Debunking the false dichotomy: Developing and applying trans quantcrit at the intersection of trans/non-binary identities and religious, secular, and spiritual engagement in college

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Debunking the False Dichotomy: Developing and Applying Trans QuantCrit at the Intersection of Trans/Non-Binary Identities and Religious, Secular, and Spiritual Engagement in College

by

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Abstract

Discrimination towards people who identify as trans/non-binary (NB) is still extremely well documented and pervasive across many different demographics. Discussions on religious, secular, or spiritual (RSS) identities and trans/NB identities are often fraught with difficult conflicts between the two. In student affairs published standards, practitioners are expected to serve “regardless” of gender in RSS programs and “regardless” of religion in LGBTQ+ programming. This study sought to explore how RSS campus climate influences students’ attitudes towards trans/NB people and how trans/NB experience their RSS campus climate. Informed by critical theory and using critical consciousness and ally identity development conceptual frameworks, I used a longitudinal data set of over 7,000 first-year students at the beginning and at the end of the first year of college. Methodologically, I developed and used a critical quantitative model informed by critical race theory and trans epistemologies called Trans QuantCrit. In a single-group study on gender binary students, I performed a structural equation model on how RSS engagement and campus climate measures influence students’ attitudes towards trans people, controlling for pre-college attitudes. The study’s findings argue that reflective interfaith engagement and perceptions of RSS campus divisiveness—that is not also experienced alongside negative discrimination based on one’s RSS identity—can contribute to more positive attitudes towards trans/NB people across all RSS groups (non-religious, RSS majority, and RSS minority). In a separate analysis, trans/NB students ($N=81$) were analyzed using multiple regression looking at the same RSS campus climate measures and their relationship to trans/NB students feeling trans people are welcome on campus. In contrast to the gender binary group, reflective RSS experiences do not hold a relationship, but lower levels of discrimination and higher levels of perceived structural diversity influence their sense of
welcome on campus. Implications for theorists, researchers, and practitioners are discussed in relation to the application of Trans QuantCrit and the results of the study. Traditionally depicted as dichotomous, the intersection of RSS engagement and trans/NB people provides an opportunity for scholars and practitioners to foster greater inclusion for trans/NB people.
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Chapter I: Introduction

Discrimination towards trans identified people is extremely well documented and pervasive across many different demographics (James et al., 2016). Discussions on religious, secular, and spiritual (RSS) belief systems and trans/gender non-binary (NB) identities are often fraught with difficult conflicts between the two (Glaser, 2008). The critical study of RSS identities and experiences, however, has only recently begun to deconstruct normative RSS understandings to birth more queer RSS categories for trans/NB people. RSS studies and what fits in the proverbial box is highly debated (Martin, 2017). Currently, there is no widely used term in the English language that fully captures all the identities and communities we colloquially define as “religious” or “spiritual” (Hill, 2015; Martin, 2017). This present study seeks to acknowledge the box that society uses while also beginning to dismantle RSS understandings to allow for more fluidity and trans-ing of the box itself. RSS, therefore, is used as a placeholder term to situate this work as a product of the long genealogy of work applying critical theory to the study of religion. When RSS is used, the term infers to encompass all that which has been classified under the critical study of religion therein. This may include more secular understandings such as sacred spaces in drag queen culture to spiritualities outside of normative Christianity (Schippert, 2011). This study, therefore, is looking at RSS as a social identity and the study of culture as it relates to RSS identities and experiences rather than an explanation into the supernatural or a search for an ultimate truth. Instead, my positionality in this work is scholarly agnosticism and decidedly exploring the human-centered realm of experience (Martin, 2017).

Although there have been significant scholarly contributions on the intersections of different RSS beliefs and traditions that are perceived to be intolerant of LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, Queer, and others who have a marginalized sexual orientation) people (Davidson, 1999; Lee & Ostergard, 2017; Literski, 2015; Love, Bock, Jannarone, & Richardson, 2005), there is a great need to increase the research on trans/NB-identified people and their experiences with different RSS identities and communities or with people who hold different RSS identities and beliefs (Hopwood, 2014; Kidd & Witten, 2008). The amount of work at the intersection, however, proves its significance. Trans/NB-identified people have been considered aberrations, excluded, and even persecuted in some religious communities and institutions in the United States (Childs, 2009; Mollenkott, 2001). The limited—particularly quantitative—research about the intersection of trans/NB identity and one’s RSS is likely largely due to the fact that some of the most prominent U.S. RSS ideologies (as defined by Pew Research Center, 2014) do not recognize anything outside of the binary and two completely separate (man and woman) genders (Bockting & Cesaretti, 2001; Kidd & Witten, 2008). This conflict—although not fully understood—has been found to have significant negative psychological consequences for trans/NB individuals in qualitative explorations (Davidson, 1999). Furthermore, in a recent national U.S. study, 18% of trans/NB people were found to experience marginalization in their faith community and 19% left a faith community because they were rejected by their faith community (James et al., 2016). Even outside of leaving the community, though, trans/NB people have reported additional unique responses due to others’ perceptions of their gender identity in their RSS community. Trans/NB individuals in their RSS communities—communities of people who identify with the same RSS and gather together in some way—report being forced to be closeted to avoid detection by members, experiencing discrimination and marginalization within the RSS community, and sometimes even eventually rejecting a RSS identity along with its community altogether (Hill, 2015; James et al., 2016; Ryan, Russell,
Although RSS identities and communities are often intended to help people live better and gain purpose and meaning in life, trans/NB people are sometimes unintentionally or intentionally harmed by RSS experiences.

The shortage of quantitative studies on this intersection may also be explained by the intentionally vague definition of trans/NB. Trans activist groups often promote intentionally vague, undefined, or complex definitions of gender and are fiercely committed to self-advocacy. Due to this nebulous definition, quantitative inquiry approaches to capture the trans/NB experience have serious challenges. While positivist and post-positivist data collection often places people in boxes (i.e., “male,” “female,” and “other”) so researchers can make definitive comparisons, the trans/NB advocacy movement often intentionally negates and challenges boxing people into particular genders and adhering to gender binaries. However, I will argue that quantitative research is still useful and possible to do in ways that center the trans/NB community. While there are limitations to quantitative research, there are equal, but different limitations in only using qualitative research. In order to give trans/NB researchers greater access to these different sets of strengths, comparisons, and possible conclusions, I seek to use critical quantitative research techniques—in a framework which I will describe as Trans QuantCrit—to promote trans/NB inclusion and liberation.

A significant period of identity, belief, and community formation and conflict—including one’s RSS identity and understanding—happens in colleges and universities (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2010; Mayhew, Rockenbach, Bowman, Seifert, & Wolniak, 2016). Without proper, intentional engagement of religious diversity, campus communities can fracture and marginalize folks of different religious, secular, and spiritual identities (Nash, 2001). Furthermore, researchers have demonstrated that one’s gender identity (Rockenbach & Crandall, 2016;
Rockenbach, Lo, & Mayhew, 2017) and RSS identity specifically (Herrera, 2015) significantly influence one’s perception of campus climate, which, in turn, is found to be linked to a student’s success (Mayhew, Rockenbach, & Bowman, 2016; Mayhew, Rockenbach, Bowman, et al., 2016; Shin & Steger, 2016). In the last two decades, there has been a significant call for a better understanding of the trans/NB college student experience due to the growing number of self-disclosing trans/NB people on campuses today (Beemyn, 2005; Beemyn, Domingue, Pettitt, & Smith, 2005; James et al., 2016). In order to foster a more trans-affirming environment, studies show that campus-wide training on trans/NB student issues and concerns (Beemyn, Domingue, et al., 2005; Singh, Meng, & Hansen, 2013), and building a campus community of trans/NB allies leads to greater resilience and empowerment in trans/NB identified college students (Singh et al., 2013). Despite this call, trans/NB students consistently still feel significantly marginalized on college campuses (Beemyn, 2012; Effrig, Bieschke, & Locke, 2011; McKinney, 2005)—often in more overt and blatant ways in comparison to those who are marginalized by their sexual orientation (Rankin, Weber, Blumenfeld, & Frazer, 2010). While there have been notable contributions in research and practice that have focused on bathrooms and housing for campus scholars and practitioners (Krum, Davis, & Galupo, 2013; Seelman, 2014), the call for more intersectional approaches to the trans/NB college experience and trans/NB identity is frequently a limitation in these applied studies (Beemyn, 2012; Krum et al., 2013; Seelman, 2014)—particularly in interactions with different RSS identities of trans/NB individuals (Levitt & Ippolito, 2014). While there are significant amounts of research on the importance of RSS identity development to one’s overall development, trans/NB experience in this research has been markedly left out (Astin et al., 2010).
Definition of Major Terms

Critical quantitative inquiry. Historically and contemporarily, quantitative approaches to research rest on assumptions and assertions drawn from positivist and post-positivist paradigms. Commenting on post-positivism’s sometimes unbridled claims, Crotty (1998) stated, “Since the emergence of positivist science, there has never been a shortage of philosophers and social scientists calling upon it to reign in its excessive assumptions and claims” (p. 29). In addition to answering the research questions outlined below, my goal in this paper is to also invite a model on how one can use critical theories—particularly critical trans and religious theories to critique the way I define the problem, construct questions, consolidate literature, conduct analysis, and draw conclusions in the post-positivistic quantitative framework of a dissertation. I will be centering trans/NB counterstories specifically and, in this orientation, calling my inquiry Trans QuantCrit.

Despite being comparatively new, the critical or transformative quantitative paradigm has already begun to establish itself as a significant approach to higher education research (Carter & Hurtado, 2007; Covarrubias, 2011; Covarrubias et al., 2018; Garcia, López, & Vélez, 2018a; Garcia & Mayorga, 2018; Hernández, 2015; Kilgo, Linley, & Bennett, 2019; Rios-Aguilar, 2014, 2015; Stage, 2007; Stage & Wells, 2014; Wells & Stage, 2015). This shift away from strictly positivist or post-positivist assumptions, however, has been quite varied within the emergent literature. Hernández (2015) stated, “when we decided to employ a quantitative criticalist approach, we did not have a formula to follow” (p. 96). In other words, the full scope of critical or transformative approaches to quantitative methods is not yet realized. However, all the researchers do agree that normative quantitative approaches “can’t simply be adopted for racial justice aims. This requires ongoing self-reflexivity and engagement with the historical, social,
political, and economic structures and power relations at any given point in time. Only then can
quantitative approaches be re-imagined and rectified” (Garcia et al., 2018a, p. 150).

In an effort to maintain reflexivity throughout the work, critical-theory-informed
reflections will initially frame each chapter moving forward and be woven into the decision
making, evaluation, and reasoning in this work. While I attempt to critique positivist and post-
positivistic assumptions, I also recognize that I cannot possibly dismantle all my assumptions
and biases that consciously or unconsciously further marginalize already marginalized
populations. I choose to finalize my dissertation in a way that culminates in a degree and
develops quantitative skills within myself, but I hope this will also be a living, fluid document
and forever open to critique by myself and others.

Attitudes in campus climate. Students’ attitudes towards trans/NB people are just one
part of campus climate. Campus climate is “the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards and
practices of employees and students of an institution” (Rankin & Reason, 2008, p. 264). The
appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people, therefore, is important, but merely a slice of the
larger campus climate. This study is looking at RSS identities and experiences and how they
relate to the campus climate for trans/NB individuals.

More specifically, this study looks at appreciative attitudes. The language of appreciate
attitudes is one aspect of pluralism. Eck (1993), a contemporary comparative religious scholar,
would define pluralism as the larger student learning outcome for the active appreciation for RSS
diversity. Rather than simply existing alongside diverse peers, pluralism requires engagement
with diverse people and ideas, a deep respect of others’ RSS belief systems and other people
despite differing RSS identities, and a commitment to one’s own RSS identity while still
acknowledging and appreciating differences amongst all the RSS identities (Eck, 1993). Studies
show that positive perceptions of a welcoming climate toward certain groups increase the level of appreciative attitudes towards those same groups (Effrig et al., 2011; Rockenbach, Mayhew, et al., 2017).

I use this language warily, however, and am critical of the Christian hegemonical and Westernized roots of appreciative attitude language. Although groundbreaking in her comparisons, Eck’s (1993, 2012) work is devoid of mentions of systemic power and privilege among RSS groups. In her etic study of Indian geography and sacred places (of different overlapping traditions with a particular focus on Hinduism), Eck (2012) describes the spaces in her conclusion: “The places they praise are different. The taste of the lord is different in each one. But each one is a 'beloved place,' and each one enables the pilgrim soul to catch a glimpse of the vast reality of god” (p. 453). The word “god” here is significant. While preaching the sameness and underlying the similarities of all religions, Eck places them all underneath a monotheistic god—most often attributed to Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths. Placing all that is sacred as “equal” is like saying all RSS are the same as monotheism—making Christianity (and other monotheistic religions) the standard bearer and singular point of comparison. The concept of “soul,” too, is a term that has a lot of meaning in westernized Christianity, but less so in most other religions, particularly Buddhism for example (Prothero, 2010). Although only a snippet of Eck’s work, I use this as an example of how easily “all RSS identities are equal” can turn into Christian dominance and the erasure of marginalized faiths. Far from being the same, RSS cultures, beliefs, and rituals are drastically different and often intentionally and inherently incompatible with one another (Prothero, 2010). Plus, [Protestant] Christianity still holds significant power and privilege within U.S. higher education (Blumenfeld, Joshi, & Fairchild, 2009). Critical religious scholars sometimes call this promotion of similarity, therefore, simply a
“myth of pluralism” (Beaman, 2003). So, although the term of appreciative attitudes comes from pluralistic scholars, I do not necessarily promote same-ness and pluralism as the final goal. Instead, I use appreciative attitudes as a stepping stone of first understanding differences to move towards how some differences hold power and privilege in society. Pluralism is a part of the process, therefore, but not an end goal.

**Intersectionality.** I root this study in the concepts of intersectionality as defined by Crenshaw (1991). Crenshaw (1991) critiqued what is sometimes called single-axis studies—that only look at gender, race, or sexuality for example—as not only oversimplifying people’s experience but also going so far as erasing people’s specific lived experience. Identity intersections are not simply additive (e.g., Black women’s experience is not the additive combination of the Black male experience and the white woman experience), but inherently very complex and unique in their intersections and the systems that one experiences in those same intersections. This value will be woven throughout my inquiry, including disaggregating the data and analysis whenever possible in order to give a clearer portrait of student experiences and outcomes.

**Trans/NB identity.** Trans/NB is used as a more inclusive term to include those who identify broadly with “not being cisgender” which may include people who identify as transsexual or transgender. In simplest terms, the word trans “describe[s] people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be when they were born,” (National Center for Transgender Equality, 2016, para. 2). This definition is, thus, an umbrella term and includes people who may be transitioning, perform drag, agender, non-binary, genderqueer, intersex, MTF (male to female), FTM (female to male), and other self-identifiers outside of the genderist binary. Some scholars have delineated these individuals as anyone who identifies as
“other gender identity” at any point in the survey. Notably, however, people can also identify as “trans” or have gone through transition and still identify with “woman” and/or “man.” Being a transwoman/transfeminine and transman/transmasculine does by no means decrease one’s woman-ness or man-ness. These individuals who chose “Female” or “Male” on the survey but do not identify as cisgender are still in the trans/NB population but are outside the scope of this study. Therefore, I use the term trans/NB to describe this “other” category outside the traditional binary gender (male/female, which are more commonly used as “sex” and thus can conflate gender and sex incorrectly) options. My intention in creating these distinctions is not to create yet another gender binary but, instead, to hopefully better center trans/NB voices.

Also of note here is my choice to not include the asterisk at the end of trans. Initially, “trans*” was used to liken the term to a Boolean search that would include anyone related to this term. Contemporarily, the use of trans* has been highly debated and has contributed to significant levels of calling people out for identifying themselves “incorrectly” in internet conversations. The result of this policing invalidates people’s experiences and contributes to an academic elitism that creates just another binary in our field. While not inherently problematic nor exclusionary, some people—notably transwomen and non-binary people—have expressed being excluded by the asterisk. In response, I will be following the call of Trans Student Educational Resources (TSER) to not use the asterisk “because of how unnecessary and inaccessible it is and its common application as a tool of binarism and silencing trans women” (Trans Student Educational Resources, n.d., para. 7).

**Religious, secular, and spiritual identity.** The complexity of who is who and what label and definition should be used is widely debated (Ammerman, 2013; Heelas & Woodhead, 2005; Marler & Hadaway, 2002; Orsi, 2007; Schlehofer, Omoto, & Adelman, 2008; J. K. A.
Smith, 2009; Wuthnow, 1998). There is not one usable definition of religion or spirituality that
does not also exclude wanted often unbounded concepts such as Atheism or include unwanted
concepts such as American Nationalism (Martin, 2012). In Table 1, Nye (2008) describes how
the current conception of religion can be divided in four different categories.

Table 1

*Different Uses of Religion in Contemporary Language Organized with Nye’s (2008) Definitions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Verb</th>
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<tr>
<td>General category</td>
<td>Specific Religion(s)</td>
<td>Descriptor</td>
<td>Action/Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Religion(s)</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Religioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal aspect of human culture</td>
<td>Refers to particular</td>
<td>Used in</td>
<td>Not a thing but an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>groups and traditions</td>
<td>general sense</td>
<td>action, more of a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(e.g., Buddhism,</td>
<td>to describe a type of thing or behavior or experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christianity, Islam)</td>
<td></td>
<td>process of doing</td>
</tr>
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</table>

In this paper, I use RSS to highlight that one’s RSS identity is not a universal experience,
but instead is tied to a specific group (the second noun category in Nye’s work). I will also not
be using RSS as a verb, but there will be times where I use RSS as an adjective to describe
campus climate or campus experiences. This usage is to describe campus climates and
experiences that pertain to particular RSS groups and traditions. I intentionally use RSS identity
(instead of simply religious) to point to the ambiguity, imperfections, and complexity of these
concepts to be captured in a term or phrase acceptable to everyone.

In higher education specifically, RSS is a placeholder phrase that comes from the Council
for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education’s (CAS, 2017) current standard for
student affairs practitioners. The CAS standards draw this phrase from the three distinct
“religious” types found in Kosmin and Keysar’s (2013) study on American college students: religious, secular and spiritual—which each have their own set of theological, philosophical, policy-related views; political and scientific implications; and are almost of equal size constituting each a third of the population. Among other deciding factors, Kosmin and Keysar (2013) find that these three groups differ significantly in their beliefs in god(s), in creationism and evolution, in public policies on LGBTQ and women’s rights, in their orientations towards religious and spiritual institutions, and in their political leanings as a whole. In addition to these distinctions, I add secular and spiritual to religion, too, so this study can visibly and intentionally include the growing population of students who are not religious. In U.S. colleges and universities, studies have shown that students who identify as not religious avoid disclosure of their RSS identities (Goodman & Mueller, 2009) and report feeling excluded from higher education discussions on “interfaith dialogues,” “religious diversity,” and “spirituality” (Fairchild, 2009). Therefore, I use the term RSS, to be more inclusive of all students and to still situate this work in the critical theoretical applications to religious studies.

Notably, I will not be using the term worldview. “Worldview” is the term that emerged from contemporary research and practice on RSS identities on college campuses specifically. A worldview is a “guiding life philosophy, which may be based on particular religious tradition, a nonreligious perspective, or some combination of these” (Rockenbach, Mayhew, Kinarsky, & Interfaith Youth Core, 2014). Therefore, a worldview—like Shia Islam—is something one holds and a worldview identity—like being a Shiite Muslim—is an affiliation with the social group tied to that particular worldview. Although this is how the term is defined in the survey, RSS is used in this paper to make the systemic inequities and cultural realities tied to RSS identities and experiences more visible that are absent in the worldview definition. Although not intentionally
blind to power dynamics, worldview came from interfaith cooperation and religious education initiatives and, thus, centered on the equality of and similarities between all RSS beliefs (van der Kooij, de Ruyter, & Miedema, 2013). This mirrors some of the same erasure that can result from Eck’s (1993) definition of religious pluralism. RSS, on the other hand, acknowledges the socio-political power structures embedded in RSS studies and is connected to contemporary critiques on the study of religion using critical theory (Nongbri, 2013). Rather than directing myself towards equality, I bend towards equity in this work. As a manifestation of doing so, I use RSS to mirror the current standards in higher education and to acknowledge Christian hegemony in the U.S. that shapes the way RSS engagement and identity operates (CAS, 2017; Kimmel & Ferber, 2018). The reality, though, as can be seen in the literature, is that there is no definitive consensus in the field. To address this, worldview was defined for all participants in the administered surveys using the definition above to attempt to capture and establish a shared definition. However, since this does not resonate with all people in the field and is inherently disconnected to critical religious studies, I will still use “religious, secular, and spiritual” (RSS) language in this paper to (re)connect to the critical theory applications of RSS studies.

**Statement of Problem**

Campus programs and experiences addressing and engaging different RSSs do not consider trans/NB identity. Alternatively, programs specifically focusing on trans/NB student experiences often do not consider RSS identity and experience intersections. In fact, the standard for programs for both religious, secular, and spiritual programming and LGBT programming both only include the other in statements encouraging practitioners to serve “regardless” of gender or religion (CAS, 2015). While first-year students expect a welcoming environment, their first-year experiences in college often fall short of these expectations...
(Rockenbach, Mayhew, et al., 2017). Incoming college students, therefore, want more inclusive environments from their campuses. Addressing students’ multiple dimensions of identity is a piece of this puzzle. More intentional engagement within the intersection of trans/NB and RSS identities will help inform a better, more inclusive campus experience for all students.

This gap between what is needed for and the actual experience of trans/NB students on college campuses highlights a significant problem on college campuses. Furthermore, research suggests that people who are part of marginalized groups experience their campus climate very differently than those in the dominant majority—with the same program resulting in different effects for traditionally undeserved groups alongside their overrepresented peers (Kilgo, 2016; Kilgo et al., 2015; Kilgo, Sheets, & Pascarella, 2014). In fact, those who identify outside the gender binary often perceive one’s campus climate as less religiously diverse and less supportive of their own RSS (Rockenbach, Lo, & Mayhew, 2017). Not only do trans/NB identified people perceive a less inviting campus climate for diverse RSS identities, they are also more likely to experience both negative and positive RSS campus experiences, which, again, suggests that the way trans/NB students both perceive and engage with different RSS identities and experiences is different than gender binary\(^1\) students (Rockenbach, Lo, & Mayhew, 2017). This research explores disparate experiences of and towards trans/NB-identified students in college and how to foster a more positive campus climate for trans/NB-identified people through improving attitudes towards trans/NB people. Due to continued feelings of marginalization by trans/NB college students and trans/NB people in different RSS communities, exploring what and how engaging

\(^{1}\) Binary genders in this study are defined as those genders in the socio-historically constructed gender binary: (cis) man or (cis) woman.
in RSS experiences impact students’ appreciation of trans/NB people is critical to helping foster a better picture of the components needed for a trans/NB inclusive campus.

Study Significance

Purpose. In order to address the pervasive discrimination experienced by trans/NB people because of their real or perceived gender on college campuses, I look to contribute to research and practice by exploring the impact of campus RSS experiences on attitudes towards trans/NB people. Additionally, I will hopefully better describe the experience of trans/NB students with inter-RSS engagement in college in relation to the larger campus population.

Improving the trans/NB student experience is intimately connected to improving campus climate and one of those components is the RSS campus climate (Rankin & Reason, 2008). Research has shown that campus climate both can marginalize and promote inclusion among diverse groups of students through four interrelated factors of campus climate: the institution’s historical marginalization and inclusion, the existence and prevalence of diverse groups, opportunities for diversity engagement, and individual perceived experiences of one’s environment (Hurtado, Clayton-Pedersen, Allen, & Milem, 1998). Therefore, exploring the psychological climate by determining any changes in attitudes towards trans/NB students that are moderated by RSS engagements gives scholars and practitioners a tangible picture of the campus climate for trans/NB-identified people. Through this understanding, campus officials can more proactively enact positive interventions to improve campus climate.

Practical implications. I hope this study will have implications for researchers, theorists, policy-makers, and practitioners on how to better support trans/NB students and engage people’s RSS identities on college campuses. While the call for campuses to address students’ spiritual journeys (Astin et al., 2010; Kocet & Stewart, 2011; Miller & Ryan, 2001) and gender
inclusivity (Beemyn, 2003, 2005; Beemyn, Curtis, Davis, & Tubbs, 2005; Beemyn, Domingue, et al., 2005) have both been made separately by researchers in the field, the integration of the two has potentially interesting implications in both discussions by expanding the way one understands and operationalizes diversity and inclusion on campus. I will merge these two areas of need and provide tangible interventions for practitioners to improve experiences for trans/NB-identified people on campuses as well as help engage cisgender (people who do not identify as trans/NB) people in this intersection to better promote greater inclusion. Since it is known that building a campus community of trans/NB allies leads to greater resilience and empowerment in trans/NB-identified college students (Singh et al., 2013), this study will hopefully also inform people who facilitate and engage in inter-RSS experiences to think more critically about engaging trans/NB students’ experiences and leveraging the experiences to develop a more positive psychological campus climate for trans/NB people. In a relatively recent poll of LGBTQ Americans—a population which would presumably has more positive attitudes towards trans people—researchers found that only 3% of the LGBT American public perceive trans/NB people to be largely accepted in society and 80% of them see trans people experiencing little to no acceptance (Pew Research Center, 2013). While there are several outcome assessments of trans ally programs for school personnel (Marx, Roberts, & Nixon, 2017), counselors (Benson, 2012; Case & Meier, 2014), and nurses (Carroll & Mizock, 2017; Kellett & Fitton, 2017), the expansion into interdisciplinary kinship and allyship development through inter-RSS engagement may have powerful implications for social justice and education.

Still, too, RSS diversity is often not engaged or addressed on college campuses (Patel, 2007; Stewart, Kocet, & Lobdell, 2011). If RSS identity is not yet realized as an important part of diversity and inclusion, these findings may also serve as an argument to include these
identities and experiences as part of the dialogue on improving an institution’s diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

Finally, these implications may be particularly salient for health policy advocates when placed alongside the research about the impact of RSSs on health outcomes for trans/NB individuals. Trans/NB individuals who can integrate one’s RSS successfully with one’s gender identity and be part of an appreciative RSS community have been found to age better and be less likely to participate in unhealthy sexual behaviors (Golub, Walker, Longmire-Avital, Bimbi, & Parsons, 2010; Kidd & Witten, 2008; Oswald, 2001). This research can help educators, policy makers, and health promoters of all types. Within RSS-oriented institutions themselves, these findings could also help them potentially restructure or reorient themselves to better improve the experiences of trans/NB identified people in their communities.

**Research questions.** Therefore, to explore this area of the literature and deepen the understanding of the intersection of trans/NB identity and RSS engagement, this study will address two research questions:

1. Controlling for pre-college variables, do and how do RSS-related campus experiences relate to binary gender students’ feelings of appreciation towards trans people as a precursor to trans/NB kinship across RSS groups?

2. How are trans/NB students’ feelings of being welcomed and safe on campus related to RSS-related experiences controlling for their pre-college expectations?

**Knowledge creation.** In addition to practical implications, I will also contribute to existing research. The study hopes to add to trans allyship and kinship research, campus climate research, and critical quantitative research as they all relate to the centering of trans/NB people and disrupting systems of power and privilege around RSS groups and identity-related interaction.
I will also apply social justice ally frameworks (Broido, 1997, 2000; Broido & Reason, 2005) blended with trans/NB kinship (Nicolazzo, 2017b; Nicolazzo, Pitcher, Renn, & Woodford, 2017) to specifically explore attitude development as a step towards possible allyship or kinship with trans/NB people. While studies on LGBT allyship have included (a few) trans/NB people, the data and analysis often conflate trans allyship with one’s advocacy for people with marginalized sexual orientations (Gentner, 2016; Martinez & Hebl, 2010; Perrin, Bhattacharyya, Snipes, Calton, & Heesacker, 2014; Woodford, Atteberry, Derr, & Howell, 2013) even with college campus ally programs specifically (Woodford, Kolb, Durocher-Radeka, & Javier, 2014). Furthermore, while trans kinship is seen as an important component to college student success (Nicolazzo, 2016; Nicolazzo et al., 2017), little is known on how to develop these kinship networks with people who identify on the gender binary although it is known to be more than simply adding a “T” to the LGBQ+ acronym (Stone, 2009).

While studying people’s experiences with marginalized identities’ in one’s RSS campus climate is relatively new, this study could provide a model for future studies on sub-populations in RSS campus climate research specifically. Bryant (2011) has found that behavioral features of campus climate may only foster change in dominant groups such as religious majority groups. For trans/NB students, this study will illuminate how trans/NB students potentially experience their RSS campus climate—particularly surrounding other’s attitudes towards them. Since trans/NB students also tend to hold non-dominant RSS identities, too (see Halkitis et al., 2009; Kidd & Witten, 2008), this study will hopefully better describe the influence of campus climate on people with minoritized RSS identities. To date, the conditional explorations of trans/NB students and RSS campus climate have not been explored, instead focusing on female/males specifically (Bryant, 2011), LGBQ-identified people only (Rockenbach, Riggers-Piehl, Garvey,
Lo, & Mayhew, 2016), or grouping the small sample of trans/NB people with the LGBTQ population (Rockenbach, Lo, & Mayhew, 2017). The call to investigate the conditional changes of trans/NB experiences and the changes in attitudes towards trans/NB is great and a considerable gap in literature on how college affects students (Mayhew, Rockenbach, Bowman, et al., 2016). Similarly, while interpersonal interactions have been found to increase positive attitudes towards LGB people, religious beliefs and experiences can negatively influence these same attitudes (Bowen & Bourgeois, 2001; Engberg, Hurtado, & Smith, 2007; Hinrichs & Rosenberg, 2002; Swank, Woodford, & Lim, 2013; Wolff, Himes, Kwon, & Bollinger, 2012; Woodford et al., 2013; Woodford, Silverschanz, Swank, Scherrer, & Raiz, 2012; Worthen, 2012). I will explore the quality of these claims on trans/NB populations through extending this body of research.

As I describe throughout this study, the categorizations of trans/NB people and people’s RSS identity are all insufficient identifiers. Through the intersection, I will hopefully contribute to new conceptualizations of these descriptions. Hopefully in the findings, new areas of research will emerge for qualitative researchers to explore more deeply and for quantitative researchers to better capture trans/NB and RSS student experiences through more inclusive categories.

In addition to making suggestions on research design, I also seek to make suggestions on analysis of these two intersecting parts of one’s identities, communities, and experiences. Methodologically, I hope to apply critical quantitative practices not currently or not often used in higher education research. Drawing from other fields and modeling how these techniques can enhance higher education research, I will hopefully set a precedence for future scholars and provide tangible steps to practice quantitative criticalism in a way that disrupts genderism through a process I will call Trans QuantCrit. Furthermore, although there are many notable
works centering trans/NB people, the amount of quantitative research doing so outside of health and medicine is still limited. I seek to not only increase representation of trans/NB-identifying scholars but also visibility in terms of anti-deficit, non-cis normative approaches to quantitative research on trans/NB populations. One of my goals of this research is to attempt to extend the critical theory paradigm to quantitative approaches that lift rather than further marginalize already marginalized populations.
Chapter II: Literature review

According to the research, there are some unique ways that trans/NB-identified people engage with their RSS identity and campus climate as compared to the larger college and university going population. Due to this, there are some unique challenges and unique potential mediating effects at this intersection. Prior to delving into the intersection, I intentionally situate this literature review recognizing the pervasive, systemic barriers that disproportionately affect trans/NB people and differentiating this study’s population with research on sexual orientation minorities (LGBQ+) students.

Although less studied, this complexity of the intersection of trans/NB and RSS identities suggests both potential challenges and possible supports between the two in the research. In order to organize the findings, studies will be thematically sorted into this pro-con style of complexity seen in this intersection by further organizing the studies to those related to RSS affiliation, RSS integration, health-related outcomes associated with the integration, and campus climate for trans/NB-identified people and people with diverse RSS identities.

Orientation into the Intersection

Restating the critical theory informed framework. What is called the cislation of transness (the perpetuation of cisnormativity in descriptions of trans people) in higher education and RSS research is pervasive (Sumerau, 2017; Sumerau, Cragun, & Mathers, 2016). Historically and contemporarily, cis people have controlled the narrative on trans/NB people’s experiences. Throughout the literature review, therefore, I will be applying a critical lens by questioning some of the literature’s findings through the lens that social structures reinforce the status quo of genderism. In doing so, I will attempt at being particular about the studies I cite and the conclusions I draw throughout this reflexive exercise.
**Pervasive challenges.** As described in the introduction briefly, discrimination on the macro and micro scale is still highly prevalent towards trans/NB people in the U.S. today. Although there are numerous accounts of this, the U.S. 2015 Trans Survey provides some of the most recent and comprehensive data on trans/NB discrimination and lived experiences to date. According to this data, trans/NB-identified people living in the U.S. are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than the larger U.S. population and are more than likely to be verbally harassed in K-12 if they were out or perceived as trans during that time (James et al., 2016). These hardships, too, can have serious life or death consequences. In this survey, 40% of them are likely to have already attempted suicide—which is just over nine times the rate of 4.6% in the entire U.S. population in 2015 (James et al., 2016). These disparities begin to speak to the systemic inequities and discrimination trans/NB students face in their life.

**Similar and different to LGBQ+ and RSS intersections.** A more researched intersection with RSS identities is LGBQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer or questioning) identities. Although the intersection of trans/NB and RSS identities has been less studied, the relationships between the LGBQ+ and RSS identity suggest possible similar relationships with the trans/NB identity since LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer or questioning) issues are often grouped together in policy, research, and practice. In aggregate studies, LGBQ+ individuals have both been able to use religion to counter stigma and marginalization based on their identity and, on the flip side, have been seen to experience marginalization from religious communities (Bockting & Cesaretti, 2001; Fullilove & Fullilove, 1999; Love et al., 2005; Wentz & Wessel, 2011; Yip, 2007).

Researchers have also demonstrated that LGBQ+ people sometimes reject parts of their sexuality and concentrate instead on the self over sexual relationships to be further accepted into
their chosen RSS community (Fischer, 1989). On the other hand, research also suggests that
because of one’s marginalized sexual orientation, one can also struggle with RSS beliefs and
reject formal and institutional RSS community experiences altogether (Grubbs & Exline, 2014;
Lease, Horne, & Noffsinger-Frazier, 2005; Rodriguez & Ouellette, 2000). Although the trans/NB
experience is different from LGBQ+ experiences and should be analyze separately (Fassinger &
Arseneau, 2007; Worthen, 2013), the research on sexual orientation does suggest that the
intersection of trans/NB and RSS identities may also include significant intricacies.

**RSS Affiliation and Association**

**Unique challenges.** The RSS identities of trans/NB people have been seen to not readily
align with most current religious, secular, and spiritual research conceptualizations (Kidd &
Witten, 2008). Often limited in scope, the ways of capturing trans/NB experiences with their
RSS identities are, thus, incomplete and not demonstrative of the full story. Not surprisingly,
therefore, Kidd and Witten (2008) found that trans/NB people struggle with the traditional RSS
standard surveys centered in Christian theology. Perhaps due to the way researchers study this
intersection and instances of discrimination in the RSS community itself, trans/NB identified
members are seen to weaken their ties to formal religious institutions (Bockting, Knudson, &
Goldberg, 2006). Since many trans/NB are not tied to a formal RSS association, comprehensive
analyses on trans/NB people’s experiences with RSS belief systems and institutions are limited
in scope.

As alluded to previously in this section, this may be because trans/NB people are more
likely to experience discrimination if they are formally affiliated with a religious or spiritual
community or institution. In a recent study, 18% of trans/NB people were found to experience
marginalization in their faith community, and 19% of trans/NB people left a faith community
because they were rejected by the faith community (James et al., 2016). The result is almost one in five trans/NB people experience discrimination because of their gender identity in an RSS community.

Outside of the intersections with the more formal RSS traditions, there is some evidence that trans/NB-identified people may seek more general “spiritual” or non-religious orientations to their RSS identity outside of the Western Christian traditions. In several studies, trans/NB people’s preferred RSS identities that were “not religious,” “spiritual,” or at least outside the three more dominant religions in the U.S.: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Halkitis et al., 2009; Kidd & Witten, 2008). Due to the unwelcoming nature of some organized RSS communities, trans/NB individuals can also reject the communal aspect of their RSS identity and only identify with it in an individual capacity (Wilcox, 2002, 2009).

Interestingly, the national trend of RSS affiliations in the U.S. population mirrors the increase in “not religious” identifications that are found in trans/NB populations. Growing steadily each year since the turn of the century, “not religious” as a religious identity continues to increase (Pew Research Center, 2008), especially with those attending college (Pew Research Center, 2014). What is known about those who are not religious, too, is that they are more likely to experience discrimination due to their non-religious status (Cragun, Kosmin, Keysar, Hammer, & Nielsen, 2012). Furthermore, if students do go so far as to leave the RSS institution, religious disaffiliation is seen to be associated with poorer mental and physical health (Fenelon & Danielsen, 2016). Therefore, if trans/NB students are more likely to leave their religion and be religious “none’s” (people who do not identify with any formal religion), then they may also be more likely to experience additional discrimination because of their RSS identity. Furthermore, applying concepts of Crenshaw’s (1989, 1991) intersectionality where intersecting identity
experiences are greater than the sum of its parts (e.g., being a Black woman is not the same as adding the experience of being a Black man and the experience of being a woman), this intersection is also likely greater and more complicated than simply adding the two experiences of trans/NB discrimination and non-religious discrimination together.

**Possible supports.** Although trans/NB individuals are less likely to be affiliated with a predominate religious faith (Halkitis et al., 2009; Kidd & Witten, 2008), there are some models in the research where trans/NB individuals are still able to hold a particular RSS identity although they may not be directly connected to the community. Research has demonstrated that LGBTQ+ individuals purposefully position themselves as “outsiders” in RSS communities to resolve conflicts between their LGBTQ+ and RSS identities (Oswald, 2001). This research article in particular, however, potentially conflates sexual and gender identity in their findings. The disaggregation of these experiences is less common in research. One trans/NB woman in Wilcox’s (2002) study on queer women and RSS identities was found to participate in what is called “religious individuation,” where one defines their religion individually and outside of traditional religious institutions, i.e., Sheila practicing “Sheila-ism.” Through Wilcox’s thick description of one trans/NB woman’s experience alongside other queer cis women, she argued that practicing Sheilaism can be adaptive and fulfilling for trans/NB people’s relationships to their RSS identities (Wilcox, 2002). Therefore, while trans/NB individuals may not be as formally affiliated, there appears to be ways to reconcile these communal divisions and still practice a specific RSS belief system or identity.

**RSS Belief Systems**

**Unique challenges.** In general, LGBTQ+ individuals have been shown to have negative experiences with more dominant religions and be less religious (Pew Research Center, 2013).
Although LGBTQ+ individuals have significantly different perceptions of their religions across categories (see for example Pew Research Center, 2013), there are some unique challenges that cross multiple RSS groups and some that are particularly pervasive because they come from more dominant narratives in the United States. Christianity is still the dominating and privileged group in the U.S. and Canada and sets societal and institutional norms for how one understands and operates within RSS systems (Beaman, 2003; Blumenfeld, 2006; Blumenfeld et al., 2009). Christian thought is notably dualistic in gender and “because our imagery and language have been one-sidedly masculine, a masculinist-shaped spirituality has resulted” (Nelson, 1983, p. 14). So, despite RSS belief systems often being focused on the transcendent, agender or omni-gender descriptors are reserved only for the divine and binary gendered dualisms are the only structures for humans and their interactions.

Therefore, although Christian theology is by no means the only religious presence in the U.S., looking at the dominant anti-trans/NB narratives from this dominant religious text in the U.S. does provide a glimpse into the barriers trans/NB-identified people have in religious and spiritual spaces. The most commonly cited verses from the Christian Old Testament in the Bible from Deuteronomy (which notably is also in the Tanakh of the Jewish Torah). The following are two examples:

1. A woman must not wear men’s clothing, nor a man wear women’s clothing, for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this (Deuteronomy 22:5, New International Version).

2. No one whose testicles have been crushed or whose penis has been cut off may participate in the assembly of the Lord. (Deuteronomy 23:1, International Standard Version).
Citing transphobic religious doctrines such as the ones above, one’s RSS identity is often viewed as antagonizing to one’s trans/NB identity. In Christian religions particularly, one’s trans/NB identity can be seen as “a problem” to be fixed (Leong, 2008). Due to this and the dominant Christian belief system in the U.S., it is more common than not for trans/NB identified people to be raised in an RSS tradition that preached against them in the U.S. (Oswald, 2001). Even if one only had a religious upbringing and has since disaffiliated, the lack of familial and community support due to growing up religious and leaving it because one is trans/NB has been seen to significantly impact one’s psychological well-being (Ryan et al., 2010; Wood & Conley, 2014). Opposing viewpoints like religious doctrines that counter one’s trans identity also can have significant negative psychological and behavioral implications for the people who are navigating these two differing communities (Mashek, Stuewig, Furukawa, & Tangney, 2006).

Being in a RSS community and experiencing instances of transphobia in the environment can lead to extreme feelings of discord and rejection by one’s religion, religious community, and the higher power one believes in (Hill, 2015; Ryan et al., 2010). Following instances of discrimination, trans/NB-identified people can respond with adaptive or maladaptive coping strategies, and the choice between the two kinds can be significantly impacted by one’s social network, which can include their RSS community (Hill, 2015). Across multiple RSS traditions, people speak of the critical importance of others understanding or attempting to understand the integration of one’s trans identity and RSS identity (Althaus-Reid & Isherwood, 2008; Dzmura, 2010; Mollenkott & Sheridan, 2003; Nicolazzo, 2015; Shah, 2008). In other words, a community and those who are in it can cause significant unintentional harm to a person who finds both their trans/NB and RSS identity important if the larger community sees these two identities as dichotomously and unable to be integrated. A study by Westerfield (2012)
demonstrated that even though Christian trans/NB-identifying folks may integrate their identities internally, the perception of them in their various communities was the most harmful to mental and emotional well-being. Discrimination within RSS communities for trans/NB people is significant and appears to potentially cross all RSS experiences regardless of one’s RSS identity. This mirrors findings mentioned later in campus climate research on the importance of trans allies and kinship to trans/NB student well-being (Nicolazzo, 2016).

**Possible supports.** Although gender is often seen as dualistic in religion (e.g., the masculine and feminine yin and yang in Confucianism and Taoism) and thus incongruent to the trans/NB experience, there is some research—particularly in the forms of scholarly personal narratives, auto-ethnographies, and lengthy in-depth qualitative interviews—that suggests alternatives to clearly divided trans/NB dialogues with dialogues about one’s RSS identity or community. This divided binary is grappled with by trans-affirming RSS theologians across various traditions such as Buddhism (Dillon & Jivaka, 2017; Mollenkott, 2001), Hinduism (Mollenkott, 2001), Islam (Mollenkott, 2001; Shah, 2008), Native American spiritualties (Jacobs, Thomas, & Lang, 1997; Mollenkott, 2001), and others—with a notable higher concentration in the Judeo-Christian realm (Althaus-Reid, 2000; Beardsley & O’Brien, 2016; Cornwall, 2010, 2011, 2015; Dzmura, 2010; Herzer, 2016; Hornsby & Guest, 2016; Isherwood & Althaus-Reid, 2009; Mollenkott, 2001; Mollenkott & Sheridan, 2003; Sheridan, 2001; Tanis, 2003) with only a few explicitly Jewish (Dzmura, 2010). From attempting to balance on the Jewish Hebrew “mechitzah” or partition (Dzmura, 2010) to attempting to suture the divide in Buddhism as a Tibetan Monk (Dillon & Jivaka, 2017), the divide “that I continually struggle to knit together in a seamless pattern,” between one’s RSS identity and gender is consistent through all the attempted combinations (Shah, 2008, p. 88). In Althaus-Reid and Isherword’s (2008) Christian
Some scholars and theorists even go insofar as arguing that trans/NB people are divinely special. In different ways than LGBQ+ identities, there are some unique ways that some religions explicitly or vaguely support the trans/NB lived experience (Coleman, Colgan, & Gooren, 1992; Conroy, 2010; Smith & Home, 2007). A frequently cited example of a supportive RSS belief system comes from some Native American spiritual traditions where their beliefs lift two-spirited identified people (a trans/NB identity) as a special piece of their community and closer to the higher power (Jacobs et al., 1997). Even in the Christian tradition there have been significant attempts to create more inclusive theologies, including, perhaps most notably, Mollenkott’s (2001) *Omnigender: A Tran-Religious Approach* argues for not just a trans-supportive, but trans and intersex-exalting Judeo-Christian God. A similar account has also been made for intersex people—where a Dominican priest argues that intersexuality is a divine choice (Gross, 1999). These trans/NB-identity-specific justifications for positive integration suggest the expansive possibilities of adaptive identity integration.

**Mental and Physical Health and Well-being**

Due to the long history of the pathologization of trans/NB people that continues today in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM V* (5th ed.; DSM-V; American Psychiatric Association, 2013), a large percentage of trans/NB research is medicalized (Stryker, 2017). Therefore, although this study is not directly related to health, trans/NB experiences of campus climate are related to well-being, and there is a significant body of research on the health
impact of RSS on trans/NB people. In the research, there are some challenges RSS experiences can bring to trans/NB people and some promising practices in RSS integration to improve the mental and physical health and well-being for trans/NB people.

Unique challenges. Researchers have found that even if one had a religious upbringing and has since disaffiliated, the lack of familial and community support due to growing up religious and trans/NB significantly impacts one’s psychological well-being (Ryan et al., 2010; Wood & Conley, 2014). Religious disaffiliation, too, is seen to be associated with poorer mental and physical health (Fenelon & Danielsen, 2016). Opposing viewpoints like RSS doctrines that counter one’s trans/NB identity can have significant psychological and behavioral implications for the people who are navigating these two differing communities (Mashek et al., 2006). Due to the unique challenges trans/NB students face in terms of RSS association and affiliation, there are unique consequences experienced by trans/NB students in this intersection.

Possible supports. Despite studies on the threats to positive mental and physical health for trans/NB identified people, there are some small sample studies that suggest there may be alternative models. In Kerry’s (2009) study, RSS identity was found to be a critical component to intersex people’s long-term happiness and peace with their intersex identity. In another small sample study, Preves (2003) similarly described how intersex individuals were able to use RSS beliefs and communities to accept and embrace their intersex identity. While this may not be the experience for all trans/NB students, this possibility of health promotion through RSS identity or engagement could be life-changing for some trans/NB identified students. Whether one’s RSS identity is used to overcome trauma (Preves, 2003) or find happiness (Kerry, 2009), recognizing and potentially harnessing the power of the spiritual journey could be a powerful intervention for
trans students. Notably, too, not all intersex individuals identify themselves under the trans/NB umbrella.

Beyond the intersex specific studies, there are more general studies on LGBTQ+ populations that suggest some promise due to this intersection. In response to RSS-related discrimination, Hill’s (2015) research of nine Black LGBT, spiritual individuals found that individuals could maladaptively or adaptively cope in response. Whereas negative coping strategies such as addiction or promiscuity were seen to further isolate and exacerbate the negative emotions related to discrimination within the RSS community, adaptive coping strategies such as recovery and self-acceptance mediated negative emotions and societal exclusion. Fostering adaptive coping strategies, therefore, can actually lead towards improved mental health even in the face of RSS-related discrimination.

In another single, in-depth case study, there was one case to explore the intersection of trans/NB identity and RSS identity in Nicolazzo’s (2015) dissertation, where a student found an online trans and religious community that affirmed both their gender and religious identity. There is some indication in the research that trans people can use peer models—particularly in virtual spaces to build community that helps them to integrate both their gender and RSS identity—to increase student success and psychological well-being (Nicolazzo et al., 2017). Indeed, several online communities merging different religious faiths and trans identity can be found online (see, for example Michigan State University’s Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgender Resource Center, 2018; Transfaith, n.d.), but formalized ways of promoting and scaffolding these types of kinships or integrations are not fully realized on college campuses.

RSS belief systems have also been seen to mediate successful aging in trans/NB-identified adults (Porter, Ronneberg, & Witten, 2013) and negate some likelihood of unhealthy
sexual behaviors for trans/NB-identified people (Golub et al., 2010). However, if managed incorrectly, RSS communities and conflicting identities have also been shown to damage trans adult aging processes (Kidd & Witten, 2008). While higher education professionals are not health professionals, aging is a larger indicator of physical health and sexual health is a common concern on college campuses. Looking into the intersection of student’s trans/NB and RSS identity may have implications for student success and well-being based on existing research.

Campus Climate

There is a relatively strong history exploring and defining campus climate. Campus climate as defined by Rankin and Reason (2008) is made up of the “the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards and practices of employees and students of an institution” (p. 264). Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, and Allen (1998) have four areas of campus climate: “an institution's historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion of various racial/ethnic groups, its structural diversity in terms of numerical representation of various racial/ethnic groups, the psychological climate of perceptions and attitudes between and among groups, and the behavioral climate dimension, characterized by intergroup relations on campus” (p. 282). Rather than concentrating on simply recruiting more trans/NB people, campus climate research also concentrates on the institutional, structural, behavioral, and psychological climates that help or hinder student success for marginalized students. Even the perception of a welcoming climate has been seen to be associated with an increase of positive attitudes towards people of difference (Rockenbach, Mayhew, et al., 2017). Originally written as a meta-research analysis for campus climates for race/ethnicity, Hurtado and her colleagues’ campus climate framework has transcendened this aspect of diversity and inclusion to also include the climate for RSS diversity where people with different RSS identities and other demographic characteristics experience the
climate differently. Underrepresented students including religious minoritized students (Bryant & Craft, 2010; Cole & Ahmadi, 2003; A. B. Rockenbach, Walker, & Luzader, 2012; Seggie & Sanford, 2010) and trans/NB students (Rankin, 2005) have all been shown to experience the campus climate more negatively than their peers. To organize and visualize different categories of thought in the literature, each of the components of campus climate will be used as subheadings below to explore the different aspects of the intersection between trans/NB and RSS identity in higher education.

**Unique challenges.** The current college student population is more polarized and politicized than any other incoming class in recent years (Eagan et al., 2017). The strong feelings, attitudes, and actions of students likely influence and have an impact on trans/NB and other marginalized students. Trans/NB students consistently still feel significantly marginalized on college campuses (Beemyn, 2012; Effrig et al., 2011; McKinney, 2005)—often in more overt and blatant ways in comparison to those who are marginalized by their sexual orientation (Rankin et al., 2010). While there have been notable contributions in research and practice that have focused on bathrooms and housing for campus scholars and practitioners (Krum et al., 2013; Seelman, 2014), the call for more intersectional approaches to the trans/NB college experience and trans/NB identity is frequently a limitation in these applied studies (Beemyn, 2012; Krum et al., 2013; McKinney, 2005; Seelman, 2014)—particularly in interactions with different religious, secular, and spiritual RSSs of trans/NB individuals (Levitt & Ippolito, 2014). To explore this complex issue at the intersection, Hurtado et al.’s (1998) theory of campus climate will be used to explore the multitude of barriers for trans/NB students and diverse RSS identifying students.
**Institutional history.** In terms of RSS, institutional histories of inclusion and exclusion are particularly salient. The history of higher education was founded by religious denominations with some intentionally made to socialize ministers and future workers within a particular religious denomination (Geiger, 2015). While a detailed account of all the historical religious affiliations of U.S. Higher Education is outside the scope of this study, prior to the late 1800s, colleges and universities were deeply religiously rooted and founded (Roberts & Turner, 2000). Although many of those colleges and university are now explicitly secular, these religious—specifically Christian—foundations still impact the institution’s history of inclusion and exclusion and its current policies, practices, and infrastructure (Roberts & Turner, 2000). Of course, too, there are some institutions who are still explicitly religiously affiliated so this institutional characteristic will be important to address in this study.

Gender is also incredibly salient. Prior to the Civil War (1861), few universities admitted women (Geiger, 2016). Although trans/NB-identified people perhaps attended institutions of higher education long before this, trans/NB people did not widely become visible and outspoken until the LGBTQ+ movement did as a whole after the 1969 Stonewall Riots—which were organized by some trans/NB people (Beemyn, 2014). Comparative to (white, wealthy, cis) women’s access to higher educations, trans/NB visibility is a recent development. Despite these strides, however, anti-transgender backlash within the LGBTQ+ community continued to be pervasive until the nineties when queer theory was explicitly developed, “transgender”-specific activism became more widespread and known, and the Internet enabled trans/NB people to connect with each other more easily (Beemyn, 2014). Responding to the times in the 1990s, the Creating Change conference formed to focus on LGBTQ+ issues in higher education and in November 1997 the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals was formed.
(Consortium of Higher Education lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender, 2017). Just short of four years later, Campus Pride, an organization focused on making colleges and universities more LGBT friendly was also founded (Campus Pride, 2018). All these organizations took and continue to take great strides to make institutions more inclusive for trans/NB people. However, this movement, again, is relatively recent and must combat a long history of exclusion and, at best, non-explicit inclusion in higher education as a whole. The Campus Pride Index (also established in 2001) provides a national standard for colleges and universities along with a set of recommendations still given to every participating college—indicating that even the most highly ranked LGBT friendly campuses have room for improvement. For transformative change to work, campus institutional characteristics must also tangibly support trans/NB and religiously diverse people. In speaking about systemic institution-wide change, Rowley, Hurtado, and Ponjuan (2002) concluded, “To achieve a strong institutional commitment to diversity . . . a set of interlocking commitments to diversity must go beyond the rhetoric of mission statements to include articulation of diversity priorities, activities that evaluate and reward progress, core leadership support, and the development of a diverse student body” (p. 21).

**Structural diversity.** Structural diversity primarily refers to the demographic composition of the student body. Student bodies that are highly skewed to one or a few RSS identities or gender, for example, are socially governed by the majority (Hurtado et al., 1998). A skewed structural composition both means that cross-RSS and cross-gender interactions are less likely to happen and that minorities are tokenized (Hurtado et al., 1998). Tokenism—first coined specifically relating to gender and sex differences—leads to greater visibility, polarization, and assimilation: Visibility places greater pressure to succeed and stress on the minoritized group, polarization means that dominant groups will create greater distances and further separate
themselves from the minoritized group, and assimilation will distort the lived experiences of
minoritized students to better fit the dominant stereotype of them (Kanter, 1977). With gender
and RSS identity, therefore, minoritized students in either category can experience extra stress to
perform and to combat any negative or constricting stereotypes the dominant group places on
them or they internalize themselves. Interestingly, there has been some preliminary analysis
demonstrating that perceptions of structural diversity by a student may actually be associated
with a decrease in positive attitudes towards people of difference (Bowman, Rockenbach,
Mayhew, Riggers-Piehl, & Hudson, 2017). So, although structural diversity is important, it also
appears to not be enough to change peer attitudes towards diverse groups.

Although ideally an institution can make efforts to increase recruitment of trans/NB
individuals, an institution is very unlikely able to make trans/NB students not minoritized
considering the current structural diversity of gender in the United States as a whole. The reality
is cisgender people highly outnumber trans/NB in the United States. In Meerwijk and Sevelius’
estimate that only about one million Americans, or 0.4% of the U.S. population, identify as
trans/NB. Although accurate numbers of the trans/NB college going population are hard to
accurately quantify, cisgender will be the majority everywhere in the foreseeable future.
Therefore, cisnormativity and trans/NB tokenism is an undeniable, pervasive part of each of the
surveyed institutions.

Psychological climate and the importance of kinship. As described in more detail above,
in studies including positive integrations of one’s trans/NB and RSS identity, trans/NB people
note the critical importance of others appreciating these identity integrations to their overall well-
being (Althaus-Reid & Isherwood, 2008; Dzmura, 2010; Mollenkott & Sheridan, 2003;
Nicolazzo, 2015; Shah, 2008). In other words, a community and those who are in it can cause significant unintentional harm to a trans/NB student if those in the community perceive being trans/NB to be diametrically opposed to the RSS with which said trans/NB individual identifies. This is particularly critical alongside studies that show trans/NB students perceive the campus climate as less religiously diverse and less supportive of one’s spirituality (Rockenbach, Lo, & Mayhew, 2017). Fostering appreciative attitudes of trans/NB people, therefore, is significant for all genders because everyone’s attitudes can significantly impact trans/NB student experiences of engaging in different RSS belief systems and communities.

**Behavioral climate and advocacy behaviors.** Student engagement and involvement has long been linked to student success and engagement. Without proper, intentional engagement of RSS diversity, campus communities can fracture and marginalize folks of different religious, secular, and spiritual identities (Nash, 2001). Furthermore, past research has demonstrated that gender significantly influences one’s RSS identity and experiences in college (Bryant, 2007). As stated prior, too, trans/NB college students have been found to experience greater instances of discrimination and violence across campus environments comparatively to their cisgender peers (Dugan, Kusel, & Simounet, 2012; Garvey & Rankin, 2015; Marine, 2017; Singh et al., 2013). Although protection from all discrimination does not currently seem to feasible, trans/NB students sense of resiliency to these experiences of discrimination can be fostered through community support and advocacy at the institution (Marine, 2011; Nicolazzo, 2017b; Singh et al., 2013).

**Unique components of RSS campus climate: coercion.** In contrast to racial campus climate, there is a unique phenomenon in engaging RSS diversity. Whereas those of other races typically never try to coerce people to change their race, this does happen with people’s RSS
identities. This unique component of RSS campus climate is a critical, yet unique part of this study. While coercion does not influence school satisfaction (Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2014), it is frequently an expressed concern by higher education administrators (Bryant, Wickliffe, Mayhew, & Behringer, 2009). Coercion has not shown significance in the larger U.S. college-attending population on academic and satisfaction outcomes, but it is included in this study in an exploratory capacity to potentially address some practical concerns of faculty, staff, students and administrators. Students who identify with an RSS identity outside of Christianity do, however, perceive greater levels of coercion on campus (Rockenbach, Mayhew et al., 2017). Since trans/NB students are more likely to be outside of the Christian majority, instances of coercion may exacerbate instances of discrimination and lead to a more negative campus climate for them.

**Possible supports.** While an institution’s historical legacy of exclusion and inclusion and its structural diversity are relatively immovable, the psychological and behavioral dimensions of campus climate are areas where there can be possibilities of greater change and influence and, thus, the focus of this study.

*Psychological and behavioral climate: Social justice allyship and trans kinship.* While not related to RSS campus climate, certain demographic characteristics and other belief systems held on sexual orientation and gender roles have all been found to influence people’s attitudes towards trans/NB-identified people (Woodford et al., 2013, 2012; Worthen, 2012). Meaning, education on LGBT issues may change the psychological climate for trans/NB students.

While the relationship between engagement related to different RSS identities and a trans/NB campus climate has not been explored, there is research to suggest that RSS campus experiences influence students’ attitudes towards others. For example, in a recent study on changes in attitudes in students’ first year of college, “perceiving space for support and spiritual
expression on campus, having provocative encounters with people of other [RSS identities],
perceiving the campus as welcoming of different social identity groups, and formal interfaith
engagement—also engender growth in students’ appreciation of both liberals and conservatives”
(Rockenbach, Mayhew, et al., 2017, p. 5). Controlling for RSS identity and other demographic
experiences, exposure and engagement with RSS diversity is related to more positive attitudes
towards other parts of a person’s identity—in this case, one’s political affiliation. Conversely,
“informal social engagement with religiously diverse peers undermines positive attitudes towards
conservatives” in particular (Rockenbach, Mayhew, et al., 2017, p. 5). In terms of changes in
attitudes towards people of different RSS identities, genders, and sexual orientations as a whole,
behavioral dimensions that have been seen to be related with increases in attitudes towards
diverse groups are students having a close friend with someone from that group, an encounter
with people of difference that challenges one’s RSS, space and support for expressing their own
RSS on campus, and knowledge about the diverse group (Rockenbach et al, 2017). This is
consistent with findings on changes to attitudes towards trans/NB students specifically. The
existence of trans kinship networks, where a trans/NB person has a community of support, are
important predictors for trans college student success (Nicolazzo, 2017b; Nicolazzo et al., 2017).
Because of this, exploring how RSS engagement can promote said communities and general
more positive attitudes towards trans/NB people may be powerful opportunities for successful
interventions that leverage the strengths of trans/NB people throughout higher education. This
combination of findings suggests that the intersection between RSS engagement and attitudes
towards people who are different is complex and worthy of study to explore the intricacies of
supporting a more inclusive campus.
The intersection of allyship and religion is particular promising due to some of the motivating components faith has been found to have in ally research. Religion, spirituality, or faith have all been found to be influential motivations to future ally and advocacy development in college students and beyond (Astin et al., 2010; Munin & Speight, 2010; Pinkney, 1968; Snyder, 1992; Walsh, 1994) and, in some cases, one of the most influential components that contribute future social justice advocacy (Diane. Goodman, 2001)

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite significant research illuminating possible variables to explore at the intersection of trans/NB identity and one’s RSS experiences in college, many of the generalizations made have been based on small sample sizes and limited in their scope. The call to better integrate the spectrum of gender identities and their intersections on college campuses comes from multiple areas of the research and practice (Beemyn, 2012; Krum et al., 2013; Levitt & Ippolito, 2014; McKinney, 2005; Seelman, 2014). The field of higher education still needs a clear and thorough picture of the RSS campus climate for trans/NB-identified people, including possibilities for cisgender people to develop allyship through inter-religious/spiritual experiences. I look to contribute to research and practice by exploring the impact of campus experiences as the precursor to trans/NB advocacy—appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people—for gender binary students and describing the experience of trans/NB students with different RSS identities and experiences in college.

Conceptual Framework

The limited research about the intersection of trans/NB identity and one’s RSS is likely in part due to the fact that some dominant religious ideologies do not recognize anything outside of biologically male or female sexes or two genders (Bockting & Cesaretti, 2001; Kidd & Witten,
Despite the perception of mutual exclusiveness, philosophers and theologians have found ways to bridge this divide across various RSSs (Mollenkott, 2001). In this study, I seek to find ways for all students to better integrate trans/NB appreciative attitudes with all RSS identities and I operate under the assumption that this is possible across all of these identities.

**Intersectionality.** I will first root this work in the concepts of intersectionality as defined by Crenshaw (1989, 1991). Crenshaw (1989) critiqued what is sometimes called single-axis studies—that only look at gender, race, or sexuality separately for example—as not only oversimplifying people’s experience, but also go so far as erase people’s specific lived experience. Including other demographic variables and institutional variables, therefore, is not only preferred, but a necessarily ethical practice in identity research. More than simply accounting for aspects of difference, the approach to this study seeks to critically consider the complexity postulated by the theory of intersectionality. Applying concepts of Crenshaw’s (1989, 1991) intersectionality theory where intersecting identity experiences are greater than the sum of its parts (e.g., being a Black woman is not the same as adding the experience of being a Black man and the experience of being a woman) due to the interlocking systems of oppression related to each of one’s identities. In the present study, this theory characterizes the intersection between trans/NB and RSS identities as also greater and more complicated than simply adding the experiences of trans/NB discrimination and religious discrimination together. Because societal structures and systems interact in complicated and distinct ways between gender, different RSSs and their institutions, and all other identity-related social systems, the theory of intersectionality is a critical piece of this study. Trans/NB people are multifaceted and not simply a sum of each of their identities (Bowleg, 2008). This becomes incredibly important, therefore, to merge seemingly dichotomous identities such as trans/NB identities and RSS
identities to reduce tension and promote greater well-being for trans/NB students (Glaser, 2008; James et al., 2016). Therefore, my commitment to the theory of intersectionality informs this work and all of my methodological choices leading to the study’s summary and conclusions. Further discussions of applying intersectional approaches to inquiry will be included in the analysis approach to the research questions using disaggregation approaches from López, Erwin, Binder, and Chavez’s (2018) work on QuantCrit methodologies.

**Limitations and critiques.** Despite being a helpful approach to the conceptual framework, intersectionality does not provide a concrete way to relate trans/NB people and RSS experiences. In looking at this intersection, however, it is important for the researcher to remember the multiple other identities and their related systems of power and privilege that make the intersection more nuanced than perhaps previously conceived. Outside of this reminder, intersectionality as a theory does not provide an outcome, but instead is more about how the world works and therefore a consideration in the analysis amongst the other following theories.

**Intergroup contact theory.** This study’s focus on attitudes and student engagement is grounded in intergroup contact theory as defined by Allport (1954). Allport (1954) theorized that with more quality intergroup contact, one’s prejudices towards other groups (first specifically concentrating on racial groups)—both involved and not involved in the intergroup contact—decreases. According to Allport (1954), positive, quality contact requires equal group status within the situation; all groups sharing a common goal; intergroup cooperation to be the central point of the contact; and for authority figures, the institutional policies, laws, and customs to support the contact itself.

Since its formal inception, intergroup contact theory has developed validity past Allport’s (1954) initial formulation surrounding racial relations and into intergroup relations across
religious and gender diversity as well (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011). Indeed, there is some evidence contact reduces transprejudice (M. E. King, Winter, & Webster, 2009) and interreligious prejudice (Patel, 2012). Also since its inception, some of Allport’s initial tenants have been further flushed out and developed. In a meta-analysis of all the studies grounded in Allport’s theory since 1954 until 2005, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) found that these tenets are more interrelated than separate factors and that they are not necessarily required for prejudice reduction towards other groups. Although the theory has shifted from the 1950s, the general premise that positive contact with people of difference in an environment that supports this interaction reduces prejudice remains relatively unchanged. This theoretical orientation guides the methodological approach I use in my study.

**Limitations and critiques.** The prerequisites for positive intergroup dialogue—equal group status within the situation; all groups sharing a common goal; intergroup cooperation to be the central point of the contact; and for authority figures, the institutional policies, laws, and customs to support the contact itself—are substantial (Allport, 1954). For example, studies have shown that whereas smaller “outgroup” sizes may lead dominant groups to be less threatened by “outgroups,” intergroup contact is also less likely to occur as when the marginalized group population is small and “unthreatening” versus making up a larger and more substantial group (Schlueter & Scheepers, 2010). As previously mentioned, the proportionate reality of trans/NB representation in the entire population limits trans/NB representation in higher education specifically. Due to this limitation of outgroup size, cis allies in intergroup contact situations are even more important to ensure at least a variety of perspectives on trans/NB identity are represented in dialogue when trans/NB people cannot always be present. Particularly in studying trans/NB and RSS identities, certain genders (cisgender) and certain religions (Protestant
Christianity) have more power and status in U.S. society (Johnson, 2018). These systems of power and privilege significantly impact—often negatively—intergroup interactions (Brookfield, 2005). This may explain why religious minorities tend to form and maintain relationships with one another and avoid quality intergroup contact with other religious groups (Sepulvado, Hachen, Penta, & Lizardo, 2015). Therefore, in supplementation of this theory, more critical approaches must recognize the systems of power and privilege to capture this complexity.

**Critical theory.** Critical theory fills in where intergroup contact theory leaves off. Critical theory states that all interactions between people and systems are influenced by power differentials that are both earned and unearned (Brookfield, 2005). Taking intergroup contact theory further, critical theory postulates that societal change and interpersonal attitudes are not only shaped by one’s interpersonal connections. While critical trans theory is still forming, cisnormativity (the assumption that all people are cisgender) and its associated systems of power and privilege across institutions and individuals are seen to impact people’s psychological experiences and understandings (Stryker & Aizura, 2013; Stryker & Whittle, 2006). Similarly, critical religious theory is also too new to be fully used in higher education, but also warns researchers to recognize power dynamics between different RSS groups (Martin, 2017). So, while not directly grounded in critical trans theory or critical religious theory, I will be drawing from trans epistemology, critical trans politics, critical race theory, and trans-feminist theory to center the importance of identity and the larger societal context on one’s campus experience. While noted here, I will further discuss how this critical lens is applied to this work in the methodology section later in this paper.

**Limitations and critiques.** The largest critique of critical theory as applied to this study is that it does not center marginalized gender or RSS identities. Critical theory is also not higher
education specific so a more applicable theory for practice will be used. To fill this gap, social justice ally development theory is applied and critiqued through the lens of critical theory to be applied to different identity populations.

**Social justice ally development.** The extension of intergroup contact theory through a critical lens is social justice ally or kinship development (varied in name based on research areas). Intergroup contact has been shown to directly lead to ally development (Alimo, 2012). Although there is research on chilly campus climates for trans/NB students, the area of greatest promise in the research is focusing on trans kinship (Nicolazzo, 2016, 2017b; Nicolazzo et al., 2017) or—more generally—the development of potential allies as defined by Broido (2000) and Nicolazzo (2017). This may be because, unfortunately, more comprehensive interventions towards trans/NB inclusion are still relatively rare on the institutional level (Beemyn, Curtis, et al., 2005). Furthermore, simply by sheer numbers, trans/NB institutional populations are typically smaller than most student of color groups (Meerwijk & Sevelius, 2017), and outgroup size can significantly impact larger climate changes due to intergroup contact (Schlueter & Scheepers, 2010). Therefore, although some institution level characteristics will be included in the gender binary student analysis, I will only include those pertinent to ally identity development. Rather than focusing on the end goal of ally behaviors themselves, I will be focusing on both a prerequisite for ally behavior and a necessary component of quality intergroup contact to reduce transprejudice: positive attitudes towards the subpopulation of trans/NB people. Attitudes, themselves, are significant predictors of being an active bystander against LGBT discrimination (Dessel, Goodman, & Woodford, 2017). For trans/NB campus climate questions, a larger look at the campus climate model will be used in order to assess fit and validity for this subpopulation and explore the more general relationships between RSS
experiences for trans/NB students in college. This single group analysis, too, aligns with the important, yet separate component of ally development: empowerment and support for the marginalized populations (Broido, 1997).

**Description of the framework.** Broido’s (1997, 2000) social justice ally grounded theory was developed through a series of intensive interviews of heterosexual identifying LGBQ allies in college. An area of particular interest identified in the literature for exploring and for the potential of ally development is one’s college years (Broido & Reason, 2005). The full illustrated framework can be found in *Figure 1*. Broido (2000) described the framework as: “A schematic representation of college students’ development as social justice allies. Ally development begins in precollege attitudes (left), grows through experiences in colleges (center) and results in an ability and willingness to act as an ally (right)…. [D]ifficulties can impede both initial and subsequent ally actions” (p. 14). Notably, the focus of my study will not include behavior and instead focus on the attitudinal prerequisites of allyship and the general relationships suggested by the model in Broido’s theoretical findings.

**Components of social justice ally development.** In Broido’s (2000) social justice ally development theory, gathering information is one of the first initial steps when one begins attending a college or university. In one’s formal and informal curricular and co-curricular experiences, students have the opportunity to encounter information about people different from them—in this case those who have different RSS identities from them. These information-gathering moments can contribute to more provocative encounters where one reflects on their own assumptions and biases where one can make meaning out of the experience (Broido, 2000). One of the ways to do this is through intergroup contact. Intergroup dialogue specifically has been seen to influence attitudes of dominant groups towards marginalized groups (Gurin, Dey,
This intergroup contact can be both structured or unstructured. In ally development theory, structured engagement with diversity leads to more positive attitudes towards marginalized groups (Palmer, 2000; Terenzini, Pascarella, Springer, Nora, & Palmer, 1996; Milem, 2003; Nagda, Kim, & Truelove, 2004).
Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Terenzini, & Nora, 2001), but this requires one to feel safe in their environment (Hurtado, Engberg, & Ponjuan, 2003). Structural engagement with diversity is particularly important because the absence of social diversity courses in college is actually associated with higher levels of oppressive attitudes towards marginalized communities (Henderson-King & Kaleta, 2000). Formal and informal engagement along with structural components of RSS diversity are all potential predictors of social justice ally attitudes and behavior (Broido, 1997, 2000).

Although the outcome of attitudes towards trans/NB people is not directly related to RSS engagement, they are all interconnected in terms of social justice allyship. Bishop (2002) argues that for social justice allyship to lead to positive internal and social change, an ally must also recognize how one form of oppression (e.g., religious and spiritual oppression) is connected to other forms of oppression such as transphobia. In other words, social justice ally development theory suggests that greater understanding and commitment to inclusion of one aspect of identity can lead and is intimately intertwined with promoting equity for all marginalized populations.

**Distractions, interferences, and difficulties.** Although intergroup dialogue can be a powerful catalyst towards inner commitment, intergroup dialogue can also be counterproductive if facilitated incorrectly (Alimo, Kelly, & Clark, 2002; Geranios, 1997). In Broido’s (1997) study of allyship, “the difficulties identified by the participants fell into four categories: internal issues, structural issues, other people, and interactions between internal issues and other people” (Broido, 1997, p. 195). I will include each of these categories, therefore, as possible distractions (interaction effects) between the RSS engagement and attitudes towards trans/NB people.

Internal concerns refer to the issue of one not perceiving campus to be a safe space. If one does not feel safe on campus, they are less likely to act as an advocate or ally for LGBTQ+ people
DEBUNKING THE FALSE DICHOTOMY

(Broido, 1997, 2000). Structural concerns relate to those components of institutional history and structural diversity in campus climate research (see Hurtado, Clayton-Pedersen, Allen, & Milem, 1998). This theory suggests, therefore, if one does not feel supported structurally in their RSS on campus, they are less likely to be an ally to trans/NB people (Broido, 1997, 2000). The third barrier to ally development is negative interactions with other people. Negative RSS experiences, coercive experiences, or insensitive comments can all negatively impact one’s ability to develop as a social justice ally whether these interactions are explicitly or implicitly implied (Broido, 1997, 2000). This barrier is the most highly reported and difficult for students to overcome (Broido, 1997). The final concern that may distract and hinder one’s social justice ally development journey are interactions between internal issues and reactions from other people. As an illustrative example, Broido (1997) talks about students who are incorrectly assumed to be part of the LGBTQ+ community despite not identifying or whose intentions are questioned by people in the marginalized group for whom they are trying to advocate. I will explore these difficulties through interaction terms in the analysis.

**Application to attitudes towards trans/NB people.** As mentioned in the literature review, allyship is primarily described in trans/NB literature as kinship (see for example (Nicolazzo et al., 2017). Although varied in conception and inclusive of trans/NB people who are also supportive and part of one’s “chosen family” (as compared to one’s biological or given family), I use the term allyship in this paper to focus on the people who do not identify as trans/NB people and have the potential to be supportive and part of one’s trans kinship network. Trans kinship networks are important predictors for trans/NB college student success (Nicolazzo, 2017b; Nicolazzo et al., 2017). Even prior to higher education, the development of trans/NB allies is
considered an effective educational intervention to foster trans/NB student success and sense of belonging (Cooper, Dollarhide, Radliff, & Gibbs, 2014; Toomey, McGuire, & Russell, 2012).

**Limitations and critiques.** In Broido’s (1997) grounded theory study, the participating students already saw themselves as social justice allies and reported pre-college egalitarian attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people. This selection bias limits the potential generalizability to students with low pre-college attitudes towards trans/NB people. In order to control for these differences, I will be including pre-college attitudes towards trans people in the analysis.

The language surrounding “allyship” is also problematic. Being an “ally” is sometimes deemed as too low of a bar to promote actual change. Advocacy, on the other hand, requires one to be a change agent: “Advocates use cognitive, emotional, and behavioral strategies to influence others’ attitudes, behaviors, and/or decisions for the benefit of specific individuals (oneself or others) or groups” (London, 2010). I will be focused only on attitudes that are a necessary precursor but not sufficient to promote trans/NB advocacy itself. The eventual goal is for students to not just hold appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people, but be advocates or “agents of change” towards the systemic support and empowerment of trans/NB people (Marine, 2011).

The area of interest in this study, however, is on attitudinal outcomes. Despite Broido’s (2000) framework being helpful in picturing the determinants towards attitudes, I want the eventual aim of this research to be more than allyship. Additional theories will be added in order to critique allyship as the end and also to center trans/NB narratives in the analysis.

**Trans kinship.** As mentioned earlier, trans kinship is sometimes considered an extension or under the larger umbrella of allyship, but—importantly—separate and different from allyship in several ways. A trans kinship network is “a close network of like-minded peers that: (a)
recognized and honored participants’ gender identities, (b) provided a refuge from the cultural realities of the gender binary discourse and compulsory heterogenderism on campus, and (c) acted as a potential site from which participants could resist or push back against systemic genderism, if they so choose” (Nicolazzo, 2016, p. 552). More than simply an ally, trans kinship networks aid trans/NB students’ level of resiliency on campus and aid trans/NB students to challenge systems of oppression in their various communities. This theory, although not captured in the analysis as an outcome, provides an aspirational outcome for gender binary students to become accomplices in the cause against gender oppression and to focus on trans/NB students’ eventual outcome as one of resilience. Trans kinship describes the important roles that gender binary students can hold in trans/NB people’s lives and the possibilities after developing more positive attitudes towards trans/NB people as a whole. For trans/NB people, trans kinship is what can help one feel welcome on campus even in the face of discrimination and oppression.

**Limitations and critiques.** Although Nicolazzo’s (2016) work gives Broido’s (1997, 2000) theory an outcome that is more helpful for trans/NB students, trans kinship does not currently have a model on how one develops or becomes kin for trans/NB people. While Broido provides this framework, notably also the power of naming who is kin for trans/NB people comes only from trans/NB people themselves. In other words, self-identification as a trans ally does not necessarily mean this same person would be part of a trans/NB students’ kinship network. Therefore, in this model, despite trans kinship’s limitations in its ability to being applied to this study, I also find it helpful in justifying the importance of keeping the outcome for gender binary students as attitudinal changes and giving the power back to trans/NB students to build their own sense of resiliency.
Critical consciousness. According to critical theorist Paulo Freire (1973), critical consciousness necessitates coupling dominant group solidarity and appreciation with the empowerment of trans/NB people (the marginalized group). Only through both of these initiatives in tandem, Freire (1973) argues, is sustainable social change and systemic inclusion possible for trans/NB people. For systemic and institutional level change to happen, trans/NB people must be empowered on campus to advocate for themselves, at least some people in the dominant group must also be advocates for trans/NB people, and the culture and structure of an institution must be responsive enough to change. To explore this development of a sense of trans/NB empowerment or what Nicolazzo (2017b) may call kinship within themselves in the trans/NB community, I will also do single-group analyses of trans/NB student experiences of their RSS campus climate and how that shapes their feelings of being welcome and feeling safe on campus. Again, although feeling welcome is not necessarily equate to the process of resiliency or critical consciousness, feeling welcome on campus does speak to trans/NB sense of power and the level of institutional support for trans/NB people on campus.

Freire (1973) described this process of critical consciousness as “naming the world,” which enables people who are marginalized to realize the societal systems of oppression while still not rejecting reality nor shying away from dialogue. Although not organized in linear stages, Freire (1973) describes four different alternatives to critical consciousness: semi-intransitive, magical consciousness, naïve transitivity, or fantasized consciousness. The different ways of viewing the world are characterized by a lack of engagement with the sociohistorical and political structures of exclusion, a tendency to conform or submit to oppression, a resistance to dialogue, or a disengagement from reality entirely. Applied to trans/NB students on college campuses, these alternative ways of being may be characterized by disengaging from the college
or university entirely, not recognizing the issues at the college or university, and/or not advocating for greater inclusion at the college or university. Notably, however, simply because one does not enact their critical consciousness within an institution, students may still find spaces and areas of empowerment and resilience outside of the college or university walls. The scope of this study focuses on the experiences of trans/NB students at college and how perhaps colleges and universities can use similar methods (or not) to support greater inclusion—and in turn—support critical consciousness development in trans/NB student populations.

Although Freire (1973) described the different modes of consciousness, he did not thoroughly describe how one fosters critical consciousness in oneself. To fill in this gap, this study will be drawing from Osajima’s (2007) grounded theory study on the development of critical consciousness of Asian American activists on college campuses. Osajima (2007) found that conscientization in Asian American activists required both cognitive and affective components of development. In addition to the recognition of oppression and engagement in dialogue and reality as Freire (1973) suggests, Osajima found that the students needed to be in an environment where they felt safe to ask questions, explore, and eagerly learn. I will be focusing on this importance of feeling welcome as a necessary outcome and prerequisite for trans/NB people to develop critical consciousness in college.

**Limitations and critiques.** Freire’s work is over 40 years old in its initial conception. Despite the age of this theory, Freire continues to be cited as a foundational work in the study of marginalized populations. As an illustrated example, critical theory very recently was again linked to student success and achievement for U.S. Black college students (e.g., El-Amin et al., 2017). The biggest critique, still, is that this theory does not provide a framework for trans/NB people specifically to develop in their own critical consciousness. However, since feeling
welcome is a necessary requisite seen in the literature, I will be looked at this as an outcome with
the aspirational goal of trans/NB people hopefully developing critical consciousness during their
college years.

**Proposed Framework**

The relationships being explored in this study can be found in Figures 2 and 3. For the
first research question concentrating on campus RSS-related experiences, the outcomes being
explored are the final attitudes towards trans people of binary gender students after one year of
college. Since I will be using single group analyses, the conceptual frameworks for gender binary
students are completely separated from the conceptual framework which will be used for
trans/NB people. Mirroring Freire’s (1973) assertion of tandem objectives for dominant and
marginalized groups: The dominant groups’ goal is to appreciate those who are marginalized,
and the traditionally marginalized groups’ goal is empowerment without necessitating likeability.
The outcomes and pathways, therefore, are different for the different questions and groups.

Figure 2 focuses on students who are not known to be trans/NB in the data set. The
model mirrors Broido’s (2000) theory of social justice ally identity development, where
provocative and positive encounters can lead to higher and more positive attitudes towards
historically marginalized populations. Negative RSS engagement, however, can inversely affect
one’s attitudes and all of these campus experiences have the potential to be disrupted by the
“difficulties” Broido (1997, 2000) suggests. I will explore these distraction variables based on
students’ perception of safety, divisiveness, and structural diversity through interaction effects,
and they are illustrated as a dotted line pointing to the relationship between campus experiences
and appreciative attitudes towards trans people. I will also consider institutional and individual level controls to help control for these variations in the data and highlight the variables of interest. Finally, I am also including the appreciative attitudes of trans people at time one to attend to the pre-college egalitarian attitudes Broido (2000) suggests is a prerequisite.

In Figure 3, the same environmental variables are included to increase comparability, but the outcome is feeling welcome for the trans/NB student sample only.

**Limitations and critiques.** Again, this study is addressing primarily the affective components of ally and kinship development and critical consciousness. Although not the sole contributors to the development of critical consciousness and the choice to engage in social justice activism, feeling at least marginally welcome does theoretically appear to be a necessary prerequisite to choosing to engage in one’s college community and dialogue with others towards positive social change. Trans/NB people, though, are known to transcend the institutional walls and may challenge the spatial boundaries of critical consciousness in different ways than students who are marginalized because of their race. The feeling of inclusion and welcome a trans/NB person feels in the larger society is outside the scope of the study. I want to underline, however, that trans/NB students do advocate outside of their campuses (Nicolazzo, 2017b). Yet, this affective dimension is still a critical component to trans/NB student experience of campus climate (Rankin & Reason, 2008). Without feeling safe, trans/NB may not feel as able to speak out and advocate for themselves without repercussion. Therefore, although not an all-encompassing theory, critical consciousness and one’s feeling of being welcome as a necessary component grounds the single group study on trans/NB student affect in relation to the same measures of experiences contributing to appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people in binary gender students.
Figure 2. Single-group analysis conceptual framework for gender binary students.

Figure 3. Conceptual framework for trans/NB single analysis.
Chapter III: Methodology

Positionality

I identify as genderqueer, non-binary, queer, White, disabled, Unitarian Universalist Pagan who is disaffiliated from any religious community, and an Episcopalian-raised U.S.-documented citizen. Throughout these identifications, I hold both privileged and marginalized identities that shape the way I see the world and approach this research. Navigating and developing these identities throughout my life, I have learned through experience how trans/NB identities and RSS identities can feel integrated and fractured within myself. In similar ways and simultaneously, I have made to be intimately aware how one’s transness can be experienced in and outside of the trans/NB community similar yet different to how one’s RSS identity can be experiences in and outside community as well. These multiple intersections of trans/NB and RSS identities and communities came to a point within the college environment. College RSS experiences were the first spaces I realized the fluidity and gender and were the site of some of the most gender affirming spaces in my college career. At different times and sometimes even in the same spaces, however, RSS experiences and the larger RSS campus climate caused the greatest pain in relation to my gender identity. Throughout these experiences and even in the face of discrimination and coercion, I have adamantly felt the importance and possibility of integration of my transness and religiousness within myself.

On religion. During an undergraduate spiritual leadership retreat, our lead facilitator used the word “god” and asked us to treat the world as a placeholder for whatever we wanted: Shiva, Mother Earth, Allah, or even cheese if that was what was giving us life. I affectionally called this “Mad-lib god” after the childhood game past-time. Although I am likely not the first to think of such a phrase, I found it revolutionary in giving both the structure and fluidity I
needed to describe my religious and spiritual identity in a way that coalesced and advocated for my gender identity. This imagery stuck with me so much that three years later during an exercise of “drawing pictures or writing words to describe your own religion and/or spirituality completing the phrase ‘I believe’” at a Unitarian Universalist gathering in graduate school, I wrote: “I believe in the Mad Lib god where one can fill in the blanks as wanted/needed: I believe in _________ (noun/s) and I _________ (verb/s) and _________ (verb) to feel _________ (adjective) personally and promote a more loving, _________ (adjective) and just world for all.” Allowing for fill-in-the blank responses reminded me of survey questions that allowed for “gender: _________.” I was able to trans my religious and spiritual identity in a way that allowed for both the trans community and religious or spiritual community to understand my fluidity even if they did not agree with it.

**On gender.** As much as I desire community, I am unsure of the “we” that makes up the trans/NB community—a question Nicolazzo (2017b) asks herself in her own positionality statement in the trans in college study she did. I feel part of the trans/NB community and yet completely unqualified to represent trans ways of knowing. If I believe the core of trans ways of knowing is the presence of multiple possibilities and narratives, then how am I to strive to be an appropriate vessel to do this research? I do not want to speak for trans/NB people and while I am emic in my perspective, I am only seeing this work in my lens. Similar to my religious and spiritual identity, my gender identity is also fluid. Not neatly trans masculine nor trans feminine, I identify as gender fluid or genderqueer. I do not feel a sense of welcome in MTF (male to female) or FTM (female to male) focused spaces, which are both so important, but also do not give me the sense of community I feel with my queer identity. This is likely at least partially due to society conflating gender and sexual orientation in research and practice (Mishali, 2014;
Despite how I experience my identity and my expression, I am perceived fairly consistently as just a “very gay woman.” On any given day, I can look or express similar to a femme or butch queer woman, and thus, even many of my close peers cannot comprehend how my gender identity is different than a person’s identity whose expression is similar to mine. This invisibility brings at times wanted feelings of safety and unwanted feelings of dysphoria. My positionality in terms of gender, therefore, sometimes makes me feel like an outsider of the nebulous trans/NB community more than a solid insider. I am sensitive to my position and have a great desire for the diverse constellation of trans/NB people to speak for themselves and in their own words in this study.

On methods. When I think about the trans-ing of theories and methods, I remember Lorde’s (1984) description of the false dichotomy of story and theory that is pervasive in our society and disproportionately marginalizes already marginalized voices. We know that assumptions about the world and approaches to definitions of research across gender (Blair, Brown, & Baxter, 1994; Keller & Scharff-Goldhaber, 1987) and religion (Droogsma, 2007) differ, yet I feel like I continue to try and place my research into the “larger tradition” or, in other words, within the “dominant narrative” of research and the world itself. Despite actively coming to know the importance of my positionality and critique in my inquiry, I also recognize how deeply ingrained this dominant narrative of how research “should be” is. This inquiry has had multiple iterations of changing what I thought I “had to do,” and this inquiry is more of a process than a destination. If it were not for the requirements of a dissertation, I would instead liken this work to a living document—ever changing and open for people to critique. As much as I am able, I hope I and others are eagerly invited to critique and transform this document as simply a point in the collective process. This process was deeply personal and internal and is as much of a
struggle for understanding myself as it is to understand universities. This research is as much deeply personal as it is directed towards the system of higher education and larger society.

**Guiding Paradigm**

Quantitative analysis is traditionally situated in the positivist or post-positivist paradigm. In this study, however, I hope to blend and bend this tradition into more constructivist and critical theory informed paradigms that are the basis for what has been called both critical and transformative quantitative theory. I embark on this study recognizing the assumption that due to researcher subjectivity and inherent internal biases, even strictly “objective” quantitative methods are not fully objective and reflexivity on one’s subjectively must be critically analyzed and considered (Carter & Hurtado, 2007). Throughout this work, I hold the guiding belief that quantitative methods cannot and should not be adopted without engagement with the historical, political and social power structures currently present in trans/NB people’s experiences. Therefore, although positivism could be used independently, I question strict positivistic assumptions as an important part of the research question itself. In quantitative analysis, reflexively analyzing one’s subjectivity means “question[ing] the models, measures, and analytic processes and outcomes on a large scale to reveal inequities” (Stage, 2007, p. 10). I strongly believe that “[o]nly then can quantitative approaches be re-imagined and rectified” (Garcia et al., 2018a, p. 150).

Critical quantitative inquiry first requires a deep understanding of quantitative positivist methods and assumptions in order to engage them in critical quantitative inquiry (Rios-Aguilar, 2014). The goal, therefore, is consistent and critical self-reflection on my methodological process and implementation in this research. While critical theory and positivist approaches to research may be depicted in opposition at times, I found and will outline some helpful
paradigmatic overlaps in this combined orientation to the work to extend those found and explored by Stage and Wells’ (2014) and Garcia, López, and Vélez’s (2018b) journal special issues on critical quantitative inquiry. However, there are also significant paradigmatic challenges to this combination endeavor to maintain research and methodological integrity (Hernández, 2015). Although there are sometimes new techniques proposed to supplement the research and analysis, the critical quantitative paradigm most often uses the tools of positivism to attempt at an aim inspired through critical theory. This seeming dichotomy similar to the dichotomy seen between RSS and trans/NB students themselves is, of course, real yet also there are possible counterstories of integrating these paradigms despite these significant challenges. My socially critical axiology as the researcher is, thus, indivisible from the methodology itself and informs all my methodological decisions.

**Paradigmatic challenges.** Hernández (2015, p. 95) provides three methodological challenges which will be addressed in relation to this study to fully operationalize the paradigm to the current methodology:

1. Quantitative criticalism challenges normative assumptions and research practices in “quantitative research.”
2. Quantitative criticalism requires a high level of expertise in both statistical analyses and critical theory.
3. Quantitative criticalism requires the use of a set of critical theoretical tenets to ensure legitimacy and rigor. (p. 95)

The first challenge is particularly salient to this study. Hernandez (2015) asserts that unlike normative quantitative practices that make clear delineations of “good” research, “we do not have a formula to follow” for critical quantitative inquiry (p. 96). This gap in between
desired descriptions and actual methodology of critical quantitative work is where I position this work as another step towards critique under the larger umbrella of QuantCrit work.

Therefore, while wanting to critique the methods, I as the researcher also feel the weighty tension between critique and wanting to gain legitimacy in the higher educational leadership quantitative research community (Rios-Aguilar, 2014). To address these challenges, I will examine and name my own reflexivity—“the process of critical self-reflection on one’s biases, theoretical predispositions, and so forth” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 260)—and also attempt to abide by the conventional structure of an empirical quantitative studies seen more broadly in higher education research journals (as highlighted by Rios-Aguilar, 2014). To this day, publications and “valid” higher education research continue to be steeped in positivistic or post-positivistic metatheories where the status quo, realism, and regulatory science are the prime objectives and corollaries of the research itself (Milam, 1991, 2001).

**Paradigm benefits.** This particular paradigm was chosen to make the most powerful numeric statements on the intersection of trans/NB identity and religious, secular, and spiritual identities and experiences. To date, as seen in the literature review, the majority of research on this intersection is narrative-based and significantly small in sample size. Those that are quantitative typically focus on the entire LGBTQ population (lumping trans people together with LGBTQ people) rather than trans/NB individuals specifically. While these approaches are both rigorous and provide valuable findings, diversifying the methods to provide a more complete picture of the intersection by engaging trade-offs in both delimitations and limitations is a gap in the research that can help future critical researchers focus their studies. As stated by Gillborn, Warmington and Demack (2018) in their theoretical discussion of critical quantitative inquiry using large data sets, “quantitative methods are well placed to chart the wider structures within
which individuals live their everyday experiences, and to highlight the structural barriers and inequalities that differently racialized groups must navigate” (p. 160). While deep nuances in racial categories is not in the scope of this paper, quantitative methods are able to highlight the structural barriers and inequalities across different genders and RSS categories. Critical quantitative inquiry “has the potential to make the invisible visible” where visibility and invisibility can be such crucial parts of people’s RSS and trans/NB experiences (Garcia et al., 2018a, p. 153).

Paradigmatic resonance. In the formulation of her trans epistemology, Nicolazzo’s (2017a) one tenant she includes is “in/visibility and its varied meanings are central to our senses of self, community, and kinship” (p. 8). If critical quantitative analysis can illuminate powerful in/visibilities of trans/NB people, the paradigm suggests resonance for this population. Furthermore, despite being a relatively new area in higher education research, the critical quantitative paradigm has established itself as a significant approach to institutional research (Stage & Wells, 2014) from its introduction to the field by Stage in 2007. Primarily outlined in two special issues of New Directions for Institutional Research (No. 133 & No. 158) and a special issue of Race, Ethnicity and Education (volume 21, issue 2), the critical quantitative paradigm has led to significant contributions in the field of higher education (Garcia et al., 2018a, 2018b; Stage, 2007; Stage & Wells, 2014). The paradigm and associated methods have notably been applied to critical analyses on the socially constructed gendered influences on student experiences in higher education (Kinzie, 2007; Williams, 2014).

Paradigmatic assumptions. The blending of paradigms is sometimes seen as irreconcilable. However, if paradigms are primary and a priori to quantitative methodology as Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggest, then quantitative methods can also be informed by critical
theory as the guiding umbrella paradigm. However, this means I must challenge and address the
standard positivism and post-positive paradigmatic positions typically held in quantitative
research. For this visualization, the paradigmatic positions on post-positivism and QuantCrit
(short term abbreviation often used to capture critical race theory quantitative criticalism) will be
placed side by side in attempts to queer them and draw them into the theoretical borderlands of
theory as modeled by Abes (2009) alongside theories which center trans/NB experiences. In
doing this, I have to de facto assume the post-positivistic assumption that paradigms can be
blended and are commensurable. This section, therefore, I will attempt to blend these paradigms
while also standing on and bridging between their borders. The hope is that this will help orient
the work as well as give other researchers a roadmap on how to bridge theoretical borderlands to
center trans/NB people in quantitative inquiry.

**Issues stemming from quantification.**

**Internal issues with quantification and responses.** Some issues with quantitative studies
reside within the approach itself. In their foundational discussion of competing paradigms, Guba
and Lincoln (1994) outline five different issues stemming from quantification: quantification
often strips contexts, cannot answer the “why,” does not allow for an “insider” perspective,
cannot apply to individual cases, and does not allow for discovery or inquiry without already
developed hypotheses. Some of these are inevitable to this study and how I have structured my
inquiry for my dissertation. However, I am able to speak to those approaches I am not using and
why I do not choose to forcefully blend them. For example, I do not proport to answer the why
or give a complete picture of context. I will bring context in as a central part of my discussion,
but in the analysis, I choose to simply covary exogenous variables in my models to acknowledge
the lurking contextual variables that are not measured. I do this because by reporting that I have
“controlled all contextual variables,” I would also erase people’s histories and the systems of oppression that cannot readily be captured in a simple series of survey questions. In Garcia and colleagues’ (2018a) summary of Gillborn and colleague’s (2018) work, they state that one of the principles of QuantCrit is “the centrality of racism as a complex and deeply rooted aspect of society that is not readily amenable to quantification” (p. 151).

However, I will—incompletely—address the last three concerns from Guba & Lincoln (2001) in this study. Trans/NB research has been primarily perpetuated by cisgender scholars who are inherently etic in their perspective (Serano, 2016; Stryker, 2017). Although trans/NB experiences are inevitably and necessarily diverse, they also share a resistance to dominant realities about gender and sex that is actively in a “different world” than cisgender scholars (Bettcher, 2014). To meaningfully situate this work in an emic perspective, I will be explicitly revealing myself as the researcher and as part of the trans/NB community. This “for us, by us” approach was first popularized in the Black community for a clothing brand FUBU by Daymond John, Keith Perrin, J. Alexander Martin and Carl Brown in 1992 (FUBU Collection, 2019) and has been used in the disabilities rights movement (Inckle, 2015) and in the trans community (Nicolazzo, 2017b; Oliveira, 2018). In doing so, I will evaluate my methodological choices through my own and trans/NB own lived experiences rather than “validation” from numbers themselves that do not inherently hold any value. My orientation, therefore, into my work is to uncouple cisnormative assumptions often imbedded in our methodological practices.

Lifting trans voices also requires lifting individual cases. As will be described further in the analysis, outliers and critical inclusion of outliers will be used as case studies in the trans/NB community so as to not further erase already marginalized stories in quantitative studies. In these cases, and with the trans/NB community specifically where the research is particularly deft
in the intersection with religious, secular, and spiritual experiences, some exploratory relationships will be included in dialogue with personal reflections, trans/NB personal and scholarly accounts, and potentially also other similar critical theory-informed discoveries.

Finally, quantitative approaches push researchers to not perform exploratory analyses. As described in the methodology discussion of the paradigm, I will be upholding higher education scholarly standards at the minimum but will also participate in an exploratory dialectic with the data—particularly around the trans/NB students where there is a gap in the literature regarding the way they experience RSS engagement. One of the reasons for this is due to the resistance to categorical binaries and boundaries in the trans/NB community. An exploration into the data will then also be an exploration beyond cisnormative categories of thinking.

*External issues with quantification.* Other issues with quantitative inquiry come from outside the approach itself and are typically answered and critiqued by what is often seen as quantitative inquiry’s “opposite”—qualitative inquiry. This oppositional inquiry dynamics mirrors the false oppositional sexism in gender (Serano, 2016). While quantitative and qualitative methods are certainly different, they can coincide at different levels, on a spectrum, and in support rather than in opposition. In response to these critiques, I seek to create a more dialectic approach to quantitative inquiry through the use and application of some qualitative critiques.

The first external issue of quantification is that facts can only be seen as true through a certain theoretical window (Guba & Lincoln, 2001). For example, positive intergroup contact relates and leads to more positive attitudes towards people of difference only makes sense and can be explained using intergroup contact theory. To attempt to invite the multiplicity of truth, critiques and limitations are offered after every guiding theory. In a similar way—many things
only make sense if cisnormativity is assumed as “normal” and unquestionable. In critiquing this logic and uncovering the often transphobic biases and assumptions that these assertions are built on, I will be seeking to find holes in this logic with the goal of dismantling cisnormativity pervasive in the tradition of higher education scholarship. This will be further described in the practical considerations as it relates to the nature of knowledge and the accumulation of knowledge below, but this issue, in general, will be an intentionally continuous point of contention throughout the analysis.

The second and related issue of quantification is that just as theories and facts are interdependent, so are facts and values—meaning theories themselves can also be value laden (Guba & Lincoln, 2001). For example, ally literature presupposes that allyship is “good” despite competing literature complicating this claim and demanding more of an active role to actually help trans/NB students be successful. Marine (2011) categorizes potential allies on a spectrum from ambivalent supporters, to general supporters, and finally to the highest level of support—advocates. In Marine’s (2011) exploration of analyzing support of trans/NB students at a women’s college, advocacy rather than allyship was what fostered transformative change. The language of ally in this case is seen as too passive and not necessarily directed towards proactive change. Since I am not able to measure advocacy behavior in my study, I will not make claims on this outcome, but I do find it important to note that appreciation of trans people is only one small part of the puzzle to fight for trans/NB equity.

The last clear critique of quantitative inquiry by qualitative theorist is the false divide between inquirer and inquired. Even in the positivistic fields such as physics, context, conditions, and environment can (i.e., Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle or Bohr’s complementarity principle) affect and change what is “true.” In other words, context and who
the researcher is and what they believe can actually change the conclusions of a study. In response, I will be iteratively responding and engaging in the inquiry as not a set number of sequential steps, but instead more of a didactic inquiry. Furthermore, as has been practiced throughout this work, I will be continuously placing myself as the inquirer to make my position and subjectivity visible to the reader.

**Practical implications of blending assumptions: Trans QuantCrit.** These ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions are helpful and necessary, but I must flesh out the methodological endeavor further to engage them more practically in this work. To provide a more tangible methodological framework for this paper, I will describe the practical choices and reasons for each choice using Guba and Lincoln’s (2001) framework alongside the QuantCrit framework gleaned from Gillborn and colleagues (2018) and, finally, my own guiding framework I will call Trans QuantCrit for this paper using a combination of sources seen in Table 2 and its associated notations.

Notably, there are three rows typically seen in Guba and Lincoln’s (2001) discussion of paradigms that are not included in the table. These three facets of inquiry are accommodation, training, and hegemony. For this paper, each of these hold assumptions about the field in which I enter or are a priori assumption or choice that must be made before other choices are made possible.

This a priori assumption is accommodation. First, before even starting this endeavor, I choose to address the issue of paradigmatic accommodation to open up new possibilities of inquiry. In positivism and post-positivism, different paradigms are assumed to be commensurable or able to be combined and interchanged. While care is taken to not interchange or constantly shift through tactics and assumption, the practice of critical quantitative inquiry
must assume a certain level of commensurability across paradigms—as noted by the blending in the final column of Table 2. Although the combination may not be equal in “rigor” as defined by post-positivistic frameworks, I will be able to use some of the quantitative language with the goal of developing a greater sense of resilience in the trans/NB community.

Training and hegemony related to this study are related to the field in which I currently find myself. The field of higher education implicitly and sometimes explicitly places higher value on positivistic inquiry and cis male voices (Wells, Kolek, Williams, & Saunders, 2015; E. A. Williams, Kolek, Saunders, Remaly, & Wells, 2018). I have conducted my training in quantitative inquiry within this cannon. However, at the same time—sometimes intersecting and at other times completely separate and outside the academy—I have sought ways to unlearn biases and assumptions I consciously and unconsciously hold that reify interlocking systems of oppression throughout my life. Although this cultural humility is more of a process than a destination, this perpetual “training” is as important and if not more so than the quantitative methods training I have completed. However, as an emerging scholar, I still feel the desire to play by the rules to a certain extent to both express mastery of the methods and also gain validation in my ability to critique something that I understand rather than simply do not know. I acknowledge the reality of me being on the job search soon and that feels necessary (although it is of course a choice) to engage in some level of the post-positivistic hegemony in order to inspire transformation and make future transformative contributions possible. In Spade’s (2015) introduction to critical trans politics, he states, “[Critical trans politics] questions its own effectiveness, engaging in constant reflection and self-evaluation. And it is about practice and process rather than a point of arrival, resisting hierarchies of truth and reality and instead naming and refusing state violence” (p. 1). I am not fully certain on how to blend these trainings, but I
instead commit myself to the process of self-reflection and resistance. In this way, I offer these
guidelines of inquiry described below and abbreviated in Table 2.

Inquiry aim. The ultimate aim and the nature of knowledge are some of the greatest
diversions from traditional quantitative inquiry in this study. As described when discussing
epistemological differences, the goal of critical theory is to dismantle historical power structures
which constitute one’s virtual reality whereas the goal of post-positivism is to test hypotheses
and explain reality (Guba & Lincoln, 2001). Practically, I will be critical of more mainstream
assertions (e.g., campus climate theory) on reality and focus instead on how trans/NB
specifically experience student success and inclusion (i.e., kinship). The goal by doing this is to
promote not just greater inclusion for trans/NB people through using the stories and collective
knowledge gathered by trans/NB students themselves, but to inspire change in the system of
higher education in the spirit of Spade’s (2015) critical trans politics. In this way, my aim is not
simply to end discrimination against trans/NB people, but instead rethink a system where
trans/NB people can own their power and stories. The eventual aim is collective liberation. In
the more immediate and extending Nicolazzo’s (2017b) work underlining the importance of trans
kinship to student success, I will be focusing on the power and resiliency of trans/NB students
and positive attitudinal changes towards them by gender binary students. The aim of the inquiry,
therefore, is to inspire grassroots coalition-building in the trans/NB community that is central to
trans epistemology (Nicolazzo, 2017a).

Nature of knowledge. The epistemology driving this work is the belief that trans/NB
people have the knowledge and power within themselves to dismantle cisnormativity and trans
oppression. In describing her trans epistemology, Nicolazzo (2017a) described two of the tenets:
“Trans* people may be from oppression, but we ourselves are not of oppression” and “In and
through community with each other, we have the power to heal and remake ourselves as trans*
people” (p. 7). While society argues trans/NB people are fake or impossible, even trans/NB
people’s very existence questions the nature of reality and knowing held by dominant narratives.
Trans/NB people do not need be lifted up by others to “know” but already know how to
challenge systems. This knowledge, therefore, is knowledge I seek to uplift in my research.

In attempt to reclaim feminism and develop an approach of trans feminism, Serano (2007) compared feminism to Christianity which is interestingly and doubly relevant to this study: “Each has a major tenet at its core, yet there are a seemingly infinite number of ways in which those beliefs are practiced” (p. 17). There is not one trans feminism, but many trans feminisms. I hold that the nature of knowledge, therefore, to be more fluid than statically defined. What is “real” is defined by one’s own subjectivity which makes the focus on trans/NB counternarratives that much more important: “There is no such thing as a ‘real’ gender—there is only the gender we experience ourselves as and the gender we perceive others to be” (Serano, 2007, p. 13). I hold this belief as true and underline the importance of both self-definition and perception throughout this inquiry.

Knowledge accumulation. Knowledge accumulation and what is seen as “true” is driven
by my epistemology. In accordance to dissertation standards, I will be situating my research
within the body of knowledge related to my topic. However, the thematic assertions and
conclusions of the literature as well as the secondary data source will be viewed through the lens
of critical trans politics and transfeminism.

Knowledge has accumulated with the purpose to further reinforce cisnormativity,
transphobia, compulsory heterogenderism, and other dominant narratives and requires critique.
Trans/NB people themselves have a very complicated and harmful relationship with the
academy. In the first research studies on trans/NB people and continuing into today, research has been used to further marginalize trans/NB people through the pathologizing of trans/NB people, the development of gatekeepers and barriers to treatment and access to health, and the insistence of a singular monolithic narrative for all trans/NB people (Serano, 2016; Stryker, 2017). In his definition of critical trans politics, Spade (2015) “use[d] the term ‘subjection’ to talk about the workings of systems of meaning and control such as racism, ableism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and xenophobia…. The term ‘subjection’ captures how the systems of meaning and control that concern us permeate our lives, our ways of knowing about the world, and our ways of imagining transformation” (pp. 5-6). Rather than imagining new possibilities, therefore, we tend to instead accumulate and pursue knowledge that reinforces the status quo. Throughout my analysis, I will attempt to question those assumptions we have always deemed “right” to imagine new possibilities in my approach, analysis and interpretation.

_Goodness/quality criteria._ Throughout my inquiry, I will be critiquing and sometimes explicitly avoiding post-positivistic language such as “problem statement,” “reliability,” and “validity.” Although I will use the tools and tests of post-positivism at times—for example reporting the Cronbach’s alpha on my factors which is typically seen as a reliability measure—I will place them alongside goodness criteria steeped in critical trans politics and critical race theory. For example, despite the current state of RSS campus climate potentially being problematic for trans/NB people, I do not want to eradicate or minimize RSS engagement nor the existence of trans/NB people within RSS-related events on campus. Instead of solving a problem, therefore, I am assessing quality by the ability to transform and inspire greater inclusion. In a similar illustration of these methods, while “problem statements” are often required in post-positivist dissertations, I intentionally do not use this language to reinforce
Marine’s (2011) reminder that “transgender students are not a problem to be solved” (p. 1182). Instead of “solving” the trans/NB “problem,” I hope to give voice to trans/NB experiences and give knowledge and power to their resilience. Instead of making statistics the standard which, again, have been used to further marginalize trans/NB people, I will evaluate conclusions towards the aim of trans liberation and place them alongside counterstories and experiential knowledge from marginalized groups as Gillborn and colleagues suggest (2018). As Spade (2015) calls for in critical trans politics, we need analyses that “examine systems that administer life chances through purportedly ‘neutral’ criteria, understanding that those systems are often locations where racist, sexist, homophobic, ableist, xenophobic, and transphobic outcomes are produced” (p. 10). If post-positivistic measures of goodness and quality are not neutral, then they cannot be the only measures to which I rely on to justify my claims. I will assess my claims, therefore, not simply on their movement towards trans collective liberation, but also towards the dismantling of interlocking systems of oppression themselves.

*Values.** Related to the discussion on the external critiques to quantification, I intentionally recognize that facts and theories are value-laden. Broido’s (2000) social justice ally development framework, for example, has been critiqued by Marine’s (2011) research and because it downplays the importance of structures are critical components to this inquiry. While the focus of both intergroup contact theory and social justice ally development are both primarily interpersonal in nature, these frameworks were chosen because kinship networks—likely because of the overwhelming structural challenges trans/NB students face in universities—have been found to be one of the current greatest positive indicators on trans/NB student success. However, this does not mean structures are not important. On the contrary, if allyship, advocacy,
and kinship are to be sustainable, structures will need to be dismantled. Gillborn has two very important principles related to this:

1. “QuantCrit recognizes that racism is a complex, fluid and changing characteristic of a society that is neither automatically nor obviously amenable to statistical inquiry. In the absence of a critical race-conscious perspective, quantitative analyses will tend to remake and legitimate existing race inequities” (p.169)

2. “Categories are neither ‘natural’ nor given: for ‘race’ read ‘racism’ ” (p. 171).

Although my focus is gender in this study, the same level of critique can be applied in this context. For example, as will be described in the discussion of limitations more comprehensively, the way gender was asked on the survey for the secondary data analysis in this study, participants had three options: male, female, and other. Trans people are told “that we are impossible people who cannot exist, cannot be classified, and cannot fit anywhere” (Spade, 2015, p. 19). These survey options and categories can contribute to trans erasure if we allow it to go uncritiqued. Very concretely in this case, when the survey talks about gender, it really is reifying genderism. In different ways, too, gender is also a fluid characteristic in society that changes in different sociopolitical and historical contexts. Without attending to this nuance, I run the risk of simplifying trans/NB experiences and further marginalizing trans/NB people. Although I use the language that I find most affirming at the time this paper is printed, it is likely language will change even in the year this study is released. We are continuously uncovering what Spade (2015) would call our subjections to dominant narratives. The way the question was asked itself further supports trans oppression, and although I cannot fix secondary data sets in this way, I do bring trans/NB ways of knowing to critique the categorical definitions of trans and religious or spiritual, for example. Nicolazzo (2017a) talked about how the process of trans
becoming and definition is an always already process to which I hope to continue to imagine and push the boundaries of our being throughout this inquiry.

The values that drive this inquiry are tied to the eventual and hopeful aim of this study. Valuing process and liberation over conclusions and statistical significance, I seek this inquiry to be a “practice and process rather than arrival at a singular ‘liberation’” (Spade, 2015, p. 2). To do this, however, requires a critique of the systems of power creating and perpetuating categories. Spade (2015) suggests that “rather than understanding administrative systems merely as responsible for sorting and managing what ‘naturally’ exists, I argue that administrative systems that classify people actually invent and produce meaning for the categories they administer, and that those categories manage both the population and the distribution of security and vulnerability” (p. 11). I believe this to include colleges and universities and, thus, what is deemed as “natural” must also be questioned in support of equity and liberation. If I value liberation over the maintenance of systems, I am also particularly concerned in how a system operates and determines whose safety and learning is most important. Dominant narratives and dominant numbers drive data-driven decision-making. If I value collective liberation, I also question the importance of dominant narratives and give equal and greater weight to counternarratives of marginalized groups.

Ethics. The ethics of Trans QuantCrit help determine my decision-making choices and neatly align with the inquiry aim of social justice and trans liberation. Spade (2015) argues that to promote social justice for trans/NB people, one must not focus on simply anti-discrimination policies, but ways to transform systems. Even if every college and university included trans/NB in their anti-discrimination statements tomorrow, structures and systems still reinforce genderism, oppositional sexism, and cisnormativity. The dismantling of these -isms provide the
ethical compass for this work. Mirroring Gillborn and colleagues (2018) social justice orientation, Trans QuantCrit “is oriented to support social justice goals and work to achieve equity” (p. 174). Rather than concentrating on the problems trans/NB students face from a deficit model, I am committed to anti-deficit approaches to research, the redistribution of power, and add quantitative approaches to social justice praxis.

Voice. As has been seen throughout this dissertation, I am visually placing myself as a person interacting and performing this research. In doing so, I hope to better advocate for trans/NB people through my identification with that community while still using the language of the positivistic researcher at times. The intention is for me to bridge the divide between trans/NB scholarship and quantitative scholarship in a way that can be both empowering and transformative. However, I also recognize that I am only one person and experience my trans-ness in only one particular way. Like Nicolazzo (2017a) said, “we all experience our trans*ness differently as a result of our varied, intersecting identities” (p. 7). As a white, religious minoritized, queer, middle to upper class individual, I carry significant amounts of privilege that shape the way I interpret data and have access to information and experiences. This self-reflexivity is crucial when I am critically analyzing data. Trans QuantCrit seeks to follow the principles of CRT informed QuantCrit, which “assigns particular importance to the experiential knowledge of people of color and other ‘outsider’ groups (including those marginalized by assumptions around class, gender, sexuality, and dis/ability) and seeks to foreground their insights, knowledge, and understandings to inform research, analyses, and critique” (Gillborn et al., 2018, p. 173). Voice is hugely important, and statistics are not value neutral, I will be weaving multiple trans/NB experiences, narratives from people of color and marginalized RSS identities, and qualitative descriptions—both scholarly and informal—to give life and value to
the findings. Of particular importance throughout Trans QuantCrit inquiry is the process of developing and supplying counterstories as is seen in Pérez Huber, Vélez, and Solórzan’s (2018) work providing counterstories to explicate the value of a degree for Latinx people. The definitions and meaning behind religious, secular, and spiritual experiences on college campuses may be very different than their cis peers and looking at trans/NB accounts of their college experiences may help make sense of the findings, for example. In one known way, trans/NB people are known to value virtual communities in more and different ways than gender binary people. Could this mean, then, that some engagement is lost if the survey is favoring in-person engagement and is not necessarily covering the virtual and online engagement that some trans/NB people immensely value? The way trans/NB people make meaning of these questions may shape the way that they answer and, thus, shape the results. This type of experiential knowledge will be used to illustrate, critique, and analyze the data.

Table 2
Paradigmatic Comparisons of Approaches to Quantitative Inquiry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facets of inquiry</th>
<th>Post-positivism (Guba &amp; Lincoln, 2001)</th>
<th>Critical Race Theory QuantCrit (Gillborn et al., 2018)</th>
<th>Trans QuantCrit (citations designated in notes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry aim</td>
<td>Explanation; prediction and control</td>
<td>Linked with ethics, the aim is ending white supremacy and promoting racial justice</td>
<td>Transformation of systems in order to develop greater sense of resilience and trickle-up activism towards greater inclusion(^1,2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) (Nicolazzo, 2017a)  
\(^2\) (Spade, 2015)  
\(^3\) (Serano, 2016)  
\(^4\) (Gillborn et al., 2018)
Table 2 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of knowledge</th>
<th>Non-falsified hypotheses that are probably facts or laws</th>
<th>Knowledge has been constructed by racist means and all knowledge is therefore racialized</th>
<th>Knowledge has been societally constructed in cisnormativity and white supremacy to bolster systems of oppression, but trans people are from, not of oppression and carry the knowledge and power to heal¹,³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge accumulation</td>
<td>Accretion- “building blocks’ adding to “edifice of knowledge”; generalizations and cause-effect linkages</td>
<td>Knowledge has accumulated with the purpose to reify racial inequity and requires critical questioning</td>
<td>Knowledge has accumulated with the purpose to further reinforce cisnormativity, transphobia, compulsory heterogenderism, racism, and other dominant narratives and requires critique²,³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodness/quality criteria</td>
<td>Conventional benchmarks of “rigor”; internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity</td>
<td>Conventional benchmarks are only disguises for racist conclusions. A general distrust of the normative criteria is needed and goodness is instead measured by alignment towards racial justice</td>
<td>Conventional benchmarks will be used as tools towards social justice and critiqued through the lens of trans liberation, racial justice, and disrupting Christian hegemony²,⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Excluded-influence denied</td>
<td>Numbers are not neutral so one has to actively value racial justice</td>
<td>Categories are value-laden and numbers are not neutral; valuing social justice against interlocking systems of oppression¹,²,⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ (Nicolazzo, 2017a)  
² (Spade, 2015)  
³ (Serano, 2016)  
⁴ (Gillborn et al., 2018)
Table 2 continued

| Ethics       | Extrinsic; tilt toward deception | Ethic of social justice must be the internal guide | More than inclusion, social justice in trans communities means transforming systems of inequity
|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Voice**    | “disinterested scientist” as informer of decision maker, policy makers, and change agents | Stories of experience are critical to explain data: “data cannot ‘speak for itself’” (p. 169) | Intentionally placing myself as a trans advocate and part of the community while recognizing the inherent multitude of trans experience and making voice an important part of the explanatory process

1 (Nicolazzo, 2017a)  
2 (Spade, 2015)  
3 (Serano, 2016)  
4 (Gillborn et al., 2018)  

**Concluding thoughts.** The resulting paradigm is what I will describe as Trans QuantCrit.

Rather than an attempt at an immovable theory, I intentionally place this theoretical methodological approach as a point in time and part of a continuous process in line with the focus of process not destination in trans ways of knowing and critical trans politics. I chose to weave together four narratives and counterstories to develop this mode of inquiry, but there are many other counternarratives that may be brought in to further situate this framework within one’s area of interest. I also feel compelled to name for whom this framework is. This framework is not for cis people to continue to develop and perpetuate narratives about trans/NB people. I do not give permission for people to use this framework as a symbolic way to signal inclusion while not doing the work of challenging one’s own assumptions and biases. I do, however, hope this provides a springboard for trans/NB people to claim their power in multimodal spaces in higher education inquiry and beyond.
Data Collection

This study uses de-identified data from the Interfaith Youth Core Interfaith Diversity Experiences and Attitudes Longitudinal Survey (IDEALS) project and given to me through a grant through the Andrew C. Melon Foundation and administered by Alyssa Rockenbach at North Carolina State University, Matthew Mayhew at The Ohio State University, and the Interfaith Youth Core. As part of a larger plan to complete further longitudinal surveys, this study uses only the first two timed data sets from both individual students and the institution captured in 2015 and 2016. Two types of data were collected: institutional/individual and Time 1/Time 2. Only individuals who attended one of the chosen institutions were surveyed, but not all individuals at a chosen institution were necessarily surveyed.

The institutions were chosen by interest in the study and to address several relevant institutional variables (see Table 3). The full list of 122 institutions can be found in Appendix A. This is one of the ways the data is intentionally nested—in institutional type, classification, size, selectivity, and geography. At Time 1 prior to the start of the 2015-2016 academic year, one survey hosted on Qualtrics Survey Software, depicted in Appendix B, was given to the institution for one institutional representative to capture institutional level data on the campus environment for attending students. Incoming first-year students, prior to starting the 2015-2016 academic year (this includes first time college attendees and transfer students whose first year at the particular college is in the fall of 2015), were given a survey link and mailed the paper survey in Appendix C if they did not respond with $5.00 cash as a participation reward. Institutions were responsible to administer and disseminate the survey at their discretion, which led to variation in response rate. After their first year in college—in the spring or fall of 2016, the students who completed the initial survey were given personal invitations to an online survey and were mailed
another paper survey to assess first year in college experiences as compared to pre-college experiences. This survey is found in Appendix D and participants were given $2.00 cash if they participated in the survey. In the Fall 2016, there was a last call to non-respondents and those who did not respond are not included in the aggregate data. Finally, in the fall or spring of 2016, institutions, as well, were also surveyed electronically once more to note any institution-wide incidents relating to religious, secular, or spiritual campus climate or environmental shifts on a campus-wide scale (Appendix E).

Through surveying students from multiple different types of campuses before and after year one of college, environmental factors that are components of appreciative attitude development will be explored as moderating effects on any changes in one’s attitudes towards trans/NB people. This study will also look to aggregate religious, secular, and spiritual experiences into factors that hold some type of relationship to changes in appreciative attitudes towards trans people and to explore how trans/NB people may experience their RSS campus climate.

Legal, Ethical, and Moral Concerns

Prior to entering further into the analysis and an extension of Trans QuantCrit principles, I want to openly critique and be transparent about the power dynamics imbedded in the data and process itself. Through this exercise in self-reflexivity, I hope to name the issues and concerns in hopes to inform methodological choices directed towards equity. Although this study uses a secondary data set that has already been collected, there are some significant legal, ethical, and moral concerns related to the research questions and methodology on the intersections of RSS experiences and identity and trans/NB identity.
Table 3

Percentages of the 122-institution sample by institutional characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Status</th>
<th>Institutions ($N = 122$)</th>
<th>Students ($N = 7194$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$N$</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public institution</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private institution-no religious affiliation</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private institution-Roman Catholic</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private institution-Mainline Protestant</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private institution-Evangelical Protestant</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population(s) Served</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historically Black College or University (HBCU)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s College or University</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, and VT)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-East (DE, DC, MD, NJ, NY, and PA)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes (IL, IN, MI, OH, and WI)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plains (IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, and SD)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, and WV)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest (AZ, NM, OK, and TX)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocky Mountains (CO, ID, MT, UT, and WY)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far West (AK, CA, HI, NV, OR, and WA)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlying Areas (AS, FM, GU, MH, MP, PR, PW, and VI)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selectivity (per Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges, 2015)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most competitive</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly competitive</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very competitive</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less competitive</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncompetitive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unavailable</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legal concerns.

Informed consent. Prior to collecting the data, the IDEALS Research Team received informed consent from each student which can be found in Appendices C and D. As stated in the informed consent (Appendices C & D), researchers must “always analyze student data in the
aggregate, meaning that your individual record and survey responses will never be analyzed on their own. All of the information you share will be kept secure and confidential by your institution and the research team, and your name will never be used in reports summarizing the data collected.”

*Privacy and confidentiality.* Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, I will take great lengths to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. Therefore, while student identification numbers are not visible, some identifiable information is, and therefore, great care must be taken when disseminating results to ensure the privacy of the participants. This is particularly salient when I focus on trans/NB people who are not always out or open with their gender identity and may be put in harm’s way if they are identifiable in dissemination. Due to this, I will not be breaking down demographics of institutions for each trans/NB person, for example, or give demographics of the institutions at all since trans/NB percentages of the student populations can be small and, therefore, identifiable perhaps by other students, faculty or staff connected to said institution.

*Ethical standards and contracts.* The data collection was first approved by North Carolina State’s institutional review board. In order to access and the data, I applied and received a grant and entered a contract to answer my research questions using the IDEALS data. I was responsible for turning in a manuscript-sized paper of the analysis to ensure the full grant distribution in early December 2018. After the completion of this manuscript, I have completed all of my requirements of the grant. Relatedly, as a final step of approval, this study was cleared under the Eastern Michigan University institutional review board under a not-human-subject research determination (due to the de-identified nature of the secondary data) to ensure I can analyze the data and disseminate the findings ethically.
**Ethical & moral concerns.** One of my main concerns in this study is the question of the categorization of trans/NB identified people. Garber (1992) described queer and the developing field of trans theory as “a space of possibility structuring and confounding culture: the disruptive element that intervenes, not just a category crisis of male and female, but a crisis of category itself” (p. 17). Critical queer theory, therefore, suggests rejections of categorical and binary thinking which may appear antithetical to quantitative research as a whole. While quantitative data collection often places people in boxes—i.e., “male,” “female,” and “other” as in this study (see Appendix C)—so I and other researchers can make definitive comparisons, both the trans/NB advocacy and theoretical movements often intentionally negate and challenge boxing people in particular genders and adhering to gender binaries (man/woman) themselves. These limitations and delimitations are further discussed in those sections. To point to these limitations throughout this study, instead of using cis and trans/NB, I will use the terms gender binary and trans/NB. In this way, I do not necessarily label those who conform to the male/female binary as non-trans/NB.

Although perhaps more conceivably problematic for the categorization of gender identity, the categorization of RSSs also holds considerable problems. Although I decided to use the term RSS in this study to attend to the power differentials and different experiences in people’s RSS identities, the study itself used the term “worldview” with 26 different multiple-choice answers. In the survey itself, “worldview” was defined as “your guiding life philosophy, which may be based on a particular religious tradition, a nonreligious perspective, your ideological views, aspects of your cultural background and personal identity, or some combination of these” (see Appendices C & D). The issue I have in this definition is that it too easily incorporates concepts such as American nationalism and a focus on equality and sameness versus equity and the
important differences between RSS identities. RSS identities and experiences, too, are not readily amenable to quantification. Since the description and definition of RSS is imperfect, so also are the categories and attempts at quantifying people’s RSS experiences.

Despite these challenges, I still am intentionally choosing to critically engage in quantitative research. Quantitative research still dominates in higher education’s top journals (Hutchinson & Lovell, 2004; Wells et al., 2015; Williams et al., 2018), and yet there are very few published articles of trans/NB identified quantitative researchers doing research on trans/NB identity (Williams et al., 2018). Likely due to the assumption that quantitative data are more generalizable, quantitative research is still highly desired by trans advocacy groups to aid data-driven policy, funding, and practice changes to support the trans/NB community (James et al., 2016). As stated in the introduction, while there are limitations to quantitative research, there are equal, but different limitations in only using qualitative research. Since generalizability and the ability to predict is often higher in quantitative research, the hope is that I may incite changes in larger policies and practices nationally (Sowell, 2001). Therefore, to give trans/NB researchers and policy-makers greater access to these different set of strengths, comparisons, and possible conclusions, I seek to not only apply critical quantitative inquiry, but develop and apply a Trans QuantCrit paradigm to specifically center trans/NB people in quantitative studies. In efforts to make quantitative and qualitative research a more iterative practice, I am attempting to give attention and thought to who I cite across methods and identities and using a broad spectrum of studies to situate everything from the questions to the analysis. The hope is that in this study, too, I can use the research and findings to help inform areas of future research for qualitative and mixed-methods researchers to further explain and describe the “why” and “how” in the found areas of interest.
Bias. Although the traditional aim of quantitative research is to eliminate bias, critical quantitative research and thus also Trans QuantCrit recognizes the undeniable bias inherent in all research (Rios-Aguilar, 2014; Risman, 2001). Using core concepts of reflexivity central to this paradigm, I will attempt to be transparent about my biases so I can hopefully challenge and minimize their effects on the data analysis and conclusion formation. As can be seen woven throughout this dissertation, my bias towards centering of trans/NB voices is continuously and clearly stated to self-reflect on how this orientation may influence my decisions. Although I seek to challenge dominant narratives and also because I seek to do so, I will also actively search for disconfirming data and research that may suggest deficit model explanations of the findings. In searching for contradictory evidence, too, I can bring nuance and trustworthiness to my conclusions and minimize unconscious biases I may have (Creswell, 2009). Finally, although this study uses a secondary data set and, therefore, cannot change the data collection methodology, I will reflect on possible biases apparent in the study particularly relevant to the research questions in the limitations and delimitations sections.

Beneficence and doing no harm. Beneficence and doing no harm are both key ethical aims found in higher education research codes (American Educational Research Association, 2011). In attempt to both not misuse the data and to also share significant findings to hopefully help participating institutions, I presented preliminary findings at a symposium where all participating institutions’ administrators, faculty, and staff were invited to critique and give feedback on the findings. Although not all schools had representatives present, the attendees expressed that the findings were useful and resonated with their understanding of their own campus. Much of the feedback was centered on the desire of how they—as campus administrators—can help support their RSS groups to be more trans inclusive and their trans/NB
students to navigate RSS-related campus engagement. This feedback was extremely helpful in framing Chapter 5, and I hope this section in particular can help trans/NB students, college administrators, faculty, staff, and gender binary student leaders to transform the system around RSS diversity to be more trans inclusive.

**Measures**

The measures included in this study are sometimes consistent across research questions and other times specific to the gender binary sample or trans/NB sample. Also specific to the sample is the way I will be handling and interpreting the data. Due to the differences in sample size, sample weights will only be used on the gender binary sample. The data set was weighted to reflect the larger U.S. college-going population according to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data from Fall 2015 using the variables of gender, race, type of school, Carnegie classification, geographic area, and school in an urban or city setting. The data were weighted after Time 1 using the generalized raking method (Deville, Särndal, & Sautory, 1993) and adjusted for attrition after Time 2. The trans/NB dataset was not be weighted, which affects the factor loadings and regression analyses.

**All research questions.**

**Independent characteristics.** I made each of the exogenous variables that include personal and institutional characteristics a single dummy coded variable except for political leaning. Political leaning (How would you describe your political leaning? 1 = very conservative; 2 = conservative; 3 = moderate; 4 = liberal; 5 = very liberal) had a normal distribution in its responses and was therefore treated like a continuous variable. Each of the other exogenous variables, however, were dummy coded; these include race, sexual orientation, college religious affiliation, and a campus-wide significant RSS event. This choice is significant
and limits the level of intersectionality that can be explored in the findings. Although the statistical program I use for the analysis can handle dichotomous exogenous variables, disaggregating the exogenous variables to the six different sexual orientations, seven different races, five different college religious affiliations, and 13 different types of significant RSS events would require an additional 27 variables at the very least. Unfortunately, although I would like to explore the nuance of each of these variables, my sample size does not allow for this many total variables when I conduct separate RSS group analysis in the gender binary sample (smallest \(N = 1,206\)). So, although I would like to create effect coding variables for all the racial categories, doing this for race, sexual orientation, college religious affiliation, and significant events would make the analysis of RSS campus climate and its influence on appreciation towards trans people less rich. In the interest of responding to my research question to my fullest capability, I chose to limit the dichotomous exogenous variables. Ethically, I feel in a bind here, but if my aim is to specifically disrupt Christian hegemony and move towards trans liberation, I operate within my paradigm to give preference to variables in direct assessment of gender and RSS. I hope more intersections and social locations can be explored in future research. I actively welcome these critiques and opportunities for future analysis.

The first personal dichotomous exogenous variable is LGBQ+ identifying or not. This variable was coded along categorical responses and open responses in alignment with theories on sexual orientation. The survey asked participants to “please indicate your sexual orientation: (1) Bisexual, (2) Gay, (3) Heterosexual, (4) Lesbian, (5) Queer, or (6) Another sexual orientation; please specify (textbox).” Likely due to a lack of knowledge around the term heterosexual, participants who participants responded with some variation of “straight” in the open-response text box were recoded as someone with a non LGBQ+ sexual orientation and combined with
those participants who selected heterosexual. This variable was also screened for mischievous responders according to the guidelines outlined in Cimpian’s (2017) taxonomy of assessing for mischievous responders and errors in the LGBTQ+ population. To check this, I looked at all the responses of LGBQ+ people to the question “I have thing in common with people in this group—gay, lesbian, and bisexual people,” which had an average of “agree strongly” in the LGBQ+ population. Since a participant responded that they were LGBQ+, one would assume that they would also feel like they share commonalities with people in that identity. Conversely, a mischievous responder would not if they considered an LGBQ+ identity to be a joke. None who were not already screened due to a “heterosexual” or “straight” open response album appeared mischievous by these standards and were kept under one of the categories of LGBQ+ (Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Queer, or Another Sexual Orientation). Although some knowledge can be gained from the disaggregation of these categories, I struggle with the discreteness of these categories. Gay can be used by all genders, queer is often used as an umbrella term, and “another sexual orientation” included everything from asexuality to pansexual to “straight-ish?”. I struggled with these categories and am uncomfortable with the fact that participants could only select one despite knowing sexual orientation is fluid. Since I am most concerned with systems of oppression; I am also most concerned with those people who identify with a sexual orientation outside of the dominant narrative. To attend to this fluidity and inquiry aim, I instead chose to group by 1 = LGBQ+ and 0 = non-LGBQ+. This variable, therefore, indicates participants as 1 if they selected bisexual, gay, lesbian, queer, or another sexual orientation and was not already recoded due to other screen tests. Participants who self-identified as heterosexual or straight in their open-responses were recoded into the non-LGBQ+ group.
The second personal dichotomous variable is race. Unlike sexual orientation, participants were able to check all that apply. The question was “What is your race/ethnicity? Please check all that apply: (1) African American/Black, (2) Asian American/Asian, (3) Mexican American/Chicano, (4) Puerto Rican; (5) Other Latino/a; (6) Native American/Alaskan Native; (7) Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; (8) White/Caucasian; (9) Another Race/Ethnicity (textbox response).” Again, I personally struggle with these categories. The data disaggregation movement in the Asian American and Pacific Islander community is strong—pointing to the drastically different experiences of Asian international students to Asian American students to Asian subgroups such as Hmong and Korean that make combining this data both unethical and, thus, blind to some of important inequities in Asian subpopulations (Teranishi, Nguyen, & Alcantar, 2014). The word “Caucasian” even has a history of supporting White supremacy and was coined at a time when scientists were trying to justify white supremacy through biological superiority (Dewan, 2018). As a last critique here—although there are more—and of particular importance to this study is the gendered language of Latino/a rather than Latinx or Latino/a/x. Again, however, despite these critiques, knowledge could be gained in the disaggregate and I hope more intersections of race, gender, and religion emerge soon. For the purpose of my study, I recoded these variables to 1 = student of color and 0 = not a student of color. A person was recoded as not a student of color if they only selected White/Caucasian and no other race or ethnicity. All other combinations or selections were recoded as a student of color.

The last two dichotomous variables are at the institutional level. Significant RSS-related campus-wide events is a variable I created combining an institution’s response that any significant incidents related to RSS diversity occurred in the 2015-2016 academic year. This variable was dummy coded to include any campus that said yes to any of the following
statements happening in the 2015-2016 schoolyear as 1 and all others as 0: A bias incident (e.g., act of violence, verbal assault, graffiti on campus) occurred against a (1) student/ (2) faculty/ (3) staff from a religious/worldview minority, (4) A campus incident occurred that highlighted the need for accommodations for a particular religious or worldview group, An on-campus protest/rally took place (5) highlighting an issue facing particular religious or worldview groups or (6) in response to U.S. presidential candidates’ views on different religious or worldview groups, An on-campus incident related to religious or worldview diversity led to the (7) hiring or (8) firing of an administrator or faculty member, (9) A dispute or lawsuit related to matters of religion/worldview took place among stakeholders at your institution, (10) Newly enacted legislation (local, state, or national) related to particular religious or worldview groups led to dialogues, debates, or other high profile responses on your campus, (11) Your institution was featured in a prominent news source (e.g.,, The New York Times, The Chronicle of Higher Education) regarding a matter of religious or worldview diversity, or An event occurred on campus (e.g., protest, vigil, dialogue) in response to a (12) local or (13) national or international incident related to religion or worldview. The resulting variable is called Significant RSS related campus-wide events and captures if the institutional representative reported an incident during the same year in which the students were studied (before and after their first year of college in 2015-2016). Notably, as is the case with all self-report data—the inclusion of these incidents is contingent on the institutional representative being made aware of the event and choosing to report the evident in the survey.

The last exogenous dichotomous variable included in the model is the institution’s religious affiliation. The survey to the institution included the question of “Institutional type and affiliation”: (1) public institution, (2) private institution—no religious affiliations, (3) private
institutions—Roman Catholic, (4) private institution—Protestant, or (5) private institution—other religious affiliation (open response text box). Institutions could only choose one of the responses. I dummy coded this data as 1 = religiously affiliated institutions (Roman Catholic, Protestant, or Other) and 0 = not religiously affiliated institutions (Public or Private not religious).

The justification for including these variables attends to both what is seen in the literature and my desire to look at unique social locations of participants and how that shapes one’s experience of their RSS campus climate. Research demonstrates that political leaning, sexual orientation and race can all influence one’s attitudes towards trans people and RSS campus experiences (see for example Hill, 2015; Kolysh, 2017; Means, 2017; Woodford et al., 2013). I included campus-wide significant events to address Astin’s (1993) assertion of how students are often uniquely affected by campus-wide events related to diversity and inclusion. Finally, although overly simplistic as a variable, I also chose to include religious affiliation to attend to the importance of institutional history and policies on campus climate (Hurtado et al., 1998).

**RSS campus climate measures.** The survey and its religious, secular, and spiritual campus climate constructs were developed based on a grounded theory derived from a series of interviews across different campuses. The survey was then empirically tested as a pilot study and revised as needed (Bryant et al., 2009). The truth value of these theoretically derived constructs was tested through a combination of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. Cronbach’s alpha loadings in both the gender binary sample and the trans/NB sample can be found in Tables 4-9 for Provocative RSS Diversity Experiences, RSS Structural Diversity, Campus RSS Divisiveness, Perception of Safe Space, RSS-related Discrimination, and RSS Coercion. Note that for Cronbach’s alpha is influenced by N values, and therefore, the trans/NB
sample is likely to have lower loadings with an $N = 81$ versus the sample size of 7,115 for the gender binary sample. After completing these tests, I further tested the naming of these constructs for surface-level truth value by asking experts in the field if the constructs appear to be measuring what the name suggests. Each of the factors appeared to be true to the expert viewers.

Table 4

*Confirmatory Factor Principle Component Analysis for Provocative RSS Diversity Experiences*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had class discussions that challenged you to rethink your assumptions about another worldview.</td>
<td>0.81 0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt challenged to rethink your assumptions about another worldview after someone explained their worldview to you.</td>
<td>0.85 0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a discussion with someone of another worldview that had a positive influence on your perceptions of that worldview.</td>
<td>0.76 0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heard critical comments from others about your worldview that made you question your worldview.</td>
<td>0.81 0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a discussion with someone that made you feel like you did not know enough about your own worldview.</td>
<td>0.77 0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a discussion with someone from your own worldview with whom you disagreed.</td>
<td>0.73 0.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

**Confirmatory Factor Principle Component Analysis for RSS Structural Diversity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Loadings Gender Binary</th>
<th>Loadings Trans/NB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This campus is very religiously diverse.</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This campus is a welcoming place for people of different religious and nonreligious perspectives.</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The religious organizations on this campus are diverse in the faith traditions they represent.</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the degree of religious and nonreligious diversity on this campus.</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6

**Confirmatory Factor Principle Component Analysis for Campus RSS Divisiveness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Loadings Gender Binary</th>
<th>Loadings Trans/NB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a great deal of conflict among people of different religious and nonreligious perspectives on this campus.</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People of different religious and nonreligious perspectives quarrel with one another on this campus.</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious and nonreligious differences create a sense of division on this campus.</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People on this campus interact most often with others of their same worldview.</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

Confirmatory Factor Principle Component Analysis for Perception of Safe Space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Gender Binary $\alpha = 0.80$</th>
<th>Trans/NB $\alpha = 0.80$</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This campus is a safe place for me to express my worldview.</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and staff on my campus accommodate my needs with regard to</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>celebrating religious holidays and other important religious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observances.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a place on this campus where I can express my personal</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worldview.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My classes are safe places for me to express my worldview.</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8

Confirmatory Factor Principle Component Analysis for RSS-related Discrimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Gender Binary $\alpha = 0.91$; Trans/NB $\alpha = 0.84$</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While you have been enrolled at your college or university, how often have you:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been mistreated on campus because of your worldview.</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt that people on campus used their religious worldview to justify treating you in a discriminatory manner on the basis of your gender identity.</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt that people on campus used their religious worldview to justify treating you in a discriminatory manner on the basis of your sexual orientation.</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt that people on campus used their religious worldview to justify treating you in a discriminatory manner on the basis of your race or ethnicity.</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9

*Confirmatory Factor Principle Component Analysis for RSS Coercion*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Binary $\alpha = 0.88$; Trans/NB $\alpha = 0.87$</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Items</td>
<td>Gender Binary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt pressured by others on campus to change your worldview.</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt pressured to listen to others’ perspectives when you didn’t want to hear about them.</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt pressured to keep your worldview to yourself.</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt pressured to separate your academic experience from your personal worldview.</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had guarded, cautious interactions.</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question 1: Gender binary analysis.** In the first research question, appreciative attitudes towards trans people is both the main input and the main outcome of interest. Although the appreciative attitudes variables were also developed through the initial pilot study by the IDEALS research team, it was not originally tested for construct validity. Although I will be using the sum of the constructs for the analysis to give even weight to each of the questions, the items do load together in the gender binary sample at a level of $\alpha = 0.85$ at Time 1 and at Time 2. In the analysis, appreciative attitudes towards trans people is a construct that is the sum of four items asked before and after a student’s first year of college: In each of these questions, participants were asked to

- Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements in relation to each identity group: (5) Agree Strongly, (4) Agree Somewhat, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (2) Disagree Somewhat, or (1) Disagree Strongly:
  1. In general, people in this group make positive contributions to society.
  2. In general, individuals in this group are ethical people
  3. I have things in common with people in this group
4. In general, I have a positive attitude toward people in this group

The max sum, therefore, is 20 and the minimum sum would be 4 for a participant. The variables will be treated as continuous variables in both cases and were converted to standardized z-scores in the analysis.

The second major variable unique to the gender binary analysis is the RSS grouping variable. The decision to group and how to group the sample by RSS identities is guided by the goodness criteria of attempting to disrupt the systems of power and privilege that uphold the Christian hegemony in U.S. society. The disaggregation of data and groups have the potential to produce results that are more attuned to the power dynamics present inter and intra-categorically (Covarrubias, 2011; López et al., 2018). Dividing the gender binary group, disaggregation both explores intracategorical diversity within the gender binary group across RSS identity, sexual orientation, political leaning, and race (person of color or not) as well as intercategorical diversity between the RSS identities themselves. The RSS categories are drawn from Small’s (2013) qualitative grounded theory study on college student RSS identities. Small found:

According to students’ understandings [of Christian privilege], there seems to be a three-tier structure of privilege and power in society. At the top of the structure are the Christians, who are the mainstream religious faith in this country. In the middle are the other religious groups, who fit in with a religious society but differ from the dominant ideology. At the bottom are the atheists, who do not concur with the highest value of those religions and generally do not participate in the organized institutions of religion. (pp. 293-294)

Small (2013) found that this perceived hierarchy influenced the way students interacted with another on campus. These changes in perceptions and actions lead me to do comparative
group analyses of these groups to see if students’ experience their RSS campus climates differently based on their positionality within this “three tiered” system of power and privilege. As described in Small’s definition, majority religions include those that benefit from systems of power and privilege in U.S. society—all Christians. In the present study, all Christians includes any participant who selected any one of the following RSS identities: Christianity, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormonism); Christianity, Evangelical Protestant; Christianity, Mainline Protestant; Christianity, Orthodox; Christianity, Roman Catholic; or Other Christian. What I will call minoritized religions are what Small (2013) places in the second tier. I used minoritized intentionally because RSS majority and marginalization changes conceptually and systemically in different contexts. In the U.S., one of the marginalized groups are those who identify with an RSS identity that is minoritized in the U.S. People with an RSS Minoritized religion or spirituality are still connected to the religious or spiritual in some way but are marginalized because of their religious or spiritual belief. In the RSS Minority group, this includes anyone who selected Baha’i Faith, Confucianism, Daoism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Native American Tradition(s), Paganism, Sikhism, Spiritual, Unitarian Universalism, Zoroastrianism, or Another Worldview that is religious (coded line by line). The last group Small (2013) found to influence the way students interacted with one another in relation to RSS is what I will more broadly call non-religious. In the IDEALS study, this will include anyone who chose: Agnosticism, Atheism, Nonreligious, None, Secular, or Another Worldview that is secular or non-religious (coded line by line).

**Research Question 2: Trans/NB analysis.** The two measures unique to the trans/NB single group analysis are participant’s expectations for an inclusive environment and their perception of campus being a welcoming environment for trans people. The student’s
expectations will serve as the model’s predictor variable to control for pre-college expectations of a welcoming environment and potentially also college choice. Participants were asked: “We are interested in learning more about what you expect of your college or university. Please indicate how important it is to you that your college provides the following: A welcoming environment for people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.” The answers will be treated as a scale in the analysis from 1 = not important to 5 = very important and will be standardized for the regression analysis.

The outcome variable of interest for the trans/NB analysis is a welcoming environment for trans/NB people. Participants were asked: “Please consider other aspects of diversity at your institution and indicate the extent to which you agree with the following: This campus is a welcoming place for…Transgender People.” Again, participants answer on a scale from 1 = disagree strongly to 5 = agree strongly which will be standardized in the analysis.

Data Cleaning

Prior to analysis, gender identity and LGBQ identity variables, in particular, were tested for outliers and mischievous responders according to the guidelines outlined in Cimpian’s (2017) taxonomy of assessing for mischievous responders and errors in the LGBTQ+ population. Due to these assessments, I deemed one “another gender identity” respondent as mischievous and removed this case from the analysis.

Furthermore, since structural equation modeling (SEM) is strengthened by not having missing values, I took steps to appropriately fill relevant missing values. There were 50 variables with missing values and all under 5% missing. I determined that the remaining missing values to be missing at random and imputed them using the nearest neighbor method \( (N = 5) \) as
deemed appropriate particularly in large data sets where bias is negligible using this method over multiple imputation techniques (Rancourt, Särndal, & Lee, 1994).

**Analytic Approach**

**Descriptive analyses.** Before doing inferential analysis, I will perform descriptive analysis to illustrate a broader picture of the data. To better explain the “other” gender population, I will assess the frequency of different gender identities and potentially code them for themes if appropriate. In addition to this, I will use some frequency tables to highlight some significant categorical differences between the trans/NB students, gender binary students, and the entire sample in relation to the participation in the different campus experiences and the different RSSs.

**Inferential analyses.** This study will use what Carter and Hurtado (2007) describe as single group approach to the data where I will separate the analyses by groups to individualize the analyses and compare within groups more meaningfully. To apply intersectionality to the inferential analysis, I will disaggregate the data by different social locations following the work of López and colleagues’ (2018) influential application of concepts of intersectionality, critical race theory, and quantitative methods as a guide. In the creation of dummy coded variables, I have differentiated between gender binary or trans/NB (2), LGBQ+ or not (2), person of color or not (2), and RSS group (3). The resulting grouping is an analysis of 12 (2 x 2 x 3) social locations within the gender binary category and 4 (2 x 2) different explored social locations in the trans/NB single group analysis. I will represent these social locations in separate regression tables from the SEM or regression analyses respective to the research question.

**Research Question 1: Gender binary analysis.** The research questions will be answered through path analyses. Wherever possible in these analyses, I will use SEM to capture the
percentage of variance of the outcomes that are explained by the other variables directly or indirectly. Due to the sample size, this will be possible for the first part of the research question exploring the appreciative attitudes towards trans people. Using this type of path analysis, I will explain and assess direct effects where one variable directly points to another, indirect effects through mediating variables, and total effects measuring the total percentage of variance of all the pathways to the outcome. This will be the primary analysis for the first research question looking at changes in appreciative attitudes towards trans people in the complete binary gender sample and in split samples by RSS groups (non-religious, RSS majority, and RSS minority groups). To complete the SEM analysis in a way that gives me the most accurate picture of the model, I will check and assess for the three underlying assumption inherent in SEM models: (a) univariate outliers, (b) univariate & multivariate normality, and (c) sample size. The process of these tests is discussed below and addressed within the paradigm of QuantCrit to prepare the samples for this type of analysis

Univariate outliers. Univariate outliers can be determined by standardizing each variable and removing, altering, or separating any cases that fall outside the absolute value of approximately three standard deviations away from the mean and also visually representing variables in scatter plots (Aguinis, Gottfredson, & Joo, 2013). Employing critical quantitative analysis, handling outliers is particularly important when studying marginalized populations. As a guide, I will use best practices to address outliers outlined by Aguinis and colleagues (2013) to both ensure statistical rigor and critically listen and learn from the outliers themselves. Traditionally applied to organizational science research, Aguinis and colleagues’ (2013) guide provides similar dilemmas to educational research methods where simply removing outliers may ignore critical pieces of the overall story. Aguinis and colleagues (2013) distinguish outliers to
be in three different categories in relation to structural equation modeling: (a) true error outliers or inaccuracies, (b) interesting outliers that stand apart but still tell a story, and (c) influential outliers in the model itself that significantly change the model if removed but are not inaccurate. To address the first outlier type before even beginning analysis on the data, I cleaned data particularly in relation to the research questions (i.e., “Another Gender Identity” responses and “RSS” responses) as described above and checked outliers for the possibility of coding errors or clear perceived misunderstandings of the survey questions themselves. To identify outliers, I calculated the Mahalanobis distance of each of the points and viewed scatter plots of the data. Screening the top 1% (71) cases furthest from the mean of the distribution, no cases appeared to be problematic through the lens of Trans QuantCrit. Although there were outliers technically 3 standard deviations from the mean, the spread did not look skewed and I chose to rely on the sample size to wash out any potential errors. Outside of the gender and sexual orientation corrections already mentioned, no other corrections or transformations were made to the data set.

For interesting outliers that perhaps create a notable subset of individuals, Aguinis and colleagues (2013) argue for identifying these outlier groups and applying a case study method approach to analyze these cases as can be seen in Hitt, Harrison, Ireland, and Best (1998). Although founded on a small select group of individuals, studying interesting outliers can still inform future research questions and practice—particularly in underrepresented populations (Mohrman & Lawler, 2012). By separating out trans/NB students for a single group analysis, I am investigating and giving time to these “interesting outliers.” Studying this groups as a case study may illuminate interesting results for future researchers. Indeed, sometimes looking at exceptional research cases can lead to future—particularly qualitative—research questions.
To address outliers that are particularly influential when doing SEM analysis, Aguinis and colleagues (2013) suggest including both models and reporting their statistical fit to not lose any potential conclusions or data in the analysis. For example, to still acknowledge the importance of the outliers, Goerzen and Beamish (2005) presented findings both with and without outliers in order to ensure transparency and honor the importance of the individual while still giving the more “statistically sound” model for broader analysis and discussion. Since the gender binary sample is so large, including trans/NB students washes out any influential components and, therefore, only separate analyses will be presented in this inquiry. Notably, however, this combined analysis is often the only one reported in research—collapsing trans/NB students with one of the binary gender groups (usually cis women).

Univariate and multivariate normality. Although SEM is relatively flexible to skewed data, all variables were plotted as histograms with a normal curve overlaid to test for univariate normality for each of the variables. For cases of bimodal or multi-modal variables, I explored possible underlying interaction effects. Despite some skewed data and a ceiling effect on the appreciative attitudes towards trans people, I did not feel comfortable with common transformations such as square root, logarithm, and inverse because the variables are meaningful and used in other research articles and reports (see for example A. N. Rockenbach, Mayhew, et al., 2017). I standardized all the data, however, in the analysis so that all variables’ fit the standards of being at or below 3 on the skewness index and definitely below 20 and mostly below 10 on the kurtosis index (Kline, 2015). To address these moderate violations of normality and in line with the most common SEM technique, I used maximum likelihood (ML) SEM which has been found to be fairly robust to normality violations (Anderson & Gerbing, 1984).
The goal of checking for univariate normality is to approximate multivariate normality which is one of the assumptions of SEM. Multivariate normality is also called the assumption of homoscedasticity. The opposite of homoscedasticity, heteroscedasticity exists when the variation errors from the multivariate regression line differ significantly in size as independent variables change. To check for this, I grouped some variables that appeared multi or bi-modal in their distribution to see if independent variables had a significant effect. This was not found to be the case and although the data is not perfectly normal, Kline (2015) argues that data rarely is in SEM analyses and homoscedasticity can be affirmed if univariate normality is appropriate. Geary (1947), in his foundational book on testing for normality, even went so far to say that every statistics text book should have the disclaimer: “Normality is a myth; there never was, and never will be, a normal distribution” (p. 214). I state this not to negate statistics entirely, but instead question the firmness of rules surrounding the assumptions “required” for analysis. I find that due to societal structures, not every variable or experience is allowed to be normally distributed. For example, perhaps race does influence access to having inter-RSS experiences (which it does as I will demonstrate in the analysis later), but I also do not want to choose to transform the data and therefore negate people’s experience or erase the existence of racism. I instead wish to illuminate these nuances in regression analyses within the different social locations. Skewness and kurtosis exist in the data, I argue, because skewness and kurtosis exist in our imperfect world of inequity. I decide to continue the analysis acknowledging these moderate violations in the hopes of illuminating them in the analysis.

Sample size. While I will use SEM when possible, in single group analysis particularly, small sample sizes may require multiple path analysis, which will be the case in Research Question 2. While there is no “one size fits all” rule to a required sample size for structural
equation modeling (see Wolf, Harrington, Clark, & Miller, 2013), I employed several different rules of thumb to determine further exploration such as having a sample size of at least 100 or 200 (Boomsma, 1982, 1985), having 5 or 10 observations per estimated parameter (Bentler & Chou, 1987; Bollen, 1989) and a sample size that amounts to at least 10 cases per variable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1967). In my split group analysis of all the usable cases in the gender binary sample \( N = 7112 \), the total sample sizes per group are: 2,160 for non-religious; 3,685 for RSS majority; and 1,206 for RSS minority. The highest threshold in the rules of thumb is the number of variables—including the interaction terms—times ten: \( 21 \times 10 = 210 \). The sample size assumption is easily met by all three disaggregated RSS groups. Notably, however, the trans/NB only data set does not meet any of the rules of thumb for appropriate sample size to conduct an SEM.

**Research Question 2: Trans/NB analysis.** In the trans/NB specific analyses, I will use multiple regression to explore their feelings of being welcome on campus in relation to the RSS campus climate measures found to apply in the confirmatory factor analysis above related to the theoretical assertions from Hurtado and colleagues’ (1998) theory of campus climate and Broido’s (2000) theory of ally identity development. I will treat these measures as manifest variables in a regression analysis due to the small sample size \( N = 81 \). In centering trans/NB and using the same variables from the gender binary study, I can better compare and explore gendered campus experiences and outcomes. Throughout the analysis, I will critically reflect and analyze statistical decisions in this single group analysis to ensure I center the experiential knowledge of trans/NB people. To start the analysis, I will enter the variables in three blocks in relation to the outcome variable: (1) individual demographics and campus characteristics, (2) students’ pre-college expectations, and (3) RSS campus experiences. Since this is an explanatory
model and not a predictive model, variables will not be dropped so I can make more direct comparisons to the gender binary group.

**Delimitations**

The data are bounded to before and after one’s first years in a U.S. college—including first year transfer students. Since one’s first year in college has particularly strong implications on development and retention, it is a good subset for this study (Mayhew, Rockenbach, Bowman, et al., 2016). Furthermore, research has shown that the most dramatic growth for changes in attitudes and values specifically happen in a student’s first year (O’Neill, 2012). It is also bounded to the 2015-2016 school year which was found to contain a particularly politicized and polarized first year class in aggregate U.S. Higher Education data (Eagan et al., 2017). However, with changes such as a new president in office starting the start of year 2017, the larger context and climate for trans/NB people is not necessarily the same.

**Instrument delimitations.** The biggest delimitation of this study is the boundaries between trans/NB and gender binary people. The way the questions were asked to favor large-scale RSS identity community buy-in, and more space for other questions, trans/NB and cisgender people are not clearly delineated in the data. This is both a significant issue in terms of ethics and truthfulness. Due to these political and survey size limitation reasons, this study does not necessarily include people who chose “male” or “female” and also define themselves as trans/NB. This does not mean they are any less trans/NB, but they are not included in this study and, thus, outside the scope of any implications. Furthermore, one’s gender is asked only once (prior to the first year) and does not, thus, consider changes in gender identity during one’s first year of college—a year of tremendous exploration and self-discovery (O’Neill, 2012).
In order to honor the spectrum of gender identities, new terms are adopted to delimit and help describe the scope of this study: those who identify with the gender binary—“binary gender,” and those who identify outside of the gender binary—“trans/NB.” However, it should be noted that despite best practices, the answers to the survey questions about gender, too, are usually defined as sexes not gender (“male/female” versus “man/woman”). This mismatch further complicates being able to capture these students correctly and in a way that is anywhere close to all encompassing. Similarly, in assessing attitudes towards trans people, the word “transgender” is used in place of the more inclusive term “trans.” While it stands to reason that those who have positive attitudes towards transgender people would also hold positive attitudes towards “trans” people, this is not necessarily the case. For example, while someone may be okay with someone who is still in the gender binary despite it not being the identity one was thought to be at birth, they might not be okay with people who physically transition or who do not conform to the gender binary.

**Method delimitations.** Although steps were taken to capture a stratified representative sample, the sample includes only 122 campuses—primarily four-year and non-community colleges. Since campus climate can vary so widely campus-to-campus, the results should not be generalized to a specific institution outside of this study. Instead, general themes will hopefully be useful across the U.S. college and university system. For more campus specific analyses and analyses on community colleges or for-profit institutions, this research would have to be replicated in those research environments. Due to the chosen research design, too, no mixed-methods, qualitative descriptions can be used to further illustrate the data. While relationships may be found, underlying reasons will have to be further explored in future research.
**Analysis delimitations.** All research will be analyzed by me, the one primary investigator in this study. Although great care will be taken to minimize bias (see section on Legal, Ethical, and Moral Concerns), I recognize that choices in delimitation and the scope of the study are also informed by my own biases and positionality. To address these biases, I will employ peer review by experts in the field throughout this process. As described throughout the research design, research bias is a critical component to interrogate and make transparent in Trans QuantCrit. Although I identify as genderqueer and, thus, have lived experiences that may inform and lead me to certain results, I acknowledge that my lived experience is not every trans/NB student’s experience. To invite multiplicity in narrative which sits at the core of trans epistemology, I will proactively and intentionally seek multiple trans/NB narratives and disconfirming data in existing research and practice. Moreover, I embedded frequent reflexive meditations on the analyses to minimize researcher bias throughout the process and invited other experts in the field when appropriate.

**Limitations**

This study looks at trans/NB experiences with religious, secular, and spiritual campus climate and attitudinal changes of gender binary students towards trans/NB people in relation to RSS engagement and campus climate. Although this is typically where initial discussions of validity and reliability would reside, I am intentionally not using this language in line with the principles of Trans QuantCrit. Standards of reliability and validity have been historically used to further marginalize already marginalized populations. Citing normative standards of statistical significance, counternarratives of trans/NB people and religious minoritized experiences have been erased or transformed to make the dominant narrative more powerful. I reject the assumption that these standards are value neutral and instead would like to attend to the
limitations of conducting this secondary data analysis. Although it was a choice to do so in favor of a large dataset, I also a priori accepted limitations to this inquiry which I will make clear here.

Due to the delimitations of the study, there are some inherent limitations that also follow, but also additional limitations to expect based on what researchers and I already know about studies of this kind and in this topic area. In order to explore these limitations, Cook and Campbell’s (1979) and Creswell’s (2012) discussions of internal and external validity and reliability will be used to both discuss the limitations of the study and how I hope to minimize these concerns when I deem appropriate through the lens of Trans QuantCrit. Notably, I will not be using the terms validity and reliability as sole measures of quality although they will be reported to give a full picture of the findings. What has normatively been defined as valid and reliability are historical and current tactics to invalidate and erase systems of oppression—and very specifically racism (Zuberi, 2001). Instead, in place of these terms I will be using truth value and consistency to invite critiques on the normative standards and additional areas of truth and consistency giving methods consistent to trans/NB experiential knowledge.

**Concerns of truth value.** Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2001) divide issues of research truth value (validity in their terms) into four types: statistical conclusion, construct, internal, and external. Statistical conclusion truthfulness is discussed in more depth when discussing research misconduct and determining the analytic approach, but specifically in relation to the value of the conclusions, I will both practice reflexivity in the process as well as colleague review to ensure the appropriate use of statistics. Truth in the analyzed constructs is addresses in the discussion of measures earlier in this chapter. This leaves the two remaining areas of truth value: internal and external.
**Internal truth.** What I will be calling internal truth (normatively names internal validity) is described as the level to which one can infer that the relationship between the covariates and the outcome variable truly exists in the way it is found in the results (Shadish et al., 2001). Statistically speaking, in a pretest-posttest control group design as is the current research design of this study, threats to internal validity are controlled (Cook & Campbell, 1979). In terms of internal validity as is normatively described, therefore, the only remaining limitations are those that are derived from unrandomized treatments. Since the data is nested within an institutional context, captures campus-wide events, and compares participants with similar maturation rates (first year of college attendees), the study will have relatively high internal validity and be able to control pieces of the shared environment by keeping those variables constant.

More broadly, however, experiential knowledge does suggest that relevant events outside those captured that may affect the internal truth of the findings. For example, state-wide movements on bathroom policy likely disproportionately affect trans/NB experiences of their RSS campus climate as compared to gender binary students. Despite these differences, I decided to continue with the analysis because I also think that these disproportionate effects will be demonstrated and, thus, captured in students’ reports of discrimination on campus and perceptions of RSS campus climate. Moreover, with a sample size of this size, the law of large numbers will likely overwhelm these small, isolated events and make them negligible to the analysis, but perhaps important in the discussion.

**External truth.** External truth refers to my ability as the researcher to generalize the findings to the larger target population. I am generally wary of generalizability through the lens of Trans QuantCrit; trans/NB student experiences are subjective and varied. However, genderism, transphobia, and other systems of oppression are pervasive across the U.S. In this
way, I hope that explorations into how systems of oppression intersect and influence campus
climate can be used practically by college and university students, staff, faculty, and
administrators and in theoretical ways to inform future research.

Following some of the delimitations of this inquiry, I am further hesitant to generalize.
With my focus on first year college students, findings should and cannot be generalized to all
students’ years in college. Furthermore, the sample of respondents in the secondary data set is
not necessarily representative. Although care is taken to stratify school types, response rates
significantly differed in the different schools. Because IDEALS was voluntary, only those
individuals who have a keen interest or opinion on the topic may respond. Although the
response rate of Time 1 is unknown and undisclosed to me, I do know that the attrition rate
between Time 1 and Time 2 is known to be 43%. White, Christian, middle-to-upper class
women were largely oversampled in the study and, thus, not necessarily representative of the
larger college attendee population. To address this skewed oversampling, I will be weighting
the data in the gender binary analysis to make the sample more representative of the larger U.S.
population.

The trans/NB single group analysis has its own concerns in terms of external truth. The
number of trans/NB identified people comparable to the total sample is fairly low—meaning the
ability to generalize the findings is less—at least statistically—justifiable. However, when I
compare the attrition percentage of trans people from Time 1 and Time 2 to the response rate of
the entire response group (42% as compared to 43% as the overall response rate), the trans/NB
sample appears to operate similarly to the overall sample population. However, those who
choose to respond to the survey may also be self-selecting and different from the larger
population. The low trans/NB percentage, for example, may be due to the seemingly non-
inclusive gender questions or the topic of the survey itself. For example, students who have experienced trauma around religion or spirituality may not even participate in the survey—which according to the literature is likely to include trans/NB people (James et al., 2016). Furthermore, even if one identifies as trans/NB, there are significant reasons that may explain them deciding not to out themselves in the survey (i.e., if they are sitting next to a stranger in their orientation group, are not yet out, and are worried this will out them). While the final percentage of trans participants in the survey is approximately 0.1%, this is only slightly more than a fourth of the proportion considered to be present in the total U.S. population (Meerwijk & Sevelius, 2017).

Despite these issues of trustworthiness, I have again decided to continue under the operating theory that those who may not have responded perhaps are more likely to have had negative experiences and/or are less connected to the college or university as a whole. I hope more research will emerge on these populations of difference in future inquiry at this intersection.

Outside of the threats to generalizability due to the representativeness of the sample, there are also limits in generalizability because of the limited usefulness of self-reported data. Recent studies have found that anti-gay sentiment, for example, is substantially underestimated due to how most survey questions are self-reporting and capture what one may want to be seen as rather than what they actually think (Coffman, Coffman, & Ericson, 2017). In the same way, participants may be biased to respond in a more socially desirable way towards trans people rather than truthfully answering how they feel or would act. Promises of confidentiality and attempts to capture feelings such as perceived “commonalities” between the participant and transgender people (which conceivably has less social pressure assigned to it) will be used to test and hopefully discover any socially desirable survey responses outside of just asking if one “likes” trans people. Since commonalities loaded highly in a confirmatory factor analysis on the
other items in the appreciative attitudes towards trans people construct, issues of social desirability are considered minimal in this study according to Nederhof’s (1985) suggestions of how to control for social desirability bias.

**Threats to consistency.** Although the term “reliability” is normatively used in quantitative studies, I use the term consistency intentionally here to describe the slight departure for a post-positivist analysis of the survey constructs. Although institutional representatives were able to contact the IDEALS Research Team with clarifying questions, students were not. As described previously, although the question to students asks them to “please indicate your gender identity,” the answers are biological sex (a different construct; male/female) and only binarily defined (not including “intersex”). This continues to the questions on attitudes. What is meant and included by “transgender people” is potentially ambiguous since the definition of trans is not consistent in research, much less in the U.S. population.

Secondly, the procedures for test administration did vary because it fell upon the institution. However, consistently across campuses, all students received a link via university e-mail and also a follow-up paper copy of the survey if they did not respond. So, although the nature of the e-mail may have varied slightly from institution to institution, I can safely determine that the large response rate will overwhelm any minor differences in the data across the 122 different institutions.

Despite these relevant minimal threats to consistency, there are several statistical strategies that have been completed. Because of the research design, I am able to both use Cronbach’s alpha in factor analysis across groups as depicted in the measures section and I can assess for consistency across variables asked at Time 1 and Time 2. All Time 1 and Time 2
variables are highly correlated with one another which suggests consistent understandings over the constructs.

Overall, the limitations of the study are outweighed by the potential merits to the findings of this data set, research questions, and subsequent methodologies. In addressing both normative definitions of validity and reliability and suggesting alternative methods of assessing truth and consistency, I am able to reflect on the usefulness of the data. Despite some of the issues, the inclusion of some of the most comprehensive data on RSS campus climate to date provides great opportunities for discussion and I maintain that I want trans/NB students to have visibility within that quantitative inquiry.
Chapter IV: Results

Sample Description

**Binary gender sample.** The total number of binary gender students in the sample who responded at Time 1 and Time 2 is 7,112. Before weighting the data, 11.1% of the sample report having an LGBQ+ sexual orientation and approximately 37.7% report being a person of color. After weighting the data, 13.2% of the sample are LGBQ+ and 54.0% of them identify as a person of color. Relevant particularly to the comparative group analysis, approximately 30% of the sample identify as non-religious ($N = 2160$), 52% associated themselves with a majority RSS ($N = 3,685$), and 17% with a minoritized RSS ($N = 1,206$).

**Trans/NB sample.** The total number of trans/NB people in the sample is 81. Interestingly, there are more genderqueer, gender non-binary, or otherwise gender non-conforming identities as part of the trans sample than in the larger U.S. Trans Survey—amounting to greater than a third of the sample (James et al., 2016). This may suggest that some trans people (e.g., one’s who are MTF or FTM) who identify solidly with male and female may have chosen those responses and, thus, are not included in this study sample. This subset of the data was not weighted in the analysis and the percentages reflect raw scores. Important particularly in interpreting the influence of different social locations: 88.9% of the sample report being LGBQ+ and 34.6% of them identify as a person of color. Due to the high lack of variability of LGBQ+ orientations in the sample, specific social locations due to sexual orientation are hard for me to explore. To place the trans/NB student sample alongside their gender binary peers in terms of RSS identification, the breakdown by RSS group is as follows: 57% non-religious ($N = 46$), 19% RSS Majority ($N = 15$), and 37% RSS Minority ($N = 30$).
Inferential Analysis Findings

Research Question 1: Gender binary analysis. To answer the research question, I used structural equation modeling using the lavaan and SEMTools packages in R through R Studio version 1.1.383 and single group analysis as defined by Carter and Hurtado (2007). The data set was weighted to reflect the larger U.S. college-going population according to IPEDS data from Fall 2015 using the variables of gender, race, type of school, Carnegie classification, geographic area, and school in an urban or city setting. The data were weighted after Time 1 using the generalized raking method (Deville et al., 1993) and adjusted for attrition after Time 2. All variables were automatically standardized, and the reported estimates are standardized regression weights.

The final SEM with all 7,112 cases, as seen in Figure 4, ended normally after 176 iterations in lavaan with a chi-square p-value of .000. I tested for the appropriateness of the model using model fit tests outlined by Hu and Bentler (1999), which are still considered the standard-bearers for determining adequate thresholds for structural equation models. The measures for model fit can be found in Table 10. Notably, since the baseline model’s RMSEA is < .158, the TLI, CLI, and other incremental fit indices are not recommended (Kenny, Kaniskan, & McCoach, 2015). This is the case for each of the single group analyses.

The final SEMs for the non-religious, RSS majority, and RSS minority groups can be seen in their respective Figures 5-7. The fit indices for these figures can be found below the full group fit indices in Table 10. A side-by-side comparison of the most noteworthy coefficients across all groups can be found in Table 11.

Across all groups, appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people at time 1 to time 2 has a regression coefficient around .5 at the p < .001 level which means that as attitudes at time 1
increase by 1 standardized value, attitudes at time 2 increase by .5. Although the highest regression coefficient in the model, considering these are the exact same questions at time 1 and 2 and only 1 year apart, .5 is an unexpectedly low regression weight for this relationship. Provocative RSS experiences, perceptions of campus divisiveness and perceptions of feeling like campus is a safe space are all positively and strongly correlated with appreciative attitudes towards trans people at time 2 controlling for all the other variables in the model. These relationships mean that if people have more experiences that make them reflect on their own RSS identity, if they perceive their campus to have more conflict and divisions among RSS groups, and if they feel safe practicing their RSS identity on campus, they are more likely to have higher appreciative attitudes towards trans people at Time 2.

Finally, to further explore the effect social location has on RSS experiences and their influence on appreciative attitudes towards trans people, I also disaggregated the data. In Table 12, I looked at the intersection of being LGBQ+ and race on the various RSS campus climate measures across RSS groups. In interpreting this data, it is important to underline that sexual orientation is coded as 1 = LGBQ+ and 0 = not LGBQ+ and race as 1 = person of color (POC) and 0 = not a POC. There is a large amount of information in this disaggregated table, but I will highlight some particularly noteworthy findings. LGBQ+ identity has high multiple collinearity with appreciative attitudes towards trans at Time 1, meaning they are essentially measuring the same construct. However, this collinearity does not continue at Time 2 although being LGBQ+ is still positively correlated with appreciative attitudes towards trans people significantly in all RSS groups except for RSS minority. Only LGBQ+ people who identify with a majority RSS are more likely to have a provocative RSS experience on campus. In general, however, in terms of the model LGBQ+ has less statistically significant effects in terms of intersections with RSS
groups on RSS campus climate measures. Race, however, has several social locations of great statistical significance. POC have lower appreciative towards trans, but this is most highly concentrated in those who are not-religious and this correlation is not significant in the RSS majority group. Being a POC and an RSS minoritized student is correlated with less opportunities to engage with other RSS groups and individuals. POC RSS minoritized students are less likely to feel safe and able to practice their own RSS identity on campus and more likely to experience discrimination than POC in other RSS groups. Across all RSS groups, POC are less likely to report having the opportunity to personally engage with their own RSS identity on campus and feeling safe on campus. On the other hand, POC across all RSS groups are more likely to experience RSS coercion than non-POC students. Interestingly, POC perceive the campus to be more divisive than their non-POC peers except if they identify with a majority RSS.

Table 10

*Model Fit Indices Across RSS Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Subset</th>
<th>Baseline model</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>PCLOSE</th>
<th>SRMR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-religious</td>
<td></td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 2,160)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS Majority</td>
<td></td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 3,685)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS Minority</td>
<td></td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 1,206)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11

*Highlighted Comparisons of Regression Estimates of Variables in Relation to Appreciative Attitudes Towards Trans People at Time 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>NR</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Minor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Time 1</td>
<td>0.51*</td>
<td>0.48***</td>
<td>0.52***</td>
<td>0.52***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provocative RSS Experiences</td>
<td>0.34***</td>
<td>0.22***</td>
<td>0.40***</td>
<td>0.37***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Diversity</td>
<td>-0.14***</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.17**</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Divisiveness</td>
<td>0.28***</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td>0.35***</td>
<td>0.29***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of Safe Space</td>
<td>0.45***</td>
<td>0.45***</td>
<td>0.49***</td>
<td>0.31***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS Discrimination</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS Coercion</td>
<td>-0.11**</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.16**</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. ALL = All RSS groups; NR = Not Religious; Major = RSS Majority; Minor = RSS Minority*

* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001
Figure 4. Structural equation model regression coefficients for entire sample ($N = 7,112$).
Figure 5. Structural equation model regression coefficients for non-religious students ($N = 2,160$).
Figure 6. Structural equation model regression coefficients for RSS majority students ($N = 3,685$).
Figure 7. Structural equation model regression coefficients for RSS minoritized students ($N = 1,206$).
### Table 12

Regression Coefficients of the Relationship of Sexual Orientation and Race on RSS Campus Climate Measures and Trans Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>SEXUAL ORIENTATION (1 = LGBQ+; 0 = non LGBQ+)</th>
<th>RACE (1 = Person of color; 0 = Not a person of color)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA Trans Time 1</td>
<td>2.23***</td>
<td>1.40***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>-0.16**</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-RSS Engagement</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.55*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal RSS Engagement</td>
<td>-0.12*</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provocative RSS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS Structural Diversity</td>
<td>0.07*</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus RSS Divisiveness</td>
<td>-0.15***</td>
<td>-0.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of Safe Space</td>
<td>-0.16***</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS-related Discrimination</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS Coercion</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA Trans Time 2</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.31*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Non-Religious (NR), N = 2,160; Majority RSS (Majority), N = 3,685; Minority RSS (Minority), N = 1,206*

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001
Table 13

Unstandardized and Standardized Correlations with Trans/NB Students’ Perception of Feeling Welcome on Campus as a Trans/NB person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B (SE)</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person of Color (1 = POC; 0 = not POC)</td>
<td>-.41 (.28)</td>
<td>-.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political leaning (1 = very conservative; 5 = very liberal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBQ+ (1 = LGBQ+; 0 = not LGBQ+)</td>
<td>.38 (.49)</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Controls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious affiliation</td>
<td>.11 (.32)</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Event</td>
<td>.32 (.27)</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-college Expectations</td>
<td>.29 (.21)</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RSS Campus Climate</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coercion</td>
<td>.10 (.20)</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>-.48 (.18)</td>
<td>-.36**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provocative Diversity</td>
<td>-.23 (.17)</td>
<td>-.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Diversity</td>
<td>.58 (.16)</td>
<td>.44***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus Divisiveness</td>
<td>.02 (.16)</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safe Space</td>
<td>.12 (.19)</td>
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<td><strong>R²</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
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<td>4.14***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001
Research Question 2: Trans/NB analysis. With 81 total trans/NB students in the sample, the second research question looking at trans/NB students’ feeling of welcome on campus will not support an SEM. To approximate a similar analysis in a smaller sample, I conducted a multiple regression in blocks resulting in the findings in Table 13. The first block included demographics mirroring the measures in the gender binary analysis: person of color (1 = POC, 0 = non POC), Political leaning (1 = very conservative to 5 = very liberal) and sexual orientation (1 = LGBQ+, 0 = non LGBQ+). The second block included institutional level controls including one’s pre-college expectations which seeks to get at college choice (“Please indicate how important it is to you that your college provides a welcoming environment for people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities” with answers from 1 = not important to 5 = very important), the institution’s religious affiliation (1 = religiously affiliated, 0 = not religiously affiliated), and the report of significant RSS related campus events (1 = event happened, 0 = no event reported). The last block is the main area of interest looking at how RSS campus climate measures influence trans/NB students’ feeling that trans people are welcome on campus. This block includes the same factors from the gender binary analysis and treated as manifest variables in this regression. The results I found demonstrate that if trans/NB students are more liberal and experience RSS-related discrimination, they are more likely to not feel welcome on campus. However, if students perceive the campus to hold greater RSS-related structural RSS diversity and representation, they are more likely to feel a sense of feeling welcome on campus. These findings, therefore, sit in contrast to the gender binary findings. This contrast is particularly differential when looking at provocative RSS experiences. Although this relationship is not significantly significant (which is harder with a small sample size) in this
multiple regression analysis, the results suggest that more provocative RSS diversity experiences actually are related to a decrease in trans/NB students feeling welcome on campus.

To further investigate the innerworkings of these relationships, I ran a correlational analysis between all the variables which can be found in Table 14. Of particular note is that all the campus climate measures are correlated with each other except for provocative RSS diversity experiences. This finding suggests that changes in one of these measures (not including provocative RSS diversity experiences) may affect a trans/NB students’ experiences in other components and areas of the RSS campus climate. In this trans/NB sample, institution-wide significant events being reported is associated with higher levels of greater discrimination and more likely to happen at a secular college or university. A religiously affiliated college or university, however, is correlated with lower perceptions of both structural diversity and college being a safe space.
Table 14

Correlations Between Independent Variables in Trans/NB Sample with Significant Values Bolded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EXP</th>
<th>PL</th>
<th>LGBQ</th>
<th>SOC</th>
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<th>RA</th>
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<th>SD</th>
<th>DC</th>
<th>SS</th>
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<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.05</td>
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<td>( .46^{***} )</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>( .35^{**} )</td>
<td>-.47***</td>
<td>-.35**</td>
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<td>Expectations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>( .54^{***} )</td>
<td>( .40^{***} )</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political leaning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.20</td>
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<td>.06</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>( .26^{*} )</td>
<td>-.06</td>
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<td>.13</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<td>.23*</td>
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<td>Student of color</td>
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<td>Significant events</td>
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<td>( -.22^{*} )</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
<td>( .24^{*} )</td>
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<td>Religious</td>
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<td>( -.09 )</td>
<td>( -.26^{*} )</td>
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<td>Provocative diversity</td>
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<td>Structural diversity</td>
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<td>( -.45^{***} )</td>
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\* p < 0.05 \*\* p < 0.01 \*\*\* p < 0.001
Chapter V: Discussion

Trans/NB identity and RSS engagement on college campuses are often talked about dichotomously in theory, research and practice. This study debunks this false dichotomy and begins to forge bridges at the intersection in higher education research. Provocative RSS experiences, perception of safe space, and perceptions of conflict can all positively influence gender binary people’s appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people—an antecedent to trans/NB kinship. At the same time, however, lower reported instances of RSS discrimination, higher perceptions of RSS structural diversity, and perhaps also lower instances of provocative RSS experiences and perceptions of campus conflict around RSS are associated with a greater sense of feeling welcome on campus in trans/NB groups. Therefore, while conflict and provocative, reflective RSS experiences can greatly benefit gender binary students, these same experiences can further marginalize trans/NB people. These disparate findings, therefore, suggest a question: What are the promising theoretical approaches, research directions, and practices at the intersection of trans/NB identity and RSS identity and experiences? To explore the answer, I will address the findings through multiple lenses in the form of five overarching take-aways—in no order that indicates importance:

1. College experiences continue to prove to be a tremendous opportunity for growth and change.

2. Trans QuantCrit invites new possibilities and provides direction to re-center trans/NB experiences in quantitative inquiry.

3. Social location is an important consideration when considering intent versus impact of college experiences and campus climate.
4. The intersection of trans/NB identities and RSS identities and experiences needs to be investigated further as there are powerful implications and experiences suggested at the intersection.

5. (Re)connecting RSS identities and experiences to systems of power, privilege, and oppression is a necessary outcome of this inquiry.

My hope is that through these different lenses, I can also lift a multiplicity of voices, narratives, and counternarratives to make meaning out of this work. For each chosen lens, I will further disaggregate the point into implications for theory, research, and practice. I recognize also that this is not an exhaustive list. The beauty of research is that the publication invites future critique and imaginations. I do not give permission, however, to use my work to marginalize trans/NB people or explain these findings through a deficit perspective. I hope this work can spark new narratives towards collective liberation.

**College Makes a Difference**

If college did not make any difference, the appreciative attitudes towards trans people at time two after students’ first year of college would be the same as the appreciative attitudes towards trans people at time one before their first year of college. The findings that demonstrate this relationship to be cut in approximately half across all RSS groups suggests that a lot of change happens in terms of attitude even in that first year of college. Furthermore, the RSS-related college and university experiences indicate a remarkable influence on final attitudes towards trans people controlling for all other variables in the analysis. Providing a safe space for students to practice their RSS identity in particular was found to be almost as influential to final attitudes as all of the years prior to attending college (captured by attitudes at time one).
Coupled with provocative RSS experiences and perceptions of campus divisiveness, these college experiences defend the transformative nature of a college experience.

**Theory.** The impact of college attendance has long been of theoretical interest for higher education theorists. Astin’s (1984) theory of involvement suggests that the college environment can mediate the relationship between a students’ inputs (demographics, prior preparation, expectations, etc.) and a students’ outputs or learning outcomes—for example, one’s final attitudes towards trans people. This same theory remains to be the foundational theory to explain how college works and affects students (Mayhew, Rockenbach, Bowman, et al., 2016). In line with the tradition of higher education, I found that the college environment in this study significantly mediated student outcomes and confirmed theories of college involvement.

However, I am very hesitant to reduce these findings to an I-E-O model level of assessment. The way I and everyone experiences the world is much more complicated. Colleges and universities are not the only environments students experience—instead, I propose, college and universities are one of many communities in which students reside. My findings resonate particularly with the postcolonial theory of identity of “thirdspaces” by Homi Bhabha (2004). Bhabha (2004) described third spaces as those spaces in-between the colonized and the colonizers where hegemony can be disrupted and hybridity in culture rather than essentialism is possible. Broadly defined, thirdspaces critique and deconstruct the hegemonic structures of spatiality and consider less binary, separated ways of being. For example, rather than seeing RSS spaces and Trans/NB spaces as separate: can college instead be a possible thirdspace that can bring the two together?

To illustrate this point, I will invoke Soja’s (1996) illuminating discussion of Thirdspace in relation to two different epistemologies: Firstspace and Secondspace. Firstspace could be
equated with Astin’s I-E-O model. In Firstspace, the “E” environment is seen as an absolute entity and one that can be exactly measured and analyzed empirically and—notably—quantitatively and linearly. As seen in higher education literature, this spatial understanding of higher education continues to be the dominant narrative of understanding college as a space. Firstspace is inherently positivistic and is not critical of the ways people and dominant narratives produce reality to make it appear essential and absolute. Firstspace, therefore, does not allow for hybridity, multiple narratives, or different ways of imagining space. Secondspace epistemologies are what could be considered Firstspace’s counter: “In this duality, Secondspace developed arguments for considering subjectivity as opposed to objectivity, idealism as opposed to materialism, agency as opposed to structure, and abstract space as opposed to concrete space,” (Allen, 1997, p. 14). As opposed to passively conceiving the world, Secondspace is similar to critical race theory (coming from postcolonial studies) in that the nature of knowledge is subjective and the goal is to change systems and critique hegemonies. Imaginations, therefore, are critically important in Secondspace because they allow for new imaginations of the material world and critique the essentialist nature of space. This oppositional duality that has been developed by Firstspace (the objective) and Secondspace (the subjective) is what Lefebvre (2011) calls a double illusion and one that Thirdspace seeks to deconstruct. Soja (1996) defines Thirdspace as “both a space that is distinguishable from other spaces (physical and mental, or First and Second) and a transcending composite of all spaces (Thirdspace as [a concept of infinity])” (p. 62). In this way, Thirdspace is a place where one can combine the real and imagined, objective and subjective in infinitely different imaginations. Rather than seeing college as one environment that can be objectively described nor its counter as an environment that is only subjectively experience, I propose Thirdspace as a helpful explanation of why
college continues to matter so much to students’ experiences. College has opportunities to be a third-as-other space where positivistic and critical theories of space can be combined and recombined in infinite ways. Through dialogue and scholarly inquiry, students, faculty, and staff can continue to imagine new connections between Firstspace and Secondspace in a space that is neither entirely physical or mental. The current inquiry suggests that college matters not because it objectively does so and because it is the same experience for all, but because it is able to be a Thirdspace and combine essentialist and subjective ways of knowing in the same space.

**Research.** The intentional collection of data viewing colleges and universities as a Thirdspace provides tremendous opportunities for the field of higher education to explore the difference colleges and universities can make particularly in terms of RSS campus climate. This theory of Thirdspaces has been applied in the context of RSS more broadly (Knott, 2005) and with particular interest of how the internet can provide a third space for the exploration and formation of RSS identities and experiences (Echchaibi, 2014). How can colleges and universities leverage this opportunity more concretely and what are other variables that may influence student outcomes? For example, in the case of this study’s inquiry, what are the other college and university related variables that can influence gender binary students’ ability to move the positive attitudes towards trans people into action and activism? This research confirms that provocative RSS experiences can lead to more positive attitudes towards marginalized populations (e.g., Bowman et al., 2017; Mayhew, Bowman, Rockenbach, Selznick, & Riggers-Piehl, 2018). However, while this study explored the antecedents to attitudinal changes, I do not proport that this equates to action. More research needs to be done to look at how RSS experiences influence gender binary students to exhibit both supporter and, ideally, advocacy actions as defined by Marine’s (2011) phenomenological study on trans/NB advocacy. Can
provocative RSS engagement, campus divisiveness, and perceptions of safe space also lead to advocating for others to use students’ chosen name and pronouns? If so, how so and if not, why not? While incrementally moving research forward and demonstrating the influence college can have on attitudes towards trans people, I also readily invite future inquiry to take this a step further.

I welcome, also, a similar trajectory on the research on trans/NB students and their RSS experiences in college. The findings support the growing body of research that college campus climates and college experiences influence trans/NB students perceptions of campus—specifically their sense of feeling welcome (Dugan et al., 2012; Nicolazzo, 2017b; Pryor, 2015; Singh et al., 2013). However, just as attitudes is not action, feeling welcome does not necessarily equate to critical consciousness. More research needs to be done to connect feeling to action. Participatory action research, specifically, has been found to be particularly promising to develop critical consciousness among trans students through advocating for systemic changes in higher education (Case, Kanenberg, Erich, & Tittsworth, 2012). I readily invite participatory action researchers to think about how RSS engagement and RSS framing can be used to foster trans/NB centered advocacy in RSS spaces in college.

**Practice.** In a political climate where funding for college and universities dwindle, the justification of the importance of colleges and universities—particularly those efforts by student affairs practitioners and educational leaders is imperative. This study can provide data-driven evidence to justify student affairs work, diversity, equity, and inclusion programming generally and RSS equity and inclusion programming specifically. Currently, although RSS identity is often included as an afterthought in college anti-discrimination clauses, the critical engagement with and of RSS identities is often not actualized (Kocet & Stewert, 2011; A. N. Rockenbach,
Mayhew, et al., 2017). In fact, despite students wanting and expecting greater RSS diversity engagement, they are reporting not getting this to the extent they wish within their first year (A. N. Rockenbach, Mayhew, et al., 2017). My current inquiry further fans these flames and suggests an igniting change in practice. The turn, therefore, would be enacting policies more meaningfully on college campuses to engage RSS differences more intentionally and fully across the system of higher education.

College practitioners have a particular opportunity to leverage their command of Thirdspaces to effectively host provocative RSS diversity experiences on campus property. Leveraging Thirdspaces also means inviting in counternarratives that may not be part of one’s own campus community. Colleges and universities can lift alternative voices through the use of technology to engage in thoughtful, reflective dialogue around religion—see, for example, the third space blog coming out of CU-Boulder (https://thirdspacesblog.com). The goal is not necessarily to cover all of the information, but to invite students to think critically on how they engage in RSS experiences, RSS-related conflict, and conflict across RSS divides. This theory of Thirdspaces has also been discussed in terms of how to engage multiculturalism in curricula in education specifically. Tracing this inquiry, Allen (1997) describes what a critical multicultural curriculum would look like if one used Thirdspaces and spatiality as an analyses lens:

In particular, the goal would be to identify dominant spatial conceptualizations and practices, such as the double illusion, and bring marginal lived spatialities to a privileged place. The production of marginalized identities via the social intersectionality of the real-and-imagined spaces of racism, capitalism, and sexism should be a primary device for deconstructing hegemonic spatialities. (p. 26).
The goal of this endeavor is a “rethinking of the political imagination” and developing “a new possibility of social living” by critiquing the current production of hegemonical structures (Allen, 1997, p. 27).

The concept of Thirdspace both encourages educational leaders to have hard conversations and educational moments with students and also gives a way of framing curriculum to inspire the greatest disruption to hegemonic structures in RSS and gender discourses. Positioning colleges and universities in this way, colleges and universities are able to be spaces to facilitate hard conversations that cannot happen in binary essentialist spaces. Thirdspace can facilitate dialogues between Students for Justice in Palestine and Hillel or Trans/NB student groups and Evangelical Christians. Just as Students for Justice in Palestine members may never feel comfortable going to Hillel’s spatial home (their synagogue for example) or vice-versa, trans/NB people may never feel comfortable going to an evangelical Christian church nor may evangelical Christians ever be comfortable going inside an LGBTQ+ campus center. Beyond comfortability and safety, these decisions are sometimes antithetical to their very beliefs and asking someone to cross these boundaries is asking them to renounce their beliefs. Each of these binaries requires, therefore, a new environment. I propose: what if instead of seeing college as simply an environment, educational leaders frame college as a Thirdspace? This transforms the position and goal of the space itself. College matters and college can make an even greater difference not just because it is an environment, but because it has an opportunity to be a Thirdspace. This allows college to be a space to engage the intersections such as trans/NB and RSS identities and also other falsely dichotomized identities in a Thirdspace frame of spatiality and understanding.
Trans QuantCrit and Emergent Possibilities

Theory. Trans QuantCrit could itself be seen as a Thirdspace in between post-positivism and trans/NB ways of knowing. Trans QuantCrit disrupts the false dualism of the quantitative post-positivistic Firstspace and critical race theory and critical trans politics as Secondspace. In this understanding, Trans QuantCrit becomes an area of infinite possibilities and a space for a multitude of imaginings that, to quote Nicolazzo (2017a), “de/re/construct” trans/NB understandings that span “material and virtual environments” (p. 7). Just as trans/NB lives are seen as always already an impossibility, so also is trans-centered quantitative inquiry. Since trans/NB existence is, therefore, is a way of proving the impossible as possible in an infinite amount of ways, the way of studying trans/NB identities using Trans QuantCrit also mirrors this lived experience. I present Trans QuantCrit as not something I own, but a space to imagine what is possible. I propose a methodological theory that is not prescriptive nor oppositionally purely subjective, but a quantitative criticalism that trans-cends the very boundaries of critical trans politics, trans epistemology, trans feminisms, and (post-) positivisms. Trans QuantCrit is other than all of those theories and also a combination of each of them. Trans QuantCrit is a Thirdspace. I invite other researchers and theorists to come play in the metaphorical sandbox—a ThirdSpace to mix objectivity and essentialism with the goal of collective liberation and the centering of trans/NB experiences and their multiplicity of narratives. Approaching research and theory in this way; “all epistemologies must be re-written relative to the ontological assertion of space, along with new intersectionalities with spatiality, historicity, and sociality” (Allen, 1997, p. 15). In this study, I have added a page in a book and invite researchers and theorists to build and add to the story using a constellation of new intersections between histories, systems,
groups, narratives, and spaces. The goal is not one story, but a collection of narratives towards the collective liberation of trans/NB people.

**Research.** My inquiry provides a current conception of Trans QuantCrit which can be both replicated, critiqued, and built upon by other researchers. The method of single group analysis separating cisgender (or in my case binary gender) students and trans/NB students is a promising practice for researchers to center trans/NB experiences and still include what would be normatively defined as using rigorous methods on the dominant group. Furthermore, although disaggregation of data does take slightly more time, again, there is often no good reason that researchers cannot also integrate disaggregation of data by social location within their practice even if it is not “part of the research question.” I suggest that good research incorporates intersectionality without having to explicitly state it; if research is meant to depict or critique reality, then intersecting systems of power and privilege are inevitably part of the answer whether a researcher chooses to name so or not. Finally, the intentional coding I did to re-center trans/NB narratives can also be replicated by future researchers particularly in the cases of using secondary data sets where questions are imperfect representations of identity. Despite these methodological renovations, future research requires more trans/NB affirming datasets across all fields (not just those surveys only studying trans/NB people although those are also important) to gain a better understanding of trans/NB people outside of the often pathological and medicalized contexts where most of the data currently resides (Serano, 2016). Relatedly, can Trans QuantCrit perhaps be used in other fields of research even outside of higher education? While founded through the lens of higher education, I outline the process of developing Trans QuantCrit to underline that the process is more important than the end itself. Using the process of Trans QuantCrit, researchers can apply this methodological framework to inquiries as varied
as architecture to medicine through a grounding in their respective fields. Since cisnormativity is pervasive across all parts of our society, Trans QuantCrit can help critique genderism in all fields where quantitative inquiry is used to perpetuate genderism.

**Practice.** Although Trans QuantCrit appears to be primarily a scholarly endeavor, I do also want it to be practical and usable by trans/NB people and those they hold in kinship. While perhaps practitioners are not always in the position to conduct statistical analyses themselves, I encourage Trans QuantCrit to be used as a way to critique the way statistics have been used against us. Every year, for example, on the Transgender Day of Remembrance, Transgender lives are reduced to a death toll—a number to sum up the year for all trans/NB people. For some, this number is the only way they capture trans/NB lived experiences. This positivistic way of looking at reality, however, does not lead to collective liberation or even visibility of the multiplicity of narratives of trans/NB people. Trans QuantCrit at Transgender Day of Remembrance requires students to also make the resiliency of trans/NB people visible and something to commemorate. Trans QuantCrit at Transgender Day of Remembrance suggests bringing in multiple narratives to foster dialogue and explore multiple intersections of identities. Finally, Trans QuantCrit calls the Day to turn into collective action. If Trans QuantCrit postulates that numbers cannot “speak for themselves” then how can numbers instead spark trickle up activism and inspire the transformation of systems? More than a research framework, Trans QuantCrit is a lens for practitioners and students to critique how numbers and statistics and the way we typically treat them can reify systems of oppression towards trans/NB people.

**Social Location Matters**

Some of the biggest conclusions I draw from this research are the differences in RSS experiences and outcomes across social locations. While perception of conflict is helpful for
gender binary students, it is negatively associated with trans/NB sense of welcome. Being a person of color and identifying with an RSS minoritized religion, too, are associated with less opportunities for personal and inter-RSS engagement which means that these groups are also barred from the beneficial outcomes of these experiences. Analyzing these results through the non-deficit framework of Trans QuantCrit, I am able to conclude that different social locations and intersections of identity experience their RSS campus climate differently, are systematically supported in different ways by the campus, and, thus, are given opportunities to achieve outcomes at different levels.

Theory. While campus climate theories attempt to propose essentialist and generalizable theories to all parts of a marginalized population (e.g., people of color, sexual minorities), the disparate findings across social categories in RSS campus climate mean that a “one-size-fits-all” RSS campus climate framework is both incorrect and unethical. These findings confirm Crenshaw’s (1989, 1991) theory of intersectionality, critical race theory applications in QuantCrit (Covarrubias, 2011; López et al., 2018), and queer theory (Wilchins, 2004) specifically applied to the study of religion (Schippert, 2011). Which RSS experiences promote greater trans inclusion is different across cisgender and trans/NB sample populations. This primacy and importance of social location also reaffirms the theoretical emergence of Thirdspace in this inquiry. The differences by social location underlines the importance of social space as a critical part of the picture and demonstrate that you cannot essentialize spatial reality (Firstspace ways of knowing).

This critique of the essentialism of campus climate also extends to intergroup contact theory. Although at one level the results confirm intergroup contact theory, the assumption that everyone has to be equal in terms of power for it to operate correctly (see for example Pettigrew
& Tropp, 2006; Pettigrew et al., 2011) also proves to be currently at least improbable due to the current structure of our social reality. Intergroup contact theory, therefore, has merit in that RSS intergroup contact can foster inclusion. However, this study also proves that intergroup contact theory has its limits. In the case of trans/NB students, for example, RSS provocative diversity experiences—which also could be described as reflective intergroup contact experiences—do not benefit trans/NB student development of critical consciousness similar to the way that the same experiences appear to help aid trans allyship or kinship development. Therefore, if we assume that dominant and oppressed groups have different outcomes to gain in intergroup contact, this study also suggests that these power dynamics can also privilege certain outcomes over others and disregard the desired learning and growth of marginalized groups.

**Research.** One of the greatest implications for research is providing a defense for disaggregation to become a normal and expected scholarly practice. Without the disaggregation of data, I would have reported only what can be gleaned from the gender binary aggregate (as the 81 trans/NB students would not have drastically changed the analysis). In essence, therefore, if I reported the data without disaggregating it, I would have in effect only reported on the experiences of the dominant group. As can be seen in the disaggregate, the RSS majority group most closely resembled the SEM analysis with all RSS groups. RSS majority and dominant groups have the power and privilege to overcome and dominant society as well research findings. As another illustrative example, without disaggregation, perceptions of RSS structural diversity appear to be negatively associated with positive changes to appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people. This could be consistent with research demonstrating that dominant groups feeling threatened because of increased representation of RSS diversity (e.g., Bowman et al., 2017). However, in the disaggregate, this connection does not hold in non-religious or
religious minoritized groups and, perhaps most importantly, greater perceptions of RSS structural diversity actually contribute to trans/NB people feeling more welcome on campus. While the aggregate tells one story, the disaggregate tells something completely different. Without the disaggregation of data, furthermore, only the stories of dominant social locations would be propagated and structural diversity—a component incredibly important to marginalized groups—may have incorrectly dropped in importance. If the goal of research is to disrupt dominant narratives, disaggregation of data must be a necessary part of all research processes. This assertion further defends the work of Covarrubias (2011) and López and colleagues (2018) where the disaggregation of data—particularly in quantitative inquiry—is a critical component to applying critical theory and working towards collective liberation. I argue that instead of needing a research question to ask “do systems of power and privilege exist,” researchers who adopt a critical framework to their analysis de facto investigate these structures of oppression without having to justify the inquiry.

Following my delimitations of this inquiry, I intentionally open up this intersection for future research. While I analyzed 16 different social locations in this inquiry, there exists many more particularly in regard to race and class which require further investigation. The data set itself has received critiques for white washing RSS research in higher education (Snipes, Foste, & Singer, 2018). How do Hmong Americans experience their RSS campus climate in relation to attitudes towards trans/NB people? How about students at community colleges or colleges and universities outside of the US? Each of these questions were impossible with the current selected data set and it is my hope that future research on RSS campus experiences can gather more comprehensive social demographic data and more diverse groups of people to invite further disaggregation in the analysis.
Another area of future research is investigating the nuances of intergroup contact theory. If, as discussed above, intergroup contact theory is more complicated because of systems of power and privilege in society, then what are the components specifically that enable the theory to work or not work. And, if more problematic than helpful, with what would we replace intergroup contact theory?

Finally, because social location matters, I also am able to speak to how gender itself can influence the study of RSS groups, identities, and experiences. The social location differences particularly surrounding gender on the sociology of religion is garnering more attention in recent years (Avishai, Jafar, & Rinaldo, 2015). Looking at RSS through a gender lens opens new opportunities for research in relation to RSS identities and experiences in higher education. Currently when disaggregating data on RSS experiences in college, gender is normatively and overwhelmingly included only on the gender binary (see for example Bryant, 2007, 2011; A. N. Rockenbach et al., 2016). However, my findings confirm Bryant’s (2011) assertions that sometimes behavioral components of campus climate influence majority or dominant groups more than those who remain underserved on college campuses. Instead of erasing or minimizing this experience, my research argues that disaggregating trans/NB students and not collapsing them into “woman” or “female” can have powerful implications on the results and conclusions. Trans/NB identities have the possibility to be centered even in relation to outcomes that do not involve attitudes towards trans/NB people specifically. Disaggregating in additional RSS related inquiries will contribute to a greater understanding of trans/NB people as whole beings and people whose RSS identities and experiences are known to be different than the cisgender population (Bockting & Cesaretti, 2001; Halkitis et al., 2009; Hopwood, 2014; Kidd & Witten, 2008).
Practice. Equipped with this knowledge, educational leaders have a duty to engage the understanding that “provocative” diversity experiences may not be provocative nor positive for all students—particularly for those who are marginalized. While perceived RSS conflict, perception of RSS safe space, and provocative RSS diversity experiences highly influenced gender binary students’ attitudes towards trans people, these constructs did not similarly affect trans/NB students’ feeling welcome. Although perceiving a safe space was positively correlated with sense of welcome, higher levels of RSS structural diversity and lower experiences of discrimination—which were correlated with provocative diversity experiences—were the highest predictors of a higher sense of feeling welcome on campus. Furthermore, perceptions of campus divisiveness are negatively correlated with a trans/NB students’ feelings of being welcome on campus. These findings suggest that those same provocative diversity experiences and conflicts proving so beneficial for gender binary students may be the same ones that further marginalize trans/NB people. In other words, what we deem as “best practices” may simply be best practices for those in dominant or majority social locations. The results suggest that forcing trans/NB into experiences where they may be discriminated against to benefit the learning of dominant groups is not always a beneficial exercise for marginalized groups. Therefore, as educational leaders, we must ask how we can create provocative diversity experiences for dominant groups to engage with difference in ways that do not further discriminate and lead to the RSS coercion or discrimination of marginalized groups. Marine’s (2011) exploration of trans advocacy actions by cisgender administrators at a women’s college provides some answers to this apparent conundrum. Marine identifies that cisgender supporters can advocate and foster change through actions such as “raising issues of transgender inclusion in division…, [c]hallenging instances of stereotypical imagery about women on campus…, [and, c]ommunicating with faculty on behalf.”
of student” (p. 1180). Rather than placing the burden of educating others on trans/NB people, cisgender students who are trans/NB allies can also enter in those spaces and similarly advocate for change and foster change in other people’s attitudes towards trans people. Recognizing these opportunities and risks can help foster greater inclusion for trans/NB people without placing the burden of education entirely on trans/NB people.

Just as the results suggest that disaggregation is integral to socially just research, disaggregation can also be a useful tool in practice. Fostering and aiding trans/NB students to develop trans/NB kinship networks can lead to trans/NB students feeling more welcome on campus and a greater sense of resilience (Nicolazzo, 2017b). While intergroup contact is important to learning and growth, supporting and advocating for trans/NB students to have separate spaces to heal allow for this growth and development—which are central to the development of critical consciousness and fostering trans/NB inclusion. Although a university’s population of trans/NB students and their advocates may vary, kinship networks that are virtual are just as meaningful to students’ sense of resilience (Nicolazzo, 2017b). Leveraging these resources and amplifying access to them are great tools for a practitioner to meet the needs of trans/NB students to gain healing and resilience in relation to their RSS identity even if they are not available within the campus’ physical walls.

**Debunking the False Dichotomy of Trans/NB and RSS Identities and Experiences**

I am far from the first person to discuss the intersection of trans/NB identities and RSS identities and experiences. Personal accounts of trans/NB people integrating their RSS identity within themselves and theological explorations through a trans/NB lens have grappled with this apparent divide across various traditions such as Buddhism (Dillon & Jivaka, 2017; Mollenkott, 2001), Hinduism (Mollenkott, 2001), Islam (Mollenkott, 2001; Shah, 2008), Native
American spiritualties (Jacobs et al., 1997; Mollenkott, 2001), and others—with a notable higher concentration in the Judeo-Christian realm (Althaus-Reid, 2000; Beardsley & O’Brien, 2016; Cornwall, 2010, 2011, 2015; Dzmura, 2010; Herzer, 2016; Hornsby & Guest, 2016; Isherwood & Althaus-Reid, 2009; Mollenkott, 2001; Mollenkott & Sheridan, 2003; Sheridan, 2001; Tanis, 2003) with only a few explicitly Jewish (Dzmura, 2010). This study’s results support these narratives and confirm that appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people can be possible and grow across all RSS groups through RSS engagement.

Even prior to our recent conceptions of trans/NB identities, indigenous ways of knowing embraced and integrated gender expansive identities with their spiritual beliefs and practices. Prior to colonialization, some Native American communities integrated gender expansive identities into their spiritual beliefs and practices—placing trans/NB “two spirited” individuals actually closer to their conceptions of the divine (Jacobs et al., 1997). In response to colonialization, these gender expressions and integrations with RSS identities and experiences were erased and dehumanized. Therefore, debunking the false dichotomy is not a discovery, but more correctly a process of decolonialization. RSS engagement in college can have a significant effect on binary gender students’ attitudes towards trans/NB people and trans/NB students’ sense of feeling welcome on campus. This being the case, colleges and universities are provided a great opportunity to bridge this divide, decolonize their curriculum, and foster trans/NB inclusion through intentional RSS engagement.

Theory. Freire’s (1973) theory of critical consciousness and Broido’s (2000) theory of social justice allyship both appear to be good fits to look at RSS campus climate in relation to attitudes towards trans/NB people and trans/NB sense of feeling welcome on campus. Nicolazzo’s findings that trans/NB kinship networks lead to a greater sense of resiliency in
trans/NB college students, too, provided a useful link between these two theories and trans/NB college students. This unique integration of theories suggests that this intersection may be a useful theoretical framework to continue looking at RSS campus climate and trans/NB students or other campus climate measures and trans/NB students’ development of resiliency and critical consciousness. Filling in the how of trans/NB RSS and critical consciousness development is an area for both theoretical investigation and analytical research.

**Research.** As described in the introduction of this section, this integration of RSS and trans/NB identities and experiences confirms many scholarly personal narratives. Although the findings suggest that RSS campus climate is important, the specifics on how one develops an understanding of their RSS environment, identity, and attitudes surrounding RSS groups is grounds for future research. In the binary gender group, the findings similarly confirm previous research that suggest that RSS identities can influence trans/NB ally beliefs (Munin & Speight, 2010) and that provocative RSS experiences can lead to more positive attitudes towards marginalized populations (Bowman et al., 2017; Mayhew et al., 2018). As addressed before, however, attitudes do not necessarily equate to action and more research needs to be done to link this intersection of identities and engagement towards actual transformative change. However, my findings alongside Bishop’s (2002) research that argues that for social justice allyship to lead to positive internal and social change, an ally must also recognize how one form of oppression is interconnected to other forms of oppression—do suggest that this intersection may help students understand how trans oppression is connected to RSS oppression.

In the trans/NB group, more research on critical consciousness is begging to be done (Watts, Diemer, & Voight, 2011). The results are significant, but again sense of welcome is merely a prerequisite for critical consciousness. Particularly helpful here would be to explore the
development of critical consciousness like Osajima (2007) did with Asian American students and Turner-Essel (2013) did with Black women activists. Do trans/NB students build their critical consciousness in similar or different ways to those with marginalized racial identities and how is critical consciousness related to the resiliency found in Nicolazzo’s (2017b) work? These research questions are set up by this inquiry for future research.

**Practice.** Currently in colleges and universities, RSS identity is often included as an afterthought in college anti-discrimination clauses, but the critical engagement with and of RSS identities is often not actualized (Kocet & Stewert, 2011; A. N. Rockenbach, Mayhew, et al., 2017). In this study, I prove that this gap in intentional engagement is a severe missed opportunity for fostering greater inclusion on campus—particularly related to trans/NB student success. Citing Edwards’ (2014) work on RSS intergroup dialogue, I caution program coordinators that knowing how to facilitate intergroup dialogue on race or gender translates to facilitating a dialogue with meaningful outcomes on RSS identities. Doing one’s own work on RSS diversity and inclusion is imperative to intentional and productive provocative RSS diversity experiences. Furthermore, Edwards’ (2014) findings that having non-dominant RSS identifying staff and recruiting diverse RSS identifying student representation leads to more effective RSS intergroup dialogue also supports the importance of RSS structural diversity in trans/NB students’ experiences. Advocating for RSS structural diversity as a practitioner could mean asking candidates about their experiences with working with diverse RSS populations and capturing RSS data in student, faculty, and staff surveys so researchers can look at intergroup differences between RSS groups. On a broader scale, advocating for a more inclusive RSS campus climate would be to advocate for the actualization of engaging RSS in the universities’
strategic plan on diversity and inclusion and implementing programs and curriculums engaging RSS identities broadly and the intersection of RSS and trans/NB identities more specifically.

**RSS Systems of Power and Privilege**

**Theory.** Through the disaggregation of social locations, I also uncovered how systems of power and privilege can show up around RSS identity. The categories Small (2013) identified as the perceived hierarchical RSS categories on college campuses: non-religious, RSS majority, and RSS minority groups did prove to experience their RSS campus climate differently. These differences are compounded by intersecting identities with their own systems of power and privilege which can be seen in the results by social location. This finding challenges the dominant theoretical narrative guiding research on RSS identities and engagement in higher education. The theoretical underpinnings of the IDEALS data set itself is Eck’s (1993) theory of religious pluralism. Born as a Christian Methodist, Diana Eck develops this theory through her explorations and engagement with other religions through her position as an interfaith identified Western American. While appreciating differences and seeking to understand other religions is certainly important, promoting pluralism has the tendency to ignore power dynamics and systemic privileges afforded to certain RSS groups.

While helpful in some cases, I propose that the theory of religious pluralism is not a good framework for the current study’s results or future critical theory informed research on RSS identity and engagement in higher education. While the theory has helped spur tremendous development in the area of RSS-related research at colleges and universities in the U.S., space also needs to be given to disrupt the Christian hegemony in research by recognizing the privilege Christianity holds in research and in society. Critical religious theory holds particular promise in this area and could be used as a future guiding framework in higher education. Already a robust
field in religious scholarship circles, critical religious theory does not just notice that religions are different, but also that some religious have power over one another. The process of engaging critical religious theory as defined by Martin (2017) in his book *A Critical Introduction to the Study of Religion* (2nd ed.) is as follows:

- starts by considering what insiders say and do,
- remains suspicious or doubtful of all supernatural claims (methodological atheism),
- seeks to understand “what’s going on” by reducing or translating religious claims or practices into social terms and social functions (reductionism and functionalism), while
- focusing on whose interests are served, in order to
- discover things of interest that we might not otherwise notice (p. 31).

Employing this method of inquiry, a researcher is able to critique their own religious biases, attempt to see the research in the context of the religion they are studying, and focus on the social impact—and therefore also systems of power—related and connected to different RSS beliefs and groups themselves. Martin (2017) argues that this theoretical framework actually leads researchers to uncover different results and claims than if one was not critical of one’s RSS positionality or aware of the social components of RSS identity. Critical religious theory, therefore, captures many of the tenets from critical race theory and applies the lens to specific RSS understandings. Applying this theory, therefore, particularly in critical quantitative contexts on religion even without having the focus of gender has considerable merit.

**Research.** This inquiry also questions the truth value of monolithic RSS student development models such as those suggested Parks’ (1986, 2011) and Astin, Astin, and
Linholm’s (2010) spiritual development theories. Are these resonant only with cisgender individuals and those who identify with more dominant RSS identities? The findings in this study suggest that this may be the case and question the generalizability of such theories. This question is given more weight alongside Sumerau, Cragun, and Mather’s (2016) research that contemporary religions in the U.S. erase, mark, and punish trans people to perpetuate cisnormativity. Perhaps the ways we conceptualize religion currently contribute to trans erasure in dialogues and research on RSS identity development in higher education. More research needs to be done disaggregating by RSS groups and gender along different RSS student development models.

If one takes critical religious theory as a guiding framework, the future implications in research surrounding RSS identity and experiences would be great. I encourage research engaging critical religious theory that will identify systems of power and privilege and explore how RSS identity functions in society. New surveys, interview questions, and mindsets would have to be delineated to outline this new approach to RSS higher education research. Studying religion in this way, future researchers can investigate what components of a provocative RSS diversity experience can contribute to attitudinal changes, how students can better understand systemic oppression through religion, and how these promising practices may vary across gender.

**Practice.** This take-away is incredibly resonant to implications for practice. If RSS identities are connected to privilege and power, then this suggests that appreciation of other RSS identities is not enough for fostering inclusion and that, as the study shows, trans/NB people and people with a minoritized RSS identity need and require different things than their peers with dominant gender and RSS identities. Through connecting RSS identities with power and
privilege, facilitators and practitioners will be more able to connect RSS groups with the other interlocking systems of power and privilege tied to other identities such as gender.

People who identify within the Protestant Christian faith still hold considerable power and privilege in U.S. society (Beaman, 2003). These systems of power and privilege significantly impact—often negatively—intergroup interactions (Brookfield, 2005). Due to this, my findings on social location mirror the findings in Sepulvado and colleagues’ (2015) work where religious minorities tend to form and maintain relationships with one another and avoid quality intergroup contact with other religious groups. Facilitating interfaith dialogues focused only on respecting and understanding differences erases the experiences of people with minoritized identities and does not give space for the real experiences of oppression based on religion (e.g., the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting as a recent example). For those marginalized because of their RSS minoritized identity, framing potential provocative RSS conversations around systems of power and privilege can help minimize instance of discrimination and make them feel safer on campus and in RSS engagement experiences. The combination of these two components of campus climate, too, therefore, are more likely to also lead gender binary students to hold higher appreciative attitudes towards trans people.

Especially important to note for practitioners is the finding that conflict is not necessarily bad. This is congruent with several student development theories that place conflict as a central part of development (see for example P. M. King & Baxter Magolda, 2005). Although discrimination and coercion can lead to decreases in appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people, the aversion to engage in conflict around religion and trans identity may actually be hurting the larger campus climate for trans/NB people. The results of this study suggest that intentional engagement in this intersection and thoughtful opportunities to have students reflect
on the conflict in a space where they feel safe could transform people’s attitudes towards trans/NB people.

The result that provocative RSS diversity experiences benefit gender binary students, but do not necessarily positively influence trans/NB students’ sense of welcome and, therefore, resilience is a distinction worthy of note for practitioners. This discrepancy suggests that trans/NB people perhaps should not always be mixed in with gender binary students to talk about systems of power and privilege surrounding religion because anti-trans rhetoric continues to be frequently religiously based. At the time of this study’s completion, for example, businesses can refuse service to trans individuals based on religious grounds. This level of legalized oppression complicates trans/NB students’ relationship to RSS engagement; trans/NB students are often forced to advocate not only for others to understand their RSS identity with everyone else, but possibly also their legitimacy and humanity as a trans/NB person. These possible intersecting systems of oppression can manifest in uniquely challenging ways for trans/NB students as can be gleaned from this study. This may be because research has found that without intentional support, trans/NB people report feeling overwhelmed by being forced to advocate for themselves all of the time (Means, 2017; Nicolazzo, 2017b). If this is the case, not only is fostering trans advocacy behavior that much more important, but it also means that we as practitioners cannot continue to force trans/NB people in harmful situations to act as the only teachers of trans inclusion—specifically as it relates to RSS identities—to gender binary students. Nicolazzo’s (2017b) work suggests that trans/NB people can benefit from physical and virtual trans/NB centered spaces where they are able to use their own power and knowledge to heal and resist. Developing and collecting these trans/NB affirming counterspaces and counternarratives as resources can support trans/NB students at the intersection of RSS identity and engagement even
beyond the institutional walls. Research suggests that personal RSS connections, too, can actually help students gain a sense of resilience and develop critical consciousness against the oppression they are being forced to experience. In Means’ (2017) work on spiritual black gay and bisexual men, the men:

began to exercise agency and resist oppression by (a) internally or externally interrogating spiritual messages embedded in homophobia; (b) embracing their spiritual and sexual-orientation identities by rejecting dualistic messages about them (e.g., How can you be gay and a Christian?); (c) developing a personal relationship with a higher power and sometimes leaving spiritual spaces; and (d) developing spiritual counterspaces. (p. 239)

Although this research is specific to gay and bisexual men, I think that the strategies towards resilience can give practitioners good direction to help trans/NB students respond to the RSS-related discrimination and coercion that they may face that may lead them to feeling unwelcome on campus. This could include helping students interrogate and question transphobic messages people tie to RSS beliefs to consider if transphobia is in fact tied to the RSS identity itself or the individual person’s interpretation. Helping trans/NB students reject dualistic messages and find counternarratives of personal RSS fulfillment while being trans/NB is particularly promising. In Nicolazzo’s study of trans/NB college students, one individual was able to foster a sense of resiliency by connecting with an online trans-affirming faith community. Findings from Nicolazzo and Means remind practitioners that for trans/NB students, resources can—and often do—come to them virtually. Although it is unlikely one will have experts on their campus across all RSS identities who are also trans/NB, these people and communities do exist online and providing these counterstories as resources can be “transformational in their own
lives” (Means, 2017, p. 239). Leveraging online resources and giving space for trans/NB people to heal, interrogate, and develop their RSS parts of themselves can help trans/NB students both build resilience and critical consciousness in the face of RSS discrimination and coercion. Online resources such as TransFaith, The Center for LGBTQ and Gender Studies in Religion, and the Human Right Campaign’s guides on faith are all good online starter resources for students to feel less alone and to perhaps connect them with a greater kinship community of support.

**Conclusion**

**Positional reflexivity.** As I conclude my inquiry, I also reflect on the way that this inquiry shaped me as a researcher and as a person. As a scholar, the development of Trans QuantCrit opened me up as a researcher from removing the “should’s” and the “must’s” from my inquiry. I was allowed to critique what I thought I “had to do” and realized that those things we feel we do not have a choice about are much more fluid than originally conceived. We are, in those moments as researchers, acting in what Sartre (1993) would call bad faith. At the beginning of this journey, I both did not see my power as a researcher nor gave myself the freedom to make choices. I, in a lot of ways, followed the trend of zombification of higher education researchers—attempting to go through the motions to get ahead (Davis, 2018; Galvez, 2018). My process of inquiry has been a process of learning and unlearning—developing a deep understanding of quantitative inquiry to the point where I could thoughtfully critique it. As I went further and further into statistical research, I began to see how fluid and emerging statistics still really is. This process for me was a process of imagining and learning how to reimagine possibilities; it was a way to reclaim the power and give voice to my lived experiences.
At once empowering, the process was also humbling. I am awed by the vastness of possibilities and narratives in the intersection of trans/NB identities (which are themselves vast) and RSS identities and experiences. Going in for answers, I came out with more questions. I did not find integration in terms of a point of terminal understanding, but instead found ways of integrating. While my narrative is singular and only my own, I also do hope others are able to find their own truth, power, and humility in the process of reading this work and in their own processes of research. I see this conclusion of research as more a renewed beginning than a conclusive end. I hope that it, too, gives power to future trans/NB researchers to critique the way society perpetuates genderism by separating our trans-ness and making the emotional and experiential self dichotomously opposed to us as a researcher.

Concluding summary. While often seen as dichotomous in research and practice, these findings suggest there are tangible relationships between trans/NB identity and RSS identity and experiences on college campuses that can have significant influences on students’ experiences of their college or university. Opposing viewpoints like religious, secular, and spiritual doctrines that counter one’s trans/NB identity can have significant psychological and behavioral implications for the people who are navigating these two differing communities (Mashek et al., 2006). Due to the unique challenges trans/NB students face in terms of RSS association and affiliation, there are unique consequences experienced by trans/NB students in this intersection. Due to these health implications, fostering kinship networks and allyship on campus is even more important for higher education faculty, staff, and administrators. Practitioners must be aware of how RSS campus climate may sometimes inadvertently affect other campus climates for other marginalized populations such as trans/NB students. While the call for campuses to address students’ spiritual journeys (Astin et al., 2010; Kocet & Stewert, 2011; Miller & Ryan,
2001) and gender inclusivity (Beemyn, 2003, 2005; Beemyn, Curtis, et al., 2005; Beemyn, Domingue, et al., 2005) have both been made separately, the integration of the two has powerful implications in both discussions by expanding the way one understands and operationalizes diversity and inclusion on campus.

RSS engagement can be marked by increases or decreases in one’s psychological appreciation of trans people depending on the nature of the engagement. Without proper and intentional engagement and discussion of RSS diversity, campus communities can fracture and marginalize folks of different RSS identities (Nash, 2001). This study reinforces the call for higher education to better incorporate and engage RSS diversity because it will not only aid in improving the campus climate for students who are marginalized because of their RSS, but trans/NB students as well. Whereas ill-informed RSS engagement can eventually lead to lower appreciative attitudes towards trans/NB people and a poorer campus climate, the careful consideration of all the components of positive intergroup contact theory can critically promote inclusion for trans/NB people and people of all RSS identities.
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APPENDICES
Appendix A: The 122 Participating Institutions in IDEALS

1. Augustana College
2. Barnard College
3. Bates College
4. Bellarmine University
5. Berea College
6. Bethany College, KS
7. Bethel University, MN
8. Bridgewater College
9. Butler University
10. California Lutheran University
11. Carnegie Mellon University
12. Carthage College
13. Central Christian College of Kansas
14. Central College
15. Central Michigan University
16. Chapman University
17. Coker College
18. Colorado Mesa University
19. Colorado State University - Fort Collins
20. Concordia College, Moorhead
21. Converse College
22. Dartmouth College
23. Davidson College
24. DePauw University
25. Dominican University
26. Drew University
27. East Carolina University
28. Eastern University
29. ElizabethTown College
30. Elmhurst College
31. Elon University
32. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
33. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University: Prescott Campus
34. Ferrum College
35. Florida State University
36. Gallaudet University
37. Georgia Institute of Technology
38. God's Bible School and College
39. Goshen College
40. Goucher College
41. Green Mountain College
42. Greenville College
43. Gustavus Adolphus College
44. Hamilton College
45. Hardin-Simmons University
46. Hendrix College
47. Illinois College
48. Illinois Institute of Technology
49. Juniata College
50. Keuka College
51. Lane College
52. La Salle University
53. Le Moyne College
54. Lenoir-Rhyne University
55. Loras College
56. Loyola University Chicago
57. Madonna University
58. Malone University
59. Marian University, Indiana
60. Mary Baldwin College
61. McNeese State University
62. Middlebury College
63. Millersville University of Pennsylvania
64. Missouri Baptist University
65. Morgan State University
66. Mount Holyoke College
67. New York Institute of Technology
68. North Carolina State University
69. Northern Illinois University
70. North Park University
71. Notre Dame de Namur University
72. Notre Dame of Maryland University
73. Nyack College
74. Oakland University
75. Oklahoma City University
76. Pennsylvania State University
77. Pfeiffer University
78. Pomona College
79. Presbyterian College
80. Regis University
81. Reinhardt University
82. Rice University
83. Rochester Institute of Technology
84. Saginaw Valley State University
85. Saint Louis University
86. Saint Norbert College
87. San Francisco State University
88. Simpson College
89. Southern Utah University
90. Texas State University
91. Trinity Lutheran College
92. Union College
93. Union University
94. University of California, Los Angeles
95. University of Evansville
96. University of Houston - Houston
97. University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign
98. University of Indianapolis
99. University of La Verne
100. University of Maryland, Baltimore County
101. University of Maryland, College Park
102. University of North Carolina School of the Arts
103. University of North Dakota
104. University of Northern Iowa
105. University of North Florida
106. University of Oregon
107. University of South Alabama
108. University of South Carolina
109. University of the Virgin Islands
110. Utah State University
111.Vanderbilt University
112. Vassar College
113. Wagner College
114. Warren Wilson College
115. Washington & Jefferson College
116. Western Michigan University
117. Westminster College, Missouri
118. Wheaton College (IL)
119. Wheelock College
120. William Jewell College
121. Wofford College
122. Xavier University of Louisiana
Appendix B: IDEALS Institution Survey Time 1-Summer/Fall 2015

Note: This Survey is taken from the Interfaith Youth Core where crossed out questions are those fields not given to me as the researcher.

Q1 Institutional Information Form Part I
   Full name of institution: (1)
   Institution city: (2)
   Institution state (two letter abbreviation): (3)
   Name of campus representative: (4)
   Title of campus representative: (5)
   Campus representative e-mail address: (6)
   Campus representative phone number (xxx-xxx-xxxx): (7)
   Campus e-mail address to include in correspondence with survey participants (this will be the "from" e-mail address used in all correspondence with survey participants): (8)
   Name for signature line to include in correspondence with survey participants: (9)
   Title for signature line to include in correspondence with survey participants: (10)
   President or Chancellor's name (IFYC has special opportunities available only for institutional presidents/chancellors): (11)

Q2 Institutional Type and Affiliation:
   ○ Public institution (1)
   ○ Private institution - No religious affiliation (2)
   ○ Private institution - Roman Catholic; affiliation: (3) ______________________
   ○ Private institution - Protestant; denomination: (4) ______________________
   ○ Private institution - Other religious affiliation; affiliation: (5) ______________________

Q3 Other Institutional Characteristics:
   Average composite undergraduate SAT: (1)
   Average composite undergraduate ACT (if applicable): (2)
   Size of undergraduate population: (3)
   Size of the first-year, first-time student cohort (total number of new, entering students): (4)
   Percent of students living in campus housing: (5)
Q4 What religious, spiritual, or interfaith programs, spaces, or opportunities are provided on your campus? Please check all that apply:

Q5 Student Involvement Opportunities:
☐ Student/campus religious and secular worldview organizations (e.g., student ministries, faith organizations, or atheist/agnostic/humanist groups); number of organizations: (1)
☐ Interfaith action student group (2)
☐ Interfaith community service opportunities (3)
☐ Interfaith internships (4)
☐ Student interfaith council (5)
☐ Other interfaith student leadership opportunities (6)
☐ Religious diversity/interfaith cooperation included in required student events (e.g., orientation or first-year common reading) (7)
☐ Other; please specify: (8) __________________________

Q6 Spiritual Support and Space for Expression:
☐ Multifaith or spiritual life center (4)
☐ Ritual washing stations (5)
☐ Prayer space (6)
☐ Designated meditation space (7)
☐ Interfaith worship spaces on campus (8)
☐ Separate worship spaces for different faiths on campus (9)
☐ Full-time religious life staff employed by the institution (10)
☐ Part-time religious life staff employed by the institution (11)
☐ Religious life staff employed by their respective religious organizations; number of religions represented: (12) __________________________
☐ Other; please specify: (13) __________________________

Q7 Curricular Opportunities:
☐ Religious studies department (4)
☐ Religious studies major (5)
☐ Religious studies minor (6)
☐ Required religion course for undergraduates (7)
☐ Required religious diversity course for undergraduates (8)
☐ Interfaith concentration or minor for undergraduates (9)
☐ Interfaith cooperation integrated into required/general education courses (10)
☐ Specific interfaith courses (11)
☐ Other; please specify: (12) __________________________
Q8 Campus Diversity and Policies:
- Institutional policies related to religious diversity, such as hiring, leave of absence, dining, housing accommodations, bias response (4)
- Institutional policies related to accommodations for religious holidays (5)
- Interfaith cooperation and/or religious diversity indicated in the institutional mission statement (6)
- Interfaith cooperation and/or religious diversity indicated in the institutional diversity statement (7)
- Interfaith cooperation and/or religious diversity indicated in the institution’s strategic plan (8)
- Cross-campus interfaith cooperation committee including faculty, staff, and administration (9)
- Interfaith or religion subgroup of institutional diversity committee (10)
- Required religious diversity training for faculty (11)
- Optional religious diversity training for faculty (12)
- Required religious diversity training for staff (13)
- Optional religious diversity training for staff (14)
- Required religious diversity training for student professional staff (15)
- Optional religious diversity training for student professional staff (16)
- Presidential/administrative statements or communications about the importance of engaging religious diversity (17)
- Program-specific evaluation of interfaith initiatives (18)
- Campus partnerships with local religious/nonreligious communities (19)
- Other; please specify: (20) __________________________

Q9 Please list the date classes begin for the fall 2015 semester at your institution: (MM/DD/YYYY)

Q10 Please indicate the estimated sample size for your institution.

Q11 Please upload your signed Research Approval and Data Use Agreement Form.

Q12 Please upload your signed commitment letter.

Q13 Please upload an institutional logo for use in the online survey template. Images must be jpg, png, or gif and 16MB or smaller.
Appendix C: IDEALS Student Paper Survey Time 1-Summer/Fall 2015

We appreciate your interest in the Interfaith Diversity Experiences & Attitudes Longitudinal Study (IDEALS)! As you may know, your campus is conducting this study in partnership with researchers at North Carolina State University, New York University, and Interfaith Youth Core. The study explores how college students relate to people of different religious and nonreligious perspectives—and the experiences students have with religious diversity on this campus. This study will help guide efforts to ensure you have access to innovative educational programs and experience a positive campus climate while you are a student at this campus.

You will have an opportunity to share your point of view and experiences twice over the next year and once again in your fourth year. This is the first of three brief surveys. The second survey will be sent to you in 9-12 months and the third survey will be sent at the end of your fourth year. This survey asks about your previous experiences with religious diversity, as well as your current opinions, and will take about 15 minutes to complete. We encourage you to take the survey in a private, quiet space where you feel comfortable.

We hope to hear from students who represent a wide spectrum of worldviews, including religious and nonreligious perspectives. Because this survey is designed for students of diverse perspectives, we use the term “worldview” throughout the survey in reference to your guiding life philosophy, which may be based on a particular religious tradition, a nonreligious perspective, your ideological views, aspects of your cultural background and personal identity, or some combination of these. We encourage you to respond to the questions in a way that best reflects your opinions and experiences.

In appreciation of your efforts we have enclosed $5 cash to thank you in advance for completing the survey.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. You are also free to skip any question that you are not comfortable answering.

If you consent to participate, the data collected from this survey will be linked to other information provided by you or your institution, including your student identification number, name, birthdate, email address, gender identity, and race/ethnicity. This information will be used for the sole purpose of linking data from this survey to follow-up survey data that you provide and possibly other data from your institution e.g., financial aid information, standardized test data, and indicators of academic success, such as persistence at your campus and GPAs. Taken together, this information will help your institution and the research team to examine how college experiences with religious diversity affect student attitudes and success. We will always analyze student data in this aggregate, meaning that your individual record and survey responses will never be analyzed on their own. All of the information you share will be kept secure and confidential by your institution and the research team, and your name will never be used in reports summarizing the data collected.

Should you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research, please contact Deb Parson, Regulatory Compliance Administrator, Campus Box 3754, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC 27695, (919) 515-4514.

Your participation is vital to the success of this project, and we appreciate your consideration of this opportunity to make a difference on your campus!

☐ I consent to participate in this research study
☐ I do not consent to participate in this research study

Is this your first fall semester as a student at this institution?
☐ Yes, Please proceed to page 2.
☐ No, Thank you for your interest in this survey. Only students in their first semester on campus are eligible to participate.
Thank you for your interest in taking this survey! The first set of questions gathers information about your background and worldview. We hope to follow up with you two other times over the next four years to learn more about your opinions and experiences as a college student. To help us get in touch with you again, please share the following. We ask for your name and student ID number only for the purposes of linking the information you provide in this survey with other data you or your institution may provide later on. Please provide the address and email address that you plan to use over the next four years.

**PLEASE PRINT IN ALL CAPS (one letter or number per box).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT ID NUMBER:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY:</td>
<td>STATE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIP:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMAIL ADDRESS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Regarding your current religious or nonreligious perspective, with which of the following descriptors do you most closely identify? (Mark one)
   - Agnosticism
   - Atheism
   - Bahai Faith
   - Buddhism
   - Christianity, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormonism)
   - Christianity, Protestant
   - Christianity, Orthodox
   - Christianity, Roman Catholic
   - Confucianism
   - Daoism
   - Hinduism
   - Islam
   - Jainism
   - Judaism
   - Native American Tradition(s)
   - Nonreligious
   - None
   - Paganism
   - Secular Humanism
   - Sikhism
   - Spiritual
   - Unitarian Universalism
   - Zen Buddhism
   - Another worldview; please specify:

2. Do you consider yourself an evangelical or born-again Christian? (Mark one)
   - No
   - Yes

3. How do you currently perceive yourself religiously and spiritually? (Mark one)
   - Both religious and spiritual
   - Religious, but not spiritual
   - Spiritual, but not religious
   - Neither spiritual nor religious

4. How would you describe your political leaning? (Mark one)
   - Very conservative
   - Conservative
   - Moderate
   - Liberal
   - Very liberal

5. What is the highest level of formal education obtained by your parent(s)/guardian(s)? (Mark one in each column)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent/Guardian 2</th>
<th>Parent/Guardian 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary school</td>
<td>Elementary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some high school</td>
<td>Some high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>High school diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>Some college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>College degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some graduate school</td>
<td>Some graduate school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degree</td>
<td>Graduate degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. What is your best estimate of your family’s total income last year, including all sources of income before taxes? If, for tax purposes, you are classified as independent of your parents, please indicate your household’s total income before taxes. (Mark one)
   - Less than $25,000
   - $25,000-$49,999
   - $50,000-$74,999
   - $75,000-$99,999
   - $100,000-$124,999
   - $125,000-$149,999
   - $150,000-$174,999
   - $175,000-$199,999
   - $200,000 or more
   - Prefer not to answer

7. Please indicate your gender identity: (Mark one)
   - Female
   - Male
   - Another gender identity; please specify:

   __________________________________________________________________________

   - Prefer not to answer
8. Please indicate your sexual orientation: (Mark one)
   - Bisexual
   - Gay
   - Heterosexual
   - Lesbian
   - Quer
   - Another sexual orientation; please specify:

   - Prefer not to answer

9. What is your race/ethnicity? (Mark all that apply)
   - African American/Black
   - Asian American/Asian
   - Mexican American/Chicano
   - Puerto Rican
   - Other Latino/a
   - Native American/Alaska Native
   - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
   - White/Caucasian
   - Another race/ethnicity; please specify:

10. Are you an international student?
    - Yes  No

11. Are you attending your institution full-time?
    - Yes  No

12. Did you transfer to your current institution from another college or university?
    - Yes  No

13. What is your birthdate?
    

14. Many aspects of identity and life experience can affect the way an individual sees the world. In your life, consider the elements that have the most important influence on your worldview.

   Please RANK the top three elements that are most influential (1=Most Influential, 2=Second Most Influential, 3=Third Most Influential). Write 1, 2, or 3 in the boxes below. Use each number only once; some boxes will remain blank.

   - Religious beliefs/faith
   - Nonreligious beliefs/perspectives
   - Philosophical tradition (for example, existentialism, humanism, rationalism, feminism, Marxism, etc.)
   - Political views
   - Family background and traditions
   - Cultural background and traditions
   - Social class and/or socioeconomic background
   - Racial/ethnic identity
   - Gender identity
   - Sexual orientation
   - Other; please specify:

15. These next items have to do with how you developed your worldview. Please indicate the accuracy of each of the following statements: (Mark one in each row)

   Not At All Accurate
   Slightly Accurate
   Moderately Accurate
   Very Accurate
   Extremely Accurate

   1. I have thoughtfully considered other religious and nonreligious perspectives before committing to my current worldview.
   2. I have had to reconcile conflicting religious and nonreligious perspectives before committing to my current worldview.
   3. I talked and listened to people with points of view different than my own before committing to my worldview.
   4. I integrated multiple points of view into my existing worldview before committing to it.
16. The next set of questions asks about your participation in various activities before college. Please indicate whether you participated in any of the following activities within the last 12 months: (Mark all that apply)

- Attended religious services within your own religious tradition
- Attended religious services for a religious tradition that is not your own
- Participated in community service
- Traveled to a country outside of the U.S.
- Attended an interfaith prayer vigil/memorial
- Participated in an interfaith dialogue
- Worked together with people of other religious or nonreligious perspectives on a service project
- Had conversations with people of diverse religious or nonreligious perspectives about the values you have in common
- Had conversations with people of diverse religious or nonreligious perspectives about your different values
- Shared a meal with someone of a different religious or nonreligious perspective
- Studied with someone of a different religious or nonreligious perspective
- Socialized with someone of a different religious or nonreligious perspective
- Discussed religious diversity in at least one of your high school courses
- Discussed religious or spiritual topics with teachers
- Discussed your personal worldview in class
- Grew up in a multi-faith family
- Discussed religious diversity in a family or with friends

17. We are interested in learning more about what you expect of your college or university. Please indicate how important it is to you that your college provides the following: (Mark one in each row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Marginally Important</th>
<th>Moderately Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A welcoming environment for people of diverse religious and nonreligious perspectives</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A welcoming environment for people of diverse racial identities</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A welcoming environment for people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for you to get to know students of other religious and nonreligious perspectives</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to participate in community service with students of diverse religious and nonreligious perspectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses and other educational programs to help you learn about different religious traditions around the world</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. In general, people in this group make positive contributions to society. (Mark one in each row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atheists</td>
<td>Buddhists</td>
<td>Evangelical Christians</td>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>Jews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements in relation to each identity group:

19. In general, individuals in this group are ethical people. (Mark one in each row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Buddhists</td>
<td>Evangelical Christians</td>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>Jews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements in relation to each identity group:

### 20. I have things in common with people in this group. (Mark one in each row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Group</th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atheists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latter Day Saints/Mormons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
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<tr>
<td>Politically liberal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Politically conservative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transgender people</td>
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<tr>
<td>People of a race different than my own.</td>
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<tr>
<td>People from a country different than my own.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements in relation to each identity group:

### 21. In general, I have a positive attitude toward people in this group. (Mark one in each row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Group</th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atheists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buddhists</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Politically liberal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Politically conservative</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transgender people</td>
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<tr>
<td>People of a race different than my own.</td>
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<tr>
<td>People from a country different than my own.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
26. The notion of Nirvana in the Buddhist tradition refers to:
(Mark one)
- The practice of meditation
- Good deeds resulting in positive consequences
- A state of enlightenment and freedom from suffering
- The rebirth of a living being into a new body following death
- Adherence to the Four Noble Truths
- I don't know.

27. The Latter Day Saint movement, or Mormonism, was founded by: (Mark one)
- Elhanan Winchester
- Joseph Smith
- Martin Luther
- John Calvin
- Cotton Mather
- I don't know.

28. Name the religious identity of Mahatma Gandhi: (Mark one)
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Eastern Orthodox
- Muslim
- I don't know.

29. The social activist who is Catholic is: (Mark one)
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- Malala Yousafzai
- Dorothy Day
- Chris Steinman
- I don't know.

30. How many of your closest friends have a different religious/nonreligious perspective than you? (Mark one)
- None
- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five or more

31. I have at least one close friend who is: (Mark all that apply)
- Atheist
- Agnostic
- Buddhist
- Evangelical Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Latter Day Saint/Mormon
- Muslim
- Multifaith
- Spiritual but not religious
- Very different from me politically
- Of a different sexual orientation than I am
- Of a different racial background than I am

Next we turn to some questions about your general attitudes and values.

32. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements: (Mark one in each row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am actively working to foster justice in the world</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I frequently think about the global problems of our time and how I will contribute to resolving them</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am currently taking steps to improve the lives of people around the world</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am actively learning about people across the globe who have different religious and cultural ways of life than I do</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I respect people who have religious or nonreligious perspectives that differ from my own</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivating interreligious understanding will make the world a more peaceful place</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a sense of good will toward people of other religious and nonreligious perspectives</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are people of other faiths or beliefs whom I admire</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
33. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements: (Mark one in each row)

- It is possible to have strong relationships with those of religiously diverse backgrounds and still strongly believe in my own worldview.
- My faith or beliefs are strengthened by relationships with those of diverse religious and nonreligious backgrounds.
- World religions share many common values.
- There are essential differences in beliefs that distinguish world religions.
- There are essential differences in spiritual practices that distinguish world religions.
- Love is a value that is core to most of the world’s religions.
- It is important to serve with those of diverse religious backgrounds on issues of common concern.
- My worldview inspires me to serve with others on issues of common concern.
- We can overcome many of the world’s major problems if people of different religious and nonreligious perspectives work together.
- I am committed to leading efforts in collaboration with people of other religious and nonreligious perspectives to create positive changes in society.
- I am open to adjusting my beliefs as I learn from other people and have new life experiences.

You’re almost done! As the survey comes to a close, we have just a few questions about your academic background and future plans.

34. Please provide your scores on the SAT I and/or ACT:

- SAT Critical Reading
- SAT Mathematics
- SAT Writing
- ACT Composite

35. What was your high school GPA? (Mark one)
- 4.0 or above
- 3.50-3.99
- 3.00-3.49
- 2.50-2.99
- 2.00-2.49
- Less than 2.00

36. What is your planned academic major? (Mark one)
- Arts (e.g., Fine/Applied Arts, Drama/Theater, Music, Journalism, Speech, Communications, Media Studies)
- Humanities (e.g., Classics, English Language/Literature, Foreign Language, History, Philosophy)
- Social Science (e.g., Anthropology, Economics, Ethnic Studies, Geography, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work, Women’s/Gender Studies, Cultural Studies)
- Religion or Theology
- Biological Science (e.g., Biology, Botany, Biochemistry, Environmental Science, Marine Biology, Microbiology, Zoology)
- Computer Science
- Physical Science (e.g., Astronomy, Chemistry, Earth Science, Physics)
- Mathematics/Statistics
- Engineering (e.g., Aeronautical, Civil, Chemical, Electrical, Industrial, Mechanical)
- Health Professional (e.g., Health Technology, Nursing, Medicine, Pharmacy, Therapy)
- Business (e.g., Accounting, Finance, Business Administration, Marketing, Management)
- Education (e.g., Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Special Education, Physical Education, Music/Art Education)
- Undecided

Double major; please specify: 

Another major; please specify: 

37. What is the highest degree you plan to earn? (Mark one)
- No degree
- Bachelor’s degree
- Master’s degree
- Doctoral degree
Thank you for participating! We appreciate that you took the time to answer these important questions.
Appendix D: Student Paper Survey Time 2-Spring/Fall 2016

We appreciate your interest in the Interfaith Diversity Experiences & Attitudes Longitudinal Survey (IDEALS). As you may recall, your campus is conducting this study in partnership with researchers at North Carolina State University, New York University, and Interfaith Youth Core. The study explores how college students relate to people of different religious and nonreligious perspectives—and the experiences students have with religious diversity on this campus. This study will help guide efforts to ensure you have access to innovative educational programs and experience a positive campus climate while you are a student at your campus.

This is the second of three brief surveys. The first survey was sent to you at the beginning of your first year, and the third will be sent at the end of your fourth year. This survey asks about your experiences with religious diversity on campus as well as your current opinions and will take about 20 minutes to complete. We encourage you to take the survey in a private, quiet space where you feel comfortable.

We hope to hear from students who represent a wide spectrum of worldviews, including religious and nonreligious perspectives. Because this survey is designed for students of diverse perspectives, we use the term “worldview” throughout the survey in reference to your guiding life philosophy, which may be based on a particular religious tradition, a nonreligious perspective, your ideological views, aspects of your cultural background and personal identity, or some combination of these. We encourage you to respond to the questions in a way that best reflects your opinions and experiences.

In appreciation of your efforts we have enclosed $2 cash to thank you in advance for completing the survey.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. You are also free to skip any question that you are not comfortable answering.

If you consent to participate, the data collected from this survey will be linked to other information provided by you or your institution, including your student identification number, name, birthdate, email address, gender identity, and race/ethnicity. This information will be used for the sole purpose of linking data from this survey to previous and follow-up survey data that you provide and possibly other data from your institution (e.g., financial aid information, standardized test data, and indicators of academic success, such as persistence at your campus and GPA). Taken together, this information will help your institution and the research team to examine how college experiences with religious diversity affect student attitudes and success. We will always analyze student data in the aggregate, meaning that your individual record and survey responses will never be analyzed on their own. All of the information you share will be kept secure and confidential by your institution and the research team, and your name will never be used in reports summarizing the data collected.

Should you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research, please contact: Deb Paxton, Regulatory Compliance Administrator, Box 7514, North Carolina State University, (919) 515-4514.

Your participation is vital to the success of this project, and we appreciate your consideration of this opportunity to make a difference on your campus!

☐ I Consent To Participate in This Research Study
☐ I Do Not Consent To Participate in This Research Study

MARKING DIRECTIONS
• Use a blue or black pen.
• Place an “X” in the appropriate box or boxes.
  RIGHT  X  WRONG  ✓  O
• To change an answer, completely black out the wrong answer and put an “X” in the correct box as shown below.
  CORRECT  X  INCORRECT  ■
Thank you for your interest in taking this survey! The first set of questions gathers information about your background and worldview.

We hope to follow up with you during your fourth year of college to learn more about your opinions and experiences as a college student. To help us get in touch with you again, please share the following. We ask for your name and student ID number only for the purposes of linking the information you provide in this survey with other data you or your institution may provide later on. Please provide the address and email address that you plan to use over the next four years. PLEASE PRINT IN ALL CAPS (one letter or number per box).

NAME: __________________________________________________________________________

STUDENT ID NUMBER: __________________________________________________________________________

STREET ADDRESS: __________________________________________________________________________

CITY: __________________________________________________________________________

STATE: __________ ZIP: __________

EMAIL ADDRESS: __________________________________________________________________________

Are you 18 years old or older? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please indicate the institution you currently attend. __________________________________________________________________________

1. Regarding your current religious or nonreligious perspective, with which of the following descriptors do you most closely identify? (Mark one)
   ☐ Agnosticism
   ☐ Atheism
   ☐ Bahai Faith
   ☐ Buddhism
   ☐ Christianity, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormonism)
   ☐ Christianity, Protestant
   ☐ Christianity, Orthodox
   ☐ Christianity, Roman Catholic
   ☐ Confucianism
   ☐ Daoism
   ☐ Hinduism
   ☐ Islam
   ☐ Jainism
   ☐ Judaism
   ☐ Native American Tradition(s)
   ☐ Nonreligious
   ☐ None
   ☐ Paganism
   ☐ Secular Humanism
   ☐ Sikhism
   ☐ Spiritual
   ☐ Unitarian Universalism
   ☐ Zoroastrianism
   ☐ Another worldview; please specify: __________________________________________________________________________
   ☐ I prefer not to respond

2. Do you consider yourself an evangelical or born-again Christian? 
   ☐ No
   ☐ Yes

3. Since entering college, have you converted to another religion/worldview? 
   ☐ No
   ☐ Yes

4. How do you currently perceive yourself religiously and spiritually? (Mark one)
   ☐ Both religious and spiritual
   ☐ Religious, but not spiritual
   ☐ Spiritual, but not religious
   ☐ Neither spiritual nor religious

5. What is your current GPA? 
   ☐ 4.0 or above
   ☐ 3.50-3.99
   ☐ 3.00-3.49
   ☐ 2.50-2.99
   ☐ 2.00-2.49
   ☐ Less than 2.00

6. Do you live in campus housing? 
   ☐ No
   ☐ Yes
7. Many aspects of identity and life experience can affect the way an individual sees the world. In your life, consider the elements that have the most important influence on your worldview.

Please RANK the top three elements that are most influential (1=Most Influential, 2=Second Most Influential, 3=Third Most Influential). Write 1, 2, or 3 in the boxes below. Use each number only once; some boxes will remain blank.

- Religious beliefs/faith
- Nonreligious beliefs/perspectives
- Philosophical tradition (e.g., existentialism, humanism, rationalism, feminism, Marxism)
- Political views
- Family background and traditions
- Cultural background and traditions
- Social class and/or socioeconomic background
- Racial/ethnic identity
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Other; please specify:

8. These next items have to do with how you developed your worldview. Please indicate the accuracy of each of the following statements: (Mark one in each row)

- I have thoughtfully considered other religious and nonreligious perspectives before committing to my current worldview.
- I have had to reconcile competing religious and nonreligious perspectives before committing to my current worldview.
- I talked and listened to people with points of view different than my own before committing to my worldview.
- I integrated multiple points of view into my existing worldview before committing to it.

9. The following questions ask about religious diversity on your campus, including how well people of different religious and nonreligious perspectives get along at your institution and experiences you’ve had personally in relation to your worldview.

- This campus is very religiously diverse.
- This campus is a welcoming place for people of different religious and nonreligious perspectives.
- The religious organizations on this campus are diverse in the faith traditions they represent.
- I am satisfied with the degree of religious and nonreligious diversity on this campus.
- There is a great deal of conflict among people of different religious and nonreligious perspectives on this campus.
- People of different religious and nonreligious perspectives quarrel with one another on this campus.
- Religious and nonreligious differences create a sense of division on this campus.
- People on this campus interact most often with others of their same worldview.
- This campus is a safe place for me to express my worldview.
- Faculty and staff on my campus accommodate my needs with regard to celebrating religious holidays and other important religious observances.
- There is a place on this campus where I can express my personal worldview.
- My classes are safe places for me to express my worldview.

10. On this campus, how often have you heard/read insensitive comments about your worldview from: (Mark one in each row)

- Friends or peers
- Faculty
- Campus staff or administrators
11. Please consider other aspects of diversity at your institution and indicate the extent to which you agree with the following:

This campus is a welcoming place for...

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither</th>
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<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Transgender people</td>
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<tr>
<td>People of different socioeconomic backgrounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>People of different races</td>
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<tr>
<td>People from different countries</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

12. While you have been enrolled at your college or university, how often have you:

(Mark one in each row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All the Time</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Been mistreated on campus because of your worldview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt that people on campus used their religious worldview to justify treating you in a discriminatory manner on the basis of your gender identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt that people on campus used their religious worldview to justify treating you in a discriminatory manner on the basis of your sexual orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt that people on campus used their religious worldview to justify treating you in a discriminatory manner on the basis of your race or ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt pressured by others on campus to change your worldview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt pressured to listen to others’ perspectives when you didn’t want to hear about them</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt pressured to keep your worldview to yourself</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt pressured to separate your academic experience from your personal worldview</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

13. While you have been enrolled at your college or university, how often have you:

(Mark one in each row)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All the Time</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had class discussions that challenged you to rethink your assumptions about another worldview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felt challenged to rethink your assumptions about another worldview after someone explained their worldview to you</td>
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<tr>
<td>Had a discussion with someone of another worldview that had a positive influence on your perceptions of that worldview</td>
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<td>Heard critical comments from others about your worldview that made you question your worldview</td>
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<td>Had a discussion with someone that made you feel like you did not know enough about your own worldview</td>
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<td>Had a discussion with someone from your own worldview with whom you disagreed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

14. Regarding your interactions with people whose worldviews differ from yours, how often have you:

(Mark one in each row)

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All the Time</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt stenciled from sharing your own experiences with prejudice and discrimination</td>
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<td>Had guarded, cautious interactions</td>
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<td>Had tense, somewhat hostile interactions</td>
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<td>Had hurtful, unresolved interactions</td>
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15. The next set of items gauges your participation in various out-of-class activities. Please indicate whether you participated in any of the following activities during your first year of college. (Mark all that apply)

- Utilized a multi-faith space on campus
- Attended religious services within your own religious tradition
- Attended religious services for a religious tradition that is not your own
- Participated in required community service (e.g., as part of a class or program requirement)
- Participated in voluntary community service
- Participated in an interfaith activity (e.g., dialogue, reflection) in conjunction with a service activity
- Served in a campus leadership role (e.g., student government, admissions tour, resident assistant, orientation leader)
- Participated in multicultural campus activities
- Lived in an interfaith living-learning community or religious diversity-themed residence
- Participated in a student organization that is affiliated with your religion or worldview (e.g., InterVarsity, Hillel, Secular Student Alliance)
- Participated as a leader in a faith community off-campus
- Participated in a campus interfaith group/council
- Attended an interfaith prayer vigil/memorial on campus
- Participated in an interfaith dialogue on campus
- Attended a formal debate on campus between people with different worldviews
- Attended a lecture or panel discussing religious diversity or interfaith cooperation
- Participated in interfaith or religious diversity training on campus
- Participated in the leadership of your campus’ interfaith initiatives
- Participated in interfaith action, such as having an impact on critical issues like hunger or poverty
- Worked together with students of other religious or nonreligious perspectives on a service project
- Had conversations with people of diverse religious or nonreligious perspectives about the values you have in common
- Dined with someone of a different religious or nonreligious perspective
- Studied with someone of a different religious or nonreligious perspective
- Socialized with someone of a different religious or nonreligious perspective
- Learned about religious diversity on campus in orientation or other required events
- Attended an off-campus event designed to promote interfaith cooperation
- Experienced campus-wide communications about the importance of religious diversity (e.g., all-campus email, chalk on sidewalks, message from university president)

15. Continued.

- Met one-on-one with a chaplain or other religious/nonreligious advisor
- Attended an Interfaith Youth Core sponsored conference (e.g., Interfaith Leadership Institute)
- Participated in Better Together or an Interfaith Youth Core sponsored campaign on campus
- Participated in any on-campus event with an Interfaith Youth Core staff member
- Downloaded an Interfaith Youth Core online resource
- Participated in an Interfaith Youth Core online session (e.g., webinar, tweet chat)

16. The items below reflect your participation in various activities related to your coursework. Please indicate whether you participated in any of the following activities during your first year of college. (Mark all that apply)

- Enrolled in a religion course on campus specifically designed to enhance your knowledge of different religious traditions
- Enrolled in a course on campus specifically designed to discuss interfaith engagement
- Discussed shared values between religious and nonreligious traditions in one of your courses
- Discussed religious diversity in at least one of your elective courses
- Discussed religious diversity in at least one of your general education courses
- Brainstormed a solution to a societal issue by working with students from other religious or nonreligious perspectives
- Used a case study as a way to examine religious and nonreligious diversity in the world
- Participated in contemplative practices (e.g., meditation, prayer, moment of silence) in the classroom
- Discussed interfaith cooperation in at least one of your courses
- Visited a religious space off campus as part of a class
- Discussed religious or spiritual topics with faculty
- Discussed your personal worldview in class
- Reflected on your own worldview in relationship to another religious or nonreligious perspective as part of a class
- Discussed other students’ religious or nonreligious perspectives in class
- Pursued a minor or concentration in interfaith studies
- Reflected on why interfaith cooperation is relevant to your field of study
- Developed a deeper skill-set to interact with people of diverse religious and nonreligious perspectives
- Participated in an internship designed to enhance your interfaith skills
The following questions ask about your attitudes toward and knowledge of different social identity and worldview groups, as well as the relationships that you have with people of different worldviews.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements in relation to each identity group:

17. In general, people in this group make positive contributions to society. (Mark one in each row)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
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<td>People from a country different than my own</td>
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19. I have things in common with people in this group. (Mark one in each row)

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<tr>
<th>Group</th>
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18. In general, individuals in this group are ethical people. (Mark one in each row)

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<tr>
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20. In general, I have a positive attitude toward people in this group. (Mark one in each row)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
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<td>Atheists</td>
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</table>
21. The foundational sacred text in the Jewish tradition is:
   (Mark one)
   √ The Synagogue
   √ The Quran
   √ The Mynsan
   √ The Torah
   √ The Seder
   I don’t know

22. Which of the following statements correctly distinguishes atheists and agnostics? (Mark one)
   √ Athiests believe in only one God, while agnostics believe in multiple gods.
   √ Athiests are uncertain about whether God exists, while agnostics do not believe in God.
   √ Athiests do not believe in God, while agnostics are uncertain about whether God exists.
   √ Athiests do not believe in God, while agnostics are certain that God exists.
   √ Athiests and agnostics have basically the same beliefs about God’s existence.
   I don’t know

23. In the Muslim tradition, this spiritual practice takes place from dawn until dusk during the month of Ramadan: (Mark one)
   √ Meditation
   √ Fasting
   √ Pilgrimage
   √ Service to those in need
   √ None of the above
   I don’t know

24. In the Christian tradition, the “gospel” refers to:
   (Mark one)
   √ The Bible
   √ The “good news” shared by Jesus Christ
   √ A style of worship formulated by the early Christians
   √ The moral and ethical guidelines established by the early Christians
   √ None of the above
   I don’t know

25. The notion of Nirvana in the Buddhist tradition refers to: (Mark one)
   √ The practice of meditation
   √ Good deeds resulting in positive consequences
   √ A state of enlightenment and freedom from suffering
   √ The rebirth of a living being into a new body following death
   √ Adherence to the Four Noble Truths
   I don’t know

26. The Latter-day Saint movement, or Mormonism, was founded by: (Mark one)
   √ Elian Winchester
   √ Joseph Smith
   √ Martin Luther
   √ John Calvin
   √ Cotton Mather
   I don’t know

27. Name the religious identity of Mahatma Gandhi: (Mark one)
   √ Buddhist
   √ Christian
   √ Hindu
   √ Eastern Orthodox
   √ Muslim
   I don’t know

28. The social activist who is Catholic is: (Mark one)
   √ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
   √ Valerie Kaur
   √ Dorothy Day
   √ Malala Yousafzai
   √ Chris Stedman
   I don’t know
29. How many of your closest friends have a different religious/nonreligious perspective than you? (Mark one)

- None
- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five or more

30. I have at least one close friend who is: (Mark all that apply)

- Atheist
- Agnostic
- Buddhist
- Evangelical Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Latter-day Saint/Mormon
- Muslim
- Multifaith
- Spiritual but not religious
- Very different from me politically
- Of a different sexual orientation than I am
- Of a different racial background than I am

31. Please indicate whether you have done any of the following since starting college: (Mark all that apply)

- Had a significant disagreement with a friend about religion and remained friends
- Had a significant disagreement with a friend about politics and remained friends
- Stayed close to someone I care about even though our religious or nonreligious perspectives are incompatible
- Initiated a conversation with someone of a different religious or nonreligious perspective to learn about the person’s beliefs and values
- Spent my free time with someone of a different religious or nonreligious perspective

32. Next, we turn to some questions about your general attitudes and values. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements: (Mark one in each row)

- I am actively working to foster justice in the world.
- I frequently think about the global problems of our time and how I will contribute to resolving them.
- I am currently taking steps to improve the lives of people around the world.
- I am actively learning about people across the globe who have different religious and cultural ways of life than I do.
- I respect people who have religious or nonreligious perspectives that differ from my own.
- Cultivating interreligious understanding will make the world a more peaceful place.
- I feel a sense of goodwill toward people of other religious and nonreligious perspectives.
- There are people of other faiths or beliefs whom I admire.
- It is possible to have strong relationships with those of religiously diverse backgrounds and still strongly believe in my own worldview.
- My faith or beliefs are strengthened by relationships with those of diverse religious and nonreligious backgrounds.
- World religions share many common values.
- There are essential differences in beliefs that distinguish world religions.
- There are essential differences in spiritual practices that distinguish world religions.
- Love is a value that is core to most of the world’s religions.
- It is important to serve with those of diverse religious backgrounds on issues of common concern.
- My worldview inspires me to serve with others on issues of common concern.
- We can overcome many of the world’s major problems if people of different religious and nonreligious perspectives work together.
- I am committed to leading efforts in collaboration with people of other religious and nonreligious perspectives to create positive changes in society.
- I am open to adjusting my beliefs as I learn from other people and have new life experiences.

Thank you for participating! We appreciate that you took the time to answer these important questions.
Appendix E: IDEALS Institution Survey Time 2

Default Question Block

Please provide some information about you and your institution.

Campus representative submitting the form:

Full name of institution:

Institution city:

Institution state:

Each year that you participate in IDEALS, we will gather information about the religious, spiritual, or interfaith programs, spaces, and opportunities provided on your campus. Providing this information annually enables us to conduct more rigorous analyses of the data. In the lists below, please check all that exist on your campus:

Student Involvement Opportunities

☐ Student/campus religious and secular worldview organizations (e.g., student ministries, faith organizations, or atheist/agnostic/humanist groups); number of organizations:

☐ Interfaith action student group

☐ Interfaith community service opportunities

☐ Interfaith internships

☐ Student interfaith council

☐ Other interfaith student leadership opportunities
Religious diversity/interfaith cooperation included in required student events (e.g., orientation or first-year common reading)

Other; please specify:

Spiritual Support and Space for Expression

- Multifaith center
- Spiritual life center (available to students of all worldviews)
- Ritual washing stations
- Prayer space
- Designated meditation space
- Interfaith worship spaces on campus
- Separate worship spaces for different faiths on campus
- Full-time religious life staff employed by the institution
- Part-time religious life staff employed by the institution
- Religious life staff employed by their respective religious organizations; number of religions represented:

Other; please specify:

Curricular Opportunities

- Religious studies department
- Religious studies major
- Religious studies minor
- Required religion course for undergraduates
- Required religious diversity course for undergraduates
- Interfaith concentration or minor for undergraduates
- Interfaith cooperation integrated into required/general education courses
- Specific interfaith courses (i.e., not world religion or comparative religion courses)

Other; please specify:

Campus Diversity and Policies

- Institutional policies related to religious diversity, such as hiring, leave of absence, dining, housing accommodations, bias response

Other:
Institutional policies related to accommodations for religious holidays

☐ Interfaith cooperation and/or religious diversity indicated in the institutional mission statement
☐ Interfaith cooperation and/or religious diversity indicated in the institutional diversity statement
☐ Interfaith cooperation and/or religious diversity indicated in the institution’s strategic plan
☐ Cross-campus interfaith cooperation committee including faculty, staff, and administration
☐ Interfaith or religion subgroup of institutional diversity committee
☐ Required religious diversity training for faculty
☐ Optional religious diversity training for faculty
☐ Required religious diversity training for staff
☐ Optional religious diversity training for staff
☐ Required religious diversity training for student professional staff
☐ Optional religious diversity training for student professional staff
☐ Presidential/administrative statements or communications about the importance of engaging religious diversity
☐ Program-specific evaluation of interfaith initiatives
☐ Campus partnerships with local religious/nonreligious communities
☐ Other, please specify:

Did your campus experience any significant incidents or events related to religious, spiritual, or worldview diversity in the 2015-16 academic year?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I don’t know

If yes, please use the table below to indicate what incidents or events occurred (check all that apply):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Description</th>
<th>Occurred Fall 2015</th>
<th>Occurred Spring 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A bias incident (e.g., act of violence, verbal assault, graffiti on campus) occurred against a student from a religious/worldview minority group.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A bias incident (e.g., act of violence, verbal assault, graffiti on campus) occurred against a faculty member from a religious/worldview minority group.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>A bias incident (e.g., act of</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</table>
violence, verbal assault, graffiti on campus) occurred against a staff member from a religious/worldview minority group.

A campus incident occurred that highlighted the need for accommodations for a particular religious or worldview group.

An on-campus protest/rally took place highlighting an issue facing particular religious or worldview groups.

An on-campus political protest/rally took place in response to U.S. presidential candidates' views on different religious or worldview groups.

An on-campus incident related to religious or worldview diversity led to the hiring of an administrator or faculty member.

An on-campus incident related to religious or worldview diversity led to the firing of an administrator or faculty member.

A dispute or lawsuit related to matters of religion/worldview took place among stakeholders at your institution.

Newly enacted legislation (local, state, or national) related to particular religious or worldview groups led to dialogues, debates, or other high-profile responses on your campus.

Your institution was featured in a prominent news source (e.g., The New York Times, The Chronicle of Higher Education) regarding a matter of religious or worldview diversity.

An event occurred on campus (e.g., protest, vigil, dialogue) in response to a local incident related to religion or worldview.

An event occurred on campus (e.g., protest, vigil, dialogue) in response to a national or international incident related to religion or worldview.
For each event or incident selected above, please share additional relevant details, such as the size and scope, number of people involved, etc.