Underrepresented College Students and the Trump Presidency

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ABSTRACT

The entrance of the Trump administration may have been particularly concerning to underrepresented college students attending predominately white institutions (PWIs), who may face social identity- or class-related discrimination and barriers to achievement. The studies comprising this dissertation centered on investigating associations among distress related to the Trump presidency, activism, social support, and mental health. Participants were 340 underrepresented college students at a PWI who completed surveys in the fall of their first year at the university (Fall 2013) and each spring thereafter until Spring 2017. Results of the first study indicated that holding multiple targeted marginalized identities produced greater levels of Trump-related distress. Trump-related distress was associated with increases (relative to previous trajectories) in anxiety but not depressive symptoms. The second study tested a three-way interaction between Trump-related distress, activism, and peer support. Results suggested that Trump-related distress and activism contributed to heightened anxiety, while peer support did not serve as a protective factor. In the third study, results suggested that feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency conditioned associations among emotional responses and activism. For those who did not feel personally affected by the Trump presidency, anger predicted more frequent collective action, and sadness predicted less frequent higher-accessibility activism. Fear predicted more frequent collective action among those who felt personally affected by the presidency. Taken together, the findings of this dissertation suggest that the Trump presidency is a stressor that may threaten the wellbeing of underrepresented college students, particularly those who hold marginalized identities targeted by his rhetoric and policies. Underrepresented college students may require institutional resources and supportive structures to inoculate them against the potential harm of the Trump presidency.

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*This dissertation is dedicated to the women in my life who provide
invaluable inspiration, support, and guidance.*

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INTRODUCTORY LINKING DOCUMENT

Donald Trump's election to the presidency represented a sociopolitical shift that may have threatened the wellbeing of those who hold marginalized social identities (DeVylder, 2017; Glied & Frank, 2017; McKee, Greer, & Stuckler, 2017). In the months preceding and following his election, Trump proposed exclusionary policies and used derogatory rhetoric that may have contributed to psychological distress among targeted marginalized groups (Hatzenbuehler, 2014). The entrance of the Trump administration may have been particularly concerning to underrepresented college students who are also in the developmental space of emerging adulthood (Matsuda, 2018). The overarching purpose of this dissertation was to investigate underrepresented college students' responses to the Trump presidency.

Developmental Framework

Emerging adults are in the midst of a critical period for identity development (Arnett, 2000). Emerging adults tend to have an improved understanding of how the sociopolitical world might influence their future (Ciccheti & Rogosch, 2002; Diemer et al., 2010; Thomas & Azmitia, 2014). Sociopolitical changes that formally (i.e., legislation) or informally (e.g., political rhetoric) alienate certain groups can reduce tolerance of identity differences and increase bias (Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick, & Esses, 2010) on college campuses. Research suggests underrepresented students attending PWIs tend to face identity-related stressors such as discrimination and classism (Wei et al., 2010). Such identity-related stressors may be harmful in the moment, and also may contribute to anxiety about ways in which discriminatory experiences may negatively influence their future aspirations (e.g., employment opportunities; Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). Thus, the potential noxious effects of sociopolitical distress on mental

health (Ford & Airhinbuwa, 2010) may be heightened among underrepresented college students attending PWIs.

Responding to Sociopolitical Distress

In the face of sociopolitical distress, individuals often take steps to resist oppressive structures to restore a sense of agency (Hajdukowkski-Ahmed et al., 1999; hooks, 2000). Emerging adults have historically been at the frontlines of activist movements (Joseph, 2013; Kohstalll, 2015; Munoz, 1989; Rudy, 1996). As Trump featured more prominently in the political sphere, college students represented a substantial proportion of attendees and leaders of post-election activist movements (Reynolds & Mayweather, 2017). Engaging in activism may be beneficial to psychological functioning as it can foster a sense of empowerment and increased sense of personal control (Taft, 2010). However, activism may be a stressor in its own right, and even more so in the joint presence of sociopolitical distress (Sztompka, 2004). Activism may deplete the social and emotional resources needed to cope with sociopolitical distress (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001). Student activists may require other promotive assets to avoid experiencing psychological distress. Peer support, in particular, might be a protective factor for those who engage in activism in response to sociopolitical distress, because healthy peer relationships tend to be affirming and foster self-efficacy (Siegrist, 2001).

Guiding Aims

The overarching goal of this dissertation was to characterize underrepresented college students' emotional and behavioral responses to the Trump presidency. Specifically, my dissertation is centered on understanding associations among Trump-related distress, activism, social support, and mental health.

Aim 1. Characterize underrepresented college students' response to the Trump presidency

In Paper 1, I examined students' level of self-reported distress related to the Trump presidency. In addition, I investigated whether self-reported distress predicted decrements in psychological functioning (i.e., symptoms of anxiety and depression). In Paper 2, I extended this line of inquiry by investigating whether activism and social support interacted with Trump-related distress in an attempt to better understand agentic responses to the Trump presidency. In Paper 3, I aimed to gain a richer understanding of the nature of students' emotional responses to the Trump presidency utilizing quantitative and qualitative data.

Aim 2. Examine factors that might compound or buffer Trump-related distress

In Paper 1, I tested the hypothesis that holding one or more marginalized identities targeted by Trump might explain higher levels of Trump-related distress. Paper 2 examined whether the potential exacerbating effect of activism on the association between Trump-related distress and psychological health may be conditioned by the amount of peer support available to underrepresented students. In Paper 3, I continued to explore student activism. I investigated whether underrepresented students' emotional responses to the Trump presidency were associated with participation in activism.

Methods

For all three studies in this dissertation, I drew upon data from a four-year longitudinal study conducted at an elite PWI in the southeastern United States. The study sample was composed of 340 underrepresented college students. Students completed surveys at five time points, beginning in the fall of their first year at the university (Fall 2013) until the Spring of their fourth year (Spring 2017). Data were collected in the Fall and Spring semesters of their first year and each Spring semester thereafter. Students who transferred or left the university for other reasons remained enrolled in the study. Retention across the 5 waves was above 90%. The

election and inauguration of Donald Trump to the presidency occurred between the fourth and fifth waves of data collection.

Paper 1

In Paper 1, *Marginalized identities, Trump-related distress, and the mental health of underrepresented college students*, I investigated whether distress related to the Trump presidency differed among individuals who were targeted by his rhetoric and proposed policies, and whether this distress contributed to decrements in mental health (i.e., symptoms of anxiety and depression). Underrepresented students in college during the 2016 presidential campaign cycle and election may have already contended with marginalizing experiences (Nienhusser, Vega, & Carquin, 2016). Through biased rhetoric and exclusionary policy proposals, Trump consistently expressed contempt for Black, Latinx, women, Muslim, and LGBTQ+ individuals (Konrad, 2018). The general population of college students already tend to experience stressors that can threaten their mental health (Patel, Flisher, Hetrick, & McGorry, 2007). Trump's election may have been a salient stressor given their developmental stage, wherein identity is central, and concerns about the future feature prominently. Nearly 90% of students in the sample held one or more targeted identities (i.e., Black, Latinx, women, LGBTQ+ and/or Muslim students). Holding multiple targeted marginalized identities was associated with greater levels of Trump-related distress. A longitudinal examination of mental health trajectories revealed that Trump-related distress was associated with higher levels of anxiety than would be expected from previous trajectories. Trump-related distress was not significantly associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms compared to students' previous trajectories. Findings partly align with previous findings that exposure to bigotry and exclusionary policies can contribute to psychological distress among marginalized groups (Hatzenbuehler, 2017). This indicates there

may be a need for universities to proactively address the possible mental health consequences of the Trump presidency.

Paper 2

Paper 2, *Activism, social support, and Trump-related distress: Associations with mental health,* builds on Paper 1 by investigating activism in the context of Trump-related distress. Activism often occurs in response to sociopolitical distress, but may hold the potential to exacerbate the psychological toll of sociopolitical distress. In Paper 2, I investigated whether peer social support conditioned an interaction between activism and sociopolitical distress, thereby protecting mental health. Limited research has examined the conditions of the interaction between activism and social support. Therefore, I drew upon social support literature and the high effort—low reward framework used in human service fields to inform my hypothesis. I hypothesized that the nature of the interaction between sociopolitical distress and activism may be contingent on a third dimension: social support (Huckfeldt, 2001; Iwasaki et al., 2008). To test this hypothesis, I conducted multiple regression analysis to investigate a three-way interaction between Trump-related distress, activism, and peer support. I did not find support for the hypothesis that peer support might condition an interactive effect of activism on the association between Trump-related distress and symptoms of anxiety or depression. Instead, Trump-related distress and activism exerted significant direct effects on symptoms of anxiety. These findings indicate that student activists may require additional social support and supportive environments to inoculate them against the potential harm of the Trump presidency and the psychological demands of activism.

Paper 3

Paper 3, *Emotional responses to the Trump presidency and associations with activism,* examined students' emotional responses to the Trump presidency. This paper aimed to characterize underrepresented students' feelings of anger, fear, sadness, and disgust in response to the Trump presidency. Paper 3 focused on these four primary emotions because they have been implicated in individuals' reactions to sociopolitical events. Literature focused on responses and sociopolitical events typically relies upon narrow assessments of emotional experiences. Paper 3 also explored open-ended responses to the question, "How do you feel about the Trump presidency?" I analyzed students' text responses to determine whether the primary emotions measured in the closed-ended items (anger, disgust, fear, sadness) also emerged in participants' own words. I found support for the notion that these emotions are relevant to the study of sociopolitical distress. Notably, distress related to sociopolitical shifts has been called a "mobilizing force" (Dyke & Soule, 2002). Yet it is less clear whether distinct negatively-valenced emotional experiences might be differentially associated with participation in activism. Findings indicated that feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency may condition associations between feelings of sadness, anger, and fear and student activism.

Conclusion

While exploratory, the findings of my dissertation studies provide a preliminary account of underrepresented college students' response to the Trump presidency. First, underrepresented students experienced a level of distress in response to the Trump presidency that was of consequence for their mental health. I found that Trump related distress and activism were directly associated with higher symptoms of anxiety and depressive symptoms, even in the presence of a potential protective factor, peer support. As Trump continued to engage in biased rhetoric and implemented exclusionary policies during his presidency, it may have become an

even greater stressor for underrepresented students who hold marginalized identities. Even

before the 2016 presidential campaign cycle, underrepresented students tended to face

marginalizing experiences on campus. In turn, the Trump presidency might exacerbate the

stressors with which underrepresented students already contend on PWI campuses (Gin et al.,

2017). Thus, PWI administrators might consider implementing additional supports for

underrepresented students who may contend with considerable levels of threat and uncertainty

under the Trump administration.

ELEMENTS OF PAPER 1

Marginalized identities, Trump-related distress, and the mental health of underrepresented

college students

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Abstract

The current study sought to determine whether holding targeted marginalized identities was associated with greater experiences of distress related to Trump's presidency and whether participants' level of Trump-related distress predicted decrements in mental health. Participants in the current longitudinal study included 338 underrepresented college students attending a predominantly White institution. Results indicated that holding multiple targeted marginalized identities was associated with greater levels of Trump-related distress. Findings also indicated that Trump-related distress was associated with increases (relative to previous trajectories) in anxious but not depressive symptoms. Overall, results suggest that a shift in sociopolitical circumstances that promulgates bigotry may be harmful to those who possess targeted marginalized identities. Additional research is needed regarding best practices in supporting underrepresented college students experiencing distress related to the Trump presidency.

Introduction

From the moment Donald Trump announced his candidacy for the presidency, it was clear that his presence in the political arena introduced the possibility of considerable economic, political, and social change (Jagsi, 2017; Rohlinger & Bunnage, 2017). For example, he proposed a number of policies that would limit the rights of marginalized groups (Ayón, Valencia-García, & Kim, 2017; McKee, Greer, & Stuckler, 2017) and made disparaging remarks toward marginalized groups that brought bias to the forefront of public discourse (Jagsi, 2017; Oliver & Rahn, 2016). When Trump was elected president, members of groups who had been targeted by his prejudiced rhetoric reported feeling fearful of what his presidency would mean for them and their loved ones (Burnett-Ziegler, 2016; Southern Poverty Law Center [SPLC], 2016). Accordingly, I hypothesized that Trump's election may have been distressing to college students who belonged to groups negatively targeted by Trump's policies and rhetoric. In the current study, I utilized longitudinal data from the Fall 2013 through the Spring 2017 semesters to examine the potential influence of distress stemming from the Trump presidency on marginalized college students' mental health. I examined whether membership in negatively targeted social identity groups was cumulatively associated with greater distress and whether Trump-related distress was associated with worsening psychological health. This study sought to expand our understanding of whether and how sociopolitical shifts may affect mental health, with attention to the potential deleterious consequences of belonging to a social group that has been explicitly negatively targeted by the person occupying the nation's highest office.

Sociopolitical Shifts

Several political scientists have suggested that the victory of Donald Trump changed the sociopolitical climate (Goodheart, 2018) including shifts in social norms dictating interpersonal

interactions (Crandall, Miller, & White, 2018). The term "sociopolitical" refers to the interaction of social and political factors: just as social norms influence political structures, so too can politics influence social norms and systems (Bursztyn, Egorov, & Fiorin, 2017). For instance, expanding the rights of members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and gender-nonconforming (LGBTQ+) community has been found to increase the "social acceptability" of same-sex relationships and reduce anti-LGBTQ+ prejudice (Tankard & Paluck, 2017). On the other hand, shifts in sociopolitical circumstances that formally (e.g., legislation) or informally (e.g., political rhetoric) alienate certain groups can reduce tolerance of identity differences and increase negative bias toward groups (Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick, & Esses, 2010). When one's social identities are threatened by explicitly prejudiced rhetoric and policies at the institutional level, individuals may experience intensified distress that might contribute to mental health difficulties (Pascoe & Richman, 2009).

The Trump presidency provides a striking opportunity to examine the potential for social and political circumstances to influence mental health. In the first few months of Trump's presidency, he took steps to dismantle policies aimed at reducing health disparities (e.g., Affordable Care Act; Exec. Order No. 13765, 2017) and shrinking the gender wage gap (Exec. Order No. 13673, 2017). Trump also attempted to weaken legal protections against employer discrimination for women and members of the LGBTQ+ community (Exec. Order No. 13682, 2014). Further, the Trump administration initiated efforts to ban travel from several Muslim-majority countries (Exec. Order No. 13769, 2017) and build a massive wall along the Mexico–United States border to prevent undocumented immigrants from entering the country (Exec. Order No. 13767, 2017). Beyond these policies, Trump consistently employed prejudiced rhetoric directed toward Blacks, Latinx individuals, women, Muslims, and LGBTQ+ individuals

in his speeches and posts on social media (Konrad, 2018). Evidence suggests prejudiced rhetoric in the media by prominent public figures can be a "social sanction" that justifies biased behavior, whether in the form of stereotyping, prejudice, overt discrimination, or violence (Crandall et al., 2018; Ramasubramanian & Oliver, 2007; Steuter & Wills, 2009).

Indeed, early evidence suggests that the Trump administration's exclusionary policies, prejudicial rhetoric, and endorsement of stereotypes may have increased biased beliefs and behavior among the broader public. The United States Department of Justice (2017) released a report stating that in 2016, the number of hate crimes were at the highest they had been since 2012. The majority of these incidents were anti-Latinx, anti-Black, anti-Muslim, and anti-LGBTQ. Notably, bias-related incidents explicitly tied to Trump's campaign and election were documented in several states in 2016 (SPLC, 2017). Thus, Trump's use of prejudiced rhetoric and proposed exclusionary policies may have contributed to fear of victimization and uncertainty about the future among those holding targeted marginalized social identities. Below, I review Trump's proposed exclusionary policies, prejudiced rhetoric, and use of pejorative stereotypes toward certain marginalized groups as well as early indicators of shifts in the social acceptability of prejudice and discrimination.

Social Identities Targeted by the Trump Administration
  Prejudice toward Black Individuals. Trump's anti-Black rhetoric and endorsement of policies that disproportionately target Black Americans (e.g., "stop and frisk" policies) were documented prior to and throughout his presidential campaign. Among a few examples of Trump's explicit stereotyping of racial minority groups includes a claim made in a 2013 Twitter post that circulated widely during the 2016 election cycle stating, "the overwhelming amount of violent crime in my major cities is committed by Blacks and Hispanics" (Trump, 2013). Although government agencies report that Whites commit the majority of crimes (e.g., Uniform

Crime Reports, 2017) and issues of biased policing practices lead to disproportionate arrests of Black and Latinx people (Alexander, 2012), stereotypes perpetuated in the media have been found to uphold perceptions of Black and Latinx people as dangerous criminals (Hurley, Jensen, Weaver, & Dixon, 2015). Some scholars have suggested that the prejudiced rhetoric espoused by Trump and his administration during his campaign, election, and early presidency fueled a spike in anti-Black hate speech and hate crimes in 2016 (Müller & Schwarz, 2018; Rushin & Edwards, 2018). Indeed, supporters of the Trump campaign have included members of notorious white supremacist and anti-Black groups, such as the Klu Klux Klan (KKK). One KKK leader succinctly explained white supremacist groups' alignment with Trump when he said, "a lot of Klan members like Donald Trump because a lot of what he believes, I believe in" (SPLC, 2018). Moreover, hate crime perpetrators have explicitly invoked Trump's name and anti-Black sentiments (SPLC, 2017).

   Prejudice toward Latinx Individuals. Promises to restrict Latinx immigrants from entering the country and increase deportation were central to Trump's platform. In his campaign and first few months in office, Trump detailed plans to build a massive wall along the Mexico–U.S. border (Exec. Order No. 13767, 2017) and pushed the Department of Homeland Security to expand grounds for deportation to include minor non-criminal infractions (Executive Order No. 13768, 2017). His demand reversed former guidelines, which advised law enforcement agencies to focus their deportation efforts on violent offenders (Rosenblum, 2015). Subsequently, there was a 40 percent increase in arrests of suspected undocumented immigrants in the first 100 days of the Trump presidency (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2017). Trump's anti-immigration policy proposals were centered on the unfounded notion that Latinx immigrants pose a major threat to the United States and its citizens (Chaflin, 2015). In a memo justifying and

describing his plans for "compelling Mexico" to pay for a border wall, he stated, "Mexico has taken advantage of us: gangs, drug traffickers, and cartels have freely exploited my open borders and committed vast numbers of crimes inside the U.S." (Trump, 2016). Consistent with the previously documented link between public rhetoric and acts of bias (Philbin, Flake, Hatzenbuehler, & Hirsch, 2017), perpetrators of hate crimes have engaged in the same derogatory language about Latinx immigrants espoused by Trump (SPLC, 2017). For instance, one family in Michigan was harassed by their neighbors who stacked a wall of boxes outside their home. Written on the boxes were the words "Trump," "Take America Back," and "Mexicans suck" (SPLC, 2017).

Prejudice toward Women. During his campaign, Trump repeatedly used sexually aggressive language toward women, including his statement in reference to the 2008 election: "[Hillary Clinton] got schlonged. She lost" (Moyer, 2015). In 2016, video footage of Trump in 2005 stating, "I'm automatically attracted to beautiful [women]—I just start kissing them […] I don't even wait. When you're a star, they let you do it. You can do anything—grab them by the pussy" was widely covered by the media (The New York Times, 2016). Trump's response to the video dismissed the statement as "locker room banter." Dismissive responses to sexual assault and harassment can reinforce stereotypes that women are not reliable reporters of victimization (Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). Reports of sexual harassment after the election suggest that Trump's derogatory rhetoric toward women may have served as a social sanction for sexual violence against women. In the days following the election, several women described street harassment in which perpetrators referred to Trump when justifying their actions. In one incident of street harassment in Virginia, two young men yelled at a woman crossing the street and said, "[…] with Trump, I can grab you by the pussy even if you don't want it."

Prejudice toward Muslims. Examinations of media portrayals of Muslims and immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries have found that Muslims are depicted as untrustworthy and uncivilized terrorists (Nadal et al.,2012). Trump and members of his administration have upheld such negative portrayals of Muslims. In a 2016 speech, Mike Flynn (Trump's first appointed U.S. national security advisor) stated, "Islamism [sic], it is a vicious cancer inside the body of 1.7 billion people on this planet and it has to be excised" (Kaczynski, 2016). In his first few weeks of office, Trump called for a travel ban on individuals from select Muslim-majority countries (Exec. Order No. 13769, 2017), titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States." The name of the order alone highlights its erroneous premise: that Muslims entering the U.S. pose a threat to national security. In fact, Regarding his self-proclaimed "Muslim Ban," Trump explained, "[the ban] is about keeping bad people with bad intentions out of my country" (Trump, 2017). Although several of Trump's executive orders have been diverted by the justice system, the rhetoric used in his proposals may have emboldened some individuals to express Islamophobic views (Bursztyn et al., 2017; Rushin & Edwards, 2018). Indeed, immediate increases in reports of anti-Muslim discrimination were documented throughout his campaign, election, and early presidency (Müller & Schwarz, 2018).

Prejudice Toward Sexual Minorities. During his campaign, Trump selected a vice presidential candidate, Mike Pence, who had repeatedly expressed homophobic attitudes and made numerous legislative attempts to undermine LGBTQ+ rights (Pence, 2000). In 2013, he signed a bill in Indiana that made it a felony for same-sex couples to apply for a marriage license, and later signed a "religious exemption" bill making it legal for businesses to discriminate against LGBTQ+ employees (S.B. 101, 119th Gen. Ass., 2015 Reg. Sess., 2015). Trump's selection of a vice presidential candidate with a strong anti-LGBTQ+ agenda created a

powerful platform for anti-LGBTQ+ views and policies within his administration. Indeed, in

Trump's first few months of office, he initiated a policy to weaken protection against employer

discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals at the federal level (Exec. Order No. 13798, 2017).

Research suggests that exclusionary policies limiting LGBTQ+ rights promote public prejudice

against those individuals (Dovidio et al., 2010). Notably, anti-LGBTQ+ hate crimes spiked in the

days following the election. Several perpetrators of hate crimes invoked Trump's name as part of

their attack. In one incident, a 75-year-old gay man in Florida was beaten and was told: "You

know my new president says I can kill all you [gays] now" (SPLC, 2016).

Mental Health Consequences of Unfair Treatment

Statistics suggest that the Trump presidency may have fueled an increase in identity-

based discrimination, harassment, and hate crimes (e.g., SPLC, 2016) potentially leading

members of targeted marginalized groups (i.e., Black, Latinx, women, Muslim, and LGBTQ+

individuals) to feel less safe and more worried about being the victim of discriminatory

treatment. Discriminatory treatment has been associated with a myriad of adverse outcomes,

including shorter life expectancy, poorer physical health, and lower overall self-reported quality

of life among racial/ethnic minorities (Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010; Olshansky et al., 2012). The

implementation of exclusionary policies also has been found to negatively impact the physical

health, mental health, and economic stability of marginalized groups (Hatzenbuehler, 2017). For

instance, Latinx individuals exposed to stringent immigration policies experience more frequent

and severe psychological distress and health problems regardless of whether they are immigrants

or U.S. natives (Cook, Alegría, Lin, & Guo, 2009; Hatzenbuehler et al., 2017; Philbin et al.,

2017). Similarly, policies that deny rights to LGBTQ+ individuals have been associated with

higher levels of stress, which may lead to poorer mental health (Bostwick, Boyd, Hughes, West,

& McCabe, 2014; Shenkman & Shmotkin, 2016). Moreover, extant literature has consistently

demonstrated that across marginalized groups, the psychological toll of anticipating and coping

with marginalization can lead to mental health issues such as anxiety and depression (Berger &

Sarnyai, 2015; Pascoe & Richman, 2009).

Further, a growing, post-election body of evidence supports the possibility that the Trump

presidency has already exerted noxious effects on the mental health of marginalized groups.

Trump's attempts to "crack down" on immigration were followed closely by indicators that

Latinx individuals felt threatened by his policies. Police departments in major cities documented

reductions in crime reporting by Latinx individuals (Hing, 2017); local agencies received fewer

applications for public assistance (Dewey, 2017); and health centers reported rising numbers of

missed appointments (Negi, Maskell, Goodman, Hooper, & Roberts, 2018). Coverage of the

notorious 2005 video of Trump saying, "when you're a star […] You can do anything—you can

grab [women] by the pussy" was followed by a surge in sexual assault helpline calls among

survivors of sexual assault (RAINN, 2016). In addition, mental health agencies reported spikes in

calls from individuals seeking psychological support following the election (Ravitz, 2016). This

influx of distressed callers may be indicative of negative mental health consequences resulting

from Trump's election (Burnett-Ziegler, 2016; Matsuda, 2018). Despite these trends, researchers

have yet to investigate whether previous trends of mental health may be altered as a consequence

of distress related to the Trump presidency.

The Trump Presidency and Underrepresented College Students

Emerging adults who hold marginalized identities targeted by Trump's rhetoric and

exclusionary policies may be at risk of experiencing negative mental health consequences as a

result of Trump's election. Political and social circumstances often become more personally

relevant as college students are preparing for the future (Arnett, 2000). Individuals from

marginalized groups tend to gain an improved understanding of institutional structures, social

stratification, and how their identities are regarded by society during emerging adulthood

(Diemer et al., 2010; Thomas & Azmitia, 2014). Trump's proposed policies may have served to

expand the structural barriers students expected to encounter, compounding the uncertainty

experienced by many emerging adults (Diemer & Hsieh, 2008; Furlong, Woodman, & Wyn,

2011). In addition, Trump's election, which appears to have contributed to an uptick in prejudice

and discrimination, may have led students from targeted groups to be more concerned about their

safety.

Students who hold marginalized racial/ethnic, sexual, or religious identities already tend

to face discriminatory treatment while attending PWIs (Goodman & West-Olatunji, 2010;

Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015). For example, studies have found that students of color

encounter microaggressions (i.e., subtle statements or behaviors that communicate negative

beliefs based on identity membership; Sue, 2010) across social and academic contexts. Racial

microaggressions are associated with an array of negative outcomes such as decreased self-

esteem, reduced sense of belonging, and emotional distress (Torres, Driscoll, & Burrow, 2010).

Similarly, in a sociopolitical climate that sanctions homophobia, LGBTQ+ students may feel an

increased need to conceal their sexual identity, which has been associated with increases in

symptoms of anxiety and depression (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al., 2014; Meyer & Frost, 2013).

Women in college experience sexual assault at disproportionately high rates compared to

women's overall lifetime risk of sexual violence (Finkelhor, Shattuck, Turner, & Hamby, 2014).

In light of Trump's use of sexually aggressive language toward women, college students may

have experienced heightened concerns about sexual victimization. Experiencing sexual violence

has been associated with social isolation, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of anxiety and depression (Watts, Pallitto, García-Moreno, DeVries, & Abrahams, 2013).

Moreover, many underrepresented college students hold multiple marginalized identities (e.g., Black and LGBTQ+). These students tend to experience decreased sense of belonging and struggle to find supportive peers at PWIs (Kulick, Wernick, Woodford, & Renn, 2017). Thus, in a sociopolitical climate that sanctions negative bias toward several marginalized identity groups, these students may encounter more instances of discrimination across peer groups which may lead them to feel less safe on campus (Galupo, Mitchell, & Davis, 2015). Broader social discourse and political circumstances that reinforce systems of oppression can be a significant stressor for marginalized groups (van Dijk, 2012). Notably, during the 2016 election cycle, much of Trump's bigoted rhetoric toward certain marginalized groups occurred and circulated through social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook), a popular public platform for college students (Villanti et al., 2017). Thus, marginalized college students may have endured elevated exposure to Trump's rhetoric, which may also have been endorsed by their peers or other members of their online networks.

Current Study

Research has demonstrated that derogatory rhetoric by public figures can serve as a social sanction for acts of prejudice (Bursztyn et al., 2017), and anticipating discriminatory treatment can lead to poorer mental health (Hatzenbuehler, 2017). Additionally, the threat and uncertainty produced by exclusionary policies such as those Trump promised has been shown to be harmful to the psychological well-being of targeted groups (Ayón et al., 2017; Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010). Symptoms of anxiety and depression have been associated with declines in one's sense of self-efficacy, ability to cope with stress, and overall health (Lee, Dickson, Conley, & Holmbeck,

2014; Marin et al., 2011). The effects of internalizing symptoms on college students' functioning tend to be harmful and long-lasting. Thus, it is important to determine whether the Trump presidency may have heightened vulnerability to mental health problems among already marginalized individuals. Colleges and universities have extensive resources that can be leveraged to support students who are being harmed by the sociopolitical context and its sequelae. Better understanding the potential mental health consequences of the Trump presidency for members of marginalized groups will inform decisions regarding whether additional resources should be mobilized and whether targeted interventions should be developed to address this specific source of distress.

The current study aimed to (a) determine whether self-reported Trump-related distress was greater among college students holding a greater number of social identities that were negatively targeted by the Trump administration (i.e., Black, Latinx, women, Muslim, LGBTQ+), and (b) investigate whether the degree of Trump-related distress experienced by students may have increased their symptoms of anxiety and depression. Given that adverse life events may influence one's appraisal of the severity of emerging stressors and one's mental health (Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen, & DeLongis, 1986), I accounted for the possible influence of other recent life stressors on changes in mental health outcomes in the model. Political ideology was also accounted for as a covariate in the model in an attempt to isolate the influence of Trump-related distress on mental health outcomes as a function of identity-related targeting. Some evidence suggests that previous psychological functioning can influence the degree to which an individual's mental health is negatively affected by stressful life events (Cohen, Janicki-Deverts, & Miller, 2007). Thus, I also explored an alternative hypothesis where existing anxious and depressive symptomatology contributed to Trump-related distress.

I hypothesized that students who were members of targeted marginalized groups would report higher levels of distress related to the Trump presidency in comparison to their non-targeted peers. Moreover, I expected there would be a cumulative toll of holding multiple marginalized identities, such that with each additional targeted identity held by students, there would be a corresponding increase in Trump-related distress. I also hypothesized that greater Trump-related distress would predict increases in underrepresented students' symptoms of anxiety and depression that would be greater than what would have been predicted based on their trajectories of mental health preceding the Trump election (i.e., Fall 2013 through Spring 2016).

Method

Participants

For the current study, I drew upon data from an ongoing longitudinal study aimed at documenting the experiences of underrepresented college students (i.e., first-generation college students, students eligible for the full amount of the Federal Pell Grant, and students from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minority groups) attending a public predominately white institution (PWI) in the southeastern United States. At the first time point (Fall 2013), a total of 340 first-year college students participated (44% response rate of all eligible students). Students' demographic information and social identities (i.e., race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religious affiliation) were determined using admissions records and survey items. The sample was racially and ethnically diverse: Black/African American (29%), White (23%), Multiracial (20%), Asian (17%), Latinx (10%), and American Indian/Alaskan Native (<1%). Sixty-seven percent of participants identified as women and 16% of participants identified as LGBTQ + . Students' religious affiliations included Christianity (43%), Islam (4%), Judaism (2%), and Buddhism (1%). The average age of participants was 18.11 years ($SD = 0.37$ years) at the time

of initial data collection. Yearly family income ranged from less than $4900 to more than

$105,000. Based on family size, 61% of participants came from households with annual incomes

at or below 200% of their state's poverty level.

Procedure

After obtaining approval from the university's Institutional Review Board (Protocol

#2013034500), university admissions records were used to identify eligible incoming first-year

students in the fall of 2013. All eligible students received a generic recruitment email inviting

them to participate in a study focused on college experiences. In order to limit selection bias, the

email did not detail eligibility criteria. Interested students provided informed consent prior to

participation. Students under the age of 18 obtained parental consent and provided written assent.

To further ensure confidentiality, a Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of

Health was obtained. Students completed surveys on iPads in a research laboratory. After the

first point of data collection (Fall 2013), participants completed surveys during the midpoint of

each following Spring semester from 2014 to 2017, yielding a total of five data collection time

points. If students unenrolled from the university, they were invited to continue participating in

the study and received an online link to the survey at each subsequent time point. In the first

year, students were compensated with a $20 Visa gift card, and in each consecutive academic

year, compensation increased by $5. Retention was greater than 93% across all five time points.

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Measures

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Descriptive statistics for study variables are reported in Table 1.

Targeted identity variable. I used each of the five identity categories explicitly targeted

by the Trump administration's policies and rhetoric (i.e., Black, Latinx, Woman, LGBTQ+,

Muslim) to create a sum variable of total targeted identities (range = 0–5). Participants were

instructed to select each of the racial/ethnic group(s) with which they identified. For the purpose

of the current study, participants were assigned a value of 1 if they identified as Black, a value of

1 if they identified as Latinx, and a value of 0 if they did not identify as either of these

racial/ethnic groups. Participants who identified as both Black and Latinx received a value of 2.

Participants were asked to report their gender identity and were assigned a value of 1 if they

identified as women and 0 if not. Regarding the LGBTQ+ identity category, participants who

identified as gender non-binary or reported same-gender attraction, attraction to both genders, or

attraction to neither gender were assigned a value of 1 and all others assigned a value of 0.

Regarding the religious identity category, students who reported their religious affiliation as

Islam were assigned a value of 1 and all others received a value of 0. After coding for each of the

five possible identities, a composite score was calculated to indicate the total number of

participants' targeted identities.

Trump-related Distress. Distress related to the Trump presidency was measured with a

single item during the Spring of 2017: "When you think about the Donald Trump presidency,

how distressed are you?" Response options ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 10 (*extremely*).

Political Ideology. Political ideology was measured during the Spring of 2017 with a

single item: "How would you describe your political views?" (Pew Research Center, 2017).

Response options ranged from 0 (*very liberal*) to 4 (*very conservative*).

Stressful Life Events. In the Spring of 2017, students were asked to indicate whether

they had experienced any major life events (e.g., an immediate family member became seriously

ill) during the last 30 days using a modified version of The Undergraduate Stress Questionnaire

(Crandall, Preisler, & Aussprung, 1992). Participants were assigned a value of 1 if they had

experienced the stressful event, and 0 if they had not experienced the event across a total of 17 items. Responses were summed to indicate the total number of events in the previous 30 days.

Anxiety symptoms. Participants completed the Beck Anxiety Inventory-II (BAI-II) at each time point (Beck & Steer, 1990). The BAI-II assesses how frequently participants were bothered by various symptoms of anxiety such as nervousness, inability to relax, fear of the worst happening, and heart pounding/racing over the past month. The response scale ranges from 0 (*rarely or never*) to 3 (*almost every day*). Responses to all items were summed to create a composite variable. According to the scoring manual, BAI scores ranging from 10 to 16 are indicative of mild anxiety, and scores greater than 17 are indicative of moderate anxiety. Cronbach's alpha for these items indicated high reliability across time points ($\alpha = .91–.93$).

Depressive symptoms. Participants completed the Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II) at each time point (Beck, Steer, & Brown, 1996). The BDI-II measures depressive symptoms over the previous two weeks. The BDI-II was modified to exclude one item assessing suicidality (given that including this item would have altered the confidentiality agreement with participants) yielding a 20-item measure. Participants were instructed: "Pick out the one statement in each group that best describes the way you have been feeling during the past two weeks, including today." Response options are presented on a 4-point scale. For example, feelings of sadness are assessed with response options ranging from 0 ("I do not feel sad") to 3 ("I am so sad or unhappy that I can't stand it"). Responses to all 20 items were summed to create a composite variable. Cronbach's alpha for these items indicated high reliability across all time points ($\alpha = .91–.92$). According to the BDI-II manual, scores of 14–19 are indicative of mild depression, and scores >20 are indicative of moderate depression.

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Data Analysis Plan

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Students' survey responses from their first (Fall 2013) semester of college and each subsequent spring semester (2014–2017) were used in the current study. Of the original sample of 340 students, two participants were excluded from analyses to avoid bias introduced by straight-line response patterns in the final study wave (Swain, Weathers, & Niedrich, 2008), yielding a final sample of 338 students. Analyses were conducted in SPSS and R version 3.5.0 (R Development Core Team, 2014). To handle a small amount of missing data across time points ($<7\%$), multiple imputation for multivariate data with chained equations (mice package in R 3.5.0) was used (Van Buuren, 2011). I first assessed correlations among study variables. Next, I conducted an analysis of variance (ANOVA) using the composite variable indicating the total number of targeted marginalized identities held by participants to determine whether Trump-related distress differed across groups as a function of quantity of targeted identities held. Because few participants held more than two targeted marginalized identities, the ANOVA was based on the following categories: no targeted identities, one targeted identity, and two or more targeted identities. Post hoc Tukey's tests were performed to probe significant ANOVA results.

To examine whether Trump-related distress may have influenced participants' symptoms of anxiety and depression, a linear mixed-effects modeling (LMM) approach was used. Analyses were conducted in R version 3.5.0 (Bates, Maechler, Bolker, & Walker, 2015). Given that LMMs are designed to handle dependencies of response variables (e.g., mental health status) over time (Baayen, Davidson, & Bates, 2008), this analytic approach was well suited for my research questions. Longitudinal data were used to establish baseline trends of mental health outcomes (from Fall 2013 through Spring 2016). Establishing baseline trends strengthened the ability to isolate the impact of Trump-related distress on symptoms of anxiety and depression in Spring 2017 by examining individual-level deviations from previous trends. My analyses

included political ideology and stressful life events as covariates. Given my focus on social identity group membership as a potential driver of Trump-related distress, certain identity-related control variables (e.g., gender) that are often included in mental health research were not included as covariates in analyses.

Anxiety and depressive symptoms were examined separately using structurally identical models. In all analyses, LMMs were fitted and evaluated with linear and quadratic growth terms (Barr, Levy, Scheepers, & Tilly, 2013). Reported models were the best-fitting models based on the chi-square statistic, Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), wherein lower AIC and BIC values indicate better model fit. Intercept and slope terms were treated as correlated random effects in the LMMs using maximum likelihood estimation. In order to take into account the shorter time period between the first two points of data collection (Fall 2013 and Spring 2014), and the subsequent three points of data collection (Springs 2015, 2016, 2017), time was treated as a continuous variable in the LMMs by approximating the number of days between survey completion each semester. Predicted levels of Spring 2017 symptoms of anxiety (BAI-II scores) and depression (BDI-II scores) were generated using four waves of data collected between Fall 2013 and Spring 2016. Predicted values were estimated based on the best-fitting LMM fitted to Fall 2013 through Spring 2016 data. The predicted values were then subtracted from participants' observed Spring 2017 values to create deviation scores such that positive values indicate higher symptomatology than expected. These deviation scores were used as outcome variables in LMM analyses. Finally, two competing models were tested separately in lavaan in R version 3.5.0 (Rosseel, 2012). In these analyses, latent factors were created to represent intercept and growth terms for symptoms of anxiety and depression (across all time points) and were used as predictors of Trump-related distress. These competing models

tested whether pre-existing mental health issues may have influenced the level of Trump-related distress experienced by participants.

Results

Correlations among study variables are presented in Table 2.

Number of targeted identities and Trump-related distress

Nearly 90% of participants were members of at least one of the five identified targeted marginalized groups. Thirty-eight percent of participants held one targeted identity and 51% held two or more targeted identities. Results indicated that Trump-related distress differed as a function of the number of targeted marginalized identities participants held, $F(2, 335) = 17.08$, $p < .05$. Tukey post hoc analyses showed that Trump-related distress was higher among those who held one targeted identity compared to those who held no targeted identities, and was highest among those who held two or more targeted identities (see Table 3).

Trump-related distress and mental health trajectories

Model comparison using BIC values indicated that the best-fitting, most parsimonious model for predicting anxiety symptoms was a quadratic model with random intercept and slope effects, $\chi 2$ ($df = 10$, $N = 338$) $= 18.36$, $p < .05$. Trump-related distress explained a significant proportion of deviation from previous anxiety symptom trajectories (see Table 4). Specifically, Trump-related distress predicted higher-than-expected anxiety symptoms ($\beta = .16$; $p < .05$). Model comparison using AIC and BIC values indicated that the best-fitting, most parsimonious model for predicting depressive symptoms was a quadratic model with random intercept and slope effects, $\chi 2$ ($df = 10$, $N = 338$) $= 10.25$, $p = .05$. Trump-related distress did not explain a significant proportion of deviation from previous depressive symptom trajectories.

I examined two competing models which tested whether Trump-related distress was predicted by participants' previous anxiety or depressive symptoms, including political ideology and number of stressful life events as covariates in the model. The first model, which was focused on previous anxiety symptoms, achieved adequate fit to the data [$\chi 2$ ($df = 13$, $N = 338$) $= 28.18$, $p < .05$; CFI $= 0.98$, TLI $= 0.96$, RMSEA $= 0.06$ (90% CI for RMSEA $= 0.03, 0.09$), SRMR $= 0.06$]. Results suggested that Trump-related distress was not predicted by participants' initial level of anxiety symptoms ($\beta = .07$; *ns*) or previous trend of anxiety symptoms ($\beta = .08$; *ns*). The second model, which was focused on previous depressive symptoms, achieved adequate fit to the data [$\chi 2$ (13, $N = 338$) $= 19.11$, $p = .12$; CFI $= 0.99$, TLI $= 0.99$, RMSEA $= 0.04$ (90% CI for RMSEA $= 0.00, 0.07$), SRMR $= 0.04$]. Results suggested that Trump-related distress was not predicted by participants' initial level of depressive symptoms ($\beta = -.01$; *ns*) or previous trend of depressive symptoms ($\beta = -.03$; *ns*).

Discussion

The current study aimed to investigate whether the Trump presidency was a significant stressor among members of marginalized groups targeted by Trump's derogatory rhetoric and proposed exclusionary policies. I pursued this line of inquiry among a sample of underrepresented students at a PWI, many of whom possessed at least one marginalized identity that had been explicitly targeted by Trump's prejudiced rhetoric and policies. Notably, although the average level of Trump-related distress for this sample ($M = 6.66$) was higher than the midpoint of the scale, it was only slightly above the midpoint and the standard deviation ($SD = 2.9$) indicated substantial variability in the degree of distress experienced among study participants. Thus, I felt confident the data were appropriately suited to test study hypotheses. I contended that by publicly disparaging those who hold marginalized identities and attempting to

limit the rights of those who already have long-standing experiences of oppression in this country, the Trump presidency may have exerted deleterious effects on the mental health of members of marginalized groups in the months following his election. My findings were partly consistent with my hypotheses, and in this way, align with previous research that suggests exposure to bigotry and exclusionary policies may undermine the well-being of marginalized groups (Hatzenbuehler, 2017).

These results also suggest being targeted across multiple identity domains may have a compounding effect on sociopolitical distress. Specifically, students with just one targeted marginalized identity experienced more Trump-related distress than those who held none, and students with two or more targeted marginalized identities experienced the highest Trump-related distress. My findings point to the possibility that the stress of being targeted by public bigotry and exclusionary policies may be amplified when individuals are threatened across multiple identity domains. Thus, results of the current study are consistent with other findings that suggest individuals who belong to multiple marginalized social identity groups must contend with intersecting systems of oppression, which can have a noxious effect on well-being (Azmitia, Syed, & Radmacher, 2008).

I found support for my hypothesis that greater Trump-related distress was associated with an increase in symptoms of anxiety in the months following his election. Moreover, pre-existing symptoms of anxiety and depression were not significant predictors of students' level of Trump-related distress, strengthening my confidence in my interpretation of my results regarding the potential role of Trump-related distress in driving an increase in symptoms of anxiety. However, I did not find an association between Trump-related distress and depressive symptoms.

To make sense of these inconsistent findings, it is important to consider potential differences in the nature and etiology of anxious versus depressive symptoms. Although stressful events have been associated with increased symptoms of depression (e.g., sadness, feelings of hopelessness), the toll of a major sociopolitical shift may take time to manifest in this way (Cohen et al., 2007). In the current study, participants completed surveys approximately two months after Trump's inauguration. Heightened anxiety related to distressing sociopolitical shifts may be observed more quickly than resulting symptoms of depression, perhaps, in part, because feelings of stress can mirror symptoms of anxiety (Franklin, Saab, & Mansuy, 2012). Moreover, the effects of distressing sociopolitical shifts tend to become more deeply rooted and far-reaching over time, especially to the extent that exclusionary policies become instantiated. Initial distress related to Trump's election may have been fueled by feelings of uncertainty as marginalized individuals anticipated threat to their and their community's safety. As uncertainties become realities, individuals may experience increased feelings of helplessness or hopelessness, which are more closely tied to depressive symptoms (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). In addition, chronic stress—such as coping with ongoing discriminatory treatment—has been associated with higher levels of depression (Marin et al., 2011). Therefore, future research is needed to investigate the potential influence of Trump-related distress on depressive symptoms in the months and years following his election.

An additional possible explanation for this pattern of findings may have to do with how marginalized students reacted to the Trump presidency. It is possible, for example, that students may respond to their feelings of anxiety related to the Trump presidency by engaging in acts of resistance (e.g., sociopolitical activism; Taft, 2010). While participating in activism may, in part, be an attempt to cope with feelings of anxiety and gain social connection, it may be an added

stressor (Brashers, Haas, Neidig, & Rintamaki, 2002). It is possible that sociopolitical activism could fail to alleviate anxiety, especially as many forms of activism (e.g., protesting) can further compromise the safety of marginalized individuals (Chen & Gorski, 2015). However, engaging in sociopolitical activism could yield some mental health benefits as a consequence of providing a sense of community with similar others and instilling hope that activist efforts will result in social change (Gilster, 2012). Nevertheless, social change occurs slowly. If students engage in resistance and yet do not see social change, feelings of hopelessness and depression may set in over time. Future studies are needed to identify how marginalized individuals are coping with Trump-related distress and the extent to which participating in various forms of sociopolitical activism may affect individuals' mental health.

There has been an uptick in discrimination and violence toward marginalized groups on college campuses since Trump's entrance into the political arena (Anti-Defamation League, 2019), with many perpetrators of hate crimes naming Trump during their actions (SPLC, 2017). Acts of bigotry on college campuses can decrease students' sense of belonging and make them feel unsafe (Stotzer & Hossellman, 2012). Thus, one mechanism through which distress in response to Trump's presidency may be fueling greater anxiety among marginalized college students may be via the creation of a constant state of fear among marginalized students. Students with targeted marginalized identities must simultaneously contend with policy-related threats to their well-being as well as ripple effects of bigoted rhetoric from Trump that appear to have made blatant displays of bigotry and acts of violence more common (Crandall et al., 2018). Anxiety symptoms have been found to impair social functioning, academic achievement, and work performance (Breslau, Lane, Sampson, & Kessler, 2008). Furthermore, among individuals who are experiencing subclinical levels of anxiety, a stressful life event can "tip the scales"

toward more severe symptoms that impair functioning (Ormel, Oldehinkel, & Brilman, 2001). Symptoms of anxiety have been linked to an array of later adverse outcomes such as poorer physical health, fewer supportive relationships, and financial instability (Barrera & Norton, 2009; Zvolensky, Garey, & Bakhshaie, 2017). Thus, participants' increased symptoms of anxiety may have long-term consequences for their well-being and achievement. Notably, participants in this sample showed fairly elevated anxiety symptoms, with the sample's average score being above the clinical cutoff value for "mild anxiety" and the size of the standard deviation indicating that a non-trivial number of participants (e.g., approximately 20% across study timepoints) were above the clinical cutoff value for "moderate anxiety" (Beck & Steer, 1990). Thus, even though this was a non-clinical sample, I documented elevated rates of anxiety among participants across study timepoints.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The current study is limited by the use of a single-item measure to assess Trump-related distress. Although my findings are situated within a substantial body of work that has documented the noxious effects of bigotry and sociopolitical exclusion, I was unable to identify established multi-item measures assessing responses to the election of political figures who may pose threats to individual safety. I also was limited in my ability to investigate mechanisms through which being a member of multiple marginalized identity groups was associated with Trump-related distress. Future research might extend these findings by investigating whether Trump-related distress among individuals who hold multiple marginalized identities indeed stemmed from increases in discriminatory treatment (Helms, Jernigan, & Mascher, 2005), other forms of harassment, or broader concerns about safety. Due to a smaller sample size, I was unable to implement more sophisticated analytic approaches to assess for the ways in which

intersecting social identities may influence participants' level of Trump-related distress. Scholars have advocated for multidimensional approaches which include testing multiplicative effects alongside additive effects (Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016; McGrath & Johnson, 2003). Yet, as noted by Bowleg (2008), interaction effects may be particularly difficult to detect in intersectionality research. Moreover, scholars have noted that both multiplicative and additive approaches to some extent rely on the notion that social identities are independent and separable (Weber & Parra-Medina, 2003). Accordingly, quantitative methods may be best used alongside qualitative methods in true intersectionality research (Cuadraz & Uttal, 1999). The current study was a first step toward documenting an association between holding one or more marginalized identities and Trump-related distress. This study employed an additive approach and did not incorporate a true intersectionality framework. Future research could build on these findings by implementing a qualitative approach in addition to a quantitative approach to better understand how intersectional identities may contribute to Trump-related distress and corresponding changes in mental health (Bowleg, 2008).

Other study limitations include a reliance on self-report data and the observational nature of the study. Although a complete reliance on self-report data introduces the possibility of shared method variance as a threat to study validity, self-report seemed to be the ideal method for learning more about individuals' personal reactions to the Trump presidency, the social identities with which they identify, and their mental health. Similarly, while a purely observational study poses limits to my ability to draw causal inferences, an observational approach seems the most appropriate given the phenomenon under investigation. Moreover, the observational approach is likely to yield greater external validity than a laboratory-based simulation study. I also leveraged each individual's previous trajectory of anxiety and depressive symptoms to estimate a deviation

score in the final wave of data, which may strengthen the ability to draw meaningful inferences from my findings.

Although results were largely consistent with previous research and early evidence Regarding the potentially deleterious effect of the Trump presidency on the mental health of marginalized groups, more research should be done with diverse samples to determine the extent to which these findings replicate. Though the emerging adults in this sample of underrepresented college students indeed tend to face prejudice and discrimination that can negatively affect their life prospects, they also may represent a group of marginalized individuals who have more access to social capital and opportunity relative to other marginalized demographic groups (e.g., their same-aged counterparts who are not pursuing higher education; Ovink & Veazey, 2011). The fact that I found an association between Trump-related distress and increases in anxiety symptoms among this study sample speaks to the potential potency of my findings. Moreover, it also is worth noting that this study utilized data from a larger longitudinal study focused on the experiences of underrepresented college students. For that reason, this sample did not include more privileged college students (i.e., students who are White, upper-middle class, and continuing-generation college-going) who constitute the majority of students enrolled at PWIs. Utilizing a sample of students that was representative of the typical student body at a PWI would have likely amplified my findings. Thus, the findings from the current study may be an underestimate of the true nature of harm that marginalized students may be experiencing from the Trump presidency.

Implications and Conclusions

Overall, my findings support previous evidence suggesting that a shift in sociopolitical circumstances that normalizes identity-based prejudice and promulgates bigotry may be harmful

to those who possess targeted marginalized identities. Mental health concerns are considered an economic burden to society (Trautmann, Rehm, & Wittchen, 2016), and are costly on an individual level (e.g., poorer overall functioning). Furthermore, research suggests that the psychological toll of marginalization may function to perpetuate existing health disparities (Bambra et al., 2010). Notably, the results of this study may hold important implications for administrators at PWIs seeking to better support underrepresented students at their institutions. Given that underrepresented students were likely facing marginalizing experiences prior to the entrance of the Trump administration, it is worth considering the ways in which the level of sociopolitical toxicity that may have been induced by the Trump presidency could exacerbate the stressors with which underrepresented students were already contending (Gin, Martínez-Alemán, Rowan-Kenyon, & Hottell, 2017).

In a time when bigotry and discrimination may be dismissed or normalized by political leaders, marginalized students may wish to connect with others who share their experiences. Previous research has demonstrated that underrepresented college students can benefit from relationships that provide validation and support related to marginalization (Griffith, Hurd, & Hussain, 2017; Hurd, Albright, Wittrup, Negrete, & Billingsley, 2018; Rendón, 1994, 2002). A variety of approaches may be implemented to achieve this goal. Administrators at PWIs can prioritize recruiting and hiring more diverse faculty and staff; recruiting and admitting more diverse undergraduate and graduate students; training faculty and staff to more effectively work with diverse students; and creating opportunities to foster supportive relationships between marginalized students and their peers, faculty, and staff (Arao & Clemens, 2013). Moreover, universities can take proactive steps to ensure all students have access to culturally responsive and competent mental health services (Brach & Fraserirector, 2000), which have been associated

with better outcomes among clients from marginalized backgrounds (Griner & Smith, 2006). Additionally, faculty and staff could receive trainings specific to the ways in which the current sociopolitical climate may be harming students (e.g., how an uptick in immigration raids may affect students' sense of safety and uncertainty about the future), and learn more about ways to support students and their communities (e.g., "know your rights" trainings) as interventions tailored to specific stressors may be the most effective in addressing problems and reducing distress. Finally, institutions of higher education could do more to combat toxic climates on their campuses. Incidents of bias on college and university campuses have surged since Trump's election. Institutions of higher education can implement zero-tolerance policies for acts of bigotry on campus; require courses that properly attend to issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion; institute intergroup dialogue programs; and implement bystander interventions to reduce incidents of bias on their campuses.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Key Study Variables

Variable	Response Scale	*M*	*SD*	*α*
Trump-related distress	0 – 10	6.66	2.90	
Total targeted identities	0 – 4	1.51	0.80	
Political ideology	0 – 4	1.26	0.91	
Stressful life events	0 – 17	0.55	0.88	
Anxiety symptoms				
Fall 2013	0 – 63	11.24	9.56	.91
Spring 2014	0 – 63	10.50	9.76	.92
Spring 2015	0 – 63	11.92	10.46	.92
Spring 2016	0 – 63	10.56	9.59	.92
Spring 2017	0 – 63	11.04	10.36	.93
Depressive symptoms				
Fall 2013	0 – 60	10.93	8.64	.91
Spring 2014	0 – 60	10.51	9.12	.92
Spring 2015	0 – 60	11.33	9.71	.92
Spring 2016	0 – 60	10.43	9.16	.92
Spring 2017	0 – 60	9.89	9.27	.92

Table 2

Correlations among Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1. Trump-related distress																		
2. Black	.11																	
3. Latinx	-.07	-.27																
4. Women	.25*	.06	-.06															
5. Muslim	.10	.08	-.14*	-.05														
6. LGBTQ+	.16*	.01	.02	.03	-.10													
7. Number of targeted identities	.26*	.49*	.31*	.56*	.17*	.43*												
8. Anxiety symptoms Fall '13	.04	-.02	.02	.17*	-.05	.06	.10											
9. Anxiety symptoms Spr '14	.12*	.00	.05	.16*	-.10	.14*	.15*	.59*										
10. Anxiety symptoms Spr '15	.16*	-.02	.09	.14*	-.06	.18*	.18*	.51*	.66*									
11. Anxiety symptoms Spr '16	.12	-.07	.04	.07	-.05	.14*	.07	.50*	.60*	.60*								
12. Anxiety symptoms Spr '17	.23*	.06	.02	.06	-.07	.20*	.15*	.40*	.49*	.62*	.66*							

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
13. Depressive symptoms Fall '13	.03	.00	-.05	.13*	.05	.14*	.12*	.57*	.39*	.34*	.33*	.25*						
14. Depressive symptoms Spr '14	.05	-.01	-.04	.08	-.04	.13*	.07	.42*	.48*	.41*	.37*	.33*	.75*					
15. Depressive symptoms Spr '15	.11	.02	.03	.16*	.05	.13*	.18*	.40*	.42*	.61*	.40*	.43*	.58*	.62*				
16. Depressive symptoms Spr '16	-.01	.00	-.05	.06	.04	.11*	.07	.33*	.37*	.42*	.59*	.48*	.52*	.57*	.63*			
17. Depressive symptoms Spr '17	.10	.05	-.02	-.01	-.05	.14*	.06	.25*	.34*	.43*	.45*	.64*	.41*	.56*	.55*	.68*		
18. Political ideology	-.53*	-.25*	.05	-.06	-.15*	-.23*	-.29*	-.03	-.11	-.15*	-.03	-.17*	-.06	-.07	-.07	-.02	-.10	
19. Stressful events Spr '17	.06	.22*	-.04	.04	-.03	.01	.12*	.13*	.09	.11	.08	.16*	.07	.02	.04	.10	.13*	-.10

*$p < .05$

Table 3

Comparisons of Trump-related Distress by Number of Targeted Identities

Total	n	M	SD
None	37	4.54a	3.37
One	127	6.26b	3.08
Two or more	174	7.34c	2.40

Note: Means that do not share subscripts differ at $p < .05$ based on Tukey post-hoc comparisons

Table 4

Political Ideology, Stressful Events, Trump Distress, and Deviations from Predicted Anxiety and Depressive Symptoms

	Anxiety symptoms				Depressive symptoms			
	b (SE)	β	t	p	b (SE)	β	t	p
(Intercept)	2.63 (0.95)		2.77	.01*	0.62 (1.05)		0.58	.56
Political ideology	-1.80 (.56)	-0.18	-3.21	< .01*	-0.63 (.41)	-0.10	-1.52	.13
Stressful events	1.20 (.58)	0.12	2.06	.04*	0.56 (.43)	0.07	1.29	.20
				$R^2 = .051$				$R^2 = .014$
(Intercept)	-1.59 (2.06)		-0.77	.44	-1.18 (1.96)		-0.60	.55
Political ideology	-1.05 (.66)	-0.11	-1.60	.11	-0.36 (.49)	-0.05	-0.74	.46
Stressful events	1.18 (.57)	0.12	2.06	.04*	0.55 (.43)	0.07	1.29	.20
Trump-related distress	0.49 (.21)	0.16	2.38	.02*	0.18 (.16)	0.08	1.23	.26
				$R^2 = .073$				$R^2 = .019$
				$\Delta R^2 = .022$				$\Delta R^2 = .005$

Note: Means that do not share subscripts differ at $p < .05$ based on Tukey post-hoc comparisons
* $p < .05$ *Note*. Positive deviation scores indicate higher-than-predicted symptoms of anxiety or depression in Spring of 2017.
Political ideology was coded such that lower values indicate more conservative political views.

ELEMENTS OF PAPER 2

Activism, social support, and Trump-related distress: Associations with mental health

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Abstract

Trump and his administration's proposed exclusionary policies and use of derogatory rhetoric may be particularly concerning to underrepresented college students. Identity-related stressors may contribute to anxiety as students consider the ways in which discriminatory experiences may negatively influence their future (e.g., employment opportunities; Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). In the face of sociopolitical distress, individuals may engage in activism as a way to resist oppressive structures and restore a sense of agency. However, activism the demands of activism may deplete social and emotional resources and increase exposure to distressing aspects of the sociopolitical climate (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001). The current study examined whether activism, when combined with greater peer support, might offset the noxious influence of Trump-related distress on mental health. Analyses revealed that Trump-related distress and activism contributed to heightened anxiety, while peer support did not serve as a protective factor. Findings speak to the possibility that underrepresented college students engaging in activism require resources and supportive structures beyond peer support to inoculate them against the potential harm of the Trump presidency.

Introduction

The election of Donald Trump marked a sociopolitical shift that may have been anxiety provoking for underrepresented college students (i.e., first generation college students, students from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds). During his presidential campaign and early presidency, Donald Trump espoused rhetoric and proposed policies that may exacerbate existing inequality (DeVylder, 2017; Glied & Frank, 2017). Underrepresented college students may have experienced heightened distress as they anticipated the potential future implications of the Trump administration. Activism is one way that individuals have historically responded to threatening sociopolitical changes (McVeigh & Smith, 1999; Szymanski & Lewis, 2015). Unsurprisingly, Trump's election to the presidency was followed by a surge of activist demonstrations (Kitch, 2018). Notably, college students represented a substantial proportion of attendees and leaders of post-election activist movements (Reynolds & Mayweather, 2017).

Young people have historically been key players in advancing important legislative changes such as school desegregation and the legalization of same-sex marriage (Joseph, 2013; Kohstalll, 2015; Munoz, 1989; Rudy, 1996). In addition to effecting social change, activism may promote mental health by facilitating social connection, empowerment, and increasing one's sense of personal control (McClurg, 2008; Taft, 2010). However, research investigating activists' mental health is limited and has yielded inconsistent results (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995; Lorenzini, 2015). While activism has historically contributed to meaningful improvements to societies (Shragge, 2013; Doetsch-Kidder, 2012), there may be a personal toll associated with activism (Sztompka, 2004). Activism, for example, may deplete the emotional and social resources needed to cope with stress, increasing vulnerability to symptoms of anxiety and

depression (Brashers et al., 2002). The inconsistent pattern of associations between activism and mental health may be explained by the extent to which other promotive factors are present in activists' lives. It appears that accessing a supportive network of peers through activist engagements or friends (even if those friends are not similarly involved) might prevent or reduce some of the psychological costs of activism. In general, social support has been found to improve stress tolerance (Iwasaki, Bartlett, Mackay, Mactavish, & Ristoclk, 2008). In turn, social support may even bolster the resources needed for individuals to experience psychological benefits from activism. In particular, emotional and appraisal support from peers may offset the mental health consequences of the joint presence of Trump-related distress. The current study pursued this line of inquiry by investigating whether peer support may condition the nature of the interactive effects of political distress and activism on mental health.

Underrepresented College Students and the Trump Presidency

Evidence suggests that the Trump presidency may be distressing for members of marginalized groups (McKee, Greer, & Stuckler, 2017; Ravitz, 2016). Trump and his administration proposed exclusionary policies and used biased rhetoric that may have consequences for historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minority underrepresented college students (Konrad, 2018; Matsuda, 2018). Some of Trump's proposed policies (e.g., revoking the Affordable Care Act) may have consequences for lower-income students' financial security (McKee, Greer, & Stuckler, 2017). In general, sociopolitical shifts that pose new threats to individuals' status have been associated with increased symptoms of anxiety and depression (Ford & Airhinbuwa, 2010; Hatzenbuehler, 2017). Therefore, the Trump presidency may have been stressful among underrepresented students who also must contend with the demands of

college and additional social-identity-related stressors pertaining to their underrepresented status at a PWI (e.g., discrimination; Nienhusser, Vega, & Carquin, 2016).

Underrepresented students who entered college during emerging adulthood may experience heightened vulnerability to mental health concerns given the strain posed by discrimination on campus and the typical academic and social demands of college (Patel, Flisher, Hetrick, & McGorry, 2007). Mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression are prevalent among college students. The American College Health Association (2016) found that 60% of students experienced overwhelming anxiety in the previous year, and 40% had experienced depressive symptoms that made it difficult to function. Moreover, some evidence suggests that racial/ethnic minority college students report poorer mental health than their white counterparts (Smith, Chesin, & Jeglic, 2013). Symptoms of anxiety and depression can weaken social relationships, reduce stress tolerance, and contribute to cognitive decline (Lee, Dickson, Conley, & Holmbeck, 2014). Symptoms of anxiety and depression can be long lasting: mental health concerns in emerging adulthood are predictive of poorer physical health and psychological functioning in adulthood (Zivin, Eisenberg, Gollust, & Golberstein, 2009). The added stress posed by the Trump presidency may have been a compounding risk factor for underrepresented college students' mental health.

Elite, predominantly white institutions (PWIs) tend to replicate systems of inequality in the United States. Discrimination and classism are well-documented challenges experienced by underrepresented college students at PWIs (Wei et al., 2010). Such marginalizing experiences on campus have been found to be harmful to underrepresented college students' mental health (Eisenberg et al., 2013, Wei et al., 2010). Research suggests that racial/ethnic minority and lower-income students may experience more barriers to their future career than white students as

a result of structural inequality (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005; Metz, Fouad, & Ihle-Helledy, 2009). Trump's biased rhetoric and exclusionary policies may reinforce existing career barriers and undermine underrepresented students' ability to reach their aspirations. Emerging adults tend to be particularly future-oriented (Arnett, 2000; Lapsley & Hardy, 2017). Anticipating structural barriers related to one's social identity or economic status may compound normative concerns about the future (Furlong, Woodman, & Wyn, 2011). Feeling as though one has limited control over the future may produce feelings of helplessness (Duffy, 2010). Notably, hopelessness and lower perceived control have been implicated in symptoms of anxiety and depression (Polanco-Roman & Miranda, 2013; Salami, Temilola, Walker, & Beach, 2017).

Activism and Mental Health

Trump's campaign and election brought renewed attention to ongoing issues of identity-based bias and oppression (Jagsi, 2017; Oliver & Rahn, 2016). Accordingly, post-election political protests centered on preserving the rights of those who hold marginalized social identities. Activism is a proactive strategy used by college students (and the general citizenry) to address injustice (Hope & Spencer, 2017; Klandermans, 1997). On- and off-campus activist movements have the potential to engender more equitable conditions for current and future generations (Altbach & Cohen, 1990; Berger, 2000; Boren, 2013). Activism may also have individual benefits (Marzana et al., 2011). Participating in collective goal-oriented activities (such as activist movements) may increase resilience to external stressors (Watts & Flanagan, 2007). Individuals who felt most affected by the Trump presidency (i.e., whose rights may be in jeopardy) may have become more motivated to engage in activism (Cronin et al., 2012; Hope, Keels, & Durkee, 2018). Indeed, distress related to injustice has been called a "mobilizing force" (Dyke & Soule, 2002). Engaging in activism can be a way to exercise agency when one's future

security is at risk (Hajdukowkski-Ahmed et al., 1999). Actively working against large-scale

forces may be an empowering experience that might reduce the extent to which those forces feel

overwhelming (Flanagan et al, 2007; Musolf, 2017). In turn, participating in activism may

protect against the psychologically damaging feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness related

to oppressive circumstances (Doetsch-Kidder, 2012).

Intentionally resisting systems of oppression may help individuals extricate themselves

from society's pernicious messages directed toward their identity or community (Braun-

Lewensohn, 2016). In fact, some young activists have referred to their work as "transformative"

(Cabrera, Meza, Romero, & Rodriguez, 2013). Although social change may occur very slowly,

activists may benefit from seeing small changes resulting from their efforts. Observing change

can provide a sense of self-efficacy and meaning to activists' work (Antonovsky, 1987; Youniss,

2006). Feeling as though one is doing meaningful work is considered a key element of a

psychologically healthy life (Youniss, 2006). Taken together, it seems that for some individuals,

activism may buffer against the psychological consequences of distressing sociopolitical

circumstances (Renn & Bilodeau, 2005). However, some research findings indicate that activism

holds the potential to take a psychological toll (Hope et al., 2018; Kovan & Dirkx, 2003;

Maslach & Gomes, 2006). In fact, some scholars posit activism may be a stressor in its own

right. Specifically, it appears activism may be psychologically taxing in the joint presence of

sociopolitical distress (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001). This effect may be pronounced among activists

who advocate for social causes such as racial equality (compared to causes such as

environmental issues) with direct personal repercussions (Maslach & Gomes, 2006). This may,

in part, occur because activism tends to lead to greater knowledge about the depth and breadth of

systems of oppression. In turn, social justice activists may experience intensified distress (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001; Plyler, 2006).

As Gorski and Chen (2015) note, activism involves "cultivating and maintaining awareness of large and overwhelming social problems" (p. 43). Activists from marginalized groups must concurrently cope with the oppressive circumstances they are working to dismantle (Leondar-Wright, 2014; Szymanski, 2015). Participating in activist movements may deepen one's awareness of the personal consequences of oppression, making existing concerns feel even more overwhelming (Nienhusser, Vega, & Carquin, 2016). Thus, the mobilizing intensity of sociopolitical distress may interact with activism to produce or exacerbate psychological distress. Longstanding systems of oppression are not quickly altered. Activists working to address institutional inequality may find themselves discouraged by slow or limited progress (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001). Believing one's work is not meaningful may make persistent effort even more psychologically costly (Baaker et al., 2000). Yet limited research exists on the potential interaction between sociopolitical distress and activism.

Research on human service occupational stress may provide a useful framework for understanding how sociopolitical distress and activism may interact to influence mental health. Social justice activism parallels some aspects of the high-effort—low reward circumstances of certain human service jobs (e.g., nursing; Karasek & Theorell, 1990). Individuals in human service fields are often intrinsically motivated to put high effort into their emotionally demanding work. Similarly, a sense of personal responsibility and concerns about social injustice appear to drive activist participation (Haste, 2010; Haste & Hogan, 2006). Baaker and colleagues (2000) found nurses' intrinsically motivated effort interacted with the imbalance of effort to reward ratio to predict emotional exhaustion. Researchers posited this phenomenon may be

driven by the potentially depleting experience of engaging in difficult, personally meaningful

work and observing few benefits in return (Bakker et al., 2000).

The high effort-low reward theoretical framework would suggest that limited "reward"

for activists' high level of effort—for slow or minimal social change—may compound the

sociopolitical distress that activists may be attempting to neutralize (Buunk & Schaufeli, 1993;

Shields, 2008). Observing a lack of progress may heighten the perception that institutional

inequality is intractable (Shields, 2008). While a commitment to activism may be driven, in part,

by a desire to restore a sense of personal control, this lack of forward motion may instead

compound psychological distress (Kovan & Dirkx, 2003). Notably, research has found that

social resources may offset the psychological costs of high effort—low reward conditions among

those who engage in emotionally demanding work (Buunk & Schaufeli, 1993; Johnson & Hall,

1988). Indeed, research suggests that social support may be a critical protective factor for

activists' mental health (Gorski, 2018). Specifically, social support may protect activists' mental

health by reducing the extent to which the stress of activism exacerbates the negative

psychological consequences of sociopolitical distress. An abundance of social support may have

the potential to create circumstances wherein activism could neutralize the harmful effects of

sociopolitical distress on mental health.

Peer Social Support

Underrepresented college students may be embedded in contexts in which their peers

seem apathetic to social injustice (Gonzalez, 2015). This perception can contribute to feelings of

alienation, and in turn, psychological distress. Having others dismiss the value of activists'

work—either explicitly or implicitly—may be a significant source of emotional exhaustion

(Gorski, 2018). Racial justice activists in one study expressed that some of their relationships had

deteriorated as a result of their commitment to their work (Gorski, 2018). Activists attributed these ruptures to friends and family members who did not "understand their passion," or who felt their commitment was "too much." Moreover, they expressed that the loss or deterioration of relationships outside of their activist circles lessened their access to support when they needed it most (Gorski, 2018). Further, some activists may experience distress inflicted by members of their own social circle of activists. Activists have described feeling inadequate (e.g., "not doing enough") compared to their peers (Maslach & Gomes, 2006; Plyler, 2006). Taken together, findings point to the possibility that inadequate peer support might compound the potential psychological toll of activists' work.

Although research is limited, some findings indicate that activists may intentionally seek social support as part of their self-care (Chiang, Hunter, & Yeh, 2004; Iwasaki et al., 2008). Supportive relationships might improve one's ability to cope with the psychological toll of sociopolitical distress and activism (Gorski, 2018; Vaccaro & Mena, 2011). Emotional and appraisal support from peers might be particularly meaningful, given the nature of activism-related stressors (e.g., invalidating messages and alienation). Peers might offer emotional support to activists who need a space to process difficult experiences related to their work. Healthy social relationships tend to transmit messages that one is worthy and capable (i.e., appraisal support), thereby protecting against symptoms of anxiety and depression when external messages suggest otherwise (Siegrist, 1996; 2001).

Current research findings point to the possibility that activists benefit from supportive peer relationships both within and outside their activist circles. Activists' social circle of like-minded peers may serve as a supportive microcosm within the potentially alienating environment of a PWI campus (Goode-Cross & Good, 2008; Iwasaki et al., 2008; Renn, 2007). Activism

often requires collaborative planning and ongoing dialogue to reach a consensus about the best

way to tackle complex social problems (Bokeno & Gantt, 2000). Working collaboratively to

address a mutual goal may foster a deeper emotional connection with peers (Black, 2005). As

noted previously, activists typically cultivate a greater knowledge of the systems that marginalize

them. Over time, activists may feel as though they are working against immovable forces, which

can undermine the sense that one's effort is meaningful (Shields, 2008). However, the ongoing

dialogue of activists may increase one's understanding of the structural forces that uphold

injustice (i.e., critical consciousness; Black, 2005). Collectively working to develop critical

consciousness can serve as a form of "liberation" from societal messages that people who hold

marginalized identities are less worthy or capable than others (McAdam, 1982). To counter these

messages, activists may offer appraisal support by affirming the value of marginalized social

identities. Research suggests that activists tend to engage in "meaning-making" to collectively

cope with frustration when their efforts do not yield change (Shields, 2008). This process may

foster an emotionally supportive community, protecting against the feelings of helplessness that

can result from attempting to address threatening and entrenched societal problems (Black,

2005).

Regardless of whether one's friends are also engaged in social change efforts, they may

be well positioned to counter toxic messages directed towards activists (Crossley, 2008). First,

appraisal support from peers may serve to affirm the value of activists' work (Iwasaki et al.,

2008). Studies suggest that activists who are personally invested in their work (e.g., distressed by

the sociopolitical circumstances they are resisting) but feel ineffective are more likely to

experience burnout (Marwell & Oliver, 1993). Peers who are not engaged in the same level of

activism may have enough distance to help students see their "small wins." This perspective

might enhance one's locus of control and cultivate hope (Ludden, 2011). Indeed, social support appears to be closely linked to feeling hopeful about the future (Thoits, 1994). Hopefulness appears to be a critical aspect of persisting under discouraging circumstances, and can be protective for one's mental health (Cohen-Chen, van Zomeren, & Halperin, 2015).

Additionally, peers outside of activist circles may offer emotional support to the benefit of activists' mental health (Tindall, 2008). Vaccaro and Mena (2011) found that queer college activists of color who possessed sufficient social support outside of their activist circles experienced fewer depressive symptoms and found their work to be more restorative than those who felt they lacked support. Peers who are not engaged in activism may be able to offer emotional support for personal concerns, which may receive less attention in activist circles which are working for the collective good (Radin, 2006). Managing stress more effectively in one's personal life may reduce the extent to which the stress of activism exacerbates the psychological toll of existing sociopolitical distress (Fox-Cardamone, 2000; Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001). Moreover, peer support may increase the potential for activism to be a rewarding and personally beneficial activity that can offset the harmful association between sociopolitical distress and mental illness.

Current Study

Trump and members of his administration engaged in biased rhetoric and promised policies that threaten the wellbeing of many Americans (Jagsi, 2017). The entrance of the Trump administration appears to have been a significant stressor for underrepresented college students (Albright & Hurd, 2019). Research suggests that distress related to sociopolitical circumstances can be harmful to mental health (Ford & Airhinbuwa, 2010). In response to Trump's election to the presidency, there was an uptick in activist movements (Kitch, 2018). Extant literature points

to the possibility that activism and sociopolitical concerns may interact to influence mental health (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001). However, research investigating associations among activism, sociopolitical distress, and mental health has produced inconsistent findings. The nature of the interaction between sociopolitical distress and activism may be contingent on a third dimension: social support (Huckfeldt, 2001; Iwasaki et al., 2008). The current study sought to build upon previous work by investigating whether emotional and appraisal support from friends might condition the nature of the interactive effects between sociopolitical distress and activism on underrepresented college students' psychological distress.

Previous research findings suggest that personality factors (specifically, extraversion) and socioeconomic status may influence social network size as well as the likelihood that a person will participate in activism (Marien, Hooghe, & Quintelier, 2010). In addition, individuals who are more extraverted or come from higher-income families tend to display fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression. It appears that one way in which activism may take a psychological toll is by depleting resources needed to manage other obligations (Brashers et al., 2002). Extraverted students may find the social demands of activism less emotionally taxing. While all participants in the current study were underrepresented students, their financial resources varied. College students from lower income families may experience greater mental health concerns (Golberstein, 2015). Moreover, socioeconomic status may influence the extent to which activism depletes the resources needed to sustain activist engagement without suffering psychological consequences. For instance, students from lower-income backgrounds may be required to work to support themselves and their families, leaving less time and energy for activism. Engaging in activism may hinder lower-income students' ability to meet the competing demands of school, work, and relationships without compromising their mental health. Including family income and

extraversion as covariates in the current study strengthens the ability to draw conclusions about how sociopolitical distress, activism, and peer support may interact to influence mental health.

Methods

Participants

Participants in the current study were 340 underrepresented college students attending a predominantly white institution in the southeastern United States. Eligible first-year students were identified during the first semester of the 2013 - 2014 academic year using admissions records. First-year students were invited to participate in the study if they were first generation college students, eligible for the full amount of the federal Pell Grant, or a member of one or more historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minority groups (i.e., Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander). Demographic information was collected in the first wave of the study using admissions records and survey items. In the first time point, 69% of students identified as women, and the average age of participants was 18.11 years ($SD = .37$ years). The sample composition included Black/African American (29%), White (23%), multiracial (20%), Asian (17%), Hispanic/Latino (10%) and American Indian/Alaskan Native (< 1%). Socioeconomic status was assessed using participants' estimates of their family's total annual household income on a 12-point Likert scale. Total annual household income ranged from less than $4,900 to more than $105,000. Based on participants' family size, 15% of participants came from households at or below their state's poverty level. Sixty-one percent of all participants came from families whose income was at or below 200% of their home state's poverty level. Forty percent of students were part of two or more eligibility groups (e.g., historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minority and first-generation college student).

Procedure

The university's Institutional Review Board approved the study prior to recruitment of participants [The SEASONS (Students' Entrance, Adjustment, Social Outcomes, and Next Steps) Study; Protocol #2013034500]. Eligible participants were identified using admissions records. Of the 775 eligible first-year students, 340 participated in the study (44% response rate). Eligible students who expressed interest in participating in the study came to the research lab to provide consent and complete the survey. For participants under the age of 18, consent was obtained from a parent/guardian and students provided written assent. To further ensure confidentiality, a Certificate of Confidentiality was obtained from the National Institutes of Health.

After consent was obtained, participants completed surveys on iPads. Participants completed surveys in the Fall and Spring semesters of their first year of college (2013 - 2014 academic year) and in the midpoint of each consecutive spring semester thereafter (Spring 2015, 2016, and 2017), yielding a total of five time points. After the first time point, students who were studying abroad, taking a leave of absence, or no longer enrolled in the university were still invited to participate and were emailed a link to the survey. All participants were included in the current study, regardless of their enrollment status. During the first academic year, participants received a $20 gift card, and the amount of compensation increased by $5 each consecutive year. The retention rate across all five time points was greater than 90%.

Measures

Descriptive statistics for study variables are reported in Table 1.

Trump-related distress. Distress related to the Trump presidency was assessed with a single item ("When you think about the Donald Trump presidency, how distressed are you?") presented on a 10-point scale. Response options ranged from 0 (not at all) to 10 (extremely).

Activism. Frequency of activism (i.e., political participation) in the previous 6 months was assessed using items drawn from political participation surveys (Krueger, 2002) on an 8-point Likert scale with options ranging from 0 (not at all) to 7 (every day or almost every day). Participants were asked to report how often they engaged in 13 different types of political activities, for example, participating in a protest or rally, attending a political event or meeting, or expressing their political views on social media. Responses to these items were averaged to create a composite variable for study analyses. Cronbach's alpha for this measure indicated high reliability ($\alpha = .93$).

Peer social support. Participants were asked about the frequency of social support they received from their peers during the previous 30 days using a modified version of the Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors (ISSB; Barrera, 1981). The ISSB is composed of subscales that measure frequency of emotional and appraisal support receipt. The emotional support subscale measured how frequently a supportive individual offered comfort (e.g., "Over the past 30 days, how often has this person listened to you talk about your private feelings?"). The appraisal subscale measured how frequently a support provider offered their perspective on how an individual was performing or behaving (e.g., "Over the past 30 days, how often has this person let you know you did something well?"). Items are presented on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 4 (every day or almost every day). For the purposes of analyses, scores for the two scales were averaged to create a composite variable. Cronbach's alpha indicated high reliability across both scales ($\alpha = .93$).

Depressive symptoms. Participants completed the Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II) at each time point (Beck, Steer, & Brown 1996). The BDI-II is a 20-item instrument used to measure depressive symptoms over the previous two weeks. The BDI-II was modified to exclude one item assessing suicidality given that including this item would have altered the confidentiality agreement with participants. Participants were instructed, "Pick out the one statement in each group that best describes the way you have been feeling during the past two weeks, including today." Survey items are presented on a 4-point scale and are grouped by type of symptom (e.g., feelings of sadness). For example, feelings of sadness are assessed with response options ranging from 0 ("I do not feel sad") to 3 ("I am so sad or unhappy that I can't stand it"). Responses to all 20 items were summed to create a composite variable. According to the BDI-II manual, scores of 14 – 19 are indicative of mild depression, and scores greater than 20 are indicative of moderate depression. Cronbach's alpha for these items indicated high reliability at both time points (Spring 2016 α = .92; Spring 2017 α = .92).

Anxiety symptoms. Participants completed the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI; Beck & Steer, 1990) at each time point. The BAI is a 21-item instrument used to measure anxiety symptoms over the prior 30 days (e.g., "Over the past 30 days, how much have you been bothered by numbness or tingling?"). Items are presented on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 3 (severely – it bothered me a lot). Responses to all items were summed to create a composite score. According to the BAI manual, scores of 10 - 16 indicate mild anxiety, and scores greater than 17 indicate moderate anxiety. Cronbach's alpha for this measure indicated high reliability at both time points (Spring 2016 α = .91; Spring 2017 α = .93).

Extraversion. The extraversion subscale of the Big Five Inventory (BFI; John & Srivastava, 1999) was used at the first time point to assess extraversion. Participants indicated

how much they agreed or disagreed with statements describing themselves as extraverted (e.g.,

outgoing/sociable). Response options ranged from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). A

composite variable was created by averaging the 8 items. Cronbach's alpha indicated high

reliability (α = .89).

Stressful life events. Stressful life events were assessed in spring of 2017 with a single

item ("Over the last 30 days, did any of the following things happen?"). Students indicated

which, if any, events (e.g., loss of a loved one) occurred over the previous 30 days. Participants

were assigned a value of 1 if they reported experiencing the stressful event, and 0 if they had not

experienced the event. Responses were summed to indicate the total number of stressful events

they experienced in the previous 30 days.

Demographic variables. Participants self-reported demographic information such as

their age, gender, race/ethnicity, and household income. A dichotomous variable was created to

represent gender in analyses, with 0 referring to "female or other" and 1 referring to "male."

Total household income at college entry was assessed using a single item ("What is your best

estimate of the total income from all persons and sources in the household in 2012?") with

response options ranging from 1 (below $4,999) to 12 ($105,000 and above) with intermediate

options increasing in increments of $9,999. Students self-reported family size, which was used to

determine whether their family's income was at or below 200% of the federal poverty line when

accounting for the number of purposes in their household. For the purposes of analyses, a

dichotomous variable was created to represent socioeconomic status, with 0 representing

students whose family income was below the poverty level, and 1 referring to students whose

family income was above the poverty level.

Data Analysis Plan

Participants' survey responses from their third and fourth spring semesters of college (2016 and 2017, respectively) were used in the current study. Of the 340 participants in the study, 319 were used in the current study. Two outliers were excluded from analyses to address bias introduced by straight-line response patterns (Swain, Weathers, & Niedrich, 2008). Given that the current study was focused on activism in response to sociopolitical distress related to the Trump presidency, participants who reported voting for Trump in the 2016 election ($n = 19$) were excluded from study analyses. Analyses were conducted in R version 3.5.0 (R Development Core Team, 2014). Full information maximum likelihood was used to handle a small amount of missing data ($< 8\%$). All continuous variables were mean-centered prior to computing interaction terms to avoid issues of multicollinearity (Aiken & West, 1991).

Extraversion, socioeconomic status (i.e., whether participants' total family income fell above or below 200% of the federal poverty level), number of stressful life events participants experienced in the prior 30 days, and gender were included in the model as covariates. To best estimate possible increases in anxiety or depressive symptoms as a consequence of interactions among the primary variables (i.e., Trump-related distress, activism, and peer support), I accounted for levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms from the previous year.

After computing descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables, I used hierarchical multiple regression to investigate a three-way interaction between Trump-related distress, activism, and peer support to predict symptoms of anxiety and depression. A multistep procedure was used. The first step investigated the influence of the covariates (i.e., extraversion, family income, stressful life events, and gender). Subsequent models included all covariates in addition to main effects, all two-way interactions, and finally, the three-way interaction term.

Results

Correlations among study variables are presented in Table 2. Trump-related distress was positively associated with activism, support from peers, and Spring 2017 anxiety symptoms. Higher frequency of activism was also associated with greater levels of peer support, anxiety at both time points, extraversion, and a greater number of stressful life events. Spring 2016 symptoms of depression and anxiety were positively correlated with Spring 2017 depression and anxiety symptoms, and negatively correlated with extraversion.

I used hierarchical multiple regression to investigate a three-way interaction between Trump-related distress, activism, and peer support to predict symptoms of anxiety and depression using two identical models. In the first step, I tested models predicting Spring 2017 symptoms after accounting for Spring 2016 symptoms and the potential effects of extraversion, family income, stressful life events, and gender. The second step of the hierarchical regression included all covariates in addition to the main effects of Trump-related distress, activism, and peer support. The third step included covariates, main effects, and all 2-way interaction terms (Trump distress X Activism, Trump distress X Peer Support, and Activism X Peer Support). The three-way interaction term was added in the final step. The results of the full models indicated that Trump-related distress was directly associated with higher symptoms of anxiety in Spring 2017 ($\beta = 0.15$, p < .05) but not depression ($\beta = 0.10$, $p = .06$). Similarly, more frequent activism was associated with higher symptoms of anxiety ($\beta = 0.13$, p < .05) but not depression ($\beta = 0.04$, $p = .55$). Peer support did not directly predict symptoms of anxiety ($\beta = 0.13$, $p = .38$) or depression ($\beta = -0.01$, $p = .83$). Finally, none of the two-way interactions (Trump Distress X Activism, Peer Support X Trump Distress, Activism X Peer Support) or the three-way interaction term (Trump Distress X Activism X Peer Support) predicted symptoms of anxiety or depression in Spring 2017.

Discussion

The current study examined whether emotional and appraisal support might condition the nature of potential interactive effects between sociopolitical distress and activism in the months following the election of Donald Trump as the forty-fifth president of the United States. I pursued this line of inquiry among a group of underrepresented students at a PWI because many underrepresented college students hold social identities targeted by Trump's rhetoric and proposed policies, and may have experienced distress related to the entrance of the Trump administration (Albright & Hurd, 2019). Historically, activism has been one way that individuals respond to distressing sociopolitical circumstances. However, activism—particularly in the context of a stressful political climate—may be psychologically taxing (Ford & Airhinbuwa, 2010).

In the current study, I expected support from friends might condition the potential interactive effects of Trump-related distress and activism, given the salience of peer relationships during the college years and the potential of activism to foster supportive peer relationships. Contrary to my hypotheses, I did not find two- or three-way interactive effects among Trump-related distress, activism, or peer emotional and appraisal support. Instead, I found direct effects between Trump-related distress and activism on symptoms of anxiety. Findings partly align with previous research, pointing to the possibility that sociopolitical distress and activism may independently influence symptoms of anxiety.

My findings suggest that underrepresented college students in this sample experienced a level of distress related to the Trump presidency that predicted higher levels of anxiety in Spring 2017 after accounting for Spring 2016 symptoms. The 2016 Trump campaign and early presidency was characterized by the use of biased rhetoric and promises of policies that are

likely to disadvantage and harm already-marginalized groups (e.g., racial/ethnic minorities, women). Previous research suggests that anticipating further marginalization as a result of sociopolitical factors can harm mental health (Scheepers, Ellemers, & Sintemaartensdijk, 2009). Moreover, research suggests that biased rhetoric in the media may serve as a "sanction" for bias, thereby increasing overt prejudice and discrimination in the general population (Steuter & Wills, 2009). Exposure to bias and discrimination has consistently been associated with adverse outcomes among targeted marginalized groups (Garcia & Sharif, 2015; Olshansky et al., 2012; Watts et al., 2013). Policies that limit the rights of marginalized groups have been found to undermine psychological wellbeing (Glasier et al., 2007; Hatzenbuehler et al., 2017). Underrepresented students at PWIs who are approaching college completion may have experienced heightened distress regarding how Trump's policies might affect their future prospects. Thus, it is unsurprising that participants in the current study experienced distress by his election to the presidency that was associated with increases in symptoms of anxiety.

I also found that more frequent participation in activism contributed to increased symptoms of anxiety. Research suggests that sociopolitical distress stemming from identity-related concerns can motivate participation in activism. Indeed, young people who hold marginalized identities (e.g., racial/ethnic minorities or LGBTQ+ students) have historically played a part in activist movements in response to major political shifts. The study sample of underrepresented college students represents a group of young adults who may be motivated to engage in activism as a result of holding marginalized social identities. Being personally affected by the forces an individual is working to dismantle may be one explanation for the association between activism and higher levels of anxiety.

There may also be individual differences in regards to the decision to respond to sociopolitical distress via engaging in activism. First, research suggests that activists may engage in more problem-focused coping than nonactivists (e.g., Brashers, Haas, Neidig, & Rintamaki, 2002). Yet, students who engage in frequent activism as a form of coping may be more often confronted with the overwhelming nature of social problems that may affect one's life prospects (Furlong, Woodman, & Wyn, 2011). Furthermore, the mental health benefits of activism may only hold true for individuals with lower baseline anxiety and fewer personal stressors (Boehnke & Wong, 2011). For individuals with higher baseline anxiety, activist endeavors may tax the social and emotional resources needed to maintain psychological wellbeing (Ford & Airhinbuwa, 2010). As a preliminary step to investigate the directionality of the association between activism and symptoms of anxiety, I conducted a *t*-test using data collected with the current study sample to determine whether those who participated in protests related to violence against women or unarmed black men in Spring 2015 (n = 145) displayed higher levels of anxiety in Spring 2016. I found that participants who had engaged in protests in 2015 had higher levels of 2016 anxiety (*M* = 12.26, *SD* = 10.41) relative to those who had not (*M* = 8.72, *SD* = 8.69; *t* (276) = -3.16, p < .05). This additional analysis, though cursory and with a less developed measure of activism, lends some additional support to my interpretation that activism may be influencing anxiety.

Previous research suggests support from peers can serve as a social resource that protects mental health in the context of stress. However, I did not find direct effects between peer support and symptoms of anxiety or depression in Spring 2017. These unexpected findings may be understood in part by considering participants' social context. Evidence suggests that activists intentionally utilize social support as a form of self-care, and therefore benefit from relationships with those who understand their motivation and support their efforts (Chiang, Hunter, & Yeh,

2004; Iwasaki et al., 2008). Notably, activists may experience pronounced distress resulting from close peers or family members who explicitly or implicitly dismiss the value of their work. For instance, activists in Gorski's (2018) study found it distressing that their loved ones—who they typically relied upon for support—criticized their involvement in activist engagements. Students distressed by the Trump presidency or engaged in activism may indeed have friends who offer frequent social support, but their friends may also attempt to be supportive by discouraging activists' efforts as they observe the psychological toll of activism. Furthermore, underrepresented students at PWIs engage regularly with white, middle-class peers who may not understand their Trump-related distress or activist efforts. Thus, friendships and social support from peers at a PWI may not adequately provide the type of support needed in the context of Trump-related distress. Moreover, social resources beyond peer relationships may be needed in the context of Trump-related distress and activism.

While I found that Trump-related distress and activism exerted direct effects on symptoms of anxiety, this pattern did not hold for symptoms of depression. These patterns of inconsistent findings may be attributed, in part, to differences in the nature and etiology of depressive symptoms versus anxiety symptoms. Participants in this study completed surveys approximately two months after the election. Anxiety symptoms may emerge more quickly after stressful life events compared to depressive symptoms (Cohen et al., 2007). In addition, feelings of acute stress can be similar to anxiety symptoms (Franklin, Saab, & Mansuy, 2012). Future research is warranted to document possible longer-term mental health consequences of the Trump presidency. If the expected consequences of the Trump presidency come to fruition, Trump-related distress may become a chronic stressor, resulting in depressive symptoms.

Similarly, the psychological toll of engaging in activism may take time to manifest in depressive symptoms. Depressive symptoms may set in after a longer period of time if individuals perceive that engaging in activism is not contributing to change. Feeling ineffective has been found to contribute to psychological distress (Kovan & Dirkx, 2003). On the other hand, while activism may be a stressor, some forms of activism may foster a sense of social affiliation and sense of purpose even though it may be stressful (Gorski, 2008). Depression is typically characterized by feelings of hopelessness and isolation. Therefore, it is possible that engaging in activism may stave off worsening symptoms of depression if individuals feel connected to other peers who engage in activism.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Several study limitations should be noted. First, I was limited in my ability to test causal relationships between the study variables and symptoms of anxiety or depression. The current study was observational and relied upon repeated self-report measures. The reliance on self-report data presents the possibility of shared method variance. Yet, self-report seems to be the best approach to assessing experiences of distress and symptoms of anxiety and depression. Research also suggests that perceptions of social support receipt may be more strongly associated with mental health outcomes than objective assessments of social support receipt (Helgeson, 1993).

The effect sizes of Trump-related distress and activism were small. Yet, researchers note that conventional benchmarks for meaningful effect sizes may be less useful in longitudinal models that account for previous levels of the outcome variable (Adachi & Willoghby, 2014). Moreover, symptoms of anxiety tend to remain relatively stable over time in early adulthood (Prenoveau et al., 2011), suggesting that any effect is noteworthy. Accounting for Spring 2016

symptoms and several control variables strengthens my confidence in my interpretation that

Trump-related distress and activism meaningfully contributed to increased symptoms of anxiety.

Another study limitation is the reliance upon a single-item measure of Trump-related

distress. To my knowledge, there are no existing multi-item measures assessing responses to

political figures whose platforms involve the use of biased rhetoric and proposed exclusionary

policies. The use of a single-item measure limits my ability to make inferences regarding the

mechanism through which Trump-related distress influenced symptoms of anxiety and

depression. For instance, concerns related to identity-related bias and discrimination might be

more salient and harmful to students' mental health than concerns about potential policy

changes. Future research might extend this work through qualitative approaches to understanding

the nature of sociopolitical distress and how specific concerns about sociopolitical changes affect

individuals' wellbeing.

Although the measure of activism included a number of activities that presumably require

fewer resources (e.g., signing a petition versus protesting), I still found a direct association

between activism and increased symptoms of anxiety in Spring 2017. Nonetheless, I am limited

in my ability to make inferences regarding the mechanisms by which activism contributed to

heightened symptoms of anxiety. Certain forms of activism might take a greater toll on

psychological well-being than others. For instance, traditional forms of collective activism may

present physical risks and heighten concerns about safety, thereby producing higher anxiety.

Activism also includes behaviors which do not require social interaction, presenting fewer

opportunities to bolster social resources or experience solidarity with like-minded peers.

However, the measure of activism used in the current study did not assess whether each activity

occurred alone or with peers. Future research should investigate whether these associations differ

as a function of the type or context of activism. It is possible that interactive effects among Trump-related distress, peer support, and mental health outcomes may emerge when examining different types of sociopolitical engagement.

In the current study, engaging in activism predicted increases in anxiety symptoms, but not depression. As noted previously, while this may be attributable to the etiology of depression, it is also possible that engaging in certain forms of activism protect against emergent or worsening depressive symptoms. Activist engagements that foster interpersonal connections (e.g., political organizations) may be less taxing to psychological wellbeing as a result of increases in social support. The extent to which social support benefits students' mental health may depend on whether peers validate students' concerns related to sociopolitical circumstances and activist engagements. Future research should examine the nature of support that activists find most beneficial. In addition, it is worth examining whether other important relationships in students' lives are better positioned to offer support for sociopolitical distress and activist endeavors. For instance, underrepresented students at PWIs may benefit from social support provided by family members who share their concerns about the Trump presidency, or from relationships with important adults who can offer guidance (Griffith, Hurd, & Hussain, 2017). Qualitative approaches may be useful to inform measures of peer support to be used in the context of studying activists. Extant literature consistently demonstrates a link between social support and better mental health in the context of an array of stressful life circumstances. Better understanding the ways in which social relationships might contribute to psychological functioning among students experiencing sociopolitical distress or engaged in activism remains an important line of inquiry.

Conclusions

The entrance of the Trump presidency marked a significant shift in the sociopolitical landscape of the United States. Underrepresented students in the current study were approaching college completion, and therefore, the Trump presidency may have highlighted barriers to their career aspirations that result from inequality and discrimination. As the Trump presidency progresses, and exclusionary policy changes are instantiated, underrepresented students' distress may increase. Students may become increasingly engaged in activism in an attempt to exercise agency and effect social change. Moreover, increases in bias and discrimination tied to Trump's rhetoric and policies may exacerbate the extent to which sociopolitical distress and/or participation in activism takes a toll on mental health.

While activism may be psychologically taxing, research suggests that activists find their work gives them a sense of purpose (Cabrera, Meza, Romero, Rodriguez, 2013). Moreover, individuals may choose to engage in activism for a variety of meaningful reasons (e.g., a sense of personal responsibility to take action in the face of injustice; Haste & Hogan, 2006) beyond personal benefit (e.g., to alleviate personal distress; Iyer, Schmader, & Lickell, 2007). Activists have acknowledged that their work may compromise other aspects of their wellbeing and persist despite these costs (Gorski, 2018). Activist movements have historically played an important role in advancing policies and social change towards more just circumstances for marginalized populations (Berger, 2000; Boren, 2013). Identifying ways to support activists' psychological wellbeing may allow for more enduring social justice efforts while limiting individual costs.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Key Study Variables

Variable	Response Scale	M	SD	α
Trump-related distress	0 – 10	6.93	2.72	
Activism (frequency/week)	0 – 7	0.53	.78	
Peer emotional and appraisal support	0 – 4	1.88	.92	.93
Anxiety symptoms				
Spring 2016	0 – 63	10.69	9.56	.91
Spring 2017	0 – 63	11.31	10.44	.93
Depressive symptoms				
Spring 2016	0 – 60	10.56	9.21	.92
Spring 2017	0 – 60	10.14	9.34	.92
Extraversion	1 – 5	3.19	.89	.89
Family income		$65,000-$74,999		
Stressful life events	0 – 17	0.55	.89	

Table 2

Correlations among Key Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Trump-related distress									
Activism	.27*								
Peer emotional and appraisal support	.18*	.17*							
Anxiety symptoms Spring '16	.08	.13*	.06						
Anxiety symptoms Spring '17	.20*	.23*	.04	.65*					
Depression symptoms Spring '16	-.04	.03	-.08	.59*	.48*				
Depression symptoms Spring '17	.05	.06	-.08	.43*	.63*	.67*			
Extraversion	.07	.16*	.22*	-.15*	-.14*	-.23*	-.18*		
Family income	.07	.05	.13*	-.02	-.05	-.05	-.03	.05	
Stressful life events	.08	.16*	.07*	.09	.18*	.11	.15*	.07	-.19*

*$p < .05$

Table 3

Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Symptoms of Anxiety

	Model 1				Model 2				Model 3				Model 4			
	b (SE)	β	t	p	b (SE)	β	t	p	b (SE)	β	t	p	b (SE)	β	t	p
Symptoms '16	0.69 (.05)	.64	14.07	.00*	0.67 (.05)	.63	14.02	.00*	0.67 (.05)	.62	13.97	.00*	0.67 (.05)	.62	14.02	.00*
Extraversion	-0.47 (.53)	-.04	-0.90	.37	-0.62 (.53)	-.05	-1.17	.24	-0.68 (.52)	-.06	-1.30	.19	-0.72 (.52)	-.06	-1.36	.17
Family income	-0.38 (.94)	-.02	-0.40	.69	-0.40 (.92)	-.02	-0.44	.66	-0.34 (.92)	-.02	-0.37	.71	-0.40 (.92)	-.02	-0.43	.66
Stressful life events	1.77 (.54)	.15	3.28	.00*	1.49 (.53)	.13	2.84	.00*	1.30 (.52)	.11	2.49	.01*	1.33 (.52)	.11	2.55	.01*
Gender	-0.38 (1.02)	-.02	-0.37	.71	0.50 (1.03)	.02	0.49	.62	0.54 (1.02)	.02	0.53	.60	0.61 (1.02)	.03	0.59	.55
Trump-related distress					0.52 (0.18)	.13	2.84	.00*	0.53 (.19)	.14	2.71	.01*	0.59 (.20)	.15	2.97	.00*
Activism					0.12 (.05)	.11	2.44	.01*	0.15 (.06)	.15	2.57	.01*	0.14 (.06)	.13	2.22	.03*
Peer support					-0.09 (.07)	-.06	-1.35	.18	-0.09 (.07)	-.06	-1.32	.19	-0.06 (.07)	-.04	-0.89	.38
Tr. distress X Activism									0.03 (.02)	.05	1.04	.30	0.02 (.03)	.03	0.63	.53
Tr. distress X Support									0.01 (.02)	.03	0.52	.60	0.02 (.02)	.05	0.85	.40
Activism X Support									-0.02 (.01)	-.12	-2.38	.02*	0.01 (.01)	-.09	-1.58	.12
Tr. distress X Activism X Support													-0.00 (.00)	-.06	-1.05	.30
	$R^2 = 0.46$				$R^2 = 0.49$ $\Delta R^2 = 0.03$				$R^2 = 0.51$ $\Delta R^2 = 0.02$				$R^2 = 0.51$ $\Delta R^2 = 0.00$			

*$p < .05$

Table 4

Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Depressive Symptoms

	Model 1				Model 2				Model 3				Model 4			
	b (SE)	β	t	p	b (SE)	β	t	p	b (SE)	β	t	p	b (SE)	β	t	p
Symptoms '16	0.68 (.05)	.66	14.74	.00	0.68 (.05)	.66	14.17	.00	0.68 (.05)	.66	14.81	.00	0.68 (.05)	.66	14.86	.00
Extraversion	-0.36 (.46)	-.03	-0.78	.44	-0.38 (.47)	-.04	-.80	.42	-0.39 (.47)	-.04	-.84	.40	-0.45 (.47)	-.04	-0.96	.34
Family income	-1.58 (.81)	-.08	-1.95	.05	-1.61 (.81)	-.09	-1.98	.05	1.58 (.82)	-.08	-1.93	.05	-1.63 (.82)	-.09	-2.00	.05
Stressful life events	1.00 (.47)	.09	2.14	.03	0.90 (.47)	.09	1.91	.06	0.81 (.47)	.08	1.70	.09	0.82 (.47)	.08	1.74	.08
Gender	0.87 (0.88)	.04	.99	.32	1.26 (.91)	.06	1.38	.17	1.34 (.92)	.07	1.46	.14	1.45 (.92)	.07	1.58	.11
Trump-related distress					0.27 (.16)	.08	1.67	.10	0.25 (.17)	.07	1.45	.15	0.35 (.18)	.10	1.90	.06
Activism					0.04 (.04)	.04	.92	.36	0.06 (.05)	.06	1.09	.28	0.03 (.06)	.04	0.60	.55
Peer support					-0.05 (.06)	-.04	-.94	.35	-0.05 (.06)	-.04	-.82	.41	-0.01 (.06)	-.01	-0.22	.83
Tr. distress X Activism									-0.01 (.02)	-.01	-.25	.80	-0.02 (.02)	-.03	-0.70	.48
Tr. distress X support									0.01 (.02)	.02	.37	.71	0.02 (.02)	.05	0.96	.34
Activism X support									-0.01 (.01)	-.06	-1.27	.20	-0.00 (.01)	-.03	-0.48	.63
Tr. distress X Activism X support													-0.00 (.00)	-.09	-1.63	.10
	$R^2 = 0.47$				$R^2 = 0.48$				$R^2 = 0.49$				$R^2 = 0.49$			
					$\Delta R^2 = 0.01$				$\Delta R^2 = 0.01$				$\Delta R^2 = 0.00$			

*$p < .05$

ELEMENTS OF PAPER 3

Emotional responses to the Trump presidency and associations with activism

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Abstract

Evidence suggests that Donald Trump's campaign and early presidency may have been a stressor for groups targeted by his biased rhetoric and proposed exclusionary policies. Although emotional distress related to sociopolitical shifts has been found to motivate political engagement, there may be variations in the patterns of associations between emotions and subtypes of activism. I sought to explore emotions related to the Trump presidency and their associations with subtypes of activism among a sample of underrepresented college students. I found support for the notion that anger, fear, sadness, and disgust are politically-relevant emotions. Three categories of activism emerged: resource mobilization (e.g., organizing), collective action (e.g., protesting), and higher-accessibility activism (e.g., petitions). Feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency conditioned associations among emotional responses and activism. For those who did not feel personally affected by the Trump presidency, anger predicted more frequent collective action, and sadness predicted less frequent higher-accessibility activism. Fear predicted more frequent collective action among those who felt personally affected by the presidency. Findings lend support for the notion that distinct emotional responses motivate different types of political engagement. While the current study was exploratory, findings offer a starting point to guide future research focused on emotional experiences and political engagement.

Introduction

During his presidential campaign and early presidency, Donald Trump engaged in rhetoric that derogated many already-marginalized groups and proposed policies likely to undermine their wellbeing. Accordingly, the entrance of the Trump administration may be of personal consequence for some individuals who hold marginalized social identities (Albright & Hurd, 2019; McKee, Greer, & Struckler, 2017). Further, for all who opposed his candidacy, his election may have been experienced as an uncontrollable, large-scale event that triggered feelings of moral violation (Konrad, 2018). Indeed, his election to the presidency was an emotionally fraught political event for many Americans (American Psychological Association, 2017). Emerging adults in college from marginalized racial/ethnic groups or economically disadvantaged backgrounds may be particularly concerned about the personal and future implications of the Trump presidency. Students who enroll in college after high school graduation are in the midst of a developmental period in which their future prospects and social identities are salient (Arnett, 2000). Those who hold marginalized identities can also expect to face structural barriers to their future security due to racism, classism, and restricted access to opportunities. Trump's election to the presidency may have heightened these concerns as his rhetoric and proposed policies reinforce identity-based discrimination and economic inequality (DeVylder, 2017; Glied & Frank, 2017).

Results from previous research studies indicate that negatively-valenced emotional reactions (i.e., anger, disgust, fear, and sadness) to political events serve to motivate individuals to engage in social change efforts. Indeed, Trump's election to the presidency was followed by a surge of activist demonstrations (Kitch, 2018). College students attended many of these post-election activist movements in large numbers (Reynolds & Mayweather, 2017). Yet, studies

investigating these associations have yielded inconsistent results. The current study sought to characterize emotional responses to the Trump presidency and explore potential associations with various types of activism. To examine these associations, I drew upon data from a longitudinal study focused on the experiences of underrepresented college students (i.e., members of historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minority groups, first-generation students, or students from lower-income families) at an elite predominantly white institution (PWI).

Emotional Reactions to Political Events

Emotions tend to influence judgment and behavior (Lerner & Keltner, 2000). Scholars posit emotions offer information that guides our beliefs about a given event and subsequent behavior (Clore & Ortony, 2008). This appears to hold true in the context of emotional responses to sociopolitical shifts and political behavior such as voting, news consumption, and activism (Ost, 2004; Turner, 2007). Activism is considered an emotionally-driven political behavior (Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2010). Activism has been defined broadly by scholars to include an array of individual and collective actions oriented towards contributing to social or political change (e.g., Shragge, 2013). Negatively-valenced emotions—specifically, anger, disgust, fear, and sadness—are considered a mobilizing force behind activism (Brown & Pickerill, 2009; Clifford & Jerit, 2018; Searles & Ridout, 2017). Although they share negative valence, anger, disgust, fear, and sadness are conceptually distinct and have displayed different associations with political activism (Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007; Petersen, 2010). This variation in associations has been explained by distinctions between the behavioral impulses of negatively-valenced emotional responses (e.g., anger vs. fear) and their unique potential to promote or thwart involvement in various types of activism (i.e., how motivating each emotion ends up being). The information provided by emotional experiences shapes behavioral responses to

events (Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003). Because different emotional experiences tend to convey different information, they may, in turn, lead to different behavioral responses (Clore & Huntsinger, 2007).

Evidence of the distinctiveness of politically relevant negatively-valenced emotions (and in the current study, anger, disgust, fear, sadness) has emerged in previous research (Marcus, 2000). Existing research has demonstrated that various negative emotions may have distinct influences on the types of activism (e.g., private versus public demonstrations) individuals choose to pursue (Valentino et al., 2011). For instance, experiencing fear about impending political changes might motivate an individual to engage in private forms of activism (e.g., calling a politician) rather than public demonstrations. Moreover, associations between emotional responses and participation in activism may vary as a function of the personal relevance of a political issue (i.e., the extent to which an individual feels personally affected; Huddy, Mason, & Aaroe, 2015). However, limited work has examined these distinctions in associations between emotions and types of activism concurrently. The current study was undertaken to gain a better understanding of the nature of negatively-valenced emotional reactions to political events (specifically, the 2016 presidential election and inauguration of Trump) and the extent to which each emotion may drive various types of activism among underrepresented college students attending an elite PWI.

Anger

Anger is considered a primary emotional response to undesired political events (Conover & Feldman, 1986; Huddy, Feldman, & Cassesse, 2007). Anger tends to be triggered after a perceived disruption to the status quo, when one feels as though they have lost control in their environment, or when an event is perceived as unjust (Haidt, 2003). Additionally, anger may

occur when a person feels as though their values, wellbeing, or personal goals have been obstructed (Turner, 2007). Anger has been observed as part of individuals' emotional responses to unwanted economic and social policy changes that have bearing on their lives (Conover & Feldman, 1986).

Regardless of whether one's own rights and reputation are at stake, an individual may feel outraged if they feel an event violates their moral values (Llu, Karasawa, & Weiner, 1992). Researchers suggest that anger may increase feelings of self-efficacy (i.e., that one's actions will make a difference) and conviction in one's beliefs (Juris, 2008). It appears anger may drive participation in forms of activism that require collective effort or garner public attention (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001). For instance, anger has been associated with forms of activism that require more resources, pose higher risk to one's physical safety, and/or publicly demonstrate discontent (Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007; Turner, 2007). This may be explained by the sense of certainty and control often experienced alongside anger. Feelings of anger may increase a person's belief that it is worthwhile to take risks and seek out resources to engage in activism (Lerner & Keltner, 2000).

Disgust

Disgust is considered a protective emotion that occurs in response to physically aversive stimuli (Curtis, de Barra, & Aunger, 2011; Oaten, Stevenson, & Case, 2009). Disgust is also considered a salient emotion in social domains. Disgust appears to be an "other-condemning" emotion that is induced when one perceives a moral transgression (Haidt, 2003). Because activism increases exposure to political issues (e.g., through discussion with fellow activists), basic emotions literature would suggest that feelings of disgust would decrease activism, because it requires re-exposure to the "object" of disgust (Nabi, 1999). This has not been consistently

corroborated by studies that have investigated the relationship between disgust and political

behavior. For instance, disgust has been associated with participating in protests against policy

changes, especially alongside anger (Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007). More research is needed

to understand what might alter the expected association between disgust and avoidance behavior

in the context of threatening sociopolitical circumstances.

Fear

Fear has consistently been associated with sociopolitical shifts when the future

consequences of a change are uncertain (Huddy, Feldman, & Cassese, 2007). Previous research

findings are inconsistent regarding associations between feelings of fear and participation in

activism. Fear is an emotion that tends to induce avoidance behavior in the interest of self-

protection (Huddy, Feldman, & Cassese, 2007). In turn, feelings of fear may decrease the

likelihood that one will engage in public or physically risky forms of activism such as protesting

(Lerner & Keltner, 2000). Feelings of fear may be triggered because the potential consequences

of a political change are often outside one's control. Feeling less efficacious may decrease the

likelihood that one will pursue political change-oriented activities (Laird, 2003). Some evidence

suggests that while fear may be associated with less engagement in activities that require one's

physical presence (e.g., protests), fear may be associated with more private forms of activism

(e.g., signing a petition; Valentino et al., 2011). However, conflicting evidence suggests that

feelings of fear may motivate activism—even types of activism that may pose more physical

risk—rather deter action (Klandermans, 2003).

Sadness

The emotional experience of sadness in the context of political change is relatively

understudied (Small & Lerner, 2008). Research suggests that sadness may be an emotional

response to injustice; for example, sadness has been documented in individuals' reactions to exclusionary social policies (Small & Lerner, 2008). Therefore, feeling sadness on behalf of people who are "victim to injustice" may heighten when one feels that policies will further disenfranchise certain groups. This indicates that sadness in the political domain might be related to community-level concerns rather than personal concerns (Small & Lerner, 2008).

Sadness tends to be a disempowering, "low-arousal" emotion (Gusfield, 1986). The disempowering nature of sadness may reduce one's belief that taking action will be of consequence, thereby, serving as a deterrent to activism (Verhulst & Walgrave, 2009). For instance, sadness may trigger social withdrawal and decrease the likelihood that an individual will join a political organization (Brader & Marcus, 2013). Conversely, because sadness may be more driven by "other-related" concerns, sadness may not lead to feelings of disempowerment, and therefore, not undermine decisions to engage in activism (Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997. Notably, research shows that sadness coupled with anger is positively associated with public activism (e.g., protesting; Boltanksi, 1999; Lerner et al., 2003).

Variations in associations between emotions and activism

The findings of research to date suggest that negatively-valenced emotional responses to political events have the potential to motivate activism (Huddy, Mason, & Aaroe, 2015). Although politically relevant negatively valenced emotions such as anger, disgust, fear, and sadness tend to be strongly correlated, they may influence behavior in distinct ways (Marcus, 2000). For instance, inconsistent associations between fear and activism may be explained by factors that counteract the fear-based impulse of avoidance (Clifford & Jerit, 2018). Researchers have indicated that more work is needed to understand the behaviors associated with emotional responses to political events. For instance, Huddy, Feldman, and Cassese (2007) encourage

further investigation to understand why anger and fear are "so closely associated in self-report data yet have such distinct consequences" (p. 230).

Types of activism

One possible approach to more rigorously investigating possible distinctive associations between negatively-valenced yet highly-correlated emotions and activism is to distinguish between various types of activism. While theory suggests activism is a multidimensional construct, it is often treated as unidimensional in investigations of its relationship with emotions (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995; Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013). Moreover, scholars who treat activism as multidimensional offer mixed recommendations for the best way to categorize types of activism. The activities considered to be part of the broader construct of activism are often conceptualized on a continuum of risk and resources (Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013). Some researchers have claimed that variations between emotional responses and activism stem from the level of risk involved in different forms of activism. In this framework, "risk" is conceptualized as the extent to which a form of engagement might hold the potential for greater physical harm or social alienation. When conceptualizing activism in terms of risk, lower-risk activism would encompass behaviors such as signing petitions and boycott/buycotting businesses (Valentino et al., 2011). Higher-risk forms of activism are considered to include protesting, attending political events, and being part of a political organization. Anger and associated emotions (e.g., rage, frustration) have been associated with participating in more public, and presumably riskier, forms of activism (e.g., protest demonstrations; MacKuen et al., 2010; Rodgers, 2010). Higher-risk activism may require more "activating" emotions (such as anger) to overcome the protective impulse to avoid physical harm. In a risk framework of activism, it would stand to reason that less "activating" emotions—such as fear and sadness—would not

motivate activism. Yet, fear is also linked to an urge to re-establish a sense of control and may still motivate participation in types of activism (Valentino et al., 2011).

Other researchers have sought to distinguish between types of activism based on the resources needed to participate. Some forms of activism may be considered to be more "costly" than others because they require more time, energy, and other personal resources (Teorell, Torcal, & Montero, 2007). For instance, donating requires financial resources; organizing events requires leadership skills; being a member of an organization might require paying dues and attending meetings. However, possessing necessary resources often does not dictate participation in activism. In fact, activists from lower-income and marginalized groups frequently employ strategies to overcome resource-related limitations to achieve their goals (Edwards & McCarthy, 2004). This further points to the possibility that factors such as emotional experiences or personal salience may explain participation in more resource-demanding forms of activism. Categorizing types of activism based on a risk or resource framework may limit the ability to capture existing variations in the associations between various emotions and types of activism.

It is important to note that increased access to online forms of activism may have reduced the overall amount of resources required to engage in some types of activism (e.g., signing an online petition) while also introducing novel risks. For instance, while it may not be time consuming or require financial resources to re-post an article on social media, there may be a cost associated with sharing political views publicly. Public expressions of political beliefs may still subject the poster to online attacks, for example (Cammaerts, 2015). A social media post that receives such a response might trigger an extensive online exchange that can be both emotionally demanding and time-consuming. More work is needed to classify activism in light of

technological advancements that have changed the opportunities, risks, and effort required to engage in activism.

Beyond the potential variability in associations among emotions and different types of activism, the patterns of activism associated with negatively-valenced emotional responses might be conditioned by the personal salience of sociopolitical issues. For instance, although sadness and fear tend to produce avoidance, they have been described as central to social justice activists' emotional experiences (Gravante & Poma, 2016). It is possible that feelings of sadness or fear when combined with a sense of personal persecution may motivate action despite the biological impulse to avoid harm (Lerner & Keltner, 2000). Moreover, when individuals feel personally affected by a shift in sociopolitical circumstances, they might be more willing to take more risks in the short-term in exchange for the possibility of greater long-term gains.

Current Study

The current study investigated emotional responses to the Trump presidency and potential associations with various types of activism among a sample of underrepresented college students attending an elite PWI. The majority of college students are in the midst of a period characterized by uncertainty about the future and in which social identity is salient. The entrance of the Trump presidency may have exacerbated existing concerns about their wellbeing and future opportunities. Indeed, early evidence suggests that some underrepresented college students may be experiencing emotional distress related to the Trump presidency (Albright & Hurd, 2019).

One way individuals have historically responded to concerns about sociopolitical circumstances is through activism (Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2010). Thus, underrepresented college students' emotional responses to the Trump presidency may drive participation in

activism. The current study aimed to (1) characterize participants' emotional responses to the Trump presidency and (2) investigate whether emotional responses were associated with activism. To address the first study aim, I drew upon quantitative and text (open-ended response) data to explore participants' emotional responses to the Trump presidency. The quantitative nature of most existing research related to politics and emotions limits the ability to describe the range of emotional experiences related to sociopolitical shifts. The emotions that are often considered most relevant to politics—anger, disgust, fear, and sadness—may not capture the full array of emotional responses to the contentious presidential election of Donald Trump. Text analysis of open-ended responses is an approach well positioned to address this limitation of existing research. As noted by Bowleg (2008), analyzing open-ended responses offers "greater allowance for the complexities and multiplicity of experience." Examining participants' open-ended responses approach allowed me to investigate whether participants described emotional experiences not assessed in the survey. Additionally, documenting the emotional experiences described in the open-ended response data was a step towards conducting a validity check of the salience of emotions assessed subsequently with closed-ended items.

Evidence suggests that negatively-valenced emotional responses to sociopolitical shifts are associated with increased participation in activism (e.g., protesting, petitioning). However, there may be variations in the link between a negative emotional response to a political shift and activism. Emotions are cues that motivate behavioral responses, and this has held true for political activities (Ost, 2004). Variations in activism may be explained by distinct behavioral impulses associated with different negatively-valenced emotions. To most comprehensively investigate this possibility, I examined whether these associations held true for different types of activism. This allowed me to consider the unique contributions of various correlated negatively-

valenced emotions in reaction to the Trump presidency and specific types of activism. In addition, because individuals may be more motivated to engage in any forms of activism when they feel they are personally affected by political event or policy (Cronin, Levin, Branscombe, van Laar, & Tropp, 2012), I examined the potential moderating effect of feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency on the association between emotions and types of activism. I expected that feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency would strengthen associations between negatively valenced emotional responses and engagement in various types of activism.

Methods

Participants

Participants were recruited from a public PWI in the southeastern United States during their first semester of college (fall 2013). To be eligible for the study, individuals were members of one or more of the following groups: first-generation college students, students eligible for the full amount of the Federal Pell Grant, or members of historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minority groups (i.e., Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander). A total of 340 first-year college students participated in the initial data collection. Data were collected in the spring of 2014 and annually each subsequent spring through 2017. Students' survey responses from the spring of their fourth year of college (spring 2017) were the primary focus of the current study as this was the only wave when students were asked questions in response to the Trump election and presidency. Because the primary study variables were collected in the spring of 2017, I only included the participants ($n = 324$) who participated in the spring 2017 wave of data collection in the current study. Two additional participants were excluded due to straight-line response patterns. Of the remaining 322 participants, 19 voted for Trump in the 2016 election and were excluded from study analyses

given that the current study aimed to better understand how negatively valenced emotional reactions to the Trump presidency may have fueled activism as a response to an undesirable political event (and presumably, the 19 individuals who voted for Trump did not experience his election to the presidency as an undesirable event). The sample for the current study included 303 participants.

Procedure

After obtaining approval from the university's Institutional Review Board (Protocol #2013034500), university admissions records were used to identify eligible incoming first-year students. In Fall 2013, eligible students received a recruitment email. Interested students provided written consent after being informed of the confidentiality, risks, benefits, and voluntary nature of the study. Of 775 invited students, 340 participated (44% response rate) in the first wave of data collection. Students under the age of 18 obtained parental consent and provided written assent. To further protect participants' confidentiality, a Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health was obtained. Students completed surveys on iPads in a research laboratory at the college campus. After the first point of data collection (Fall 2013), participants completed surveys during the midpoint of each following Spring semester from 2014 to 2017, yielding a total of 5 time points. If students unenrolled from the university, they were invited to continue participating in the study and received an online link to the survey at each subsequent time point. In the first year, students were compensated with a $20 Visa gift card, and in each consecutive academic year, compensation increased by $5. Retention was greater than 94% across all five time points.

Measures

Descriptive statistics for study variables are reported in Table 1.

Responses to the Trump presidency. First, participants were asked whether they felt personally affected by the Trump presidency ("Do you feel personally affected by the Trump presidency?"). Responses were coded as 0 (*did not feel personally affected*) and 1 (*felt personally affected*) for the purpose of analyses. Emotional responses related to the Trump presidency were assessed first with one open-ended item and subsequently with six closed-ended items. First, participants were asked, "How do you feel about the Trump presidency?" and were prompted to type their responses into a text box. This question was presented on the survey prior to the closed-ended items about emotional responses in an attempt to elicit participants' most salient response to the Trump presidency.

Next, emotional responses (i.e., sad, angry, afraid, disgusted, happy, surprised) were assessed (e.g., "When you think about the Trump presidency how angry do you feel?"). These items were presented on a 10-point scale, with response options ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 10 (*extremely*). For the purposes of the current study, only anger, disgust, fear, and sadness were included in analyses, given their established associations with reactions to political events and participation in activism (Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007; Petersen, 2010).

Activism. Frequency of activism in the previous 6 months was assessed using items adapted from a political participation survey (Best & Krueger, 2005). Participants were asked to report how often they engaged in each political activity. This measure included thirteen items with response options ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 7 (*every day or almost every day*). After latent factors were established, responses to these items were summed to create composite variables and used for descriptive and correlation analyses.

Previous activism. In Spring 2015, participants were asked whether they had participated in any protests, vigils, or demonstrations related to violence against unarmed Black

men and violence against women. Students' responses to these two items were dichotomized (1 = *participated in either activity*, 0 = *did not participate in either activity*) and included as a control variable to serve as a proxy for assessing students' access and engagement in activism prior to the Trump presidency.

Demographic variables. Participants self-reported demographic information such as their age, gender, race/ethnicity, and household income. Demographic information, including age, race/ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status (SES), was collected using admissions records and responses to survey items in the first wave of data collection (fall 2013). Sixty-nine percent of participants identified as women at the time of initial data collection. Racial/ethnic composition of the sample included Black/African-American (30%), White (22%), multiracial (22%), Asian (17%), Hispanic (11%), and American Indian/Alaskan Native (< 1%). Forty percent of participants were part of more than one eligibility group (e.g., first-generation college student and underrepresented racial/ethnic minority student). I created a dichotomous variable to represent maleness in analyses, with 0 referring to "female or other" and 1 referring to "male." I also created a dichotomous variable to represent whiteness in analyses, with 0 referring to non-white students and 1 referring to white students.

Race and gender were included as covariates to account for the potential confound of the privilege often afforded by being male or white. For instance, whiteness affords protection against the potential race-based violence encountered in public activism. SES was measured by self-reported estimates of total annual household income on a 12-point scale ranging from less than $4,999 to $105,000 and above. Based on family size, 51% of participants came from households with annual incomes at or below 200% of their state's poverty level. While all participants in the current study were underrepresented students, their financial resources varied.

It appears that one individual factor associated with certain forms of activism may be related to access to financial resources (Brashers et al., 2002); Thus, family income was included as a covariate.

<div align="center">**Data Analysis Plan**</div>

Exploring emotional responses to the Trump presidency

I first examined students' responses to the open-ended survey item, "How do you feel about the Trump presidency?" The primary aim of the text analysis was to investigate the extent to which the four emotions assessed in the closed-ended items (i.e., anger, disgust, fear, and sadness) also emerged spontaneously in participants' "own words" when describing their feelings about the presidency. In addition, I sought to document any emotional responses described by participants that did not fall into one of the emotions included in quantitative analyses that might be useful to assess in future studies.

I drew upon existing theory-based emotion and sentiment "dictionaries" to aid in reducing the possibility of a biased interpretation when participants used connotative or colloquial language (Mohammad & Turney, 2013a). Researchers have compiled these resources by annotating informal text (e.g., Facebook posts, online product reviews, Twitter, and blog posts) for sentiment and emotion. Thus, these tools were appropriate for the current study, as they were developed to improve the classification of short-form text into emotion categories and to detect informal or ironic messages (Reyes et al., 2013). Specifically, I drew upon the NRC Emotion Lexicon (Mohammed & Turney, 2013b) and WordNet (Princeton University, 2010). These tools are databases of emotionally expressive words that are categorized by primary emotion (e.g., the word disappointed would be in the 'sadness' category) or associated emotions. The NRC Emotion Lexicon categorizes adjectives or metaphorical phrases that convey

sentiment; Thus, it is useful for coding open-ended responses that may contain a mixture of words, phrases, and expressions. For example, in the absence of the explicit use of the word 'disgust,' the word 'poison' conveys the sentiment of disgust. Given the relatively small number of responses ($n = 263$), responses to the open-ended question were hand-coded for the presence and type of emotional experiences described by students (i.e., how they felt about the presidency). Responses that included multiple emotional experiences were coded for each type of emotion expressed by participants. The length and detail of participants' responses varied considerably. Some participants expressed positive or negative valence without sufficient content for further classification into an emotion category (e.g., some participants responded "bad"). After examining students' open-ended responses, I analyzed students' responses to the closed-ended survey items Regarding the extent of their negatively-valenced emotions (i.e., anger, disgust, fear, sadness) in response to the Trump presidency. Descriptive quantitative analyses (t-tests and Chi-square) were conducted to investigate whether emotional responses might differ as a function of social identity, economic status (i.e., family income), and feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency.

Associations between emotional responses to the Trump presidency and activism

To address the second study aim, I first explored whether categories of activism emerged by conducting an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with the 13-item measure. For the purposes of descriptive and comparative analyses (i.e., t-tests and correlations), composite variables were created to represent each factor by summing participants' responses to the items. The items comprising the factors that emerged in the EFA were used as endogenous latent variables in a structural equation model, which examined associations between emotional responses to the Trump presidency and types of activism. Maleness, whiteness, family income, and previous

activism (i.e., participation in protests or demonstrations in Spring 2015) were included as covariates. Model fit was assessed with the chi-square statistic, comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). After fitting the model with the entire sample, I conducted a multigroup analysis to examine whether feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency moderated the associations tested in the structural model. I correlated all exogenous variables with each other and the error terms associated with each latent factor of activism with each other. In the multigroup analysis, I imposed equality constraints across paths for the two groups and subsequently freed these paths one-by-one to determine whether freeing each path resulted in a better fitting model (i.e., if the chi-square value reduction was 3.8 or greater for the loss of 1 degree of freedom, $p < .05$). The final model reported is the model that demonstrated the best fit to the data and includes several freed paths. The path model was tested using *lavaan* in R 3.5 (R Development Core Team, 2014). Full information maximum likelihood methods were used to handle missing data ($< 5\%$).

Results

Emotional responses to the Trump presidency

Of the participants who responded to the open-ended item ("How do you feel about the Trump presidency?"), more than 90% of responses provided sufficient detail to code for specific emotional response or sentiment (Mohammed & Turney, 2013b). See Table 3. Approximately 10 percent of respondents gave responses that did not contain sufficient detail for categorization beyond valence. For instance, these participants simply responded with "don't like it," "bad," "not good," or "horrible." Only one respondent expressed approval of the Trump presidency. Approximately 6% of respondents felt that it was too early in the presidency to have an opinion, felt indifferent, or neutral. Of the four primary emotions subsequently assessed by the closed-

ended items, fear-related emotions were most frequently reported (27% of respondents),

followed by sadness (14%), anger (10%), and disgust (7%). Additionally, participants described

emotional responses or expressed sentiments that fell into more than one of these four categories.

The majority of these responses contained phrases that represented an intersection between anger

and disgust (12%). Other emotions endorsed by participants included surprise/confusion (6%),

shame (6%), acceptance/resignation (6%), optimism/hope (6%).

In the full sample, emotional response study variables (i.e., anger, disgust, fear, and

sadness) were all positively correlated with each other in the range of .65 to .85 ($p < .01$). See

Table 2. I also investigated whether a similar pattern of associations among study variables

emerged when comparing those who felt personally affected and those who did not feel

personally affected by the Trump presidency. The majority of participants (73%) felt personally

affected by the Trump presidency. Correlations among all four emotional responses remained

significant when separately examining the emotional responses of students who reported feeling

personally affected ($r > .66$) and those who did not ($r > .55$). However, anger and disgust were

correlated to a stronger degree ($r = .90$) among those who did not feel personally affected

compared to those who did ($r = .72$).

A series of t-tests revealed that women and gender non-binary students reported higher

levels of anger ($M = 8.01$, $SD = 2.38$), $t(127.57) = 5.80$, $p < .05$; disgust ($M = 8.46$, $SD = 2.33$),

$t(125.15) = 4.81$, $p < .05$; fear ($M = 7.31$, $SD = 2.43$), $t(139.72) = 5.62$, $p < .05$; and sadness ($M =$

7.80, $SD = 2.39$), $t(136.67) = 5.49$, $p < .05$ compared to their male peers. Students of color

reported similar levels of anger ($M = 7.33$, $SD =$, $t(106.85) = -0.42$, $p = .68$), disgust ($M = 7.98$,

$SD =$, $t(110.7) = 0.59$, $p = .55$), fear ($M = 6.72$, $SD = 2.71$, $t(104.56) = -0.18$, $p = .86$), and

sadness ($M = 7.09$, $SD = 2.84$, $t(117.85) = -1.55$, $p = .15$) compared to white students. Family

income was not associated with differences in students' reported levels of anger ($r = 0.00$, $p = .94$), disgust ($r = 0.01$, $p = .88$), fear ($r = 0.04$, $p = .51$), or sadness ($r = 0.02$, $p = .78$) related to the Trump presidency. Finally, *t*-tests revealed that students who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency reported significantly higher levels of anger ($M = 8.11$, $SD = 2.29$, $t(102.39) = 7.35$, $p < .05$), disgust ($M = 8.66$, $SD = 2.11$, $t(96.61) = 7.24$, $p < .05$), fear ($M = 7.43$, $SD = 2.30$, $t(108.23) = 7.89$, $p < .05$), and sadness ($M = 8.00$, $SD = 2.11$, $t(99.95) = 7.87$, $p < .05$) compared to those who did not.

Types of activism

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to examine whether categories emerged within the 13 political activities assessed in the survey. First, the bivariate correlation matrix of all activism variables was examined. All pairs of items demonstrated correlation scores below 0.80, suggesting they were acceptable to include in the factor analysis (Costello & Osborne, 2005). A three-factor solution was selected. Retained factors had communality scores less than 0.20 and at least three items with loadings greater than 0.40. The three factors that emerged from the EFA were labeled resource mobilization, collective action, and higher-accessibility activism. The retained factors explained 60% of the total variance. Approximately 80% of students had engaged in one or more of the political activities assessed in the survey at least once in the prior six months. Participants engaged in at least one form of activism approximately once per week. Students who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency engaged in higher-accessibility forms of activism more frequently (approximately once a week; $M = 5.01$, $SD = 6.14$) than those who did not, $t(197.23) = 5.14$, $p < .05$. Students who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency also engaged in collective action more frequently (approximately once a month; $M = 1.92$, $SD = 2.76$) than those who did not, $t(125.82) = 2.42$, $p < .05$. There were no significant

differences in the frequency of participation in resource mobilization when comparing those who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency to those who did not, $t(106.82) = 0.69$, $p = .50$.

Resource mobilization. The first factor included four activities: contacting the media, contributing original content to an online news source or blog post, donating, and organizing an event, and was labeled 'resource mobilization.' Factor loadings ranged from 0.61 to 0.86. This factor was labeled resource mobilization, consistent with previous classifications of resource-demanding forms of activism (Edwards & McCarthy, 2004). The activities in this factor may have required greater access to and use of resources such as time, money, special skills, or social capital than other activities assessed in the scale. On average, participants reported engaging in at least one of these activities approximately once or twice in the 6 months prior to completing the survey.

Collective action. The second factor that emerged included three activities: protesting, attending an event, and participating in a political organization. This factor was labeled 'collective action.' Factor loadings ranged from 0.60 to 0.80. This factor was labeled collective action because each of the activities required some level of interaction with others, and is consistent with nomenclature used in previous research regarding these activities (Blackwood & Louis, 2012). On average, participants reported engaging in at least one of these activities at least two or three times in the 6 months prior to completing the survey.

Higher-accessibility activism. The third factor included six activities: signing a petition, boycotting, buycotting, posting on social media, contacting a politician, and demonstrating support for a political cause. Factor loadings ranged from 0.54 to 0.82. The activities in this factor tended to be more readily accessible; for instance, it is possible to complete these activities outside of formal organizations, or to complete them privately. These activities also tend to offer

greater flexibility in regards to demands on one's time and resources. On average, participants

engaged in at least one of the activities in the higher-accessibility category a few times per month

prior to completing the survey.

Emotional responses to the Trump presidency and activism

The measurement model demonstrated acceptable fit to the data; $\chi 2$ ($df = 24$, $N = 303$) =

45.67, $p < .05$; CFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.06, (95% CI for RMSEA = [0.03, 0.07]).

The structural model also demonstrated acceptable fit to the data; $\chi 2$ ($df = 120$, $N = 303$) =

227.50, $p < .05$; CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.06, (95% CI for RMSEA = [0.05, 0.07]).

Neither race, gender, nor income were associated with any of the three types of activism.

Previous participation in a protest or demonstration was significantly associated with resource

mobilization ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < .01$), collective action ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < .01$), and higher-accessibility

activism ($\beta = 0.50$, $p < .01$). Of the four emotions included in the model as predictors of

activism (anger, disgust, fear, and sadness), anger was the only emotion that predicted

participation in the three categories of activism after accounting for the covariates. In this model,

anger was associated with more frequent resource mobilization forms of activism ($\beta = 0.11$, $p <$

.05), collective action ($\beta = 0.13$, $p < .05$), and higher-accessibility forms of activism ($\beta = 0.11$, p

$< .05$).

Feeling personally affected as a moderator

I proceeded to investigate whether associations between emotional responses and

activism differed as a function of feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency. I fit the

covariance matrices of the two groups (i.e., those who felt personally affected and those who did

not) to the same model. I constrained the factor loadings, paths, and covariances to be equal

between groups. The model achieved acceptable fit for both groups, $\chi 2$ ($df = 276$, $N = 303$) =

472.04, $p < .01$; CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.07, (95% CI for RMSEA = [0.06, 0.08]). I

then released equality constraints one by one to determine whether freeing the path improved

model fit as indicated by a chi-square reduction of 3.8 for every degree of freedom lost. Upon

releasing the constraints, I found that freeing three paths improved model fit. The resulting

model which included the freed paths demonstrated the best fit to the data, $\chi^2(df = 273, N = 303)$

= 458.35, $p < .01$; CFI = 0.94, TLI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.07, (95% CI for RMSEA = [0.06, 0.08]).

See Table 4. The effect sizes were $R^2 = .11$ for resource mobilization, $R^2 = .20$ for collective

action, and $R^2 = .16$ for higher-accessibility activism. In this model, feelings of anger in response

to the Trump presidency predicted more frequent collective action among participants who did

not feel personally affected by the Trump presidency ($\beta = 0.16, p < .01$) but not among those

who felt personally affected. There was a positive association between higher levels of fear in

response to the Trump presidency and collective action among students who felt personally

affected by the Trump presidency ($\beta = 0.10, p < .05$). Fear in response to the Trump presidency

was not associated with collective action among students who did not feel personally affected by

the Trump presidency. In addition, higher levels of sadness in response to the Trump presidency

were associated with significantly less frequent engagement in higher-accessibility activism

among participants who did not feel personally affected by the Trump presidency ($\beta = - 0.09, p <$

.05). There was no association between sadness and higher-accessibility activism among those

who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency.

Discussion

The current study aimed to investigate potential associations between negatively-

valenced emotional responses to the Trump presidency and underrepresented college students'

participation in activism. I pursued this line of inquiry among a group of underrepresented

college students at a PWI. Many underrepresented college students hold marginalized social identities that were targeted by Trump's proposed exclusionary policies and rhetoric, and Thus might be concerned about the implications for themselves, their loved ones, and society as a whole. Activism is an agentic approach taken by individuals in response to threatening sociopolitical change to protect the rights and safety of marginalized groups (McVeigh & Smith, 1999). Some research suggests that negatively-valenced emotional experiences might in part drive participation in activism, but the associations documented have been inconsistent. I took a multipronged, exploratory approach to extend current knowledge about activism.

First, I aimed to characterize underrepresented college students' negatively-valenced emotional responses to the Trump presidency by analyzing data from closed-ended survey items assessing students' feelings of anger, disgust, fear, and sadness. As a validity check for the inclusion of these emotional responses, I analyzed text responses to an open-ended question assessing participants' feelings about the Trump presidency. The open-ended question was asked first in an effort to glean an unbiased assessment of participants' emotional reactions. Findings supported the notion that anger, disgust, fear, and sadness were relevant emotional responses to study in the context of the Trump election and presidency. I also found support for the possibility that emotions at the intersection of these four primary emotions might be worth examining in future research focused on emotional responses to the Trump presidency, and possibly to sociopolitical changes more broadly.

Results from an EFA of 13 different types of activism supported the notion that it is worthwhile to treat activism as a multidimensional construct. Even though I found relatively strong correlations among negatively-valenced emotional responses to the Trump presidency, I still found differences in associations between specific negatively-valenced emotional responses

to the Trump presidency and participation in various types of activism. Moreover, these associations differed as a function of feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency after accounting for gender, race, family income, and previous participation in activism. Specifically, anger in response to the Trump presidency predicted more frequent collective action among those who did not feel personally affected by the presidency. I found that greater fear in response to the Trump presidency was associated with more frequent collective action among students who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency. Finally, I also found that sadness in response to the Trump presidency predicted less frequent engagement in higher-accessibility activism among those who did not feel personally affected by the Trump presidency.

Negatively-valenced emotional responses to the Trump presidency

Consistent with what would be expected given previous literature, qualitative and quantitative analyses suggested that anger, disgust, fear and sadness may be salient emotional responses to the Trump presidency. Analyses of the closed-ended ratings of these emotional reactions indicated that they were positively correlated to a fairly strong degree. This is consistent with previous research indicating that respondents may not differentiate between their experiences of similarly-valenced emotions when using a series of Likert scales. However, findings from the text analysis suggest that there may still be individual variations in the salience of students' internal experience of anger, disgust, fear, and sadness. In addition, there appeared to be differences in the frequency with which participants spontaneously reported the emotions assessed with closed-ended survey items. Fear-related emotions in response to the Trump presidency were explicitly mentioned by nearly a third of participants. On the other hand, the other items assessed in the survey (anger, disgust, sadness), were each reported by less than 15 percent of participants. Notably, a majority of participants expressed more than one emotion in

their open-ended response. The text analysis also introduced other specific emotional responses that may warrant future research; for instance, a category of emotions that represent intersecting feelings of anger and disgust, shame, and acceptance/resignation.

Associations between emotional responses to the Trump presidency and activism

Scholars have tended to categorize types of activism based on the amount of resources required or the potential risk for harm (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995). Because some traditional forms of activism are now more accessible or present different risks (e.g., online modes of participation) to members of different groups, they may also cluster together differently over time and across samples. Thus, I aimed to build on previous literature by investigating whether similar categories of activism emerged from the activities assessed in the current study. I found support for a multidimensional framework of activism, rather than finding that activities fell on a single continuum of risk or resources. There is reason to believe that the categories that emerged in the EFA included activities held the potential to present risk and/or demand considerable resources.

I labeled the categories that emerged as resource mobilization, collective action, and higher-accessibility activism. First, drawing upon resources such as time, money, skills, or social capital in the domain of activist engagements has been termed 'resource mobilization' (Edwards & McCarthy, 2004; John & Mayer, 2017). These activities require one to possess these resources, or to strategically acquire them (John & Mayer, 2017). The second factor that emerged was labeled collective action (Jost et al., 2017). It comprised protesting, participating in a political organization, and attending an event. Each of these activities requires interaction and organization with other activists. Collective action often provides opportunities to connect with like-minded individuals who may share similar backgrounds, and further, may foster social

relationships. The third factor, higher-accessibility activism, included activities such as posting on social media, boycotting, or signing a petition. These forms of activism may be completed on- or off-line and typically require fewer tangible resources (e.g., money). In addition, these forms of activism offer greater flexibility in how much time one spends on the activities. For instance, signing a petition can be done quickly online. An individual who posts on social media can choose not to respond to comments on their post, or choose to engage in extensive conversations online about political issues.

Approximately 80% of the sample engaged in activism at least once in the previous 6 months. In fact, on average, participants engaged in some form of activism nearly once a week. This suggests our study sample is similarly engaged in political activities when compared to other college student study samples (e.g., Fassett, Priddie, BrckaLorenz, & Kinzie, 2018; Hope, Keels, & Durkee, 2016). Unsurprisingly, participants engaged in higher-accessibility forms of activism more frequently than resource mobilization or collective action. However, it seems likely that the activities in the higher-accessibility category may complement or serve as a point of access to the activities that comprise collective action or resource mobilization (Milošević-Đorđević & Žeželj, 2017). After establishing categories of political engagement, I aimed to investigate associations among emotional experiences and engagement.

First, I examined whether anger, disgust, fear, or sadness were associated with participation in the three forms of activism identified in the factor analysis after accounting for gender, race/ethnicity, family income, and previous participation in activism. I found that anger predicted more frequent engagement in all three categories of activism (e.g., protesting or attending a political event) when examining the full sample. This is consistent with previous research which suggests that anger is most likely to drive participation in forms of activism that

require a group effort, such as protesting (Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007; Turner, 2007). In the subsequent multigroup analysis, I found that the positive association between feeling angry and engaging in collective action was stronger for students who did not feel personally affected by the presidency. One explanation for this finding may be that the "activating" nature produced by anger (Izard, 1993) might be important to fuel activism among those who do not feel personally connected to political circumstances. If one does not feel personally affected by political circumstances, there may be less motivation to take action, especially in activities that require more resources and higher risk (such as the risks posed by protesting).

I found that fear related to the Trump presidency was only associated with participation in collective action (e.g., protesting) among participants who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency. There are numerous possible explanations for this finding. First, fear may have led students who did not feel personally affected to avoid collective action, which often presents greater physical risk. Among those who felt personally affected, concern about the personal consequences of the Trump presidency may have counteracted the fear-driven impulse to avoid threat. It is possible that my finding that fear was associated with participation in more collective action among students who felt personally affected may have reflected a reciprocal or bidirectional relationship between activism and fear related to the presidency. Students who engage in ongoing collective action may have been more frequently engaged in critical conversations with other activists Regarding the threat of the Trump presidency and may have a more acute understanding of its potential consequences (Furlong, Woodman, & Wyn, 2011), thereby contributing to higher levels of fear. Moreover, engaging in some forms of collective action may present physical risks and heighten concerns about safety, thereby producing heightened feelings of fear.

An alternative interpretation is that concerns pertaining to the more immediate risks associated with engaging in collective action may have been mitigated by the fact that collective action happens in solidarity with others. For instance, collective action may provide social support for distress related to the Trump presidency from other activists who share the same concerns (Chen & Gorski, 2015). Engaging in the strategic approaches typically employed by social justice organizations might also increase one's sense of agency and ability to manage the risks of activism (Hornsey et al., 2006). Feeling compelled to act alongside or on behalf of one's group or community may have reduced the extent to which fear related to the presidency dictated students' decisions to participate in collective forms of activism (Haste & Hogan, 2006). It is worth noting that evidence suggests that distress related to the entrance of the Trump administration contributed to increased symptoms of anxiety among underrepresented college students in the study sample (Albright & Hurd, 2019). Yet, understanding the ways in which one might be personally affected by the Trump presidency likely also comes with concern that other members of their communities are in harm's way. A calculation may have been made that more immediate and personal risks were worth making in exchange for the possibility that collective action may successfully reduce the more profound long-term risks associated with an oppressive presidency.

I found that sadness was associated with less engagement in higher-accessibility activism (e.g., signing petitions, boycotting, posting on social media), but only among students who did not feel personally affected by the Trump presidency. Extant literature has found that sadness might decrease participation in forms of collective action (Verhulst & Walgrave, 2009), but has been understudied in regards to participation in more immediately accessible forms of activism, such as signing a petition or boycotting. In general, participants who did not feel personally

affected by the Trump presidency were less likely to engage in higher-accessibility forms of activism. Opportunities to engage in many of the forms of activism in the higher-accessibility category are often completed online, in private, and accessed through the use of social media. Engaging with social media may also increase exposure to upsetting political news, which might heighten feelings of despair or disappointment about the "state of the world" (Solloway, Slater, Chung, & Goodall, 2013).

Thus, it is possible that students who experienced sadness but did not feel personally affected by the Trump presidency were further inclined to avoid saddening information (Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2010). Less exposure to political social media content may lead to fewer opportunities to engage in some of the types of activism in this category (e.g., not seeing a peer's post linking to an online petition). In addition, because social networks are often composed of individuals who share similar backgrounds and beliefs, those who did not feel personally affected by the presidency may have less politically-engaged social networks. Therefore, those who do not feel personally affected by the presidency would have to play a more active role in seeking out the activities assessed in the current study. In turn, the 'deactivating' nature of sadness may have a more potent influence on their decision to participate in private forms of activism, which may not provide social connection that could offset feelings of sadness.

A few non-significant pathways are worth noting. There were no group differences in associations between emotions and resource mobilization as a function of feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency. However, when examining the full sample, anger was the only emotion that predicted resource mobilization. This finding is consistent with previous research, which suggests that anger motivates participation in forms of activism that require more resources (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001; Turner, 2007). Research suggests that anger

might either drive decisions to mobilize pre-existing resources for activist endeavors, or motivate efforts to seek out necessary resources. Anger may increase one's sense of self-efficacy and belief that the use of their resources will pay off (Lerner & Keltner, 2000). Yet, the current study sample was composed of emerging adults who likely possess limited skills and resources for the activities that comprise the resource mobilization category. Thus, while anger may motivate young people to participate in resource mobilization, this may not be contingent on feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency.

Disgust did not emerge as a significant predictor of any of the three forms of activism after accounting for the covariates. Basic emotion research would point towards a negative association between disgust and activism, given that disgust evokes avoidance behaviors (Nabi, 1998). It would be expected that disgust would predict less engagement in higher-accessibility forms of activism (e.g., posting on social media, signing petitions) that require repeated exposure to information that might evoke feelings of disgust without the sense of solidarity (e.g., participating in an organization) that might offset avoidance. In the social context, disgust is an "other-condemning" emotion (Haidt, 2003) and Therefore, it would stand to reason it might exert similar influences on political behavior as anger (e.g., participation in collective action). However, anger and disgust were significantly correlated in the current study sample, which may reflect that anger has a stronger influence on political behavior than disgust. Indeed, feelings of disgust have been associated with public forms of political participation when paired with anger (Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007).

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Several important study limitations are worth noting. First, I was limited in the assessment of emotional responses to the presidency. I used a series of single items to assess four

primary emotional responses typically associated with political events. It is possible that participants may have experienced synchronous emotions regarding the Trump presidency that were not captured by the survey items or influenced their responses. I took one step towards augmenting the utility of the data from the closed-ended items by analyzing students' responses to an open-ended survey item. However, the approach to gathering this text data limited my ability to conduct a formal qualitative data analysis. In the current study, analyzing text data was primarily an attempt to confirm the validity of the emotion response variables.

Given the relatively strong correlations among responses to closed-ended items assessing similarly-valenced emotional responses, it may be worth supplementing rating items (i.e., on a continuous scale) by prompting students to also rank those feelings. This approach might encourage participants to more carefully reflect on their internal experiences of these emotions. Even when participants are indeed experiencing the assessed emotions at high intensities simultaneously, the addition of a ranking approach might provide additional or more precise information regarding the salience of different but similarly-valenced emotions motivating activism. Comprehensive approaches to qualitatively assessing emotional responses to the Trump presidency are needed to inform the development of more refined survey measures that might also facilitate a more nuanced understanding of motivations behind activism related to sociopolitical shifts. Nonetheless, the emotions assessed by the closed-ended survey items also emerged in participants' uncued text responses, indicating that feelings of anger, disgust, fear, and sadness warrant continued investigation in the context of political shifts.

An important limitation of the current study is the inability to determine whether participants' activism was in response to the Trump presidency. The associations among emotional responses and activism were cross-sectional, which limits the ability to draw

conclusions about directionality. Of note, approximately half of participants had participated in protests or demonstrations two years prior to the entrance of Trump into the political arena. This may indicate that some of the activism reported by students was ongoing sociopolitical concerns rather than specifically related to Trump, although notably, those concerns may have been exacerbated by Trump's bigoted rhetoric and proposed policies. Indeed, there was an uptick in activist demonstrations following Trump's election to the presidency (Kitch, 2018), and this may have held true for student activists. Moreover, the previous measure of activism assessed participation in protests related to two issues that were centered again upon the entrance of the Trump campaign (violence against black men and violence against women). By including previous participation in protests/demonstrations as a covariate in my analyses, I was able to approximate pre-existing participation and students' access to activist engagements. This is a notable strength of the current study and bolsters my confidence that activism measured in the current study may be related to the issues centered during the Trump campaign and entrance of the Trump administration. Nonetheless, future research should leverage multiple data points to shed light on questions related to possible reciprocal relationships among emotional experiences and participation in activism.

In addition, I was unable to determine the factors underlying participants' feelings of anger, disgust, fear, and sadness. Therefore, I am limited in my ability to draw conclusions about the reasons why certain emotional experiences might fuel greater participation in activism. It is possible that associations between emotions and activism vary as a function of the most salient 'reason' for the feeling. Thus, I am unable to conclude whether participants reported emotional experiences in relation to themselves, their loved ones, or society as a whole. For instance, one might feel afraid for their own safety, or the safety of their community. Sadness might be

experienced because one is aware of the harm that will occur to members of groups targeted by Trump's rhetoric and policies. Nonetheless, the inclusion of the moderating variable (feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency) and exploration of open-ended response data is a strength of the current study. Indeed, a slightly different pattern of results emerged when separately examining the sample by feeling personally affected. Taken together, these results provide additional preliminary information that more nuanced explorations of emotional experiences are worth conducting when considering how emotions might drive activism.

Conclusions

While the current study was exploratory, findings may inform future research focused on emotional responses to political events and associations with activism. I found support for previous research suggesting that feelings of anger, disgust, fear, and sadness are relevant to sociopolitical changes. A notable finding of the current study was that feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency seemed to condition the association between feelings of fear and participation in collective action. This suggests that the behavioral responses associated with fear related to sociopolitical circumstances might represent a notable exception to the typical relationship between fear and risk avoidance. In addition, students who felt personally affected engaged in all forms of activism more frequently than their peers. It seems that being subject to unjust sociopolitical circumstances might motivate people to engage in activism despite possible risks to their wellbeing and the significant time, energy, and tangible resources required for their endeavors.

Students may, in part, participate in activism in response to the ways they feel they might be impacted by the forces they are resisting. Moreover, individuals may choose to engage in activism for a variety of meaningful reasons (e.g., a sense of personal responsibility to take

action in the face of injustice; Haste & Hogan, 2006) rather than for personal benefit (e.g., to alleviate personal distress or express moral outrage; Iyer, Schmader, & Lickell, 2007). Indeed, individuals who work against unjust social circumstances have acknowledged their efforts might take a toll on their wellbeing (Chen & Gorski, 2015). Extant literature suggests that individuals from marginalized groups (i.e., those who may be directly affected by oppressive circumstances) often shoulder a disproportionate burden of social justice efforts on the whole. These activists are perhaps most at risk for harm while engaging in the types of activities involved in collective action (e.g., identity-based victimization at protests). Yet, activists persist in these efforts and have contributed to remarkable social changes as a result.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for Key Study Variables

Variable	Scale	*M*	*SD*
Emotional response to the Trump presidency			
Anger	0 – 10	7.33	2.88
Disgust	0 – 10	7.87	2.80
Fear	0 – 10	6.66	2.72
Sadness	0 – 10	7.19	2.80
Activism (in past 6 months)			
Resource mobilization		1.00 (*i.e., once or twice*)	2.59
Collective action	0 – 7 (*Never – almost every day*)	1.68 (*i.e., a few times*)	2.84
Higher-accessibility engagement		4.15 (*i.e., a few times a month*)	5.86
Protest/demonstration in Spring '15	47% (*n* = 141)		
Family income	Less than $4,999-- more than $105,000	$55,000 - $74,999	

Table 2

Correlations among Key Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Angry		.90*	.68*	.83*	.15	.11	.26*	-.30*	.05	.04	.17
2. Disgust	.72*		.66*	.75*	.09	.03	.19	-.22*	.04	.03	.18
3. Afraid	.68*	.55*		.76*	-.10	-.13	-.01	-.15	.13	.09	.01
4. Sad	.73*	.63*	.68*		-.11	-.17	-.04	-.31*	.18	.03	.14
5. Resource mobilization	.15*	.13	.10	.15*		.77*	.91*	-.10	-.09	-.05	.20
6. Collective action	.23*	.18*	.24*	.18*	.66*		.79*	-.11	.04	.04	.17
7. Higher-accessibility	.26*	.22*	.19*	.23*	.55*	.70*		-.12	-.04	-.02	.29*
8. Male	-.31*	-.25*	-.33*	-.25*	-.02	-.10	-.07		-.05	-.07	-.19
9. White	.11	.00	.05	.15*	.00	.07	.10	-.03		-.06	-.14
10. Family income	-.02	.00	.02	.00	.03	.15*	.03	-.01	-.08		-.12
11. Previous activism	.16*	.09	.06	.02	.20*	.29*	.24*	-.07	-.08	.09	

$* p < .05$

Note. The upper triangle of the correlation table represents correlations among study variables for those who did not feel personally affected by the Trump presidency. The lower half represents correlations among study variables for those who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency.

Table 3

Open-ended responses: Emotional type frequencies and sub-categories

Category	Words, phrases, and expressions used to convey emotions[1]	% of respondents
Non-specific negatively-valenced responses	Expression of general distress (e.g., upset, terrible, horrible, 'negatively'; n = 15)	
	Bad/'not good' (n = 8)	10%
	Disapproval (e.g., dislike; displeased; I do not support it; he is unqualified)	
Primary politically-relevant emotions		
Anger	Angry/angered (n = 8)	
	Frustration (n = 8)	
	Hatred (e.g., 'I hate him;' n = 6)	10%
	Other anger-related expressions and sentiments: annoyed, resent, infuriated[2]	
Disgust	Disgusted (n = 10)	7%
	Other disgust-related expressions and sentiments: [He is] trash/garbage, idiotic, hypocritical, liar, poison, nauseating[3], 'makes me sick[3],' appalled[3]	
Fear	Scared (n = 15)	
	Afraid, fearful (n = 12)	
	Concerned (n = 12)	
	Worried (n = 12)	
		27%

	Other fear-related expressions and sentiments: anxious, stress/stressful, unsafe, uneasy, terrified, dangerous, nervous, threat/threatened[4], jumpy[4]	
Sadness	Disappointed ($n = 15$)	14%
	Sad ($n = 12$)	
	Other sadness-related expressions and sentiments: depressing, unfortunate, regret, mistake, disheartening, discouraged, setback[5], hurt	
Emergent negatively-valenced responses		
Anger-disgust	[He is] bigoted/racist/sexist ($n = 15$) Use of profanity ($n = 9$) Other expressions of anger-disgust: loathe, atrocious/atrocity, sham, ridiculous, greedy/selfish, [he is] heinous	12%
	Anger-disgust with fear (e.g., distrust, [he is] reckless) Anger-disgust with sadness (e.g., disgrace, betrayed)	
Fear-sadness	Fear-sadness with anger (e.g., 'he will ruin America,' disaster/disastrous, doomed, 'will be our downfall'; $n = 7$) Fear-sadness with disgust (e.g., travesty, horrified; $n = 3$)	4%
Shame	Embarrassed ($n = 9$) Ashamed ($n = 4$) Other shame-related expressions and sentiments: 'not proud,' 'makes us look bad'	6%
Neutral and mixed-valence responses		
Indifference, anticipatory, or indecision	Indifferent ($n = 5$) Other expressions conveying indifference (e.g., 'don't care')	6%
	Expressions conveying indecision or anticipation (e.g., undecided, 'waiting to see,' 'too soon to tell', apprehensive)	

Acceptance/ resignation	Expressions of acceptance/resignation: 'wish it didn't happen, but it did'; 'don't agree with it but am starting to get used to it,' 'don't support it but accept it'	6%
Optimism/ hope	Expressions of optimism: 'it will be okay,' 'encouraged,' 'change is coming'	
	Hope: 'hope he proves us wrong,' 'hope it turns out okay'	6%
Surprise/ confusion	Disbelief or confusion (e.g., 'haven't accepted it,' 'can't understand it'; $n = 11$)	
	Shock, surprise ($n = 6$)	
		6%

1 Consistent with categorization by the NRC Emotion Lexicon (Mohammed & Turney, 2013b), unless otherwise specified.

2 Expression of anger (Wordnet; Princeton University, 2010)

3 Expression of disgust (Wordnet; Princeton University, 2010)

4 Expression of fear (Wordnet; Princeton University, 2010)

5 Expression of sadness (Wordnet; Princeton University, 2010)

Table 4

Results of Multigroup Analyses Comparing Pathways to Activism as a Function of Feeling Personally Affected by the Trump Presidency

Type of activism	Variable	Personally affected				Not personally affected			
		β	b	*SE* of b	p value	β	b	*SE* of b	p value
Resource mobilization	Gender	-0.08	-0.05	.08	.55	-0.08	-0.05	.08	.55
	Race/ethnicity	-0.06	-0.04	.09	.68	-0.06	-0.04	.09	.68
	Family income	0.02	0.01	.01	.30	0.02	0.01	.01	.30
	Previous activism	0.44	0.26	.08	< .01*	0.44	0.26	.08	< .01*
	Anger	0.10	0.06	.03	.02*	0.10	0.06	.03	.02*
	Disgust	0.02	0.01	.02	.60	0.02	0.01	.02	.60
	Fear	-0.03	-0.02	.02	.41	-0.03	-0.02	.02	.41
	Sadness	-0.08	-0.05	.03	.06	-0.08	-0.05	.03	.06
Collective action	Gender	0.05	0.04	.11	.69	0.05	0.04	.11	.69
	Race/ethnicity	0.16	0.14	.12	.23	0.16	0.14	.12	.23
	Family income	0.03	0.02	.02	.10	0.03	0.02	.02	.10
	Previous activism	0.56	0.44	.11	< .01*	0.56	0.44	.11	< .01*
	Anger	**0.09**	**0.07**	**.04**	**.06**	**0.16**	**0.14**	**.04**	**< .01***
	Disgust	0.01	0.01	.03	.81	0.01	0.01	.03	.81
	Fear	**0.10**	**0.07**	**.03**	**.04***	**-0.07**	**-0.06**	**.04**	**.09**
	Sadness	-0.08	-0.07	.03	.06	-0.08	-0.07	.03	.06
Higher-accessibility activism	Gender	-0.04	-0.01	.04	.78	-0.04	-0.01	.04	.78
	Race/ethnicity	0.08	0.02	.04	.58	0.08	0.02	.04	.58
	Family income	0.03	0.01	.01	.17	0.03	0.01	.01	.17
	Previous activism	0.52	0.21	.05	< .01*	0.52	0.21	.05	< .01*
	Anger	0.15	0.04	.02	< .00*	0.15	0.04	.02	< .00*
	Disgust	-0.00	-0.00	.01	.98	-0.00	-0.00	.01	.98
	Fear	-0.01	-0.00	.01	.90	-0.01	-0.00	.01	.90
	Sadness	**0.00**	**0.00**	**.02**	**.93**	**-0.09**	**-0.03**	**.01**	**.03***

Note. Bolded text represents freed paths and their coefficients. b = unstandardized coefficient. β = standardized coefficient. *SE* = standard error

CONCLUDING LINKING DOCUMENT

Emerging adults in college are in the midst of a developmental period when their social identity is salient, and are typically attuned to the ways that sociopolitical climate might influence their future. The Trump campaign, election, and presidency were noteworthy due to Trump's publicly bigoted rhetoric and early executive orders centered on restricting the rights of certain marginalized groups. Underrepresented college students who hold marginalized social identities may experience further marginalization under his administration. His election and early presidency may have fostered psychological distress and a range of negatively-valenced emotional reactions including anger, disgust, fear, and sadness. Thus, the entrance of the Trump presidency might be a significant event in the lives of underrepresented college students that undermines their mental health and motivates involvement in activism.

Summary of Study Findings

The overarching aim of this dissertation was to characterize underrepresented college students' emotional and behavioral responses to the Trump presidency and to consider potential consequences of these experiences for students' mental health. I sought to document psychological consequences of distress related to the presidency and to explore the phenomenon of student activism that could be understood as an agentic coping reaction to distress caused by the Trump presidency. The results of my first dissertation study indicated that possessing more marginalized targeted identities may have contributed to greater Trump-related distress. I also found that greater Trump-related distress was associated with increased symptoms of anxiety in Spring 2017 compared to what would have been expected based on participants' previous mental health trajectories. Notably, pre-existing trajectories of anxiety and depression were not significant predictors of students' level of Trump-related distress. Leveraging data from multiple

time points strengthens my confidence in my interpretation of findings regarding the potential role of Trump-related distress in fueling an increase in anxiety symptoms. The fact that I found harm to mental health only 4 months after the entrance of the administration speaks to the potency of the Trump presidency as a psychological stressor.

In my second dissertation study, I proceeded to investigate whether activism, when combined with greater peer support, might offset the noxious influence of Trump-related distress on mental health. I did not find support for a protective moderating influence of activism and peer support. Moreover, my findings indicated that, in addition to Trump-related distress, activism contributed to worsening anxiety symptoms. It is possible that while activism might afford students the opportunity to connect with like-minded students who share their concerns, it also might expose them more frequently to the overwhelming nature of social problems (Furlong, Woodman, & Wyn, 2011).

In my third dissertation study, I sought to build on my first two studies by gaining a more complete understanding of participants' emotional reactions to the Trump presidency and how those emotional reactions may have fueled participation in various types of political activism. In a multi-group comparison of associations between negatively-valenced emotional responses (anger, disgust, fear, and sadness) and activism, I found that feeling personally affected by the Trump presidency moderated the association between feelings of fear and participation in collective action (i.e., protesting, attending an event). Although fear is typically thought to prompt avoidance behavior, feelings of fear were associated with more participation in collective action among participants who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency. The very emotions and concerns that motivate involvement in activism—potential loss of rights, for instance—might also be part of the explanation for the associations I documented between

activism and symptoms of anxiety. For instance, more frequent activism might lead to heightened awareness of threats to one's identity and wellbeing, thereby contributing to more anxiety.

Directions for Future Research

While exploratory, these dissertation studies are a preliminary step towards addressing existing gaps in current research. Study findings and limitations point to a range of possible directions for future research. Because I was unable to identify existing comprehensive measures of distress and emotional reactions to significant sociopolitical events, I utilized single-item measures of distress and emotional responses (anger, disgust, fear, sadness) related to the presidency. My third dissertation study took a small step towards addressing this gap by analyzing open-ended questions and identifying emotional responses described by students in their own words. Future research that more extensively examines reactions to the Trump presidency and documents the pathways through which his presidency may inflict damage on marginalized communities will meaningfully extend my findings.

The current studies drew upon data with a single post-election time point, approximately four months after Trump's inauguration to the presidency. This limited my ability to determine whether the influence of Trump-related distress had an enduring influence on symptoms of anxiety. Studies with multiple post-election time points might expect to find more pronounced mental health consequences over time. In my second paper, I did not find that social support served as a compensatory factor for the psychological toll of activism and Trump-related distress. Because I did not utilize a measure of social support specific to activism, I was limited in my ability to investigate whether students were reporting support related to their activist endeavors, which may have contributed to these null findings. Because social support is

consistently associated with better mental health outcomes, it may be useful for future research to focus on identifying the types of support needed by student activists.

Going forward, more research should be conducted with diverse samples to determine the extent to which these findings replicate. Participants in the current study represent a group of young adults who, although they possess marginalized social identities, may also have access to more resources than many other young people not attending elite PWIs. That I found an association between Trump-related distress and activism and increases in anxiety symptoms among a presumably higher-resourced marginalized group speaks to the potential potency of the stressor of the Trump presidency and the psychological demands of activism. Future studies with more economically or racially/ethnically diverse young people in other contexts might expect to find even more pronounced harm to these groups.

Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to contribute to a foundation for future work examining the potential of the Trump presidency to inflict harm upon the mental health of members of marginalized groups and to better understand the phenomenon of student activism. Notwithstanding study limitations, it is notable that I documented heightened anxiety relative to students' previous trajectories of symptoms, and increases in anxiety even in the context of protective factors. The Trump presidency may have lasting consequences for wellbeing of marginalized students. Indeed, in years following the point of Spring 2017 data collection, Trump continued to engage in biased rhetoric. He also implemented or initiated many of the exclusionary policies he promised during his campaign. These changes might have compounded initial distress related to the presidency. Students who feel distressed related to the Trump administration may have become increasingly engaged in activism. Yet, many of those students

who are engaging in activism may also be those at risk of losing rights or security or safety under his administration. While some scholars suggest that activism can serve as a coping mechanism that offsets sociopolitical distress, I and several others have documented mental health consequences. It is worth noting that activists are likely well aware of the personal cost of their work and persist nonetheless (Gorski, 2018; Haste & Hogan, 2006). In fact, students in the current study who felt personally affected by the Trump presidency engaged in more frequent collective action despite (or perhaps in part, due to) fear related to the Trump presidency.

Together, my dissertation findings speak to a need for future research regarding best practices to support students who are affected by the presidency, and for those seeking to advance social change in a stressful sociopolitical environment. Student activists have paved the way towards a more equitable society (Altbach & Cohen, 1990; Berger, 2000; Boren, 2013). Unfortunately, my study findings suggest that while society collectively benefits from activists' work, it may occur at the expense of their wellbeing. More research is needed to better understand ways in which individuals can engage in this critical work without experiencing a personal cost to their mental health.

Institutions of higher education may be well positioned to support activists' endeavors and promote student wellbeing under stressful sociopolitical circumstances. For instance, institutions of higher education already invest considerable resources in students' wellbeing. Administrators at institutions of higher education might consider investing resources to provide additional support for underrepresented students who may contend with distressing levels of threat and uncertainty under the Trump administration. For instance, by creating physical "safe spaces" or support for identity-related organizations where students can connect (Arao & Clemens, 2013). Research suggests that college students may benefit from relationships with

peers or trusted mentors who provide validation and support related to marginalization (Griffith, Hurd, & Hussain, 2018; Hurd, Albright, Wittrup, Negrete, & Billingsley, 2017; Rendon, 1994, 2002). "Safe spaces" or organizations specific to students' marginalized identities may be one way to facilitate these supportive relationships. While providing direct support for students' wellbeing is important, it is also worth noting that these approaches may be insufficient to offset the stressor of the Trump presidency. Institutions of higher education tend to mirror structures of oppression in the United States. It is critical that universities attempt to create a more equitable environment wherein students from marginalized groups are not inundated with psychologically taxing experiences of bias and discrimination. Institutional initiatives to support students from marginalized groups should be guided and augmented by a broader dedication to dismantling the oppressive circumstances endemic to college campuses.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Emotional responses to the Trump presidency

Scale: 0 (*not at all*) to 10 (*extremely*).

When you think about the Donald Trump presidency, how distressed are you?
When you think about the Donald Trump presidency, how sad are you?
When you think about the Donald Trump presidency, how afraid are you?
When you think about the Donald Trump presidency, how angry are you?
When you think about the Donald Trump presidency, how disgusted are you?
When you think about the Donald Trump presidency, how happy are you?
When you think about the Donald Trump presidency, how surprised are you?

Open-ended response item: "How do you feel about the Trump presidency?"

Appendix B

Participation in Political Activism

In the past 6 months, about how frequently have you engaged in any of the following political activities?

Scale:
0 = Not at all
1 = Once or twice
2 = Once every other month
3 = Once a month
4 = A few times a month
5 = About once a week
6 = A few times a week
7 = Every day or almost every day

Signed an online or paper petition
Contacted an elected official
Participated in a protest, march, or rally
Boycotted a business or company
Buycotted a business or company (i.e., intentionally bought something from a company who supports your values)
Attended a political event (e.g., meeting, speech, forum)
Donated to a cause you support
Posted a news article, petition, or political opinion on social media
Participated in a political organization (e.g., campaigning for a politician, volunteering for a civil rights group)
Contacted or expressed your opinion to the media (e.g., spoke with a newspaper reporter)
Contributed your own content to an online news site (e.g., wrote an opinion piece)
Organized a political event
Demonstrated support for a political issue with a button, piece of clothing, or sign

Appendix C

Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors
Peer Emotional and Appraisal Support Subscales

Instructions:
The following questions are about your close friends. IN THE PAST 30 DAYS, how often have your friends...

Scale:
0 = Not at all
1 = Once or twice
2 = About once a week
3 = Several times a week
4 = Every day or almost every day

Let you know that you did something well.
Expressed interest and concern in your wellbeing.
Told you that they would keep things that you talk about private - just between the two of you.
Let you know that they will always be around if you need anything.
Listened to you talk about your private feelings.
Talked with you about some interests of yours.
Expressed esteem or respect for a personal quality of yours.
Given you feedback on how you were doing.

Appendix D

Stressful Events Scale
Instructions: In the LAST 30 DAYS, did any of the following things happen? Please select any items that happened.

One of your parents moved to a new home
One of your parents got married
Your parents got divorced or separated
A parent lost a job
A parent started a new job
You became seriously ill or disabled
You were the victim of a crime
You couldn't afford to buy something you needed for college
A sibling dropped out of school
A member of your immediate family went on public assistance
A member of your immediate family used illegal drugs
A member of your family was a victim of a crime
A member of your family got into trouble with the law
A member of your immediate family became seriously ill or disabled
A member of your family wasn't able to pay their bills
A member of your immediate family became homeless for a period of time
A close relative or friend died

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