

**Title:** Solidarity in the Academy: Collective Memory Work as a Method for Examining Intersectionality and Building Supportive Relationships in Academia.

**Track:** Scholar Activism

**Abstract** This presentation examines how white privilege constructs existing relations and social formations in higher education, particularly for faculty in teacher education programs (TEPs). Collective memory-work (CMW) is an intervention that seeks to contextualize individual experience within a collective social experience. For this reason, this workshop will include an exploration of the intersecting and complex experiences of diverse faculty of color working in a predominantly white institution (PWI). The collaborative nature of CMW makes it an ideal method for a variety of intercultural approaches for uncovering and disrupting privilege. The TEP faculty leading this workshop include: an African American woman and a Black woman from Jamaica. Experiences examined will include: (a) working as an African American woman under the gaze of well-intentioned, but deficit minded white faculty, (b) understanding the intersecting oppressions faced by a Black educated female immigrant, and (c) reflecting on incidents of epistemic violence in the everyday experiences of faculty of color. Workshop attendees will be able to share and process from their participation in an interactive activity. Attendees will also explore using CMW to understand how white privilege silences and harms people of color who seek to mobilize for ethical imperatives related to racial justice and solidarity.

### **Workshop Description - *Overview***

How can educators committed to disrupting White privilege engage in critical community building across a range of identity differences? One first step requires making visible and theorizing commonalities and links among oppressions across different identities and lived experiences (Crenshaw, 1989; Gillborn, 2015). In short, theorizing how people from racialized groups experience White supremacy requires acknowledging and discussing interlocking and intersecting oppressions (Bebout, 2012). As a means of highlighting new possibilities for interrupting White privilege, and supporting and honoring critical community

building among faculty of color, this presentation offers the theoretical and methodological resources of collective memory-work as a tool for interrogating education's entanglements in the complex processes of White privilege (Johnson, Kivel, & Cousineau, 2018).

This presentation aims to provide hope for an escape from the construction of hierarchies, taxonomies, and White/nonWhite binaries that establish and enforce arbitrary boundaries that prevent people from racialized groups from working together to disrupt White privilege. By expanding our understanding of the benefits of using collective memory-work to theorize the intersection of oppressions, this presentation provides a number of significant implications for the work of disrupting White privilege.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Participants engaged in the session will be to:

1. Understand Collective Memory Work (CMW) as a theoretical framework to analyze experiences of marginalization and build coalitions amongst faculty of color.
2. Identify how CMW can be used to identify how privilege and oppression is reproduced and impacts people of color in the academy.
3. Identify areas of commonality using CMW that can be utilized as a means of gaining understanding and forming solidarity with other session participants.
4. Brainstorm action steps and counter-narratives aimed at dismantling oppressive structures within institutions that seek to marginalize and maintain traditional hegemonic power structures.

### **Delivery Methods**

1. Introduction of Collective Memory Work (10 minutes)
2. Sharing of authors collective memory work experience and connections (10 minutes)
3. Small group activity – review of narratives and CMW intersectionality activity (20 minutes)
4. Wrap up (5 minutes)