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What Have We Learned from Critical Qualitative Inquiry about Race Equity and Social Justice? An Interview with Pioneering Scholar Yvonna Lincoln

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Abstract

In this article, two Black women scholars in higher education share a conversation with our distinguished senior colleague, Yvonna Lincoln, a pioneering scholar of qualitative research methodology about what we have learned from her, and more specifically, how this research paradigm has been used to advance racial equity and social justice in higher education. The readers will learn, through her lens, about issues that emerged over the years and what she envisions for the future of higher education and qualitative research. This article presents implications for higher education, including faculty, students, and administrators working in higher education institutions.

Keywords

Qualitative Inquiry, Yvonna Lincoln, Racial Equity, Social Justice, Higher Education

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What Have We Learned from Critical Qualitative Inquiry about Race Equity and Social Justice? An Interview with Pioneering Scholar Yvonna Lincoln

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In this article, two Black women scholars in higher education share a conversation with our distinguished senior colleague, Yvonna Lincoln, a pioneering scholar of qualitative research methodology about what we have learned from her, and more specifically, how this research paradigm has been used to advance racial equity and social justice in higher education. The readers will learn, through her lens, about issues that emerged over the years and what she envisions for the future of higher education and qualitative research. This article presents implications for higher education, including faculty, students, and administrators working in higher education institutions. Keywords: Qualitative Inquiry, Yvonna Lincoln, Racial Equity, Social Justice, Higher Education

“I have come to believe over and over again that what is most important to me must be spoken, made verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood.”

—Audre Lorde, *The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action*, *Sister Outsider*, 1977

Introduction

Qualitative research, known as a broad paradigm of inquiry employed in many different academic disciplines including the social and natural sciences for generating data, is often synonymous with Yvonna Lincoln, a pioneering scholar known globally for changing the course of understanding qualitative inquiry in higher education and beyond. Books such as *Effective Evaluation: Improving the Usefulness of Evaluation Results through Responsive and Naturalistic Approaches* (Guba & Lincoln, 1981), *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), *Fourth Generation Evaluation* (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), *The Landscape of Qualitative Research* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008a), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), and *The Constructivist Credo* (Lincoln & Guba, 2013), are some of her most highly cited publications. Over the years, these publications have not only been used by faculty to train future qualitative researchers, but also by scholars, practitioners and educational leaders globally. Many people continue to utilize Yvonna Lincoln’s scholarship to conduct groundbreaking qualitative research.

Several scholars have offered scholarly critiques and critical insights into qualitative research over the years, on topics including intersectionality (e.g., Bowleg, 2008; Christensen & Jensen, 2012; DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Few, Stephens, & Rouse-Arnett, 2003; Olesen, 2011; Parker & Lynn, 2002) and its evolution, methods, uses, data analyses, and paradigms. Additionally, there have been an increasing number of journal outlets for publishing qualitative scholarly and creative works (e.g., Gill, 2014; Schwartzman, 1993; Stake, 1995). However, considering the proliferation of studies, critiques, and insights, few of them present

an evaluation of qualitative research using source data from a pioneer in the field. We will learn through Yvonna Lincoln's unique lens, about issues that emerged over the years related to qualitative research, and what she envisions as potential research areas that could be better interrogated using qualitative methods, pertaining to race equity and social justice in higher education. This article also shares implications for higher education research, including faculty, students, and administrators working in higher education institutions.

Methods

We are two Black women scholars (one full professor and the other an assistant professor) in the same higher education administration program and department as Yvonna Lincoln. It is in that capacity we have formed a mentoring relationship with Dr. Lincoln built on trust, open communication, and collegiality, conditions which made this scholarly endeavor possible. While our proximity to Dr. Lincoln played a role in our project's research design, our approach to interpretation of the data collected is largely informed by our lived experiences and research expertise. As the scholars leading this project, our areas of combined research expertise include faculty development, diversity and inclusion in teaching and learning, intersectionality scholarship, and critical qualitative research. We have used qualitative research to examine a variety of issues in higher education through the lens of how faculty develop over the course of their careers, the experiences of marginalized faculty on predominantly White research university campuses (Stanley, 2007; Stanley, 2006b), Black women in higher education (Haynes, Allen, & Stewart, 2016), and racial implications of faculty work (Joseph, Haynes, & Cobb, 2016; Tuitt, Haynes, & Stewart, 2016).

Moreover, we are Black women scholars who conduct qualitative research in a sociopolitical context that is currently rife with anti-Blackness and racist nationalism. As such, this project was inspired by our desire to know more about how qualitative research could be better utilized to promote racial equity and social justice in higher education and beyond (Morning, 2008). Our colleague, who is a White woman and a distinguished professor of higher education at Texas A&M University, will retire soon. We thought it would be a formidable opportunity to engage Yvonna Lincoln, pioneering scholar, in this important dialogue; thus, capturing her insights for future generations of qualitative researchers.

We utilized a semi-structured interview protocol (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and used five questions to help guide us through the interview process. This allowed us to maintain structure during the interview, but also provided us with the ability and flexibility to probe Yvonna Lincoln for additional details to fully capture her thoughts, feelings, and opinions. The five interview questions were: (1) What led you to qualitative inquiry as a paradigm, and to what research paradigms do you most ascribe? (2) While pioneering this work, how have scholars used qualitative research to explore issues of race and social justice? (3) Have there been any methodological innovations that were borne out of research about race and/or social justice? (4) What would you like to see scholars (within education and other academic disciplines) do better, in our use of critical qualitative research to explore issues of race and social justice? And, (5) what research questions or topics are not being addressed for the next generation of researchers interested in using qualitative research to address issues of racial equity and social justice in education?

The interview lasted for one hour and thirty-six minutes and was audiotaped. In addition, we took notes, probed for clarification when necessary, and dialogued with her throughout the interview. At the conclusion of the interview, transcripts were then generated and shared with Dr. Lincoln for respondent validation in order to improve accuracy, credibility, validity, and applicability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Next, we (Christine and

Chayla) read the interview transcript individually. We later came together to discuss what we read, which led to the identification of key themes and implications. We consciously decided to include large portions of our interview with Dr. Lincoln in the reporting of our findings because virtually no critique of qualitative research exists documenting the perspective of one of the field's pioneers. What follows are the findings from our conversation, and responses and insights into the five guiding interview questions.

Findings: Question 1

What led you to qualitative inquiry as a paradigm, and to what research paradigms do you most ascribe?

Lincoln: What led me to qualitative inquiry were two things, and they just sort of fit together. One was a teacher that I had who was working with Bob Stake. His name was Bob Wolf, and he was talking about something he called naturalistic inquiry. The other thing was I had two degrees in history. So, it was quite comfortable to me to think about qualitative research more explicitly as a methodology. Historians are always evaluating documents, physical evidence, sometimes eyewitness testimony. Those are all qualitative methods. When he started talking about it, it made perfectly good sense to me. I got very interested. And as a matter of fact, the first book that Egon Guba and I wrote, *Effective Evaluation*, we asked Bob Wolf to be involved in writing it. Long before Egon and Bob ever met, Egon had already given a paper called, *Toward A-Experimental Inquiry*. Egon was already moving in that direction too. I was Egon's research assistant and worked for him and David Clark who was in the higher education program. That is how I got interested; it was virtually everybody around me being interested in and talking about it. I was one of the two or three graduate assistants that Egon invited to go to the May 12th meetings. And so, I would go with this little group of evaluators.

Every one of them at some time or another had been involved in the evaluation of the National Science Foundation curriculum projects—the big curriculum projects that followed on Sputnik. I sat with that group for four years during graduate school. And they started talking about, what if you did not confine yourself to just experimental methods? What would you do? And so, it was an idea whose time was coming. And I was lucky that I got in on the crest of the wave. Bob Stake (1995), Bob Wolf, and Egon Guba listened to us when we gave talks at the May 12th Group. Eventually, the May 12th Group morphed into a larger group called the Evaluation Network. And then some 10 or 12 years later, the Evaluation Network merged with the Evaluation Research Society to become the American Evaluation Association. At some point in time, I became president of that organization. A lot of people started working on qualitative or interpretive, historic, constructivist or naturalistic forms of evaluation. So that is sort of the genesis of not only my interest in the ideas, but the way that people around me kept feeding me ideas and asking questions that led to the second book, *Naturalistic Inquiry* in 1985.

Haynes: When you think about the dates, does it feel like it has been a long time?

Lincoln: It does not feel like it has been super long to me. I gave a talk at AERA, an invited address, and I stole a line from the Grateful Dead, I think—what a long, strange trip it has been, because it has been a long, strange trip. But it has only been a long, strange trip when I start thinking about how many years it has been. But it seems like it was really just a couple of years ago instead of 30 years since that book came out. That is 1985, 1995, 2005, and 2015—32 years. Google Scholar lists *Naturalistic Inquiry* 56th on their top 100 most cited publications, as well as in the top 10 of the most cited social science methodology books

(Green, 2016). According to Google Scholar, *Naturalistic Inquiry* has been cited 40,553 times (Green, 2016). How wild is that?

Findings: Question 2

While pioneering this work, how have scholars used qualitative research to explore issues of race and social justice?

Lincoln: That is an interesting question because race and ethnic studies scholars have often criticized *Naturalistic Inquiry*. There is a whole issue of the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE)* that is a very thoughtful critique of critical race theory and qualitative research (see Parker, Deyhle, Villenas, & Crosland Nebeker, 2010). I disagree not only with many of the race and ethnic studies scholars, but with most of the feminists, border theorists, hybridity theorists, queer theorists, embodiment theorists, and post-colonialists.

I think much of constructivist work is amenable to having a critical perspective. There is nothing that prevents a constructivist from adopting a critical perspective. Most of these lenses, whether it is race and ethnic studies or feminist work or queer theory or children's theory, they are all critical. They are all critical in the sense that the whole point is to criticize some aspect of policy, law, treatment, and/or oppression. I do not think that you can beat up constructivist inquiry because you say it does not fit with race and ethnic studies—when race and ethnic studies is critical constructivist work. But I would not do away with qualitative work because I think quantitative work tells us what, qualitative work tells us why.

Haynes: I share with graduate students all the time to use the methodology to answer questions about what you are seeking to understand.

Lincoln: At first, people were so engaged with naturalistic inquiry that they did not really bring these various lenses or perspectives or critical analytics to bear on it. They certainly have now, over the years. I think it is useful. It has certainly helped refine my way of thinking about things. And most of the criticism I think has been offered in a pretty helpful way, even when it is very trenchant criticism. It really has helped a lot of people think more carefully about what to support and what to change your mind on, that sort of thing.

Haynes: How have perspectives about studying race and social justice in qualitative research evolved? What examples have you seen over the years, while mentoring doctoral students?

Lincoln: Well, I would not say social justice so much until the last few years when we really started to think about that. But, certainly in terms of what I would call a much broader unit, which is policy. I co-chaired a dissertation at Kansas for a graduate student studying social welfare. There was a big school of social welfare there. And she was looking at the policy of placing children who had been taken out of their homes for neglect or abuse. And she was looking at the way in which Kansas did that, which she thought was extremely disadvantageous to children. And the student felt that children have rights too, not to be shoved around. Her research aimed to get the dysfunctional families involved in determining where they want their kids to go. And I thought at the time that that was an anti-racism dissertation. Over the years, various students have done work on racially-responsive things, ethnically-connected things, and some feminist perspectives on things. I am thinking about Robin Hughes at Indiana University, for instance.

Stanley: Glenn Phillips, a former doctoral student in our department comes to mind for his work on veterans as well as Veronica Jones' work on racial identity.

Lincoln: Yes. I would call that anti-racism work. I am not sure it aims towards social justice as much as it aims toward relieving some of the oppression, as anti-racism and social

justice are not exactly the same things. I have seen some changes in students, some ways that students have sort of re-focused what it is they think they want to know and do. I cannot pull names out of the hat right now, but it is true.

Haynes: I think about the generation of scholars that I am in and the ways that myself and other critical qualitative researchers engage in race work. Qualitative research has been useful to us. In talking to other colleagues who are post-positivist about their quantitative research, they feel as though that they are also engaged in critical research. I have to ask myself, can you do critical research as a quantitative person? And so, the answer to that is, yes. Though, how others interpret the intent of our work is what remains interesting to me.

Lincoln: Frequently, the interpretations take a different form if you are using quantitative research as opposed to qualitative. If people say well, but you cannot do critical quantitative work, that is just absolutely wrong. One scholar I know does very critical work, and it is almost all quantitative. There are people who do socially critical work. People like that use both quantitative and qualitative methods and do very critical work. Anyway, there are clearly people who use predominantly quantitative methods who are very skilled at quantitative methods, but who have a definitively critical bent. I do not think it precludes you from doing that. I just think that having an understanding of the why, in a deep way, gives you a better opportunity to be more incisively critical and to be critical at multiple levels. If you are dealing with mega statistics, you cannot be critical way down here on a micro-level, like in the classroom for instance. If you are dealing qualitatively at the classroom-level, then you have the opportunity to have a very, very deep look at how this plays out on a student-to-student, teacher-to-student, student-to-teacher, teacher-to-parent basis and you can begin extrapolating. It is much easier to extrapolate from the ground up, than it is from the clouds down. That is just why I stay persuaded that qualitative research adds a level of deep understanding that we may not get with statistics. Statistics has just removed too much from human life. And qualitative research is deeply implicated if you are doing it right in human life.

Findings: Question 3

Have there been any methodological innovations (e.g., critical race feminism methodology or walking interviews) that were borne out of research about race and/or social justice?

Lincoln: I think that there have been a number of methodological innovations. When you are talking about walking interviews, the thing that I connect that to, is something related to photographs. In psychology, people are shown photographs that are photographs of things that are close to them—relatives, themselves at an early age—and they are asked to expand on what the photograph means. This is a sociological method meant to sort of awaken in people memories that have been long forgotten. And just recently, a friend of mine who is a sociologist used a technique sort of similar to that—a qualitative technique. But what he has done is he spent a lifetime tracing what he calls rural migration. He went through the same area and he collected photographs, graduation programs, dance announcements, traveling band announcements, and all sorts of stuff. And then he would take them to the elderly and say, now what does this mean to you? Do you remember this? Tell me what you can about it. It is like photo-elicitation.

It sounds like the walking interviews are very much like that except that they are sight-specific instead of paper-specific or photograph-specific. The interesting thing from my perspective is that there are people, like my friend up at Alberta [University] who are talking about the history of places, the history of geographies. And it is a way of moving into the

post-humanist moment so that you stop focusing on just what the humans say, and you start thinking about the significance of place. Now Bourdieu years ago called that *habitat*. But it goes farther than *habitat*. It is more than just the place that you routinely move through and inhabit. It is a geography of memory, a geography of incident, and a way of saying this place is more than just a corner, or this place is more than just an alley, or more than just a coffee shop. This place has history. It is a mute history until I give it shape and form, but it has history. I think it is really important and I think it is an avenue into the kind of stuff that post-humanists are talking about these days. Now, as you know, the post humanists are also talking about not only our relationship to our habitats, but also our relationship to the earth, and particularly our relationship to animals. What are we going to do? How are we going to view animals? How do they fit with our moral-self as we practice research, as we live and work on the earth? I like the idea of these walking interviews because I think that there is a thread that connects them to the post-humanist.

Haynes: I want to understand what you mean by post-humanist. What do you understand post-humanist to mean?

Lincoln: I would say it is post-enlightenment, in the sense that the focus cannot be totally on humans and what they desire, want, believe, do, etc.—that humans live within a context. And that context is a geographic context. It is a psychic context. It is a social context. It is a physical context. But it is also a context with other beings in it including animals, birds, monarch butterflies, redwood trees, rock formations, national parks, and oceans. Why are we polluting the oceans? And so, the post-humanist says that enlightenment has always said the main thing in the world is the individual. The post-humanists say it is only one of the important things in the world. Maybe the most important thing in the world is ecologically saving biodiversity for instance. So that is what post-humanism means to me. But there are much more sophisticated constructions of post-humanism. Some of the stuff that I have seen come out of post-humanists is not well thought out, while some of the stuff is terribly important. It is important because it expands the field or fields of inquiry open to critical examination, as well as forcing us out of an unnaturally narrow context and worldview. But you expect that. You expect that there will be people who take things to silly, silly limits. And I think that has been done with post-humanism. I do think the pendulum sort of swings back and things sort of right themselves in the end.

Findings: Question 4

What would you like to see scholars (within education and other academic disciplines) do better, in our use of critical qualitative research, to explore issues of race and social justice?

Lincoln: I think there are some things we could do better. For instance, it is really nice to have funded research to explore issues of race and social justice, but if we are not funded, I think we ought to do research anyway—do smaller studies, more local studies or studies that we can drive to. Like your book (see Stanley, 2006a) on the experiences of faculty of color in predominantly White colleges and universities was not funded. You did that because you realized that there was a need based on your research work in faculty development.

Stanley: That is true. And it spawned a lot of campus and national conversation.

Lincoln: Absolutely. And, I do not think that we have to have everything funded. I know administrators like deans do. We disagree. The only reason that is happening of course is because the state and federal funding for research or teaching or anything else is going down. What we are basically trying to achieve, is to have faculty pay all or a part of their

salaries and cover the rest with tuition. It is a shame, I think. But I think what we could do better, especially if we are interested in social justice or racial equity or LGBTQIA equity, is do smaller studies, do them closer to home, publish it, and then do other pieces that tie them altogether, and look at the ways in which they exhibit confluence. Faculty run around and say, I cannot do the research that I want to because I do not have funding. If you wanted to do the research, you could do the research. You could do a smaller bit of it. I think we could help faculty do that, better. There was a time—when there was not the flood of federal or foundation dollars that there has been in the past. And if people did research, they did it on their own time. And there was a kind of understood agreement that the department chair would let you go if you said, I am going to interview two people at Wichita State for a study. They would say okay, take Wednesday and Thursday off. Drive down Wednesday afternoon, do your work on Thursday and come back Thursday night because we have a faculty meeting on Friday. There was this kind of cooperation.

And now you do not get any release time at all unless you buy it. And there is something screwed up about that. And what it does is creates a situation where faculty believe they cannot do research unless they have external funding. The other thing it does is, it pits department chairs and faculty against each other. The department chair always wants faculty to fund their away time. And faculty would like a bit more flexibility. I think it creates a situation that probably is not healthy either for faculty or administrators. The other thing it does, is create this expectation that I think is a tragic one, that all graduate students have to have external funding. I can remember a time when graduate students just wanted research for the experience. Now, if you want them to do research with you so they get the experience, you better either have money or you had better have a graduate assistantship for them.

Stanley: You touched on a couple of things that is triggering me right now because in my conversations with my co-interviewer, one of the things that I have said to her and I am sure you will agree, and this is what is driving me to say this, is she is carving out her own research agenda as a junior scholar on the tenure track. And I encourage her to do the small things. Get it published. And then down the road, they lead to bigger efforts and projects.

Lincoln: Money, if that is what you want. But, there are plenty racial and social injustice issues close to our own institutions, in places where we can explore, with critical qualitative research, scenarios of oppression, inequity, discrimination, and make compelling cases for serious policy revisions.

Stanley: I remember what got me into doing scholarship on diversity and inclusion was during the time I spent at The Ohio State University and having conversations primarily with Scholars of Color on campus and listening to their teaching experiences in the classroom. And like you said, I started saying to myself, wait a minute. What they are articulating and what they are experiencing are not what I am hearing from White scholars. I am sitting there asking, why? What is happening here? And, that is what sort of led me into using qualitative research on a smaller scale, which then led me into a larger project—a book (see Stanley, 2006a) . Then, you were also the one that convinced me to write an article presenting a narrative analysis. And that is how I ended up with the publication in the *Educational Researcher* (see Stanley, 2006b)

Haynes: The idea of doing local and doing small is so important, especially for qualitative race scholars like me.

Lincoln: It is not funded.

Haynes: Often, it is not funded. We have to do smaller studies often just because in predominantly White spaces, our participant size is considered small by comparison. Sometimes it's so hard to find funding sources because of the small sample sizes, customary in qualitative research. For instance, the recent call for programs from American Education Research Association (AERA) (see <http://www.aera.net/Professional-Opportunities->

[Funding/AERA-Funding-Opportunities/Grants-Program/Research-Grants](#)) about their research grant competition. In my excitement, I clicked the link to review the call and it was clear they are only seeking quantitative scholars and researchers who are using large data sets. I just came back from an AERA Division J: Postsecondary Education program meeting, and that was the first criticism some of us junior scholars had; it felt as though qualitative researchers were being excluded. We are at an institution, where these types of grants matter. Often, I feel like there are few grant categories where I see myself fitting.

Lincoln: So long as mostly predominantly quantitative people are elected as the vice presidents for the various divisions, you are going to continue to have the big data sets, big data people. It is absolutely devastating. And, there is an article critique of this big data that I ran across. And I thought, I am going to write about this. I am going to take a swipe at these big data people.

Stanley: Go for it!

Lincoln: Yeah, exactly, under a legitimate umbrella here. But the woman makes the argument that big data blinds—these huge databases blind us to what is actually bubbling under the surface where people live. So that is just frustrating. Anyway, it is pretty powerful. And there is a book out on it now. But I know exactly what you mean. And I have run around for two or three years now saying I realize somebody like me could not get hired on a faculty these days because my work would never have been funded externally. Nobody would appreciate the theoretical work that I have done. I could not—I mean, look at these walls [pointing to numerous national and international awards and accolades over the years]. Nobody would care. Nobody would give a damn about the work that I have done if I were not bringing in money. And increasingly, everybody who gets hired is expected to pick up some portion of their salary, or their salary and their graduate assistant salary and travel. It is sad. But I mean, it really makes you feel sort of bad when you say I have tried to work real hard all my life, and I could not—if I were a young scholar starting over with these awards—I could not get hired. If I was younger, and had all these awards, people would say, but what kind of money have you brought in? Answer—well, not much.

Stanley: You are only the most cited professor in the College of Education.

Lincoln: Yes. But you know what? It is not bringing in any money. Sometimes I sit on the review committees for the selection of university distinguished professors. They are two levels of review—one at the college level, and the other from the executive committee. And you get these files that say this guy has 400 citations. And I go, you guys do not know what citations are. I know what citations are. But no, there are expectations being laid on junior faculty like you that were never laid on me.

Stanley: And, you do not hear a lot of senior scholars admitting that—what you just shared. At least just say it is what it is. Say it out loud. There is nothing wrong with speaking truth to power. Just say the bar that we are asking you to meet or exceed, is not the same bar when we came up through the ranks. But you still have some senior scholars who maintain the posture of, what are you talking about? The bar has never changed.

Lincoln: Yes, and that is ridiculous too. You know it is just bull.

Haynes: Or, you are told it is not that high, right? I believe they mean, that it is not as high as I perceive it.

Lincoln: And, make no mistake about it. The bar is higher for you than any White person at your rank. No, it is true. I know. You know how they say if you want to succeed as a woman, you have got to be twice as good as the nearest man? They are saying the same thing about Black scholars. You have got to be twice as good as the nearest White person. And I think it is just realistic to say so. That is the truth of the matter. I mean, we might as well be honest about it.

Stanley: I appreciate your saying that. Your honesty is the reason why I encouraged my co-interviewer to engage you in this conversation, because I told her that over the years up to my progression to full professor and in senior administrative roles, how I have benefited from listening to you, and your mentoring. Speaking of the bar, I recall vividly when I was coming up through the ranks, going up for promotion to full professor, and straddling an administrative role and being in the department, the only difference for me in terms of the bar—meeting that bar—was instead of teaching two courses a semester, I taught one. The research expectations were the same. And I remember when the department voted on my dossier. You told me that one of the conversations from a senior scholar in this department—he passed away a couple years ago—he said wow, her record is like somebody who was full-time in the department. So, I think it speaks to your point. I mean, I still maintained, if not exceeded—I did not ease up my productivity.

Lincoln: I do not mean to discourage you, and you were not in the faculty meeting, but we were talking about this. It is implicit bias. And it is an implicit bias that exists in the academy. And it would hold true if you were African American, Asian, Hispanic, LGBTQIA, and a woman.

Haynes: My perception is that it holds true for me because I identify as a Black woman, but I also identify as a critical scholar. I think those two things together, not just that I am Black, but what I am writing about, it is those parts that bear significance.

Haynes: What this conversation is making me think about is that we are talking about the social reproduction of . . .

Lincoln: Racism.

Haynes: Or, whiteness. What is staying with me from our conversation is how much of this is structural. So, we are talking about the promotion and tenure process and how we each experience it differently based on our identities and what we write about. When I think about the impact of your scholarship, of which I am a benefactor, I think about the reality for the doctoral student of Color who is using qualitative research to do race work. They need to bear in mind that there is canon knowledge around qualitative research and a large part of that involves you. How might their scholarship be perceived within the academy, if they did not reference you as canon knowledge and the leading voice in qualitative research? What might you say to a Black doctoral student who is feeling pressured to or being advised by the Chair that they have to cite Lincoln and not a lesser known Black qualitative research methodologist, in order to bring legitimacy to their study?

Lincoln: What I try to do—and I do not think everybody else tries to do it, and I do not think that it has to be the Lincoln rule for doing research. I try to go back to the oldest person who talked about something. For instance, when I talk about thick description, I do not say, Clifford Geertz. I go back to Gilbert Ryle. He is the first person who wrote about it. So, when I talk about content analysis, I go all the way back to Bernard Berelson. I start with Glaser and Strauss, with some elements that they adopted for grounded theory, but end up with Cathy Charmaz. I always try to get the most original source, but not everybody does.

Haynes: But those original sources are not People of Color.

Lincoln: No, they are not. I do not know what to do about that. Actually, I never knew Gilbert Ryle. Maybe he is a Person of Color.

Haynes: Perhaps.

Lincoln: He is probably White and British. I am not sure. And, certainly Clifford Geertz was White. But, they are not People of Color. If I were you, and I were going to recommend that people utilize the scholars of color, I would find a pretty good list of those scholars of color, like Patricia Hill Collins, bell hooks, Audrey Lorde, Richard Delgado who talks about method some.

Stanley: Kimberlé Crenshaw. Mari Matsuda.

Lincoln: Yes.

Haynes: There are definitely some out there, no doubt.

Lincoln: It is interesting you should mention Mari Matsuda because I was thinking when you were talking about the structural stuff, that is what Mari Matsuda has done with the legal system. She has taken a look at the way in which the laws are structured in such a way that they favor White privilege. And I was thinking, well, so who do you think structured the promotion and tenure rules around here? The answer is—White men. And, they disadvantage not only Scholars of Color, but also scholars of alternative paradigms and virtually all women except in the hard sciences. Virtually all women, because they were written by these old White guys, and so, they do not like people, especially young women of any color, who threaten them or who challenge the dominant paradigm or epistemology. I think what you are looking at is—it is analogous to Mari Matsuda's work. It is taking a look at the structure that surrounds you stepping back from state law and taking a look instead at the particular structures—multiple structures within which you work. Which reminds me—what ever happened to that institutionalized discrimination article that we wrote about?

Stanley: I got another colleague of mine to give it a read, and with some minor edits, we are getting ready to resubmit it.

Lincoln: It is not just the promotion and tenure system. It is every system that surrounds you, including, for instance, we know that even when they are teaching exactly the same course with the same syllabus, that scholars of color tend to get lower teaching ratings than White scholars do, even though they may be actually more substantive and more expert at the topic. And so, who sets up that whole system? I do not mean to throw off on White guys; however, primarily White heterosexual males developed the system. So, there is all this intersectionality going on, not just for you, but for them too. They are male. They are White. They are primarily heterosexual. They are intolerant of folks who are LGBTQIA. They are full of implicit and explicit bias. It is not just one structure, although no doubt promotion and tenure is the one that has you nervous these days.

Haynes: It is definitely something that is on my mind.

Lincoln: Well, it is the more permanent of the structures. But it is not the only institutional infrastructure that impacts your life. It is not the only one. Ask Christine. She knows.

Findings: Question 5

What research questions or topics are not being addressed for the next generation of researchers interested in using qualitative research to address issues of racial equity and social justice in education?

Lincoln: Well, my perspectives come actually not from qualitative research. My perspectives come from political involvement. What I do not see enough of is strategic work. Work on strategy and tactics. The stuff that I see on the research about diversity or equity or social justice, it does not go far enough. It needs to have an action component. It needs to say, so how do we extend these findings? How do we set up a nonviolent confrontational system to act on these kinds of findings? What can faculty do? What can administrators do? What can graduate students do? What can undergraduate students do? What can student organizations do, et. cetera? I think that we stop short because we are so imbued with this notion of scientific objectivity. That we do not want to think about acting, because acting takes us into the moral realm, right? We want to remain objective. We do not want to be moral or immoral. The first thing I would say to do for young scholars, is that there has to be somewhere in your work about a thoughtful exposition of what is the overall strategy and

what are the individual tactics under that—the supporting tactics or whatever you want to call it? I think that we need more—probably a slant toward action research, okay? By that I mean a different thing from what the other action researchers write. I really mean research geared towards specifying actions that we can take. So that is the first thing that I would suggest.

The second thing I would suggest, and this is strictly my prejudice. Every now and then I read an article and it says the same thing as one I read six months ago. And it says the same thing as one I read a year ago and 18 months ago and 24 months ago. And this is what it says. White women will not or do not or have not thought about something, making common cause with Black women. But the whole women's movement would be a hell of a lot stronger if White women and Black women would find areas of agreement and form coalitions. I would like to see research that demonstrates how White women and Black women have areas of intersection. I think the only thing—or one of the few things that are going to counteract this crazy turn to the right that we are beginning to see in this country—is women. And so, I would like to see research that looks at activist groups and that looks at ways to get these groups talking to one another and finding avenues of agreement that foster combined action.

Stanley: I would like to see, and I am thinking about higher education broadly speaking, more White women scholars and Black women scholars engaging in work together. Engaging in self-reflection work together, including dialogues around race equity and social justice across and within many dimensions and structures in the academy. I think that could be so powerful and productive.

Lincoln: So, do I.

Stanley: Well, you and I wrote a publication together.

Lincoln: We have now written two. We just have not had the second one accepted for publication.

Stanley: The first one was actually a reflection piece, sharing our narratives, working and learning from each other as colleagues, across intersections, where race and nationality were at the center.

Lincoln: *Cross-race faculty mentoring.*

Stanley: A lot of people said that it was very personal to share, and it was.

Lincoln: They also said it was very useful. And it has been reprinted in a book.

Discussion and Implications for Faculty, Students, and Administrators

Most scholars define themselves as highly educated specialists in a particular area of research or study. Even fewer are able to further distinguish themselves as scholars who are perceived and validated by a master narrative as changing the course of their field. Pioneering scholars such as our colleague Yvonna Lincoln, shaped the field of qualitative research methodology at a time and context when certain members of the academy were and are still considered outsiders, who longed for fair and just relations between individuals and society. As Black women scholars in the academy, who walk the intersections of race, gender, class and nationality, coupled with our choices for scholarship, we know that power and interrelated forms of privilege abound within and across one another's intersecting identities and education level. There were a lot of issues raised about race equity and social justice in this interview, particularly when one considers this article is based on an interview between two Black women and a White woman who is seasoned scholar. We learned a lot from and about each other in the interview. It is indeed rare to have a relationship with a colleague where one can sit down and dialogue across race, rank, and positionalities, and be willing to listen for perspective taking and understanding. Can we use what we have learned from this interview to create common cause between Black women and White women, and junior

scholars and their senior faculty colleagues, to encourage more dialogues and shape a more racially just and equitable future for the academy?

We use the Audre Lorde quote at the beginning of this article because the contents of the interview, and our discussion and implications that follow will be *made verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood* (Lorde, 1977). We offer some lessons learned from the interview for race equity and social justice, along with actionable implications for the future of qualitative research, positioned around the five guiding questions used in the interview.

Lesson 1. *We research what people feed us, and what seems important to us.*

Research helps us to understand phenomena. Dr. Lincoln's story about how she came to use qualitative inquiry as a historian is probably similar to scholars who have used these methods to understand phenomena, particularly race and social justice. Still, qualitative researchers who study race must understand that anti-racism and social justice are not exactly the same; and thus, use their findings to illuminate that social justice cannot be advanced without the pursuit of race equity. Qualitative inquiry helps us to describe participants' lived experiences with racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and other interlocking forms of oppression. Qualitative researchers have an opportunity and obligation to expose how and why institutional norms, policies, and structures that reinforce systemic and acceptable forms of oppression are still operating systemically in the academy and beyond. Faculty who are made to feel as outsiders in (and outside of) the academy tends to research issues that bear disproportionately on their communities to challenge the master narrative that legitimizes discriminatory practices (Stanley, 2007).

Lesson 2. *Epistemologies are, among other things, lenses through which we view findings.*

Epistemology at its basic definition is concerned with the theory of knowledge (Bhattacharya & Kim, 2018). What distinguishes justified belief from opinion, however, is often at the center around research questions that seek to understand "how do we know?" If epistemology seeks to understand the conditions of knowledge, sources, structures, and limits, then why are so few qualitative researchers using critical lenses to examine issues of gender, race, racial equity, and intersectionality, for example. How can using a critical lens allow qualitative researchers to generate findings to dismantle social and political systems and hierarchies of oppression in higher education and beyond? Concomitantly, why are there so few critical research studies appearing in mainstream journals (Harper, 2012)?

Lesson 3. *Places and habitats have history.*

Places and habitats have histories, including institutions and people who work in and study higher education. If we look specifically at institutions of higher education, for example, there are institutional policies such as promotion and tenure and habitats that include the classroom, department, residence halls, research laboratories, bathrooms, athletic facilities, dining facilities, student learning and organizational spaces, office spaces, buildings, statues, and the list goes on, that paint a portrait of history. The question that remains from a racial justice perspective is, "whose history is being preserved?" Critical qualitative research helps us to understand a deeper, contextual participant history about social and racial inequities in higher education.

Lesson 4. *Smaller and localized research can lead to large-scale studies.*

Funding agencies such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institute of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Education (DOE), have historically espoused and provided specific grant opportunities aimed at fostering greater diversity and inclusion. While faculty at colleges and universities have been benefactors of awards from these agencies, the general criteria for grant proposals, which includes demonstrating intellectual merit, broad impact, and assessment of outcomes, are not inclusive enough of nuanced research projects using qualitative research methodologies that may not require large-scale national data sets or longitudinal studies. This does not preclude faculty from engaging in more localized studies that could lead to large-scale studies, such as cross-national ones. However, the challenge here is the review process, including individuals who are influenced through a variety of lenses, which include both implicit and explicit bias in the review.

Lesson 5. *Work strategically and be more action-oriented.*

To work strategically toward advancing racial equity and inclusion, is not only restricted to designing racial, social, and equity studies that improve the human condition in higher education settings, society, and the world. As discussed in this paper, forward movement also necessitates identifying the strategic requirements of the changing nature of faculty work, focusing on where to invest resources, and inviting dissent even if bruised or misunderstood so a deeper commitment to racial equity and social justice can be established. It is time for more cross-race dialogues in academia. Black women and White women need to get “more real,” listen and learn from each other, worry less about being polite, and speak truth about what it is on each other’s minds without fear (Stanley & Lincoln, 2005). Working strategically and more action-oriented also means building coalitions within and across institutions and professional associations (e.g., AERA and the Association for the Study of Higher Education) to dismantle systems of oppression. Let us not close ranks on each other, because one of the things we have learned from the qualitative researchers who study racial justice, is that many lenses of inquiry and methodological approaches can help frame realities for more just institutions of higher education and a more just society. For faculty, students, and administrators who read this paper, we hope the interview and lessons learned will transform silence and inaction into motivation for more dialogue and action, so that outsiders are no more.

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