship practices deemed to hold up cultural ideas and material realities of racialized social structures. To address the idea

of complicit allyship, it is crucial to first discuss allyship's need to produce change and challenge norms on both an individual and structural level; allyship must be devoted to equality on both a micro and macro level scale. White allies often find themselves struggling with this perspective as they frequently focus on combating inequality in regular spaces like voicing disapproval of the local neighborhood racist (Sumerau et al, 2021). This attack against inequality may be beneficial for eliminating stress experienced by those impacted by individual racism, but it does nothing to actively rid society of structural level racism. On this level of allyship with individual-level challenges of racism and relatively no social action, we find the prominence of labels and its usage by White individuals (Sumerau et al., 2021). These labels may be producing little social action to work in tandem with racial justice, because they are not continually challenging social structures.

In direct opposition, non-complicit allyship is a productive social action that challenges micro and macro-level structures for the purpose of social equality. Allies can be dedicated both internally (self-reflection) and externally (socially acting) to their role in creating racial equality. Individuals performing this style of allyship collectively act in a supportive (limited) way to create social equality. The limit here is to take on action that is supportive rather than central in the racial justice movement. Examples of some of these roles include creating support stations, speaking up about race relations in spaces composed solely of White individuals, and acting as human shields (Gachago, 2018). While these roles could be conceptualized as micro-level actions, they function in contention with racialized structures by supporting actions that challenge them. Thus, non-complicit allyship is when White allies are socially acting in a way that challenges structures and produces real-life consequences for the purpose of racial equality.

Establishing non-complicit allyship as a verb comes with a caveat as not all actions performed by allies are done in sync with motives to dethrone structures of power. Here we find the idea of performative activism in allyship. This type of activism is focused on individuals receiving social capital in return for taking part in the direct action against racial injustice (Kalina, 2020). In this position, allies are seeking a credit or payout for being an activist. Without devotion to the cause, those involved would not be willing to give up their privileges and practice non-complicity.

A refusal to rid themselves of privilege creates the divide of White complicit and non-complicit allies. As Sue (2017) states it is simply not enough to be a complicit ally, but the true

need is when allies become non-complicit. This idea splits basic acknowledgments of allyship into one that is actively challenging structures (non-complicit) and one that is sincere but not actively making change (complicit). As non-complicit allies are truly in the process of creating social change, they are considered beneficial to social movements combating racism.

Performative activism in this case is straddling a line between complicit and non-complicit allyship, as the individuals are representing some form of both a noun and verb. While this understanding could fit within the parameters of allyship outlined above, it is important to note that it functions in various social settings but stops at the level of structures. Due to this, allies that are only performative in their role are complicit allies.

White Turning Points

The extant literature offers insights into the current definitions and understandings of White allyship (Atkins et al., 2017; Becker, 2017; Case, 2012; Spanierman and Smith, 2017; Suyemoto et al., 2020) and ways to think about complicit and non-complicit practices of those identifying as White allies (Gachago, 2018; Kalina, 2020; Sumerau et al., 2021). Yet, there continues to be a lack of emphasis in published work on turning points leading to such identities and practices. In order to begin thinking through these trajectories of White allies, one can look at the literature on White identity development (Helms, 1997; Sue, 2017) for initial insights into potential pathways to allyship. Janet Helms, in her work on White identity development stages, explains a two-step process in which White individuals can identify themselves with allyship. The first process is the "abandonment of White racism," which refers to the idea that White individuals must become "awoke" to their bias against other racial groups (Helms 1997). This idea persists in the notion that one becomes "knowing" of the social constructions that surround them. As they enter this stage of the process, they can begin to decipher the deep-rooted problems that their identity, passions, and ideas place on others.

White individuals can take two distinct routes because of their newly found knowledge. One being that White privilege is explicitly clear to the holder, yet the individual engages in a form of complicit allyship through color-blind explanations that do not challenge their privileges (Mueller, 2017). Alternatively, they could move into the second stage of White identity development, the establishment of nonracist tendencies.

It is simply insufficient for one to become “awoke;” in identity development, thus the second stage of White identity development represents one becoming nonracist. This process relates to the idea that after individuals become socially aware, they must act on the ideas they hold. This, in essence, is asking the question of “I have the knowledge, so how can it be used to change the dynamics of the world?” Reflecting on the ideas of non-complicit allyship, we find a collective call for the use of social action in allyship. With the idea of White identity development, we can move further into how becoming awoke can take place and the various social, institutional, and cultural processes that help move this process along according to research.

To eliminate reiterations of White dominance that are often burdening White allyship and refocus allies towards nonracist tendencies, many have suggested the use of specific interventions and activities to create positive attitudes (Munin and Speight, 2010; Mackie, Devos, and Smith, 2000; Paluck and Green, 2009); these interventions and activities will be labeled as types of turning points. Potential influences and social realities behind White turning points can begin to differentiate the various “types” of turning points. The types of turning points have been defined in three distinct ways of awakening: through the upbringing of a household valuing allyship, the influence of diverse peers, and social awareness via social movements (Gonzales et al., 2015; Klandermans and Oegema, 1987; Peterson and Rollins, 1987; Smucker, 2017; Wright et al., 1997).

Some White individuals may racially awaken as a result from an upbringing in a household emphasizing the value of allyship. During this time, especially in early childhood, the values of family members are constantly reflected in the child’s socialization process. As Peterson & Rollins (1987) illustrate, parents play a crucial role in the socialization of their children as they acquire values and expectations in this process. Although we cannot predict that the outcome of this turning point will create non-complicit allies from the literature, it will be a place of emphasis in this study.

White allyship may occur for allies through exposure to diverse peers. This follows the idea that White individuals’ ability to racially awaken is contingent on their contact with individuals that are predominantly impacted by racialized structures. Extended contact hypothesis by Wright et al. (1997) proposes that contact with individuals of the outgroup effectively reduces prejudice. This removal of prejudice then alleviates notions of differences

that can lead to actions parallel to allyship. This turning point specifically relies on the research presented by Gonzalez et al. (2015), which shows that contact with peers creates positive feelings towards those in marginalized groups. Extended contact hypothesis promotes an ongoing emphasis on diversity in various social settings to create allies and challenge social structures (Wright et al., 1997).

As social movements attempt to create social change, the idea of recruitment holds the key to creating collective power. These efforts of recruitment involve the idea of mobilizing individuals who would otherwise not align with the goals of a social movement. Recruitment can function on various levels but largely focuses on mass media and direct mail (Klandermans and Oegema, 1987). It remains to be determined if social movements are functioning to produce non-complicit participants from a pool of individuals that benefit from non-reform. One tactic used by social movements to recruit members in these settings is creating motivations for social action. Smucker's (2017) analysis dives further into motivation by social movements through the lens of oppression and subordination. White allies divert from these forms of motivations and are limited to morals and potential gains of social capital. In return, we find here a contradiction of recruitment efforts of social movements and White allies. This study seeks to address these efforts to see how those who are influenced by social movements are defining and practicing allyship.

Methods

This project wrestles with the notion of White racial awakenings and how these impact outcomes of allyship activism, and is guided by the question: How do White allies' turning point narratives impact their understanding of themselves as White allies and their practices of allyship in the fight against racial inequality? This attempts to link the ideas of turning points to the definitions and practices of White allies.

Data Collection

The data from this study includes 19 qualitative, semi-structured interviews from a study about allyship. These interviews focus on collecting respondents' definitions and practices of allyship to analyze key differences related to defining an ally. For this study, only White respondents are included, as this study's focal point is on White self-identifying allies.

The study interviewed undergraduate students at a predominantly and historically White university in Southwest Virginia starting in February 2021 and spanning eight months. The interviews conducted provide insight into how allies narrate associations between White awakenings and allyship practices. As listed in Appendix A, questions addressing these topics are directly asked in the interview protocol. Interviewees were sent a post-interview survey, which collected basic demographics including, but not limited to, age, college major, gender, and race/ethnicity.

After obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board, the research team recruited potential respondents through various groups via Facebook (e.g., Class of 2023) and Twitter (e.g., institutional profile with hashtags). In addition, we also recruited by sending a request for participants to instructors who were teaching large classes in Spring 2021 and Fall 2021 as well as posting multiple listings in the local university news. These interviews were solicited using the flyer listed in Appendix B (redacted version). Potential respondents contacted a member of our research team to schedule an interview. Recruitment efforts were made to include both White and BIPOC respondents, especially those that identified themselves as allies. Respondents received a $5 dollar gift card to Amazon upon completion of the interview.

Table 1 presents the respondent demographics and pseudonyms given to everyone. The median age of the respondents was 20 with a range of 18 to 31. Correlated with their age, most respondents reported either junior (6) or senior (6) academic standing. All respondents identified on the gender binary scale, with men representing slightly more than half (10), the remainder identified as women (9). When describing their background, most respondents originally lived in suburban areas (11). The remainder of interviewees were evenly split between urban (4) and rural hometowns (4).

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Academic Standing	Political Party	Hometown
Jessie	19	Woman	Sophomore	Democrat	Urban
Dama	20	Woman	Sophomore	Democrat	Suburban
Caster	31	Man	Junior	Independent	Rural
Stephanie	21	Woman	Senior	DNI	Suburban
Lisa	20	Woman	Junior	Democrat	Suburban
Abby	20	Woman	Sophomore	Democrat	Rural
Susan	18	Woman	Freshman	Democrat	Urban
Grace	20	Woman	Junior	Democrat	Suburban
James	19	Man	Sophomore	DNI	Rural
Joe	21	Man	Junior	Republican	Suburban
Larry	22	Man	Senior	DNI	Suburban
John	19	Man	Sophomore	DNI	Suburban
Hannah	21	Woman	Senior	Republican	Suburban
Patrick	20	Man	Senior	DNI	Suburban
Phil	19	Man	Freshman	Democrat	Rural
Sasha	20	Woman	Junior	Democrat	Suburban
Stuart	24	Man	Senior	Democrat	Urban
Steve	21	Man	Junior	DNI	Suburban
Tyler	25	Man	Senior	Independent	Urban

*DNI = does not identify

Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed to reflect how respondents conceptualize their White ally identity, the allyship practices discussed with the research team, and their recollections and narratives regarding turning points. The interviews were initially coded based on the response to questions that directly deal with the White ally's definitions, practices, and turning points. As these ideas often were returned to when allies answered various other questions, themes revolving around definitions, practices, and turning points became central to coding. In attempts to stick close to previous literature, codes were created based on common trends addressed in the literature. I also remained open during the coding for any insights into the research question. By doing so, the analysis will reveal patterns of similar experiences and outcomes of allyship and their potential role in social movements for racial justice.

Reflexivity

With the widespread concern about the protection of Black and Brown bodies, it is important that this study reflects on a variety of different factors involving myself and my understanding of race. I am a multiracial male graduate student that lives in Southwest Virginia. As an individual who suffers from racial inequalities, I also have a level of interest in how White individuals are practicing allyship. I additionally come with my own social realities that will impact my understanding of the data, which include education in a southwest Virginia university, background in activism, and oppression due to my skin color.

It is also crucial to understand that I can never become a White ally, therefore there may be a disconnect in my ability to truly understand what respondents may be trying to illustrate. To combat this, I will attempt to follow the ideas outlined by White respondents exclusively and use past literature to guide my thoughts.

As some interviews were conducted by me, I must reflect on how White ally narratives may shift due to a BIPOC interviewer. White ally narratives when discussing allyship with a BIPOC individual adds another dynamic to the conversations, as White allies may feel compelled to discuss their definitions and practices differently with a White interviewer. For this reason, White allies may change their responses to interview questions, thus why this study focuses on narratives.

Results

Self-identifying White allies discussed a wide variety of turning points, definitions of allyship, and practices. Not only do these discussions highlight important themes but relationships evolve between these definitions, practices, and turning points. The results section reviews key themes from each of these categories then moves into an analysis of the overlapping ideas expressed by White allies. These overlapping ideas provide clarity to how turning points influence ideas of White ally definitions and practices.

Turning Point Narratives

White ally narratives are not limited to one turning point, instead allies discuss several points that created their allyship. Of the nineteen respondents only three discussed a single instance as their turning point, which illustrates that allies see turning points as a series of

interactions. Below I discuss the major types of turning points discussed by the White allies in the sample.

Turning point narratives expressed by White allies aligned closely to those highlighted in previous literature, often referring to their upbringing, exposure to diversity, and awareness of social movements as potential sources for their racial awakenings (Gonzales et al., 2015; Klandermans and Oegema, 1987; Peterson and Rollins, 1987; Smucker, 2017; Wright et al., 1997). Of these, exposure to peers was discussed by a large portion of the respondents as a reason that they began to understand and empathize with the BIPOC community. For instance, James, a 2nd year student in engineering, shares how being friends with a person of color led to him seeing racism.

> "Somebody might treat my black friend differently than me just because he's darker than me, and I don't agree with that, but I've seen it. I've seen it happen with my own eyes."

Similar to Atkins et al. (2017), ally engagement with diverse peers can serve as a fundamental basis for awareness of racial issues, and this point can be associated with racism. Relationships with diverse peers allow allies to directly view racism and the impacts it creates for BIPOC bodies, thus allowing the White allies to engage with topics of racism more fully.

With the wide-spread protests in 2020, it was not surprising that many respondents (interviewed throughout 2021) discussed such protests as an important turning point for them. These allies often directly discussed protests that resulted from the murder of George Floyd. Allies acknowledged protests as an "eye-opening experience" in which they began to "see and engage" in topics surrounding racism and practices of allyship. Phil, a male freshman echoes the impact these protests had on his realization that racism is a significant problem.

> "I would say probably about a year ago when I really started like caring… with…the protests that we saw last summer. Yeah, I was like, wow, this is like, I didn't really realize this was this big of an issue."

Although the literature touches on the idea of social movements and their efforts to inspire activism (Smucker, 2017), here we can see that protest itself is sparking the realization of racism and engagement in conversations and practices surrounding racial justice. This provides a

glimpse into how the 2020 racial reckoning may have worked to create a generation of White allies.

Along with this, allies discussed the importance that education played on their identification as an ally, with an emphasis on their experiences in high school. White allies described these years in two ways: 1) receiving education on important histories of race and racism, and 2) a space where they engaged with diverse others, some for the first time. High school experiences led to descriptions of allies learning about race-related topics (e.g. slavery, Civil Rights Movement) and influential BIPOC individuals (e.g. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Malcolm X). Lisa, a junior, described how learning history in high school changed her understanding of the world.

> "I learned about the history of this country…in… high school, because I think all the history before that… wasn't talking about anybody of color. It was a history of White people."

Self-identified allies, like Lisa, narrate that high school allowed them to understand a more complete U.S. history than they had previously known and, importantly, to learn about the role of BIPOC individuals in that history. High school as a place of exposure to racial topics in the classroom is concerning due to the current expulsion of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and racial topics in public education. Despite CRT not directly being taught in high school curriculum, race is being removed as an area of discussion and the inequalities that exists around it. If current curriculum discussing race is allowing students to engage with race and recognize racism, current efforts to remove racial topics, hidden in the effort to eliminate CRT in public education, will have severe consequences to potential allyship identity and practice.

Narrating high school as an area of exposure to racism, White allies describe a "realness" of racism that allowed them to reflect on their own privileges. Patrick, a male senior, shared a story of an experience he had in high school that allowed him to recognize racial issues.

> **"**going back to high school… that's like when I first recognized the problems at hand… people would come back from the bathroom and have the N-word written on their desk… that's when I started recognizing that those were problems."

Here Patrick and other respondents illustrate how seeing racism in high school served as an additional turning point. High school and diversity within it are creating exposure to racism itself, which may have a variety of different impacts on the understanding of allyship and its practices.

Ally turning points narratives were discussed by various allies regardless of their social background. Styles of turning points across social factors illustrate that turning points are not occurring solely in particular places, like suburban neighborhoods. The next section will begin to review the various ways that allyship is defined by White allies.

Ally Definitions

Research recommends allyship be defined as an active practice, and White allies also discuss the need for social action in its definition (Suyemoto et al., 2020). Before discussing these distinct practices, allies first illustrate the role that White privilege plays in defining allyship. Advantage and its relationship with allyship allow White allies to discuss the specific scenarios in which they can practice allyship. By first defining an ally as a person with an advantage, allies are able to further discuss the implications of such a definition in the fight for racial justice.

Consider the short passage below which serves the general understanding that allies are defined as advantaged in relation to racism. Allies, including Steve, a male junior, directly define allies as White/advantaged.

“somebody who's not personally impacted by racism”

Here we can see that most respondents view allies as individuals with a lack of impacts resulting from racism, representing a form of privilege/advantage. Allies understanding their relationship to racism is crucial to further deciphering how they can practice allyship and avoid the failures of White savior complexes. Allies continue their discussion of allyship as advantaged when narrating how allies should be fighting against racial injustice.

White allies emphasized that Whites could use their advantages to combat racism. James illustrates the importance of using advantage particularly to help the BIPOC community gain equity.

> "use… inherited advantage in society...to help disenfranchised people gain equity in the modern world… there's been a lot of work…to get to where we are today and there has to have been an ally or somebody willing to stand up."

Not only are allies identifying characteristics of advantage to describe allyship, but they discuss the ally's utilization of advantage. Here we can start analyzing how allies are defining themselves as White and advantaged in racialized social structure. As White allies intertwined their definitions with notions of advantage/privilege, allies began discussing how they must function in a limited capacity.

As self-identifying allies further the relationship of advantage and its utilization as a core definition of allyship, they also expressed the limitations that occur as a result. Though allies provided a variety of responses to why their position in the fight against racial injustice is limited, including White savior complexes, they painted an overall image that White allies have limited spaces to perform in, as Patrick discusses.

> "(an ally) recognizes the importance of racism, but does not use their position as a White person or White male, to take ownership of the conversation. I think it's important for any marginalized, racial minority, to be part of the conversation, it shouldn't just be White allies who are directing the conversation about race"

Self-identifying allies express their responsibility to function as a tool in the process of racial justice rather than a central actor, thus limiting their practices. If allies started practicing without the guidance of those in the BIPOC community, they may fall into White savior complexities, which they wish to avoid. In combination with limited practices, allies discussed the shortcomings of White allyship and how White ownership of the conversation often fails to resolve issues of racism and in many ways creates more racism.

Coupled with ideas of advantage and limited practices, some White allies talked about sacrifice in allyship. These discussions exemplify ideas of staking their privilege/advantage, with narratives often stemming from the idea that allies need to sacrifice time and energy to be an ally. These entailed allies going "out of the way" to educate themselves and practice allyship. Hannah, a female White senior, discusses how allies must be actively practicing behaviors that are not necessarily routine.

> “someone that actively goes out of their way to like read literature, and repost and read books, and talk to people of different races to understand what they're going through.”

Here allyship is perceived as a “strain” or extra duty instead of a lifestyle or action. White allies understanding allyship as “going out of the way” to engage in racial topics and understand the role that race plays in a social context. While these extra responsibilities may discourage others or even prevent themselves from participating in allyship, these narratives start to unpack a divide between complicity/non-complicity as the dive into activities that are not routine. Returning to ideas of non-complicit allyship allows us to start seeing how White allies understand allyship as non-routine in the social world, instead it is sought out and required to be an ally.

Although the above themes were discussed equally across gender lines, women provided an insight into the role of sacrifice in allyship. While it may be difficult to describe the reasons why this occurred, gender is leading to an alternative version of allyship focused on allyship being continuous. As women face social inequalities due to sexism, this may allow for more empathy with BIPOC struggles. Women-identifying White allies also described allyship as an everyday routine, in which an ally must engage in some activity or reflection of themselves and their environment. A female freshman, Susan, talks about allyship being defined as continuous.

> “it's something that I have to actively think about every day… I can't let a day go by where… I don't… put it into perspective.”

Though allies were not asked if they participated in allyship daily, women engaged in a discussion of actively participating in allyship. This could likely be due to their experiences and reflection of the role that gender plays on their own bodies in society. Reiterating the call of experiences and empathy, gender may be creating alternative understandings of the continuous nature of allyship. Furthering this idea would require additional analysis in future research.

As allies described their definitions of allyship, they started to discuss the numerous ways that they practice allyship as a result. These practices often reiterated the importance of functioning in limited spaces in the process of fighting racial inequality.

Ally Practices

Although emphasis was placed on the limits of allyship, allies were still willing to talk about practices. White allies discussed several forms of action, with frequently emerging themes of communicating with BIPOC individuals and "being a friend." Allies also discussed the role of education and social media in ally practices.

Narratives surrounding communicating with BIPOC individuals steered allies into a discussion of the role they play in these conversations. Allies first discussed their position as a listener. Listening, as described by White allies, focused on the idea that they must be cognizant of BIPOC voices. Allies illustrate that through listening to oppressed voices they can understand the impacts of racism. Jessie, a female sophomore, discusses the importance of listening to BIPOC individuals and how this allows them to understand the experiences of those impacted by racism.

> "I would say an ally is basically listening to the people who need to be heard… not talking for them, but listening and really hearing other experiences"

Emphasizing the need of listening to BIPOC voices is described as an opportunity to hear the lived realities of other individuals and learn from them. Here we find another connection to exposure of diverse peers, and we can link narratives of allies listening and the establishment of empathy throughout the interviews. Several of these discussions on listening return to previous ideas of racism becoming "real" for White allies.

The "reality" of racism narrated by White allies from listening illustrates their reliance on visualizing racism to become aware. Knowing allies need to see racism to internalize its existence means that exposure to diverse peers can be a pivotal turning point for allies. Diverse peers then are guiding White allies into new conceptualizations of racism and the encouragement of an allyship role. Despite this conception allowing BIPOC individuals to shape White allies, it opens allies to common pitfalls that require BIPOC individuals to speak on behalf of their communities and a failure to educate themselves. Allies should be encouraged to follow the lead of BIPOC voices but should not solely rely on any one individual. Instead, they should actively seek to educate themselves on racial inequalities and the practices they should enact.

Although allies discussed the importance of listening, some also inserted their role as communicator in these conversations. Patrick shared their practice of allyship as talking with BIPOC individuals at work.

> "I try just to have…normal conversations with everybody… if I see a black staff, you…say…how are you doing today? I try to have…normal conversations with people."

Specifically, allies discuss these interactions as normal, everyday conversations, and not dealing with topics of racism. By communicating with BIPOC individuals, allies illustrate that they can form relationships and become friends.

Being a friend was a predominant understanding of allyship as a practice. Allies emphasized being a friend through supporting BIPOC voices. Joe, a White junior, discusses not only "being a friend" but also the practices of what being a friend includes.

> "(An ally is) a supportive friend… someone who's there… no matter what the situation is… you can… rely on them, I would put it… reliable at any type of situation"

As a friend, allies relayed the importance of being both supportive and reliable. As a supporter, allies illustrated that they have a responsibility to uplift BIPOC voices and provide resources. The notion of reliability focused on being active when allyship is difficult to practice, specifically in situations of protests and being challenged by others (e.g. police involvement, family pushback).

The idea of being friends allows another glimpse into how advantage is again slipping through the ideas of allyship definitions and practices. Preventing White centrality leads to limited spaces which leads allies to communication and "become friends" with BIPOC individuals to understand their roles, while at the same time these serve as a point where they become allies. Limited roles are serving as a beneficial tool to allow for BIPOC voices to be heard and allows allies to seek relationships with BIPOC individuals.

Education also found its way into the performance of White allies. Allies often discussed their responsibility to educate themselves through engaging with literature and listening to

BIPOC voices, but they also reiterated their role to educate others, specifically family and peers. As discussed by a female sophomore, Dama, allies should be educating themselves and others.

> "helping… stay educated… and educate the world… (using) your platform of privilege… keeping myself accountable for educating myself."

Expressing their need to maintain up-to-date knowledge on racism also led to allies highlighting their role to educate others. Educating others, or White peers, brings in the conversations of utilizing privileges, as White allies see themselves as being able to educate White peers to understand the realities of racism.

Another interesting development occurred when allies began to discuss the distinction between participating in online settings through petitions and social media. Several allies performed allyship online, some even stating that they practice online activism largely due to the COVID pandemic. White allies participated online by commenting on posts to support the BIPOC community, which were often responses to what they described as racist posts. Additionally, they stated that sharing information on social media allowed an avenue for educating others and sharing ideas across their networks. Some also discussed practices outside of social media that included signing petitions and donating money to organizations like Black Lives Matter.

Not all White allies agreed online performance are legitimate actions of allyship, as some outright disagreed with this perspective. John, a male sophomore, discussed online activism as a form of performative activism and a characterization of what allies look like.

> "You know there's like all the… White girls that will go post things on Instagram… that's the performative activism, and then it's the making it about them"

This passage gives insights to how some allies are directly linking online activism as performative. Opposition to online activism reiterates calls against moral grandstanding and online usage just to promote yourself as an ally in identity. This identification as discussed in the literature fails to be non-complicit deviant behavior, thus not actively challenging racism (Gachago, 2018).

Discussion

The major turning points discussed by White allies in this research included exposure to diverse peers and family, education, experiences in high school, as well as the existence of contemporary protests. These narratives find themselves in both routine and non-routine White experiences in the social world. Routine experiences represent interactions that White individuals are often exposed to in daily life, which include interactions with diverse peers and education. These experiences are fundamental parts of life despite racialized structures that try to prevent White non-complicity and maintain white supremacy. Outside of routine experiences, allies illustrated turning points resulting from unordinary situations like protests and diverse families.

Experiences not rooted in an everyday White life resulted in alternative definitions and practices of allyship. These experiences are unordinary as they are not typical interactions for White individuals. Protests, despite happening frequently in the world, are often absent in the social realities of White individuals. Exposure to diverse family members, although typical of a particular White individual with BIPOC family, is not an inherent part of White families. Both narratives are non-routine social experiences that guide allies to non-complicit definitions and practices of allyship.

The analysis of turning points narratives as routine/non-routine experiences allowed White allies to express either complicit/non-complicit definitions and practices of allyship. Routine/non-routine turning points create two pathways for allyship: (1) routine experiences become avenues for allies to talk about allyship in complicit ways, while (2) unordinary experiences allow for more in-depth analysis of the ally and their role in social movements as non-complicit.

White routine experiences follow the assumption that White individuals are constantly exposed to diverse peers and educated about racial topics despite ongoing segregation of racial minorities. Though White individuals may not be exposed to racial topics and diverse peers in their communities, experiences in high school and through education represent typical White experiences that open them to allyship definitions and practices. These routine turning points function in racialized structures without directly threatening the structure itself as the definitions and practices resulting from them are complicit. Illustrated definitions and practices resulting from routine turning points include being a friend or listener and lack a discussion of specific action that allies should practice. Although ideas of allyship resulting from routine turning points

may lead to general definitions and practices, they are crucial in the process for Whites transitioning into allyship.

Ally turning point narratives that focus on education and diverse peers are expressed as spaces when allies can see racism as “real.” In terms of education, allies were able to learn about the issue of racism existing in current and historical settings. Through learning, White allies start the process of racially awakening and taking on allyship identities and practices, although they may be complicit in racialized structures. Exposure to diverse peers also led self-identifying allies to racial awakenings as they became aware of the BIPOC experience. Though some White allies narrate directly seeing these instances of racism, most shared their dialogues with BIPOC peers as the reason they were able to recognize racism as a prominent issue.

The establishment of turning point narratives from these routine experiences may not create allies that are rebellious against racialized structures, but they serve as a key point in which White allies begin to transition into allyship (racially awakened). Without routine interactions and experiences, allyship would be limited to turning points that occur in situations that are non-routine. If routine turning points were to be limited, the creation of allies could be severely impacted as these are situations that many White individuals find themselves in and could be entryways into allyship that eventually lead to non-complicity.

Turning point narratives representing experiences outside of routine White life, such as protests and diverse families, provided alternative definitions and practices of allyship than those with routine narratives. These narrated experiences provided a key insight to how allies start the process of understanding non-complicity in allyship and their own role as an ally. The protest of 2020 led allies to move into addressing the limitations of allyship in their definitions and practices. White allies who discussed the limitations of allyship share the recent protests as a significant turning point. In these recent protests, BIPOC individuals called for White allies to take on a less centralized and limited role in the fight against racial injustice, and here we may be seeing the result of these calls (Mann and Baker, 2020). The understanding of allyship by White allies is reflective of definitions and practices shared by protests and has major implications for creating non-complicit allies. Non-complicity serves as an extremely beneficial tool to combat both White savior complexes and racism itself, and protests are allowing White individuals to move into a pivotal but limited position of non-complicity. As protests continue throughout the

country, social movements could be sure to add elements of defining allyship roles to guide Whites.

The direction of allyship practices and definitions should be supportive and limited roles as Gachago (2018) points out. These positions allow BIPOC individuals to lead racial justice movements to combat racialized structures and guide White allies into non-complicit roles like blocking police from BIPOC protestors. In addition, roles may or may not include online activities, and this is an area of confusion for White allies. Although online activism is linked to performative activism, White allies are still participating in this practice. Research should discuss this relationship further to discover the benefits and downsides to online activism for White allies and the movement for racial justice.

Diverse family is another non-routine experience which linked allies to definitions focused on advantage. When White allies discussed diverse families, they established a distinction between themselves and their family members. This distinction allowed them to gain insight into the structures of racism that exist. Through these familial bonds, they could understand how they are racially advantaged. White allies with diverse families also reflected on how individuals treat family members when they are "with" them and not. In these settings, allies narrate the ability to understand the struggles that their family experiences because of racism and their own inability to see racism. These instances could be providing allies with a more complex definition of allyship including the role of advantage.

As with allyship that falls into complicity and non-complicity, the narrated paths to allyship followed the ideas of maintaining racialized structures or deviance against them. Paths of complicity and non-complicity linked heavily to White ally narratives and whether they were rooted in everyday experiences or not. Routine turning points provided allies with the ability to racially awaken but failed to move allies into positions of non-complicity. Turning points occurring outside of ordinary White experiences led to definitions and practices of non-complicity, which demonstrate a need for non-routine turning points to allow White individuals to think about racism and its impacts more systemically.

Limitations

As this research was conducted at a unique time, there were several barriers that impacted this study. The pandemic was one of the major contexts that severely limited this project through

confined outreach to students on campus and interviews relying on online spaces. While these limitations continue to be experienced by research today, it still serves as a place of reflection and limitation of both outreach and design. Outreach is limited to those who were active in online areas, as much of recruitment occurred in these spaces. Interviewing during the pandemic also required respondents to have access to stable internet and products to chat online. Participating in these online settings also required respondents to have a space where they felt comfortable to discuss race-related topics, which may have also limited the respondent's willingness to discuss.

This study was conducted during a time of increased awareness of anti-Asian hate speech. Spreading awareness of this topic may have limited White allies to narrowing on these discussions instead of being an ally for the BIPOC community holistically. Heightened social awareness of racial issues could fundamentally influence the ideas of allyship discussed by self-identified allies in this study. The implications of turning point narratives that result from experiences and reactions of heightened awareness could have implications now but be less impactful as awareness of racial issues decreases. This study also limits itself with a discussion of allies for racial justice rather than allies of other movements like gender equity.

Conclusion

This study finds that turning point narratives impact the definitions and practices of allies by leading the allies into complicity or non-complicity. Narratives that are rooted in everyday routine experiences of White individuals, such as exposure to diverse peers and education, lead to definitions and practices that do not threaten racialized structures. Despite these narratives leading to complicity, they do allow White individuals to racially awaken and start the process of moving into allyship, a step that is fundamentally necessary for the creation of White allies. Turning point narratives occurring in settings outside of routine experiences linked allies to non-complicit definitions and practices. These narratives allowed White allies to think about their limited role in racial movements and illustrate practices that challenge racialized structures.

These findings result in three major implications of turning point narratives: 1) racial awakenings resulting from high school education and experiences may be under threat through CRT bans, 2) protests could be used as a mechanism to guide White allies into more detailed

non-complicit definitions and practices, and 3) non-routine turning points could better shape White allies than those rooted in everyday White experiences.

Turning points narratives resulting from high school experiences may currently be in limbo as US politics become further involved in restricting curriculum in public schools. The US is dealing with an outright attack against CRT and ideas of race relations being discussed in school as many anti-CRT Governors take positions of power. Several school districts and states have started to implement bans on text and other resources that allow young White students to become racially aware and engage with allyship (Ray & Gibbon, 2021). This could defer the exposure of allyship and halt racial awakenings until college years or later in life, which creates more barriers to creating social equality and movements into an ally lifestyle. Future research may investigate narratives of high school as turning points and the further implications of removing race-related topics in high school settings.

As this paper deals with the turning point narratives of White allies and how this reflects their definitions and practices of allyship, the implications of protests matter. Linking protest to allyship as non-complicit provides an interesting analysis of how protests could be used as a mechanism to relay information to White individuals on the verge of becoming allies. Educating allies on their definitions and practices provides social movements with the opportunity to allow BIPOC leadership to express these roles directly to White allies. If this link continues to persist, social movements could educate allies into non-complicity.

Allyship definitions and practices moving into ideas of continual non-complicity will be the future of ridding the world of racialized social structures. Allies that truly want to create social change should be practicing non-complicity and turning points give us a glimpse into how these definitions and practices are created. Breaking down specific turning points individually may allow for additional research on the influence of turning point narratives.

References

Agnew, Robert. 1992. “Foundation for A General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency.” *Criminology* 30(1):47–88. doi: 10.1111/j.1745-9125.1992.tb01093.x.

Anicha, Cali, Canan Bilen-Green, and Ann Burnett. 2018. “Advocates and Allies: The Succession of a Good Idea or What’s in a Meme? (Dispatch).” *Studies in Social Justice* 12(1):152–64. doi: 10.26522/ssj.v12i1.1613.

Atkins, Shawna L., Marilyn R. Fitzpatrick, Gauthamie Poolokasingham, Mariane Lebeau, and Lisa B. Spanierman. 2017. “Make It Personal: A Qualitative Investigation of White Counselors’ Multicultural Awareness Development.” *The Counseling Psychologist* 45(5):669–96. doi: 10.1177/0011000017719458.

Becker, Jenifer. 2017. “Active Allyship.” *Public Services Quarterly* 13(1):27–31. doi: 10.1080/15228959.2016.1261638.

Bermudez, Claudia. 2020. “The Flaw with Social Media Activism.” *Washington University Political Review.* (https://www.wupr.org/2020/08/02/the-flaw-with-social-media-activism/).

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 1997. “Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation.” *American Sociological Review* 62(3):465–80. doi: 10.2307/2657316.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2014. “Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America.” *Choice Reviews Online* 51(05):51–2956. doi: 10.5860/CHOICE.51-2956.

Bourke, Brian. 2020. “Leaving behind the Rhetoric of Allyship.” *Whiteness and Education* 5(2):179–94. doi: 10.1080/23793406.2020.1839786.

Brown, Cynthia Stokes. 2002. “Refusing Racism: White Allies and the Struggle for Civil Rights.” New York: Teachers College Press.

Camara Phyllis Jones. 2002. “Confronting Institutionalized Racism.” *Phylon (1960-)* 50(1–2):7–22.

Carlson, Juliana, Cliff Leek, Erin Casey, Rich Tolman, and Christopher Allen. 2019. “What’s in a Name? A Synthesis of ‘Allyship’ Elements from Academic and Activist Literature.” *Journal of Family Violence* 35(8):889–98. doi: 10.1007/s10896-019-00073-z.

Case, Kim A. 2012. “Discovering the Privilege of Whiteness: White Women’s Reflections on Anti-Racist Identity and Ally Behavior.” *Journal of Social Issues* 68(1):78–96. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01737.x.

Clark, Meredith D. 2019. “White Folks’ Work: Digital Allyship Praxis in the #BlackLivesMatter Movement.” *Social Movement Studies* 18(5):519–34. doi: 10.1080/14742837.2019.1603104.

Cole, Teju. 2012. “The White-Savior Industrial Complex.” *The Atlantic*. (https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-White-savior-industrial-complex/254843/).

Edwards, Keith E. 2006. “Aspiring Social Justice Ally Identity Development: A Conceptual Model.” *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 43(4):1235–56. doi: 10.2202/1949-6605.1722.

Ford, Kristie A., and Josephine Orlandella. 2015. “The ‘Not-So-Final Remark’ The Journey to Becoming White Allies.” *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1(2):287–301. doi: 10.1177/2332649214559286.

Freire, Paulo. 2000. “Pedagogy of the Oppressed.” 30th anniversary ed. New York: Continuum.

Gachago, Daniela. 2018. “Lessons on Humility: White Women’s Racial Allyship in Academia.” Pp. 131–44 in *Feminism and Intersectionality in Academia: Women’s Narratives and Experiences in Higher Education*, edited by S. A. Shelton, J. E. Flynn, and T. J. Grosland. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Garis, Mary. 2020. “7 Ways to Be an Effective Ally for the Black Community, Because Empty Virtue Signaling Is Not It.” *Well+Good*. (https://www.wellandgood.com/what-is-virtue-signaling/).

Gonzalez, Kirsten A., Ellen D. B. Riggle, and Sharon S. Rostosky. 2015. “Cultivating Positive Feelings and Attitudes: A Path to Prejudice Reduction and Ally Behavior.” *Translational Issues in Psychological Science* 1(4):372–81. doi: 10.1037/tps0000049.

Helms, Janet E. 1997. Toward a model of White racial identity development. College student development and academic life: Psychological, intellectual, social and moral issues, 49-66.

Jenkins, Toby. 2009. “A Seat at the Table That I Set: Beyond Social Justice Allies.” *About Campus* 14(5):27–29.

Jones, Jabari C. 2021. “We Need Accomplices, Not Allies in the Fight for an Equitable Geoscience.” AGU Advances 2(3):e2021AV000482. doi: 10.1029/2021AV000482.

Klandermans, Bert, and Dirk Oegema. 1987. “Potentials, Networks, Motivations, and Barriers: Steps Towards Participation in Social Movements.” *American Sociological Review* 52(4):519–31.

Mackie, D. M., T. Devos, and E. R. Smith. 2000. “Intergroup Emotions: Explaining Offensive Action Tendencies in an Intergroup Context.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79(4):602–16.

Mann, Brian, and Elizabeth Baker. 2020. "Black protest leaders to White allies: 'it's our turn to lead our own fight'." *NPR*. (https://www.npr.org/2020/09/22/913094440/black-protest-leaders-to-White-allies-it-s-our-turn-to-lead-our-own-fight)

Mueller, Jennifer C. 2017. "Producing Colorblindness: Everyday Mechanisms of White Ignorance." *Social Problems* 64(2):332. doi: 10.1093/socpro/spx012.

Munin, Art, and Suzette L. Speight. 2010. "Factors Influencing the Ally Development of College Students." *Equity & Excellence in Education* 43(2):249–64.

Nuru, Audra K., and Colleen E. Arendt. 2019. "Not So Safe a Space: Women Activists of Color's Responses to Racial Microaggressions by White Women Allies." *Southern Communication Journal* 84(2):85–98. doi: 10.1080/1041794X.2018.1505940.

Ortiz, Zoe D., and Ruben E. Reyes Jr. 2017. "Check Your Allyship." *The Harvard Crimson.* (https://www.thecrimson.com/column/borderlandsla-frontera/article/2017/9/18/reyes-ortiz-allyship/)

Paluck, Elizabeth Levy, and Donald P. Green. 2009. "Prejudice Reduction: What Works? A Review and Assessment of Research and Practice." *Annual Review of Psychology* 60(1):339–67. doi: 10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163607.

Patton, Lori D., Kristen A. Renn, Florence Guido-DiBrito, and Stephen John Quaye. 2016. *Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Third edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass & Pfeiffer.

Peter Kalina. 2020. "Performative Allyship." *Technium Social Sciences Journal* 11:478–81. doi: 10.47577/tssj.v11i1.1518.

Peterson, Gary W., and Boyd C. Rollins. 1987. "Parent-Child Socialization." Pp. 471–507 in *Handbook of Marriage and the Family*. Springer US: Boston, MA.

Radke, Helena R. M., Maja Kutlaca, Birte Siem, Stephen C. Wright, and Julia C. Becker. 2020. "Beyond Allyship: Motivations for Advantaged Group Members to Engage in Action for Disadvantaged Groups." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 24(4):291–315. doi: 10.1177/1088868320918698.

Ray, Rashawn, and Alexandra Gibbons. 2021. Why are states banning critical race theory? *Brookings*. (https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2021/07/02/why-are-states-banning-critical-race-theory/)

Sampson, Robert J., and John H. Laub. 1995. "Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points through Life". First Harvard University Press paperback edition. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Smucker, Jonathan Matthew. 2017. "Hegemony How-to: A Roadmap for Radicals." Chico, CA: AK Press.

Spanierman, Lisa B., and Laura Smith. 2017. “Roles and Responsibilities of White Allies: Implications for Research, Teaching, and Practice.” *The Counseling Psychologist* 45(5):606–17. doi: 10.1177/0011000017717712.

Sue, Derald Wing. 2017. “The Challenges of Becoming a White Ally.” *The Counseling Psychologist* 45(5):706–16. doi: 10.1177/0011000017719323.

Sumerau, J. E., TehQuin D. Forbes, Eric Anthony Grollman, and Lain A. B. Mathers. 2021. “Constructing Allyship and the Persistence of Inequality.” *Social Problems* 68(2):358–73. doi: 10.1093/socpro/spaa003.

Sutherland, Edwin H. 1972. The theory of differential association. In Readings in Criminology and Penology (pp. 365-371). Columbia University Press.

Suyemoto, Karen L., Alissa L. Hochman, Roxanne A. Donovan, and Lizabeth Roemer. 2021. “Becoming and Fostering Allies and Accomplices Through Authentic Relationships: Choosing Justice Over Comfort.” *Research in Human Development* 18(1–2):1–28. doi: 10.1080/15427609.2020.1825905.

Tosi, Justin, and Brandon Warmke. 2016. “Moral Grandstanding.” *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 44(3):197–217. doi: 10.1111/papa.12075.

Wright, Stephen C., Arthur Aron, Tracy McLaughlin-Volpe, and Stacy A. Ropp. 1997. “The Extended Contact Effect: Knowledge of Cross-Group Friendships and Prejudice.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 73(1):73–90. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.73.1.73.

Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

- If someone asked you to define your race, how would you define yourself?

White respondents

- Do you think that racism is a problem in our society today?
  - **IF SO:** Why do you think racism is a problem? Can you give some examples?
  - **IF NOT:** Why do you think racism is **not** a problem?
- How would you define the word "ally"?
- If we asked you to close your eyes and envision a "White ally," what is the first image that comes to mind? Tell me more.
- Do you consider yourself an ally?
  - **For White respondents who answer yes:**
    - How do you engage in allyship?
      - What activities do you engage in on- and offline?
      - Do you find yourself more or less willing to engage in offline or online allyship?
    - When did you first become an ally?
      - What was the turning point?
    - When you think of a historical figure or figures to model your allyship off of, who are those individuals? Why?
    - Are there any contemporary individuals who you see as models for White allyship?
    - Why are you an ally?
    - Are your friends allies?
      - **IF YES:** does their allyship look different than yours?
      - **IF NO:** does that impact how you feel about and/or enact your allyship?
    - Are you a part of any organized allyship or anti-racist groups?
      - **IF YES:** tell us about your experience in those groups.
        - What do you all do to help the cause?
      - **IF NO:** why not?

    Have you ever faced pushback from friends and/or family because of your White allyship?

    What do you think about individuals who are actively against White allyship?

    What do you think is the future of White allyship?

    What advice would you give to your future children about becoming a White ally who fights for racial justice?

  - **For White respondents who answer no:**
    - What are your feelings about those who identify as "White allies"?

- What are your feelings about those who engage in allyship?
    - Did you actively make a decision to not be an ally? Why or why not?
    - Are your friends allies?
        - If so, what does their allyship look like?
- What do you think is the future of White allyship?

FOR ALL WHITE RESPONDENTS:
- Do you think you benefit from privilege?
- We are going to end the interview with a question about the role of White allies in Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other struggles for racial justice in terms of what those involved in the struggle might want and need from White allies:
    - What do you think BIPOC want from White allies?
    - What do you think BIPOC need from White allies?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix B: Flyer