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# Engaging Race and Power in Higher Education Organizations Through a Critical Race Institutional Logics Perspective Framework

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## Abstract

Engaging today's issues in higher education requires strong analytical tools that can address the complex nature of our institutional systems and their involved actors. This paper forwards a critical race institutional logics perspective (CRILP). CRILP examines both organizations as they are embedded in a neoliberal and racist society and actor identity, agency, decision-making, and their relation to power. It important to centralize actor-level racial identity and intersecting identities as race and racism are still pervasive in today's society. Additionally, the current state of higher education as a market-driven entity leads to thinking about the ways that neoliberalism has permeated the policies and practices in higher education and the ways that the outcomes of neoliberalism affect the work of diversity, equity, and justice, and those who do that work, in higher education. The combination of both organizational level and actor level analysis plays an important role in painting a broader, and yet specific, picture of the landscape of higher education. As a result, decision-makers can attend to specific ways that higher education can change to become more equitable and just organizations.

## Keywords

organizational theory, neoliberalism, critical race theory, communities of color, higher education

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**E**ngaging today's issues in higher education requires strong analytical tools that can address the complex nature of our institutional systems and their involved actors (Manning, 2013). Organizational theory allows one to analyze higher education from a macro level, investigating the systems of operation, norms, values, power structures, and relationships. However, a singularly framed approach (e.g., political frame, cultural frame) is not sufficient to understanding the intricacies of such complicated systems. Additionally, much of the current literature on organizational theory is devoid of a critical examination of the human experience, doing little to address issues of race and racism, power, oppression, resistance, and justice. The lack of complex understandings of higher education leaves the potential for a muted impact of organizational research.

I contend that through the utilization of a more complex organizational framework, one can conduct deep analysis of organizations by taking sociological, political, anthropological, and postmodern examinations of higher education. An interdisciplinary examination of organizations provides a multifaceted lens from which to interrogate higher education and can “help administrators, faculty, stakeholders, and students better understand the challenges of a postmodern, complex, and globally connected world” (Manning, 2013, p. 3). Many scholars (see Bastedo, 2012; Birnbaum, 1988; Bolman & Deal, 2003; Manning, 2013; Schloss & Cragg, 2012) have provided multiple lenses (e.g., political, cultural, bureaucratic) from which to examine higher education. But as a whole, they do not provide an analytical tool that attends to issues of race and racism, power, oppression, resistance, and justice in how actors make or do not make decisions—a component that strengthens the study of organizations and restores dignity and humanity to communities of color. What I forward in this paper is an adapted frame based in neo-institutional

organizational theory that I call the critical race institutional logics perspective (CRILP).

I argue for a more dynamic understanding of organizational systems that complexly includes the experiences of the member communities embedded within those organizations and how broader societal structures (i.e., neoliberalism, race, racism) organize university life. CRILP then provides a way for researchers and those interested in university life to identify the organizing principles of institutions and how those principles influence actor agency and experience. This type of analysis is particularly important when working with communities of color and studying issues of diversity, equity, and justice, which are topics this framework was originally configured to study. Due to pervasive institutional racism and a possessive investment in Whiteness (Patel, 2015), as is evidenced by current student activism, continued genderism against transgender communities, and unequal outcomes between student groups, among others, complex study must be engaged.

I first provide a brief overview of the institutional logics perspective (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012) and offer additional concepts and frames for better understanding higher education institutions. I offer both a methodology and an applied example from a recent study looking at how institutional logics related to diversity, equity, and justice influenced how faculty of color understood diversity, equity, and justice in the doctoral admissions process to illustrate the ways this framework can be employed. Lastly, I provide a few additional examples of persistent problems that can be studied through this framework.

### **Institutional Logics Perspective**

This section outlines the institutional logics perspective in its current form. The institu-

tional logics perspective as an organizational analytic highlights both material and symbolic aspects of institutional life while also incorporating the relationships of individuals and organizations (Friedland & Alford, 1991). Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012) identified macro (societal), meso (organizational or institutional field), and micro (individual) levels of analysis, arguing that a multilevel analysis is required for a full understanding of any institution. These layers are represented by the three rows in the blue section of Figure 1 as downward arrows.

The arrow or level of analysis at the top influences the one below it. Therefore, this section provides a heuristic for that diagram of the framework. Essentially, institutional logics are the “socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practices, including assumptions, values, and beliefs, by which individuals and organizations provide meaning to their daily activity, organize time and space, and reproduce their lives and experiences” (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 2).

### Institutional Orders

The institutional logics perspective is based on a set of institutional orders understood as the “key cornerstone institutions of society” (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 53). Thornton et al. (2012) described institutional orders as a governance system that provides a frame of reference that preconditions actors’ sense making choices. The cornerstone institution connotes the root symbols and metaphors through which individuals and organizations perceive and categorize their activity and infuse it with meaning and value. (p. 54)

The defining institutional orders in U.S. society are family, community, religion, state, market, profession, and corporation. These cornerstones help actors within their institutions (e.g., universities, businesses, neighborhoods) to make sense of the values related to being a member of that institution.

### Field-Level Logics

Organizations must negotiate multiple institutional orders through loose or tight coupling and may face certain regulatory behaviors that require adherence to one order over another (Birnbaum, 1988). Thornton et al. (2012) assumed that organizations are situated within an institutional field; in this case, individual universities are situated within a broader understanding of the U.S. higher education context. According to Thornton et al. (2012), fields are influenced by *theories* that provide a coherent set of logics, *frames* that provide identification within a field, *narratives* that link theories and frames (or the symbolic and material), and *resource environments* or regulatory actors.

**Theories.** Thornton et al. (2012) recognized that theories and institutional logics are not the same. Theories “need not reflect actual organizing practices, and may serve instead as political instruments mobilizing support for institutional change” (p. 153). This is different in that logics are ideological bases present in an institutional order that attend to structural, normative, and symbolic dimensions of institutions. For example, retention and persistence theories may organize thoughts around how universities implement social integration programming for first-year students. However, logics provide a meta-analytic for understanding an ideal type of institution.

**Frames.** Frames act as cognitive and symbolic markers that signal to actors within an organization the organization’s meaning (Thornton et al., 2012). Deployment of these markers often helps observers to translate the institutional logics of those organizations. Within universities, strategic plans, mission statements, and value statements provide these cues and link to larger institutional orders. For example, mission statements may espouse social justice missions (community

orders), efforts to globalize (market orders), or alignments with religious traditions (religious orders). Within the context of organizations, these various frames may contradict, compete with, or complement each other.

**Narratives.** Narratives are the most concrete iteration of field-level logics by providing evidence of the existence of institutional orders and their inherent logics and by helping actors to make sense of the university. Through integrating theories and frames, narratives “give meaning to specific actors, events, and practices, whereas frames are general symbolic constructions, applicable across a wide variety of practices and social actors” (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012, p. 155). This is the first level of integration through which individual actors, or the collective engagement of multiple actors, make sense of order logics, their influence on theories, and their understanding of frames. Generally, analysis of narratives plays a role in organizational change studies as researchers explore how actors make sense of their experiences within a given organization or with a phenomenon.

**Resource environments.** Thornton et al. (2012) identified additional influencers that affect the way that logics play out within organizations. Within higher education, accrediting bodies, legal proceedings, and governing associations may act as mediating bodies that affect organizations. These modifying bodies act to regulate an organization’s behavior or alignment with any given logic through a variety of forces, including through the courts, through policy creation and implementation, or through soft power, as is the case with some accreditation mechanisms.

### Critique

Critiques of the institutional logics perspective point to two weaknesses. First, Thornton et al. (2012) noted that in earlier versions of their framework, and in classical institutional

theory, institutions were often assumed to change devoid of a human component (see institutional isomorphism; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). However, even in the current iteration of the institutional logics perspective, the role of identity is mainly discussed in a cognitive manner. That is, actors find salience in an identity, but there is little mention of how those identities activate in relation to power. Orders may inform, change, influence, or challenge actors in varying ways. However, a discussion of power is not completely exhausted.

Institutional orders act upon institutional members through power domination, a “political technology of the body... This technology is diffuse, rarely formulated in continuous, systematic discourse; it is often made up of bits and pieces, it implements a disparate set of tools or methods” (Foucault, 1977, p. 26) for controlling the actions of actors in a system. Additionally, the institutional logics perspective realizes that actors within an organization are aware of cultural norms, values, and beliefs, even if subconsciously, and these norms, values, and beliefs help dictate decision-making. However, although an individual actor can be a rational being and stray from the norms of an organization, there are often regulatory mechanisms, or technologies of domination, that maintain the status quo or push an actor toward a desired outcome (Caluya, 2010; Douglas, 1986; Foucault, 1977). Some of these technologies are addressed in the next section. Although Thornton et al. (2012) paid some attention to the role of actors in institutional life, their analysis lacked a certain complex criticality, particularly a focus on race, power, and privilege. This criticality is important to fully understanding the experience of those actors, particularly those who do not hold dominant societal identities (e.g., White, Christian, male, cisgender, middle class).

Second, organizations do not exist inde-

pendent of external forces. The institutional logics perspective understands external forces as central to the understandings of organizations and the symbols, norms, and culture within organizations. Therefore, the institutional logics perspective highlights actors, organizations, and institutional orders as the three layers comprising an analytic for studying organizational behaviors (Thornton et al., 2012). However, the framework falls short of implicating any particular theoretical perspective. I contend that race and racism and neoliberalism are the most pervasive forces affecting higher education institutions. Although community and family institutional orders, for instance, may dictate the way a community organizes in a meeting hall to address an issue and/or the way a family structures their daily tasks, when examining the intersections of communities of color and universities, neoliberalism as a theoretical frame and race and racism as sociological constructs are imperative lenses of analysis. Therefore, the next section integrates race and racism and neoliberalism into the various levels of analysis, providing for a more complete understanding of how organizations function in relation to the people who exist within them. To that end, I extend upon Thornton et al.'s (2012) framework in actionable ways that better bring to the foreground the human experience and how prevalent external forces influence that experience.

### Critical Race Institutional Logics Perspective

In the following sections, I strengthen the institutional logics perspective through linkages to two encompassing theories: neoliberalism and critical race theory. I then provide multiple additional critical considerations for understanding actor agency (see Figure 1). First, I identify a linkage to neoliberalism in higher education (Harvey, 2005) and broader racial projects that understand race and racism as central to the human experience.

I then discuss actor agency by exploring the institutional logics perspective's link to Foucault's (1977) understanding of power and surveillance, Weber's (2009) social action theory, authentic leadership principles (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), and understandings of civility and collegiality for faculty of color (Haag, 2005). I take each of these concepts one at a time and provide examples throughout.

**Neoliberalism.** Neoliberalism can be applied as a theoretical frame to understand how society is organized as a whole (Harvey, 2005), affecting all aspects of society, and therefore education, and as an institutional order itself (i.e., market order) dictating specific policy and action within an institution singularly (see green area in Figure 1). The United States, and indeed much of the world, operates under the auspices of a neoliberal state or is influenced by neoliberal policies and action (Harvey, 2005).

Neoliberalism is a global economic theory and resultant set of practices that consequentially deregulate business in order to maximize profitability, extend the chasm between rich and poor, engage in a project of global expansion, neocolonialism, and fiscal austerity for social services and support for marginalized populations (Harvey, 2005). Higher education is not immune from the effects of the policies dictated by neoliberal logic, best seen in the decreased funding of state public universities, the increasing contingent faculty workforce, and the increase in globalization narratives (e.g., study abroad, remote campuses, international student admissions; Cantwell & Kauppinen, 2014; Giroux, 2015). Cantwell and Kauppinen (2014) recognized neoliberalism as a "regime that restructures higher education systems and organizations through regulation, funding streams, and linking organizations that tie the academy to the state and the market" (p. 5). Neoliberal theory's sustainability relies on

sometimes contradictory practices employed by politicians and other power players, but at its core, returns to these principles (Slaughter, 2014).

Neoliberalism directly interacts with higher education by dictating the types of actions that the university must make in order to survive in a time of fiscal austerity and increasing costs of running a university. The consequences of neoliberalism are a widening economic chasm between elite White and low-socioeconomic people and people of color. This system reinforces a White supremacy that operates under the auspices of color-blindness.

Many people, unbeknownst to them, looking to engage with universities, engage in neoliberal practices. For example, there is an inherent contradiction in neoliberal policy as it relates to diversity because there is a pull between neoliberal theory that disenfranchises people of color under a color-blind ideology and an administrative practice that requires diversity in order to attract and function as an acceptable institution (Osei-Kofi, Torres, & Lui, 2013). These contradictions often lead those employing neoliberal logic to be creative in the ways that they dictate their organization's policies and navigate the will of the public. For example, powerful elites are forwarding a diversity agenda through the need to be racially diverse to attract students while implementing practices on the group that, in fact, contradict that project, such as fiscal austerity in financial aid for communities of color (Espinosa, Gaertner, & Orfield, 2015). Likewise, those that resist neoliberal policy can also employ creative strategies to counter its influence (Squire, 2015). Through this particular example, an examination of frames within an institutional logics perspective shifts a focus from surface-level analysis of the usage of certain words and instead hones in on the market-based and underlying meaning of language such as "globalized"

or "diversity" or even whole phrases such as "equal opportunity and access." Examining this language by unveiling the neoliberal assumptions behind them reveals an entirely different meaning for whom is included in "equal" and what does a "globalized" university do to the host country through a neoliberal/colonial regime.

Hamer and Lang (2015) argued that communities of color have "borne the brunt of the neoliberal turn" (p. 900), identifying such events as the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson as an example of state-sanctioned profiling and policing of Black bodies in order to feed a prison industrial complex. This effect of neoliberalism impacts not just the community broadly, but also university life (Hamer & Lang, 2015). Hamer and Lang (2015) wrote:

Far from operating outside neoliberal arrangements, the university has mirrored and reproduced them. University medical centers, student housing, and other campus expansion projects have physically displaced working-class communities of color who already face diminishing access to institutions of higher education. Conservative and libertarian institutes, centers and programs, advocating the virtues of the free market and limited government, proliferate on many campuses. (p. 902)

Higher education's organization both on a federal and on a state level arguably operates as a quasi-free market where students shop institutions and take their financial aid dollars to those public universities that are most suitable to their needs (St. John, Daun-Barnett, & Moronski-Chapman, 2013). Higher education institutions compete for student dollars while still receiving minimal funding from the state. Students are tracked through secondary school and are provided opportunity based on forms of cultural and social capital. These are all potential resultants of neoliberal projects, thereby putting certain controls on the market.



Through a CRILP framework, one can examine the ways that various resource environments play a role in dictating to university actors a neoliberal outcome through its logics. Particularly, how do boards of trustees, politicians, and alumni provide market forces on the university to behave in a particular way? These market forces have the potential to engage universities as service providers, and students to increasingly view higher education as a service industry needing to appease student-customers and attract new students through commercialized endeavors like new fitness facilities, high-end residence halls, and enormous, elite athletics departments. In the classroom, moves toward online education, adjunct faculty, graduate-taught courses, “practical” skills, fiscal austerity of liberal arts programs, diversity initiatives, continued separation of community from university, and privatization of services (e.g., dining services, maintenance, residence halls) signal a move away from the historic public good mission of higher education and reflect neoliberal, policy-fueled practices (Giroux, 2002, 2015). Large-scale decisions around fiscal austerity and bloat may be tracked back to a university looking to attract new customers at the will of a board of trustees who hail from the business world. A lack of information, or a forced ignorance of the quality of education, allows universities to focus on the extracurricular commodities over other outcomes of attending college, such as student learning, student development, and degree attainment. This resource environment (i.e., board of trustees) dictates to universities particular actions and leverage power over universities in very particular ways. Extending a neoliberal lens to a resource environment analysis through the institutional logics perspective provides specific insight into how and why boards and universities make particular decisions.

Relatedly, within a neoliberal system, ev-

erything and everyone can be owned. The commodification of bodies, particularly bodies of color, toward profit maximization is seen readily in admissions booklets and websites (Osei-Kofi, Torres, & Lui, 2013). For example, a university marketing team used a photo editing tool to insert a student of color into a University of Wisconsin football game picture to depict campus racial diversity. The context of higher education in the United States today relies on making market-based decisions that drive organizations to make choices that are devoid of humanistic consideration (Giroux, 2002, 2015). This final example shows neoliberalism and race and racism as linked to a diversity agenda effecting university life.

**Critical race theory.** The second encompassing theory is critical race theory (CRT). Centralizing the experiences of communities of color allows one to better understand the effects of organizational behavior on those communities. CRT helps to complicate broader understandings of institutional orders by allowing an examination of the economic, historical, and societal contexts that affect racial and ethnic minorities (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; see green area of Figure 1). At the same time, it troubles the understanding of actor agency. The institutional logics perspective operates with an understanding of actors as simultaneously navigating multiple logics. However, by analyzing the role of actors through the lens of race and racism there is a strengthening of the analytical trustworthiness of the institutional logics perspective. This is done by refocusing the understanding of diverse social actors through the centering of race as the “key determinant of individuals and groups’ fate in social structure” (Ospina & Su, 2009, p. 132; see also Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Omi & Winant, 1994).

Intrinsic to critical social theories is a discussion of power, who holds power, and how



power is utilized to control bodies. Power is “the multiplicity of force relations that are diffuse, polyvalent, creative, and inextricably tied to knowledge, truth, discourse, and practice” (Metro-Roland, 2011, p. 144). CRT is one such theory that centralizes the power tensions across race and seeks to illuminate how racialized people understand and experience the world. Gillborn (2005) noted that there is a “pressing need . . . to view policy in general, and education policy in particular, through a lens that recognizes the very real struggles and conflicts that lie at the heart of the process through which policy and practice are shaped” (p. 487). Organizations are not insulated from the societal contexts in which they are embedded (Thornton et al., 2012); therefore, racism as a permanent societal ill permeates each organizational structure in society, including universities. Employing CRILP allows for power and privilege to be examined at each level of analysis from theory to narrative. One may ask: Who creates policy and how do they earn a seat at the table? Who defines merit and maintains a meritocracy? In what ways does the investment in maintaining Whiteness affect the experiences of Black students in the classroom?

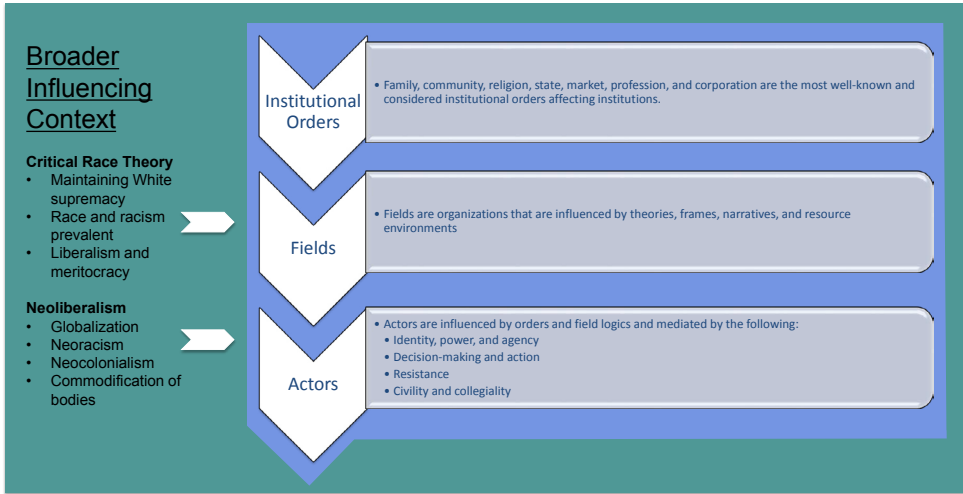
CRT, originally out of critical legal scholarship (Crenshaw, 1989), is comprised of five main tenets. First, race and racism are present and permanent in today’s society and central to understanding how one understands society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Whiteness as property is the second tenet. This means that Whiteness can be owned and provides one with many societal privileges (Lipsitz, 2006). White privilege affords White people with certain benefits, passes, and subsidies that racial minorities often do not receive as a result of their racial/ethnic identity and phenotype (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). If Whiteness can be possessed, and society is based on ownership of property, then Whiteness is something to be

protected. Those who have White privilege often work to maintain Whiteness and the power associated with it in order to maintain White supremacy (Lipsitz, 2006). It should be noted that White privilege does not only benefit White people, although the benefit is greatest to them. Groups may also be forced into alignment with Whites (i.e., the model minority myth). This, in turn, provides White privilege to the racial minority person, but also upholds the tenets of White supremacy.

Third, liberalism and meritocracy are not suitable levels of due diligence in regulating historical issues related to race and racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Liu, 2011). Color-blind racism is employed by those with power to maintain said power in order to marginalize people of color (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). Stories of meritocracy are often heard from those with the most power and privilege to maintain it. In a meritocracy, social status may be linked to level of education and inherently to test scores, GPA, and capital (Liu, 2011); however, liberal definitions of merit fail to analyze the systemic inequities in U.S. society and educational systems that may affect those factors. Fourth, individuals’ identities are intersectional and, therefore, should not be understood singularly nor should identities be thought of as competing in an “oppression sweepstakes” (Yosso, 2005, p. 73). CRT is not a theory of Black–White, but rather of understanding the experiences of all minority racial and ethnic groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Lastly, counternarratives and individual stories are powerful tools for uncovering racial injustice. Those who experience racism are best able to share their stories and counterstories (Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Therefore, in utilizing this framework, CRT methodologies and data presentation methods should be explored.

# A Critical Race Institutional Logics Perspective

(Adapted from Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012)



## Actor Agency in CRILP

Neoliberalism and CRT help set the context for where universities and their communities sit today. In a CRILP framing of organizational studies, both the macro and the micro are privileged in the exploration of the organization and the ability to identify organizational influences on human action. To do so, I suggest that we must look at the following interlocking concepts: (a) identity, power, and agency; (b) decision-making and action; (c) resistance; and (d) civility and collegiality. These concepts are represented in the bottom row of the blue section in Figure 1.

Thornton et al.'s (2012) major contribution to the institutional logics perspective was implicating the actor as a component of organizational life and, in turn, analysis. Prior institutional theory understood that organizations and organizational is separate from the actors who constructed and changed those organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Friedland & Alford, 1991). Actors are mainly seen as change agents who provide "elaboration and development of

extant logics . . . by stimulating the exportation of logics across organizational forms and institutional fields" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 77). However, actors also make day-to-day decisions that stem from institutional logics. Foucault "offers a coherent and forceful perspective on the potential of individual resistance and transformation" (Butin, 2001, p. 159), which helps one to better understand the role of actors in relation to their systems and power within systems.

More simply, all actions take place in a system of contemplation. That is "the accomplishment of social action and social order depends on a knowing self that is constantly interpreting cues from the social environment" (Levinson, Gross, Link, & Hanks, 2011, p. 44). Baez (2000) argued that all organizations are temporal and that the reproduction of normative institutional logics can change as long as people "reconsolidate their power and efficacy" (p. 385). Therefore, structures are constantly being reproduced to be more efficient but in that reproduction are open to "subversion and redefinition" (p. 385) by critical change agents. This cycle of

contemplation allows actors to think about the benefits and consequences of action for self, others, and organizations and to make a determination of behavior. That contemplation is influenced by the concepts I tackle in the following sections, which I argue influence actor behavior in relation to institutional logics.

**Identity, power, and agency.** The institutional logics perspective falls short of explaining how societal frames such as racism, sexism, or homophobia work to help or hinder an actor's ability to activate goals and intentions, identify with certain social identities, or maintain cognitive space to challenge oppressive logics. In essence, "institutional logics provide distinct permission, causation, and obligation schemas" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 89) that allow people to process information and make decisions. However, who is allowed to make decisions in any given situation is cursorily addressed and attributed to "diverse actors' commitment to alternative logics" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 99) rather than the role an actor's identity plays in enabling that agency. The discussion of power remains underexamined in the model, leaving room for more abundant analysis to take place.

Understanding an actor's identity, power, and agency in relation to "polyvalent power," which exerts force from multiple directions at all times (Metro-Roland, 2011), is central to this framework. Analyzing organizations successfully requires attending to the multiple power structures placing pressure on organizational actors. For example, faculty employ a variety of logics both normative to their organization and also those that challenge norms. The deployment of logics depends on how power is exerted on them and the ways they can utilize their power and efficacy in using that power.

Actors who identify with multiple identities will employ logics in various ways at differing

times (Holvino, 2010; Jones & Abes, 2013). They may challenge racism in one arena and genderism in another. They may employ understandings of intersectionality in yet another depending on their assessment of the environmental need and their safety from power structures that dominate their agency. Actors may be constrained by these technologies of domination; that is, they are "placed in the relations of power . . . which are exercised over the body and its powers and capacities" (Grant, 1997, p. 107) and used to mold docile and obedient subjects. Logics can both constrain and enable behavior. Certain logics carry more power than others in given institutional systems (e.g., markets over community, religion over capitalism). Additionally, some people within given systems hold more concrete power over others therefore enabling them to enact these technologies.

Actors are seen as reproducing macro-level logics within their organizations through the perpetuation of the norms, values, and behaviors of their organizations as a result of lack of awareness of given logics or through reinforced systems enabled by powerful others. This is called embedded agency (Thornton et al., 2012). Foucault (1977) wrote that power "invests [in people], it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them. This means that these relations go right down into the depths of society" (p. 27). Actors learn through dynamic constructivism (i.e., meaning making through a series of social networks) how to engage with multiple logics within organizations. In organizing their thoughts around logics, actors utilize the availability of their cognitive abilities, the accessibility of cultural and situational context, and the activation of those two abilities to make sense of logics in social interactions. Foucault argued that even if individuals have control over their own projected agency, technologies "operate through the processes

of classification and objectification of the subject via regulation of space, time, and capacities” (as cited in Grant, 1997, p. 108). In diversity work in particular, Ahmed (2012) argued the project of diversity and inclusion is a “way others as would-be citizens are asked to submit to and agree with the task of reproducing that nation” (p. 163). This is particularly true if issues of power, race, gender, and other identities are not analyzed critically. Power relations and imbalances will always exist, and that is why attending to those relations matter. Attention must be paid in order to correct inequity in our systems and institutions.

**Decision-making and action.** Power directly influences the ways that people are able to act and also places onto those people labels related to their ability to act in authentic ways. However, who is allowed to be authentic and by whom must be interrogated in alignment with a CRT framework of challenging dominant narratives. Authentic leaders are people who can align past experiences, thoughts, affect, values, beliefs, and act in accordance with those constructs (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Those unable to do so are seen as inauthentic. As institutional leaders, people make a variety of decisions that influence the future of their organizations. Weber (2009) provided a useful set of social actions to analyze how and why people make certain decisions. His four types of social actions were (a) instrumental-rational, (b) values-rational, (c) affectual, and (d) habitual (or traditional) orientation. He argued that value-rational, instrumental-rational, and to an extent, affectual-oriented action are not action for actions sake (as is habitual) but are consciously engaged actions. For instance, affectual action may take the form of enacting revenge or contemplative bliss; in this case, action is based in emotion. Absolute value action is action that aligns with one’s internal value center. Weber (2009) described these actions as those that:

regardless of possible cost to themselves, [puts] into practice [individual’s] convictions of what seems to them to be required by duty, honour, the pursuit of beauty, a religious call, personal loyalty, or the importance of some ‘cause’ no matter what it consists. (p. 116)

Although affectual-oriented action may be somewhat consciously decided, absolute value action is entirely planned, contemplative, and tied to an end. Weber (2009) theorized that as values become more absolute, actors are less likely to be rational and engage in conscious consequence judgment. This is in slight difference to individual actions that are tied to wants or needs, such as safety, mental health, or job security. Lastly, most actions fall into multiple categories at once and therefore “the usefulness of the classification of purposes . . . can only be judged in terms of its results” (p. 118).

Understanding this nuance, Weber’s (2009) social action theory may be an inaccurate analytic on its own because people and organizations are influenced by external influences, and actors choose to present, perform, switch, or mask their identities at given times to resist or collaborate with technologies of domination (Anzaldúa, 1987). In other words, they subvert and redefine organizations regularly. Foucault (1977) iterates that power is all encompassing and, therefore, actors must be aware of the power structures surrounding them to make critical change and in determining how to make that critical change or resist polyvalent powers.

**Resistance.** Resistance in its various forms, both enacted and in compliance (Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001), is important to understanding how people of color may react or not react in a given situation. Butin (2001) argued, “The lack of resistance cannot be taken to mean the lack of an ability to resist. We are involved in accepting or resisting the normative constraints placed upon us” (p. 162). Nonetheless, it provides a valuable frame-

work for probing into how people of color engage in action taking, particularly at the local level because “resistance is always most effective when localized” (Baez, 2000, p. 386), such as creating campus spaces (e.g., town halls, cultural centers) to build institutional capital for students of color (Yosso, 2005).

Because power is relational and “every form of ‘emancipatory’ power relies on the counterpower to which it is opposed” (Butin, 2001, p. 163), people “need to manage both privileged and oppressed identities, as well as tensions and interactions between the two . . . on the possibility of authenticity” (Jones, Kim, & Skendall, 2012, p. 708). Being authentic often requires individuals to decide which aspects of their identity to make apparent to others. Choices must be made about when to “pass” or when to “live in” that identity. Performing normative behaviors is seen as a “survival” technique for some (Jones et al., 2012, p. 713). In essence, there is a feedback loop of contemplation and action that occurs for actors within a social setting. This feedback loop may determine how people make decisions based on their amount of resiliency, additional external factors, pressures, motivations, or absolute values.

**Civility and collegiality.** Entwined within this feedback loop are the power and control in discourse and the rhetoric of civility and collegiality. This is of particular interest when discussing how people of color engage in discussions around diversity, equity, and justice. Stockdill and Danico (2012) noted that “when [people] from oppressed groups speak out against systemic institutional and cultural factors . . . many faculty and administrators view them at best as non-collegial and at worst as the sources of conflict” (p. 17). Just as postracialism hides a racist’s actions from clear sight, oppression and marginalization are hidden behind civility and collegiality rhetoric (Bonilla-Silva, 2009). Civility and collegiality are “the etiquette of submis-

sion” (S. Salaita, personal communication, October 9, 2014). Invoking the rhetoric of civility and collegiality disempowers people of color from engaging in authentic dialogue by silencing their voice for fear of being seen as a “conflict” or acting distinctive from the normative trope of a person of color within a given institutional context (Haag, 2005). Indeed, specifically, faculty of color have noted that collegiality is important for survival, but it requires them to expend additional energy apart from their roles as faculty (Haag, 2005; Squire, 2015). This understanding of authenticity complicates the institutional logics perspective understanding of actor agency and one’s ability to maintain one’s self while also attending to organizational dynamics and change.

### CRILP in Action

In this section, I explain how I utilized CRILP in a recent study and provide other examples of how to apply this framework. The origin of this perspective derives from a study I conducted between 2014 and 2015 that examined how the norms, values, and behaviors of higher education institutions influenced the way faculty of color made doctoral admissions decisions in higher education and student affairs programs (Squire, 2015). By utilizing this new framework, I was able to examine multiple levels and directions of influence on actors and factor in how one’s race and other salient identities led faculty to engage in particular behaviors in the admissions process. In keeping with the analytic approach and transformative theoretical commitments outlined in the paper to this point, it was important to centralize the participants’ racial identity and their intersecting identities because race and racism are still pervasive in today’s society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Additionally, the current state of higher education as a market-driven entity led me to think about the ways that neoliberalism has permeated the policies and

practices in higher education, particularly admissions, and the ways that the outcomes of these policies and practices affect the work of diversity, equity, and justice, and those who do that work.

My methodology was critical race methodology (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Critical race methodology required me to center the voices of people of color through the framing of CRT and through my methods, analysis, and, ultimately, data presentation, discussion, and implications. I first conducted a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of university mission and diversity statements to analyze the rhetoric of diversity and neoliberalism in those statements. Gee's (2014) building tasks of language provided me the opportunity to analyze the institutional orders that most influence the discussion of diversity on campus. Ahmed (2012) described documents as artifacts that "are means of doing or not doing something" (p. 85). Documents can be used as a way to avoid further discussion on a topic, such as diversity, by espousing that an institution "does" diversity, or it may be used to cause document fatigue and therefore "force" members of a community to stop talking about diversity. In this way, diversity becomes "something to be managed" (Ahmed, 2012, p. 53). Through the CDA, I identified how diversity was "managed" on my participants' campuses. In my case, I honed in on the institutional orders of community and market to analyze how they influenced these discussions and faculty understandings (Squire, 2015). Gee (2014) and others provide ample resources for how to think of CDA both as a method and as a methodology. I also open coded those documents looking at diversity, equity, and justice rhetoric, including who is included in diversity (e.g., race, sexual orientation, gender) and where diversity takes place (e.g., classrooms, residence halls). I also looked at campus histories with diversity, equity, and justice by reading websites that explained the

history of the university. A CDA is not necessary to the utilization of CRILP; however, due to limitations in the ability to travel to multiple campuses and the need to keep faculty identities anonymous, I could not spend time within the admissions meetings or on campus conducting observations or interviewing other administrators. These observations and/or analysis provide a macro understanding of institutional orders that guide university life through the first level of analysis. I also open coded and analyzed websites, program documents, and strategic plans (if available) to understand how those market and community logics influenced higher education and student affairs programs. Specifically, I noticed how bodies of color were being used to market universities, how international students were centralized as important to the functioning of the university, and how the university explicitly and implicitly connected with the broader city or state. This multilevel analysis is important to the CRILP framework. Based on this information, I could then analyze how actors interacted with these logics within the campus context.

I discussed these findings with participants in interviews and focus groups. I discussed multiple layers of influence within the university (e.g., provost, deans, associate deans, other faculty), strategic plans and diversity statements, program history, faculty experience, and viewpoints regarding the admissions process. Coding of the transcripts revealed how the institutional logics of the institution influenced faculty of color understandings of diversity, equity, and justice, and how those understandings influenced admissions decision-making and modified actor behavior.

The combination of both organizational-level and actor-level analysis plays an important role in painting a broader (e.g., neoliberalism's pull on higher education as a field), and yet specific, picture of the landscape of higher education (e.g., higher education and student



affairs (HESA) programs as a discipline). As a result, decision makers can attend to specific ways that higher education can change to become more equitable and just organizations. In this study, I studied one particular discipline. Attending to the discipline is important within the institutional logics perspective. Within the university context, disciplines shape a faculty member's worldview and are influenced by broader organizational-level logics (Lamont, 2009). As a main organizing structure for faculty, examining specific discipline organizational structures provides context for better understanding individual doctoral programs. Although not explicitly defined within Thornton et al.'s (2012) framework, disciplines act with relative autonomy (Manning, 2013), providing a clearer micro view of how decisions are made within a given area. This level of analysis may not always be necessary for study depending on the researcher's topic.

### Additional Frame Deployments

Explaining and exploring higher education institutions is a complex process requiring analysis from multiple dimensions and layers of organizational structure. CRILP is one way that I propose this examination may occur. Through its use, researchers can better enlighten decision makers and community members to the structural, societal, cultural, economic, and personal dimensions of higher education. As researchers, we must be better at bringing to light the polyvalence of power and the influence of neoliberalism in wielding this power on marginalized communities, particularly those of color. Organizational studies provide both illumination and tangible change solutions. In this section, I provide two examples of topics whose study would be strengthened by such an approach.

One such topical area is the study of the experiences of service staff of color on college campuses. This is a growing segment of the

campus population as a result of continued privatization and outsourcing. People in this role tend to be people of color. Due to this reality, the experiences of this population are of particular interest. Maintaining (or restoring) the dignity of the employee stems from the interrogation of general working conditions and the ways the power of hourly wages, anti-union movements, privatization, and benefits gouging maintain systems of power over the movement, choice, and opportunities of people of color in these roles. Continued privatization allows for a neoliberal theoretical lens to be utilized in order to examine the ways that service people understand their experiences in relation to logics that position them as bodies to be used and not supported. Through CRILP, one may examine the ways in which diversity is explained and applauded in campus staffing statistics, the ways that information is conveyed to a general public, and the ways it is utilized to maintain status quo or to show increases in campus diversity and equity. Additionally, analysis on how these bodies are commodified as "staff of color" on campus to portray a "diverse" campus without examining position and power in the institution, nor actual affiliation with the campus, reveals a neoliberal logic that aims to remove the human dignity of employees.

Another area of interest is the examination of the physical spaces in which the campus is situated. For example, a researcher may ask, how does the campus define and normalize "community"? By examining mission statements, strategic plans, or capital projects, one may examine how campus encroaches on community, keeps out community, or subsumes community. Through analysis of language and comparisons to actualized missions or plans, a researcher unveils the ways that neoliberal logics are contradicting community-based action. This examination is particularly poignant in universities located in city-centers with large communities of color or in surrounding neighborhoods, particu-



larly if those universities espouse community or social justice missions. Another methodological approach would be to photograph all of the ways the campus symbolically and physically divides a campus from community (e.g., gates, security booths) and polices bodies on or around campus. Interviews with both campus and local communities may unveil realities that are often not examined thereby beginning to demystify assumptions (logics) that campus leaders have about the relationship between community and school. A study such as this might engage leaders in broader discussions about admissions access to campus from local communities, community-based research opportunities, unnecessary cost to the university due to overly controlling behaviors in the community, and more.

These are just two such examinations of higher education that examine both organizational structure and actor while examining issues of power inherent in a racist and neoliberal context. The scope of study may vary depending on the interest of the researcher; however, the component parts (e.g., structure, actor, power, market theory) remain integral components of this frame and I believe strengthen our ability to critically analyze higher education while providing acute, tangible solutions toward humanization, liberation, and restoring higher education toward a public good.

When thinking about the operationalization of a frame such as this, it is imperative to remember that context matters. The way the frame is deployed will be dependent on each institution or organization and therefore the implications of each study will be dependent on a particular context. Although this reality is not ideal for those wishing to put into praxis the knowledge acquired, it would be outside of the purview of this manuscript or the framework to assign a catchall solution to the problems stemming from race and racism

and neoliberalism. Outside of this nuance, the examination of race and racism and neoliberalism does provide specific critiques of systems, many of which are explicated in the previous sections thereby providing some guidance to readers as to the ways that these concepts affect higher education. This guidance should lead to some resolution as to how one can better reformulate a just educational system. This knowledge can then be deployed by advocates toward changing policies that dehumanize various actor groups within the context of their university. Because this frame has not been fully used by anybody before, knowledge creation is also an outcome of this model. This knowledge creation leads to additional studies of inequities on college campuses and provides insight into organizations in new ways.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Through the creation of my initial research project described in a previous section, it became clear that the utilization of historic understandings of organizational structures through traditional organizational lenses would be incomplete. Because the study focused on communities of color, the implications of race and racism were necessary to include. From a market-driven systems perspective, neoliberalism also acted as a theory for understanding how decisions were being made on college campuses and how race and racism interplayed with that phenomenon. What emerged was CRILP.

For the reasons explicated in this manuscript, the use of this framework has many implications for addressing the pervasive racism on college campuses and the potentially harmful economic decisions being made on a daily basis at the expense of a public good mission of higher education. Complex narratives must be woven together to present a more complete picture of what is happening on college campuses and to, more importantly,

find workable solutions based in the perspectives of the oppressed. CRILP allows one to do that by centering the voice of the participant and explaining the multiple forces being placed upon that person within the context of higher education.

Scholars have a clear relationship to this framework because it can be applied to a number of studies. Practitioners may also utilize this framework as a heuristic for better understanding how their institutions make decisions and act upon various communities. The power of example and explanation based in theoretically based evidence provides one the ability to address issues and put that power behind one's words and actions. Practitioners can help empower those around them by revealing harmful realities based in neoliberal practices and racist assumptions while also empowering themselves toward actionable change.

Today's society is plagued with many ills. CRILP provides one way in which scholars and practitioners can make systemic change in their institutions and unveil the ways that campus communities can support communities of color. Building equitable campuses is imperative toward forwarding a more just society by providing capital building opportunities and broader positive societal benefits. However, these must be examined at the level of their effects on the human experience and personhood. Through CRILP, one can begin this journey and further the potential of our higher education institutions for doing the work of social justice.

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