Abstract

This thesis analyzes filmed dialogues that center interracial and intergroup understanding through small group communication. This research seeks to deepen understandings of structures and power dynamics in communication networks at the intersection of social network analysis, communication analysis, and restorative justice principles. Examining seven filmed dialogues, including five intergroup identity-based dialogues and two restorative justice circles, through computational techniques to analyze the transcripts using social network analysis, centrality measures, and sentiment analysis, this research illuminates the relationship between communication, dialogic connection, and social power structures. This research finds that these filmed identity-based intergroup dialogues center the narratives and emotional arcs of the white participants, and, more often than not, use the participants of color as educators instead of equally included participants. Further, this research finds that white participants often expressed higher sentiment scores than participants of color, and that their sentiment scores followed how positively or negatively they felt about their place in a racialized society. By centering the emotional and educational stories and arcs of understanding of the white participants, these filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues reinforce the very racial injustices that they claim to work toward dismantling.

Connections in Conversation: Dialogue Rooted in Equity

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Positionality Statement

I am a white, upper-class, privileged woman who will forever be unlearning the racism that I have absorbed and perpetuated through my socialization in what is now known as the United States. I occupy many positions of privilege and social power, and my lived experiences and inherent biases may have impacted any and all of my interpretations of the data. I am so grateful for the people, especially the people of color, who have educated me about the realities of racism and the importance of compensating and appreciating that education. I will continue to educate myself and understand my biases and internalizations around the racist, cisheteropatriarchal, capitalistic society in which I live. Recognizing our inherent interconnectedness is key to working toward collective liberation together.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Everything and everyone is connected. Methods of communication are how these connections are created, maintained, and sometimes, damaged and broken. Conflict and oppression damage these connections – historically, interpersonally, and structurally. People are connected by histories and stories of harm, and this harm is frequently reproduced through communication. This research uses this understanding of interconnectedness of people, histories, and harm in the context of racial inequity, and examines how this is represented in filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues. Through narrative analysis, social network centrality measures, and sentiment analysis, this research builds upon connections between the more quantitative elements of analysis and a qualitative interpretation of the nature of human connection through dialogue. This research endeavors to answer the following questions: Who is centered in these filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues? How are structures of power reflected in the dialogue networks? Do these filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues reproduce structures of racial inequity despite appearing focused on combating inequity? Who speaks the most and to whom? What does the content of the dialogues say about the emotional labor of the participants?

This research seeks to contribute to our understanding of identity-based dialogue and restorative justice to show structures of power in settings that are focused on connecting people through communication. This study seeks to analyze these filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues using social network analysis methodology to deepen the collective knowledge of the relationship between the identities of the participants and their interactions with each other. By illuminating patterns in social dynamics through communication, this thesis intends to add to a

conversation of increasing racial equity-focused communication where more voices, especially the voices of those who have been and are historically discriminated against, are heard and valued. Network analysis is primarily descriptive in this work, supporting the in-depth examination of the films and highlighting the patterns of racial inequity that arise and are replicated through the films.

Racial justice work has always been incredibly important in working toward collective liberation. Although there is a movement of increasing conservative sentiment in the United States right now, there is also an increasing understanding that racial justice and dialogue are essential in moving toward justice and freedom together with hope. When people dialogue, connections are cultivated — people identify what they have in common and become more deeply attuned to their collective humanity. This understanding and appreciation of the inherent interconnectedness is foundational to liberation and the building of intersectional movements. As this understanding has grown, so has the popularity and participation in dialogues for social change and the filming of those dialogues. Dialoguing for change is not new or modern, but it seems that people are now more receptive to listening.

The data involved in this research are seven filmed dialogues, five focused on intergroup identity-based dialogues, and two focused on restorative justice circle processes. This collection of films is the most salient in the film genre of filmed facilitated intergroup identity-based dialogues, and every film shows a perspective into how and why the participants were assembled, with a clear narrative arc that aims to impart a certain message about the importance of these kinds of cross-community dialogues.

These films were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative measures. They were initially watched to ascertain whether they met the criteria of the research and to identify the

existence of certain matters across them. Then, each of the films was run through a transcription service, where they were converted into usable text that was then cleaned and used in Python notebooks. These notebooks were written to contain software that transformed each transcript file into a usable database that contained all of the films, which was then used for further analysis. This includes centrality measures, sentiment analysis, and network visualizations. This production of results was then interpreted and analyzed in the context of the previous literature, and the findings are presented below in the following chapters and particularly in the Discussion.

While dialogue-based, these films do not adhere to the framework of Intergroup Dialogue (IGD). Intergroup dialogue is "a face-to-face facilitated learning experience that brings together students from different social identity groups over a sustained period to understand their commonalities and differences, examine the nature and impact of societal inequalities, and explore ways of working together toward greater equality and justice" (Zúñiga et al., 2007, 2). IGD seeks to bring people from different socioeconomic backgrounds together in a space to engage in conversation that is aimed at fostering greater understanding, learning, and growth. This research found that an IGD approach might have been very useful in these films, as findings indicate that many of these films end up reproducing the systems of inequality they claim to be organized to combat through conversation. The dataset of this thesis is films that are focused on intergroup identity-based dialogue or restorative justice circle practices; they are not Intergroup Dialogues or Restorative Justice circles. They are films that are focused on those topics and ways of communicating, but they are films, not raw dialogues or circles.

For this reason, the editing choices of the directors and producers heavily influence the narrative structure of the films. As each film is not a presentation of raw dialogue, they contain certain narrative biases and structural differences due to this editing. Narrative choices were

made around who is featured most heavily, both in the dialogues themselves, which may or may not have existed in the initial raw dialogues, as well as in the editing of those involved in producing the film itself. Through facilitation, directive agency, and editing style, biases emerge that result in the reproduction of stories of white supremacy and that center the experiences of white participants, while treating the participants of color like film devices that exist primarily to educate and support the experiences of the white participants.

These narrative patterns are supported and further emphasized through the network visualizations, centrality scores, and sentiment analysis that make up the quantitative part of this research. The network visualizations show how the dialogue participants are connected through degree centrality, which identifies connectedness through whether or not a participant spoke to another participant. This method was chosen over other centrality methods, as it shows which participants talked to each other and which did not. There may be an assumption that since each of these dialogues was in a small space with a small group of people, that it would be very likely that each participant would speak to every other participant directly, but this data shows that that is not true, and that not all participants speak to each other directly. Therefore, this research identifies underlying communication patterns that shaped the dialogic connections between participants. Then, the participants' centrality is identified through centrality scores, which often emphasize the patterns of who is centered in the network visualizations. These centrality scores show numerically what is highlighted theoretically throughout the rest of this analysis. The higher the centrality score, the more a participant spoke and was spoken to throughout the dialogue. These scores can concisely represent the patterns, and while they do not tell the entire story, they give helpful insight into the numerical classification of centrality that is then supported through qualitative examination and analysis.

The centrality scores and network visualizations give essential insight into how the participants are centered, and how that plays into the societal power dynamics that are claimed to be discussed and deconstructed throughout the dialogues. Sentiment analysis was also constructed to support the qualitative analysis of emotional labor that is thrust upon the participants of color. This is not to say that the participants of color are necessarily victims and to strip them of their agency, but this is to say that the white participants and often the directors as well, reinforced systems of societal inequity by occupying the majority of the space of the learners, and therefore relegated the participants of color to the role of educators and emotional supporters. Through sentiment analysis, it is clear how sentiment scores of each racial group of participants change throughout the films. These sentiment scores often mirror the narrative structure that centers around the white experience, particularly the white emotional arc. This is often characterized by white participants entering the space, not knowing much about the realities of racism. Then there is a period of being told by participants of color that racism does exist, to which they protest and reject, followed by a period where the white participants often have an emotional reaction that is often a tearful expression of white guilt, and, finally, ending with white participants vowing to be more conscious allies going forward. This arc of emotion is mirrored through sentiment analysis. While sentiment analysis alone does not tell the whole story, through closer qualitative analysis of the films, it highlights the patterns through clear visualizations.

This highlights how bias emerges in filmed identity-based intergroup dialogues and restorative justice films through qualitative and quantitative measures, including sentiment analysis, network visualizations, and centrality measures. Through a close examination, it is clear

that these films, although their focus is on increasing interracial understanding and learning, end up reproducing situations of racial harm and feeding into societal systems of inequity.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter illustrates a theoretical overview of three of the most relevant areas of knowledge to this research. These areas include restorative justice (RJ), communication analysis (CA), and social network analysis (SNA). Each of these fields contributes essential knowledge that is foundational to this work and has made this work possible. Restorative justice is included as a communication framework centered on addressing community harm and repair, communication analysis is included as a broader understanding of how and why people communicate, and social network analysis is included as a framework for understanding the connections between people, how they operate, and how to measure them. This chapter outlines the theorists and their work that have laid the groundwork for this research, and therefore the theoretical ancestry of this project.

Restorative Justice (RJ)

As this research centers on how connections are formed through communication and then damaged through conflict and harm, restorative justice is an essential part of understanding how community harm can be navigated through communication across difference. Restorative justice is a form of Indigenous practice used by the Maori people of Aotearoa (also known as New Zealand) as a form of community communication and repair following harm. It has also been practiced in Turtle Island (also known as the United States of America) by Indigenous people long before colonization, as well as other Indigenous groups of people around the world. Two of the seven films in this research are restorative justice-focused, and therefore, an understanding of

what RJ is and how it is practiced is important in understanding what these films aimed to cultivate and communicate.

In the late 1900s, non-Indigenous people, many in Turtle Island, began trying to adapt restorative justice and practice to the carceral system to reduce incarceration (Zehr, 2002). This has been somewhat successful, yet has also led to the warping of the original core of restorative justice to justify the carceral system and the existence of the state and the government. Restorative justice is not a new or recent form of community-based conflict management; it is centuries old and is the lived and embodied knowledge of Indigenous communities across the world (Waillling et al., 2023). There is a conception of it as being somewhat recent, but that is because non-Indigenous people only recently began recognizing the power and wisdom of restorative justice, and are now producing literature on it.

As Waŋblí Wapȟáha Hokšíla/Dr. Edward Charles Valandra writes in his essay on Native justice:

> Because our Creation comes from one source, our original instruction is to be a good relative. This original instruction manifests itself in our being D/L/Nakȟóta, particularly in our relationships. And when we are in relationship (as my people traditionally know it), one is struck, among other things, by how much of our behavior toward one another and the natural world embodies qualities often associated with justice (Hokšila, 2023).

Restorative justice stems from an inherent interconnectedness with community members. It is grounded in the three "R" values: respect, responsibility, and relationship, and in the three pillars:

1. Focusing the harm and resulting needs primarily of the victim, but also the community and offender,
2. The obligations of the offender to repair the harm as best as possible, and
3. The engagement or participation of all these stakeholders in the justice process (Zehr, 2002).

It is essential to note that restorative justice is not trying to simply repair society to the way that it was before, but instead to move forward, having acknowledged the harm and done what can be done to make it right. As Fania Davis wrote in an email to Zehr,

> It's not about returning to the pre-conflict status quo but about returning to one's best self that's always there. When well facilitated, RJ processes create the possibility for transformation of people, relationships, and communities. This is often a radical departure from the pre-conflict status quo. So what are we restoring? For me, it's about returning to the part of us that really wants to be connected to one another in a good way. Returning to the goodness inherent in all of us. One might say, returning to the divinity present in all of us. Or as indigenous elders put it, returning to that part of us which is related to all things (Zehr, 2002).

In restorative practice, the focus is on an egalitarian structure of knowing that no one is completely guilty or innocent, and dialogues are held in a circle. The general circle format usually follows the following five phases:

1. Creating the foundation for dialogue– including a welcome, opening ceremony/grounding, introduction/check in, guidelines consensus, storytelling round, acknowledgment of those present (and sometimes those absent), and clarifying the purpose of the Circle;

2. Expressing needs and interests– communicating feelings, identifying needs, interests, or shared vision, and summary;
3. Exploring options– Circle addresses interests/ issues, options, and possible consensus for action plans;
4. Building consensus or a sense of unity– circle identifies points of agreement or common ground and next steps;
5. Closing – summary: agreement/next steps, check-out, and closing ceremony. These steps seek to emphasize the needs of the people in the circle and encourage the participants to communicate in rounds, where each member of the circle speaks if they choose to (Pranis, 2005).

Pranis writes about peacemaking circles, which typically occur to restore or create peace following harm in the community, but there are also community-building circles that are not centered around harm. Circles are often comprised of those most affected in the communities in which the harm or other situation occurred. In situations of harm, this could include the responsible and affected parties and their family or close community, as well as anyone else who feels they have been affected and would like to participate, it is important to note that the use of "responsible" and "affected" parties does not seek to place blame or innocence, but rather distinguish the relationships of those in the Circle.

Restorative justice deeply acknowledges the reality that we have all been harmed and we have all harmed others. This understanding of circle processes is essential to understanding how crucial and thoughtful this form and structure of communication is, and what sets it apart from the other forms of intergroup identity-based dialogue in this research. This is a key distinction in

how restorative justice is distinct from Intergroup Dialogue, and therefore why both forms of communication facilitation were included in this work.

Communication Analysis (CA)

Communication analysis is the theoretical and statistical framework for analyzing forms of communication and their impact. Similarly to social network analysis, communication analysis operates on the framework that all people are connected through communication structures and patterns (Duck & McMahan, 2015). Communication is believed to be transactional, meaning that there are consistent and sometimes simultaneous messages exchanged between two or more people, which lead to the development of meaning and the creation of something new (Duck & McMahan, 2015). This is opposed to simply an action, where just one message is sent, or an interaction, where two messages are exchanged but no meaning is necessarily exchanged or new creation (Duck & McMahan, 2015). Therefore, what we call "communication" is symbolic, presentational, and transactive (Duck & McMahan, 2015).

Interpersonal communication is communication between individual people. This is a distinct form of communication that is unlike other forms (Wood 2015). It can be best described as a continuum, with three levels: I–It, I–You, and I–Thou (Buber, 1970). I-It communication occurs when we treat the other person in a very impersonal, almost objectifying way. I–You communication is much more common and pertains to much more of our interactions where we see the other person as a human being and not an object, but also as someone of similar or equal status to ourselves. I–Thou communication, then, is the rarest but most revered form of communication by Buber. He believed that much of our communication is focused on "seeming," but only through I–Thou communication are we truly engaged in "being" (Buber

1970; Wood, 2016). This is because Buber believed that I–Thou communication centered around both or all communication participants as seeing each other in their full, unique humanity (1970). While this is not the most common form of communication, it is often the goal of interactions between individuals and the aim of communication, even when subconsciously executed.

Intercultural communication is larger in scope than interpersonal communication. This focuses less on individuals, although individuals across cultures communicate with each other, and specifically focuses on how people or groups of different cultures communicate with other people of different cultures. There are many motivators for communication with people who share different lived experiences and/or different identities. These include personal growth, social responsibility, economic resilience and strength, media, and many more, but above all, interconnectedness (Baldwin et al. 2014). Ethical positioning and underlying assumptions are critical when approaching intercultural communication. While it can bring the benefits listed above, it can also incur damage to less privileged communication participants. It is essential to be aware of ontology, or assumptions about the nature of reality, epistemology, or assumptions about knowledge, and axiology, which are our assumptions about the role of our values (Baldwin et al. 2014). These are key to keep in mind when doing any kind of research, but especially when communicating with others, including those from other cultures and backgrounds.

While all of these intergroup communication structures are relevant to this work, interracial communication may be one of the most salient. Interracial communication is one of the core pillars of this work. To understand its importance and its place in this research, it is essential to understand the following terms outlined in the table below.

Term	**Definition**

culture	learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors common to a particular group of people
race	a largely social–yet powerful–construction of human difference that has been used to classify human beings into separate value-based categories based on arbitrary physical features such as skin color, hair texture, etc.
ethnicity	a cultural marker that indicates shared traditions, heritage, and ancestral origins; defined psychologically and historically
ethnocentrism	belief in the normalcy or rightness of one's culture and consciously or unconsciously evaluating other aspects of other cultures by using your own as a standard
microculture	term used to describe groups that are culturally different from those of the majority group (macroculture)
racial prejudice	inaccurate and/or negative beliefs that espouse or support the superiority of one racial group
racial discrimination	acting on your racial prejudice when communicating with others
racism	racial prejudice + societal power = racism; racism is the systematic subordination of certain racial groups by those groups in power,
stereotypes	stereotypes: overgeneralizations of group characteristics or behaviors that are applied universally to individuals of those groups

Orbe et al. 2015

These definitions are key to understanding interracial communication and must be kept in mind throughout this work– they are recurring themes present throughout the analysis of the collected data in this research, as these biases are extremely present and central to these intergroup identity-based dialogues.

Social Network Analysis (SNA)

Network analysis is the study of connections, and social network analysis is the application of those connections to relationships between people, social organizations, or groups

of any kind (Hansen, Shneiderman, and Smith 2011). Social network analysis emerged in academia in the 1930s with German social theorists Ferdinand Tönnies, Georg Simme, Alfred Vierkandt, and Leopold von Wiese. They are credited with the initial formalization of the idea of social groups and the idea of society as a web of connections. Weise was one of the first to mathematically analyze and describe these webs with directionality and circularity (Weise 1931). Jacob Moreno, an Austrian who immigrated to the United States, formalized the development of sociograms, graphical representations of social data, and sociometry, the study and measurement of relationships between people or groups of people (Moreno 1943).

From this foundation, the study of relationships and interpersonal networks began to grow and gain more traction in academia in the 1970s and 1980s. While it is essential to identify the fact that there are connections between all people, it is also important to note that not all connections are created equally. Granovetter's "The Strength of Weak Ties" highlights this as it analyzes the weight and depth of connections between people and groups (1973). This was an essential step forward for social network analysis as it adds importance and value to the extent to which people are connected, and distinguishes acquaintanceships from deeper relationships such as familial connections. In this article, Granovetter shows the importance that "weak" ties in a network can play in securing job opportunities. Granovetter argues that it is more effective to maintain a network of many weaker connections rather than a network of a few very strong connections when it comes to finding jobs. This idea of ties being different weights and how the difference in the weight of those ties could be more or less useful for achieving certain goals is essential to this work, which looks at the purpose of dialogic networks not to further employment opportunities, but to foster community connections.

Another essential development in social network analysis is the idea of homophily, or the idea that "birds of a feather flock together," meaning that people or groups of similar natures generally congregate together and that the networks of people are frequently made up of those with whom they share identities and social groups (Rogers and Bhowmik 1970). Finally, the idea that we as people in societies are all more closely connected than we seem, or that we do live in a "small world" is central to social network analysis as it emphasizes that not only are we all connected by those who we know and the relationships that we have in common, but that it is the fabric of our society (Watts 1999).

In the following decades, thorough and expansive reviews of the field of social network analysis, such as Wasserman & Faust's *Social network analysis: Methods and applications* (1994), Whetherall's "Historical Social Network Analysis," and Kadushin's *Understanding Social Networks* (2012). These introductory texts synthesize and outline the decades of work that have gone into the creation and development of this field of study.

Academics have since added to the core foundation of social network analysis literature by taking the established texts and adjusting them to their aforementioned niches. McPherson and Smith-Lovin outline this effectively in their article "Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks" (2001), in which they build on Rogers and Bhowmik's understanding of homophily and revisit it in the more contemporary age. Similarly titled, Goodreau, Kitts, and Morris' "Birds of a Feather, Or Friend of a Friend? Using Exponential Random Graph Models to Investigate Adolescent Social Networks" builds upon Granovetter's work by analyzing the degrees of connection in adolescent social networks and how they are different from other social networks (2009).

Social network analysis uses statistical modeling frameworks to visualize the connections and relationships it studies. Through matrices, maps, and measures, the data collected on social networks and connections can be represented and analyzed (Borgatti, S.P., 2022). Matrices store the data that is collected, maps visualize that data, and measures analyze the structure of the data. Things have changed much as technology has developed exponentially over the last few decades. Many specialized software packages are frequently freely available online for clear and attractive visualizations, with some useful software including NetDraw, Gephy, Visone, and many others (Borgatti, S.P., 2022).

In terms of statistical modeling frameworks, exponential random graph models, or ERGMs, are some of the most useful forms of visualizing network data (Lusher et al. 2013). This family of models helps visualize network data, including that from social networks, and is the mathematical basis that is the core of the free software available. While it is not always necessary to start from scratch in statistical modeling due to the widely accessible and easily adaptable packages freely available, it is important to understand the beginnings of the methodology and why the data is collected and how it is visualized.

Overall, across almost a century of work and development of social network analysis, theorists and scientists have continued pushing the boundaries of what connection means and how people are united. They have developed thorough theoretical frameworks that have been adapted to transform with the niche focuses of the projects and needs of those who use them. As we have tried to reckon with the structures of racism and racial animus through dialogue, understanding communications networks has become more important than ever.

Chapter 3: Data

This research exists at the intersection of communication, language, social connection, and quantitative and qualitative analysis. Starting with an understanding of the fields of social network analysis, communication analysis, and restorative justice, this work emphasizes the importance of community connections through communication.

In the early stages of this research, a pilot study was conducted that involved coding *The Color of Fear* (1994) into an adjacency matrix by noting each time a participant would speak, for how long, and to whom. Originally, this was put into a grid-like table, but in the interest of reproducibility and understanding of future researchers, this was then shifted into a clearer format of source and target each time a participant spoke. This covered the first section of the film, which focused on each participant's understanding of what racism is and how it exists in America. This resulted in 95 source and target encounters between 02:32 and 43:03. Using this data, we adapted a *networkx* Python package to visualize the source-target data through code. Initially, a graph was hand-drawn to visualize the centrality relationships between the participants, but this coding strategy allows a much more accurate, efficient, adaptable, reproducible, and clear representation of the data.

Through the process of troubleshooting with this first film, several inefficiencies emerged and were simplified. Initially, the process involved watching the film and pausing it every time a participant spoke or finished speaking, and while thorough, this was time-consuming and somewhat inefficient. The only benefit of watching the films instead of simply reading the transcripts was that it was clearer who was talking to whom. It is beneficial to know now that it is only truly necessary to watch the films once to get this visual data, and then conduct the rest of

the analysis using transcripts. Furthermore, it became clear, as stated above, that hand-drawing the graphs was much less useful and reliable than coding them, and the future films' data is represented through code.

The stages of processing each film for analysis were the following. It begins with viewing the films to observe and note the visual data, including who is looking at whom when they speak, and therefore implying who they are speaking to, physical gestures that may denote emotional reaction to what is being said, either by the speaker or by the listeners. In this initial viewing, the audio of the films is recorded into Otter.ai to gather information to build thorough and accurate transcripts of each of the films. These transcripts are then analyzed and put into source-target tables. That is then input into the code, already modified, which produces visualizations of centrality measures in the data. The data is then also input into code that analyzes sentiments and co-occurrences of words through individual participants and identity groups. Overall, this process gathers data and interprets it through methods that are reproducible, reliable, efficient, and clear.

This study analyzes seven filmed dialogues. These films meet the following criteria: that they are not scripted and have a somewhat organic documentary style, that they focus on intergroup communication where not all participants are of the same social and/or identity group, and that there is consistent communication between participants throughout the film, meaning that there is a small group of participants who repeatedly communicate in a closed environment. These criteria were developed around consistency in data collection and strength in communication network structure.

Five of these filmed dialogues are focused on interracial dialogue and understanding, and two are restorative justice circle processes. The five filmed interracial dialogues include Lee

Mun Wah's *The Color of Fear* (1994), *Last Chance for Eden* (2003), *If These Halls Could Talk* (2013), Frances Reid's *SKIN DEEP* (1995), and Jean Cheng's *WHAT'S RACE GOT TO DO WITH IT?* (2006). These five films were chosen because they are part of two different series that span decades. They all focus on unscripted interactions between people of differing lived experiences that are focused on cultivating inter-community connections and understanding. These films effectively and uniquely showcase the type of communication connection network that this research analyzes, as they each delve into intergroup communication focused on different forms of identity connection. Although they are not all exactly the same, they all capture a similar process, and therefore were deemed suitable for comparison and analysis.

The other two filmed dialogues are restorative justice circle processes. These films include *Circles: Restorative Justice at Work* (Thakur 1997) and *Circle Up: Mothers Seeking Justice for Their Murdered Sons* (Mallozzi 2017). These two films were chosen due to their focus on restorative justice circle processes and dialogue, which centers connections between community members who have experienced harm in their communities. These are importantly different from the previous five films because they include members of the same communities, albeit different identity groups within those communities, and these community members are connected by instances of harm in their respective communities. These two films add richness to the sample by providing the comparative lens of another more formalized form of group communication: circle processes. These films highlight how dialogic systems of connecting through communication differ with different intentions in the facilitation and topic of the dialogues. Although all seven of the films focus on fostering understanding between people of different lived experiences, these restorative circles show people who already have somewhat of a relationship with each other, even if that is only that they are connected by similar or the same

instance of harm. These films were chosen because they, in many ways, follow the same structure of the previous five films, but they add depth in the level of previously established connection.

Chapter 4: Methods

The conversational networks of these filmed dialogues are analyzed using network analysis methods aimed at estimating network centrality. These are deployed to uncover structure, power, and labor within these settings. The centrality measures focus on who speaks the most or the least, who is centered in the conversation, and which participants speak to each other the most during the dialogue. The particular form of centrality used is degree centrality. Degree centrality relates to the number of edges each node has in a network. This shows to what degree each node is connected by the number of edges that it has. This method was chosen because it shows the participants who speak to each other, how many times they speak to each other, and how likely it is that all participants speak to each other, or if the participants talk mostly to just a few of the participants.

One of the most important methods of analysis for social networks is centrality. Some common methods of measuring centrality include degree, eigenvector, alpha, closeness, and betweenness centrality (Opsahl et al., 2010; Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Each of these types of centrality refers to a group of metrics that aim to display the connectedness and therefore "importance" of a node or set of nodes within a network (Hanneman & Riddle, 2011). Therefore, the nodes that have the most centrality are those that are most central in the graph; those that have the most connections to other nodes within the network. This can help visualize who has more connections, and therefore who has the most influence, whether the network is focused on political strategy or the spread of disease.

There could be an expectation that since all of these dialogue participants are in the same area, in fact in the same room, there is a likelihood that everyone would talk to everyone.

However, this is not true for these films. Due to the editorial impact of the directors and editors for the sake of creating a simple story arc and a less repetitive display, more of the comments from one participant to another may have been cut if they were seen as irrelevant. It is also possible that the participants simply did not talk to all of the other participants, and that the representations shown in these films are the closest to the truth of the dialogues as possible. Either way, this research acknowledges the limitations of the dataset while also treating it as the closest resource to the truth that we have access to. Therefore, degree centrality is the best method in this case as it shows the interconnectedness that the participants create through who they choose to speak to, and how many times they speak to each other. To supplement network analysis methods, additional measures were developed by extracting features from the transcripts of the filmed dialogues. In particular, this research includes sentiment analysis that focuses on who has the most emotion and how that is shown throughout their dialogue.

The test case contained 95 source-target interactions across 43 minutes of dialogue. There are seven filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues. The seven filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues have a combined 503 minutes of runtime. Using this as a metric to estimate the interactions for the rest of the films suggests that there are approximately 1,100 source-target interactions across the dataset. Each of these interactions is input into the Google Sheet and then into the *networkx* analysis package, modified to fit this dataset. That allows for easily reproducible and auditable data collection and analysis review. Further analyses are then run to examine factors other than centrality, including sentiment analysis using TextBlob software.

In addition to the overall analysis of each film as a whole and the groups in each of the films as whole networks of connections, the data is then further broken down to investigate patterns on more specific scales. To measure the development of communication structure across

time, each film is divided into sections. Each of these sections are time stamped and mirror the narrative development stages that are examined further in Chapter 5. Then the analysis mentioned above is run on each section of the films. This gives insight into the development of the communication networks of each group of people in each of these films and across the series as entities. To measure the differences between each differently socialized group, the analysis also examines the representation of different demographics, including race, ethnicity, gender, and age. This investigates certain societal structures of communication and relationship, including how anger is weaponized against Black people and people of color, how white tears are used to avoid accountability by centering white people and white experiences, even and especially when they are the ones perpetrating harm. These demographic breakdowns illuminate these racialized and societally charged patterns and how they are represented in these dialogues.

This research intends to uncover patterns of connection among individual people, social groups, and identity affiliations through these intergroup identity-based dialogues. The expected findings of this research primarily include finding communication structures that mirror implicit power imbalances in these dialogues. This is because although these dialogues seek to focus on the topic of moving toward greater understanding and equality, the very structure of the dialogue may lend itself to some power imbalances in who has more airtime or who is centered in the dialogues. However, it is expected that structures may change over time as several of the dialogues studied are series, and they may become more egalitarian and equitable as the individual dialogues themselves develop, their participants become more comfortable with each other and/or the structure of the dialogue, as the dialogue series continue. This research maintains an understanding of privilege and power dynamics, yet also holds space for hope that

these dialogues have the opportunity to challenge oppressive power demands and structures as they claim to.

While the data that this study centers around is somewhat organic in that it is not scripted, it is essential to acknowledge that these filmed dialogues are all films. They are edited and spliced together ultimately to serve the purpose of the greater narrative of their respective directors, and while that in and of itself is interesting, it does somewhat detract from the idea of natural flow in these dialogues. The camera angles, while useful to get a better sense of who is talking to whom and when, ultimately are not completely reliable as they are open to manipulation by the cinematographers and directors as well. This is taken into account through the analysis of these filmed dialogues, and it is used where it is considered necessary or helpful, and ultimately understood as the nature of this dataset. Hopefully, scholars in the future will be able to build on this research and analyze the communication patterns of live dialogues, where these limiting factors are eliminated.

The official work-through process of collecting, cleaning, and analyzing data is as follows. First, the audio of the films is recorded into Otter.ai, an online transcription service, then the data is refined in Otter by inputting the correct names of the participants and allowing Otter to predict the matching of the names throughout the transcript, followed by minor editing. Then, the data is exported out of Otter to a .txt file. In this file, the data is then further cleaned- all erroneous double spaces are eliminated, and all speech acts are identified as being unique, with no paragraph breaks. From there, the .txt file is input into a series of Python code, which transforms it from the raw transcript into a spreadsheet that has columns for time, source, target, and transcript. The source is the person who is speaking at that time, and the target is the person or people to whom the source is speaking. Following the creation of the spreadsheet, the target

data is then filled in by hand according to who each speech act is directed towards. After the target data is assigned to each source speech act, the spreadsheet data is input into Python code that transforms it into clear and effective network diagrams. In this final step of network diagrams, the data is then subset to provide information into different networks based on time developments and participant demographics. This is the process by which network data is produced. Taking the data a step further, the original transcripts are input into sentiment analysis software to glean further information on the emotional impact and labor that is experienced during these dialogues. This sentiment analysis identifies the average sentiment exhibited by each participant and whether it was negative or positive.

Chapter 5: Narrative Structure in Dialogue Films

On a cursory level of analysis, it is clear that each of these films follows a similar structure. Since they are edited and not shown in their raw, organic manner, it is apparent that the directors and editors have spliced together the clips to make a compelling story arc with a distinct beginning, middle, and end. While none of them are scripted, they are all the product of directorial choice and editing. There are cuts between scenes, and the directors choose who to show on camera and how much screen time to give each of the participants in the final version of the film. Each of the films begins with an introductory period of each of the dialogue participants introducing themselves to each other and the camera, quickly followed by them stating their overall views on race and racism. This often leads to the first session of back-and-forth dialogue, where the participants communicate their perspectives and identify areas where they disagree. After this, there is often a break, and then a transition to another round of dialogue, usually focusing on a different but related question to the first part. This section usually ends with a dramatic culmination of what has been discussed, usually with an emotional outburst of one or more participants. Finally, there is a period of conclusion, where each of the participants notes their main takeaways from the dialogue and their intentions for the future.

This narrative structure is mirrored through Bruce Tuckman's work on the stages of group development. He describes these as "forming, storming, norming, and performing" with an additional and later added stage of "adjourning," representing when the group ends their work together (Tuckman, 1965). We can see these stages very clearly across these films. The introductory period that has been described is the "forming" of the group, the increased conflict and more directed comments, as well as the majority of the work to educate the white

participants despite their resistance, can be characterized as the "storming" period of the group. The "norming" and "performing" periods of the group are not seen as distinctly, and are more interspersed throughout the dialogue with a collection of the more positive experiences and reflections happening towards the end. The conclusions of the dialogue are a mix of "performing" and "adjourning," where the participants express their gratitude for the space, the main points that have stuck with them, and what their hopes are for their experiences beyond the group setting. This structure, while a bit simplistic, can be helpful in more clearly seeing each of these phases of group dialogue. This chapter will break down each of these sections and comment on their common characteristics.

This is a compelling narrative structure, and it paints a complementary picture of these dialogues, where people with different perspectives come into a space, get to know each other, navigate conflict, and leave better off. Indeed, dialogues often can achieve this outcome, and it is not the aim of this thesis to disprove this. These filmed dialogues share some components of IGD, specifically their focus on inspiring communication across different communities, but they differ in how they are structured and monitored. The films in this research are often shown in the context of training facilitators, and by illustrating how they perpetuate harmful patterns of unequal privilege, through the centering of the white participants' stories, this research hopes to add nuance to the context in which these films are shown and interpreted.

It is important to note, however, that this narrative structure further emphasizes the centrality of networks that have been produced by each of these dialogues. Each section of this narrative structure focuses on a certain person or group of people, often white, to convince them of the reality of racism and culminates with a "breakthrough" in their understanding. These dialogues have been edited to highlight certain elements of these dialogues that are most

interesting to the audience. This tells us what the directors believe are the most gripping parts of these dialogues, and therefore is ingrained with their own artistic biases.

Engaging the audience – an empirical inquiry

The "forming," "performing," and "adjourning" sections of these films are characterized by an increase in speech acts that are directed toward the entire group or to camera. Upon first glance, the "to camera" target outcome can seem a bit disappointing and unimportant. While it is slightly different from the participant-to-participant interactions around which this thesis was based, these interactions hold a particularly interesting place in discussing what, and who, is centered in the film. By speaking primarily to the camera in the restorative justice films, the audience gets a sense that they are being included and spoken to, and therefore centered in some way. This gives insight into who these films hope to speak to and the impact that they hope to have. Some feel more geared towards facilitators, others feel more focused on educating people who have not engaged as deeply with these topics. All of them portray a sense of storytelling and a hope to get their message across to a more abstract target than someone sitting across from them in the room. Often, these breakaway shots add background information about the participants, such as in *The Color of Fear*, *Last Chance for Eden*, and *If These Halls Could Talk*.

These moments of breaking the fourth wall seek to remind the audience that they are the true target of these dialogic interactions. The ultimate inherent goal in the act of filming these dialogues is to show them, and therefore, while this thesis aims to tease apart the interactions within the dialogues themselves, there is something to be said for the greater urge to film these dialogues and share them with more than just their participants. Further, it is important to emphasize that none of these dialogues are unedited. While they are not scripted, they have all

been spliced together to convey a narrative. The fact that these dialogues are not just filmed and then released raw tells the audience that there is a message that was meant to be shared and a story that was meant to be told. This plays a part in how each of the films has a similar narrative structure. To be compelling and exciting to watch, it makes sense that the directors would want to have some sort of arc in the character development of their participants, and therefore might have manipulated the data to emphasize patterns that affirm this. This may be part of the reason that in all of the intergroup identity-based dialogues, there seems to be at least one less racially educated white person who is catered to about racism by the other participants, learns the meaning of oppression, cries, and then claims to want to devote the rest of their life to being an ally. While a somewhat compelling narrative structure, this further de-centers the people of color in the space. Imagine what these dialogues could be if white participants were not centered and the people of color in the space were instead allowed to dialogue without also being made into facilitators of the space.

Narrative differences across films

This narrative structure of having several distinct phases, while it is somewhat followed across all of the films, is much stronger in its pattern of culminating with a racial realization in the Lee Mun Wah films, than in other less structured films such as *Skin Deep* and *What's Race Got to Do With It?*. This narrative structure shows up, however, somewhat differently, in the restorative justice-focused films *Circles* and *Circle Up*. All of these films follow the general narrative structure of having an introductory and background information phase at the beginning, having more engaged dialogic components in the middle, and then more aspirational and hopeful action-oriented conclusions filled with goals for the future and commitments to change.

However, only the intergroup identity-based dialogues focus on race as the guiding concept across these dialogues, while the restorative justice films focus on harm and community accountability.

All of the films are edited to tell a story, yet the stories that the intergroup identity-based dialogues are telling are distinct from those of the restorative justice circle films. The intergroup identity-based dialogue films are focused on showing the power of intentional dialogue to build connections and cultivate a more nuanced understanding of racial lived experiences. The restorative justice circle practice films are also focused on showing the power of intentional dialogue, but with a different structure and focused on community harm. The raw dialogues in both of these instances might be more similar than their edited forms because race and societal power dynamics are parts of everyday life that impact how people communicate in dialogue, yet the restorative justice circle practices focus more on how that impacts the punitive legal system and informs community responses to harm while the intergroup identity based dialogues focus on this racial system itself.

All films have moments of realization and of recognition of growth and change, yet not all of these are explicitly racially focused. The intergroup identity-based dialogues focus on the transformation of the understanding of white participants and their process of awakening to the realities of racism. These moments serve as the emotional culminations of the film and are more individualistic than the restorative justice-focused films, which are less sharply defined in their sections, and their emotional culminations are more collective. Where the intergroup identity-based dialogues focus on individual growth towards a goal of deeper and more nuanced racial understanding, the restorative justice-focused films focus on highlighting the power of circle practices to transform entire communities after harm occurs. All of the films have these

structures of communication, but the content and focus of each phase of group dynamics change depending on the focus of the films themselves.

Factors in dialogic film editing

Another way in which these films are edited, aside from the group dynamics that Tuckman outlines, is the artistic and entertainment-focused edits made. These include cutting the videos at certain points, including the aforementioned "to camera" moments, musical additions, and, arguably most importantly, choosing which participants' comments to include and which comments to cut. Watching these films, it is clear that they have been heavily edited. There are cuts between scenes, fade-to-black moments, several comments are shown in flashback style, and dramatic instances of foreshadowing and repetition. All of these more artistic parts of the dialogue are included to emphasize the points that the director and editors felt were most important and most compelling to tell the story that they were interested in telling.

These artistic components are essential to be kept in mind throughout the analysis performed in this research, as all of this work has been done with the understanding that these films, while not scripted, are not entirely organic in their formulation and presentation. These participants were convened to have a dialogue by either the director, facilitator, or potentially recruitment managers. They were each chosen for a reason, and because someone in the process believed that they would have something compelling to say– that their presence would be interesting and important to include in a filmed instance of dialogue. From the very fact that these films are not composed of randomized samples of participants, and the fact that the participants have not all been prepared in the same ways, it is clear that the films present the topics and the style of conversation in varying ways.

For example, in Lee Mun Wah's films, the style of convening the participants seems more that Lee Mun Wah, the facilitator and director, brought the participants together because he had a personal relationship with them and believed that they each would bring interesting and valuable perspectives to the space. These films appear to be taking place in a house or retreat center of some kind, the participants are staying overnight with each other, some even sharing rooms with fellow participants that they had just met. While this gives the sense that these dialogues are most similar to organic conversations happening by chance, it is still important to understand that each participant was meticulously chosen because they were expected to have certain reactions and certain beliefs that would be most interesting to have on film to make an educational, engaging, and entertaining documentary style film on the power of dialogue. Instead of following IGD structure and having all of the participants engage in educational material before and leading up to the dialogue, it appears that Lee Mun Wah intended to have the dialogic space be more of a "come as you are" space where the participants can meet each other where they are at and learn as a group. While somewhat understandable, this perspective does not take into account the labor that it could potentially (and as viewers we can see that it does) demand from the participants of color who have lived experience in many of the topics that are broached.

In *If These Halls Could Talk*, there is a moment where Lee Mun Wah seems heavily dissatisfied with how the participants are engaging with the prompts and dialogic material. He asks the crew on film what they think, and the audience is offered a moment behind the curtain where they see the crew members holding the boom mics and watching the film being made. He asks them what they think, and they share that they feel that the participants are not engaging as deeply as they should, and that they seem to only be scratching the surface. While this moment may be motivated by a facilitator/director's intention to encourage the dialogue participants to

engage more deeply with their self-examination and be more brave in sharing their truths and lived experiences with each other, it also reads as a bit of a moment in which he does not feel that what the participants have shared has been interesting, entertaining, or dramatic enough. In prompting the participants to dig deeper, they indeed become somewhat less guarded in their emotional responses. However, it could be argued that this motivation to be more outspoken might impact the participants' sharing their most authentic truths. Often in IGD spaces, the dialogues would not be confined to a single weekend, and they would be allowed to develop more naturally over several weeks. Therefore, this level of prompting (and, some might say, pressuring) to be more dramatic in their responses would usually occur out of the participants' level of trust rising with each other, not being as forced as it is in this occurrence.

In contrast, *What's Race Got to Do with It?* has a style that is most similar to an educational setting of IGD. It takes place at a university, and the participants engage in dialogue while also engaging in the space over the semester as one of their classes. It is more drawn out, and while the film shows less of the actual dialogue than that of the other films analyzed in this study, there are also fewer moments where the participants of color are required to educate the white participants. The facilitators are more engaged, and they lead the participants through a variety of educational resources and group activities through which the participants dig deeper into their identities and how they fit into the world. There are fewer moments where the participants engage in repeated instances of one-on-one communication, and this could be because they are more focused on cultivating collective understanding instead of educating certain participants who are resistant to the core ideas of what they are discussing. This structure further sets apart this dialogue, as each of these participants presumably self-selected to be in this space. Each of them is there by choice, as in all of the films, but it is clear in this particular sense

that the participants have somewhat of a level of common knowledge around racism and race relations, and therefore no one needs to do the labor of convincing any other participant that racism exists, unlike in the Lee Mun Wah films.

Conclusion

Overall, the films analyzed in this research follow narrative structures that follow the organic phases of group development outlined as "forming," "storming," "norming," "performing," and "adjourning" (Tuckman, 1965). In addition to this somewhat naturally occurring process of group formation and settling, these dialogues, as they are not completely organic other than the fact that they are not scripted, experience editing from their directors and editors. Many components of the dialogues are edited, so much that the narrative structure that this work seeks to highlight in how it plays a role in further centering the white participants is, in part, edited to be that way due to the biases of those who do the editing. This element of centering will be examined more closely in the following chapter, which highlights many of the patterns that have been discussed here through network analysis. Through a close examination of these dialogues and a critical questioning of the biases and motivations of those who contributed to producing them, we can see reflections of reproductions of power dynamics that these very dialogues claim to break down. Many of these filmed dialogues somewhat exploit the participants of color, tasking them with being the harbingers of the bad news of racism to the white participants. This, in turn, in the process of teaching some of the more ignorant white participants that racism does exist, puts them in the position of "gotcha" moments where their ignorance is centered. This further reinforces the positioning of the participants of color as educators while the facilitators focus on manufacturing moments of full-circle education where

white participants go from ignorant, to resistant, to regretful, to resolved to be allies. Through this breakdown of the factors that shape the creation and interpretation of these dialogues, it is clear that while they are not scripted, they are not free of bias. This shows that the centering of white people in the dialogues is not some unavoidable truth, but essentially a product of biased interpretation on the part of filmmakers and facilitators. This is a hopeful offering, as it suggests the possibility of realizing the errors of its ways and adjusting its future behavior to do better.

Chapter 6: Race and Network Centrality in Dialogue

This research focuses on how racial power dynamics emerge in interracial dialogues and who is centered most in those dialogues. In the context of network analysis, "centering" means both participants who talk the most and participants who are spoken to the most. This understanding of centrality examines which participants believe their contributions to be important additions to the dialogic space, such that they feel comfortable taking up screen time. These participants tend to speak on multiple occasions, frequently conversing one-on-one with other participants several times, where they also challenge the other participants' lived experiences with racism, sexism, and homophobia. By centering themselves in these dialogues in this way, these participants, who often have multiple privileged identities, end up prompting the participants of multiply marginalized identities to educate them on the topics of discussion, shifting the dialogue from its intention as an equitable environment to foster greater mutual understanding and growth, to one that is individualistic and often white-centered.

This chapter aims to answer a variety of questions around centrality. Who speaks the most throughout these dialogues? Who is spoken to the most? How does this change by subsection of time according to the narrative and dialogic structure that has been outlined in Chapter 5? Does this change if it is subset by race? Does this pattern of centrality change across the films? Who speaks mostly to all vs. who speaks mostly to individual people? Using formal centrality measures, this chapter aims to answer who is centered and offers some sociological background for why they might be centered. Further, what do these participants who are centered do once they are in the center? How much agency do these participants have, with the understanding that these films are highly edited and it is entirely possible that what the

participants have said has been transformed or changed in some way to be more engaging or dramatic for the sake of getting more people to watch the films?

With these factors in mind, the centrality networks of these dialogues are impacted by the understandings of social power dynamics, as well as the intervention of the facilitators in either working to make sure that all participants are centered equitably, or in further feeding into other inequitable centering of participants with multiple privileged identities, often white participants. Being centered in these spaces entails the complicit participation in that centering by, yes, the participants themselves, but also, essentially, the facilitators who have presumably had experience with dialogue in the past and have somewhat of some plan for how they envision the dialogues going.

In the initial test case, there was no option of speaking to the camera or all. The goal was to preliminarily identify a network based on a small portion of data, so the targets were limited to just one person. As the data has become more refined and standardized over the process of extraction and cleaning, it became clear that an option of "All" and "Camera" was necessary to provide the most accurate data possible. This resulted in the "All" and "Camera" targets being some of the most visible targets in terms of centrality, and instead of centering particular participants, these more general targets are more common. However, while it does not provide as dramatic data as the initial test case, this addition of "All" and "Camera" targets allows the opportunity to view how centrality becomes broader across the development of the dialogues. As stated previously, the dialogues tend to follow similar patterns of development. In each of these patterns, the dialogues tend to begin with more narrow centrality structures and become broader as they develop. It is also important to note that the earliest dialogues are more concentrated in their centrality networks, as they often have smaller groups of people, and then as technology

and theory on intergroup identity-based dialogues progress over time, they become more nuanced and expansive in the identities and perspectives of participants.

Based on the degree to which the camera is centered as a target in these dialogues, it is possible to glean who the potential audience is and what some of the potential purposes and motivations for filming these dialogues are. Since each dialogue follows a narrative structure, it makes sense that those narratives have been developed for certain purposes and to tell certain stories. Some of the dialogues focus more on showing the participants talking to and with each other, and letting that dialogue speak for itself, while others focus more on having the participants talk directly to the camera and, therefore, the audience, in breakaway moments, providing a fourth wall break moment, with more of an attitude that seeks to include the audience in its development.

Source and Target Speech Act Counts

In pursuit of answering the aforementioned questions, I began by analyzing how frequently each race demographic spoke and was spoken to across the differently interpreted parts of the films. The figures below on the left show how frequently each racial category of participants speaks, or is the source of speech acts, meaning that they are the ones who originated the speech act. This gives insight into who speaks more in general, and also shows how those patterns of frequency in speaking change over the distinct sections of the films. As alluded to in the previous chapter on the distinction between each film part, we can see patterns of difference in which racial group is given more airtime in each section, which often lends itself to alluding to which group is more centered in the space of dialogue. It is important to understand that these data do not necessarily tell the whole story, and that just because someone speaks more does not

necessarily mean that they are centered. As examined in Chapter 4, participants of color sometimes speak on multiple occasions, but very many of those occasions are in service of supporting a white participant's understanding or in defense of their lived experiences, while the white participants continually deny their truths. On the right side of the figures below shows how frequently each racial category of participants is spoken to. Again, as it is true for the Source figures, these Target figures do not necessarily completely present the degree to which each category of participants is centered. These figures are used to convey the overall patterns of who speaks and who is spoken to the most, and later in this chapter, the details of centrality in these dialogues will be examined further.

In Figure 6.1, the white participants of *The Color of Fear* both talk the most and are spoken to the most out of any of the racial categories in each part of the film. Part 1 of the film is not included in the Target section of this figure, as all participants in Part 1 only spoke to the camera, as it was an introductory period, and therefore, there was no race-based data for their target, as the camera was not given a race. In Part 2 of both the Source and Target figures, white participants spoke the most of any racial category. This mirrors the narrative structure that was outlined in Chapter 4, as Part 2 was a part where one white participant in particular, David C (W = white), insisted his experiences of race in America as being the objective truth, and rejected any suggestion of lived experiences of the participants of color that would contrast his experience. This is partially why in Part 3, Black participants speak the most out of any racial category, yet white participants are spoken to the most. In Part 3, the Black participants, Loren (B = Black) and Victor (B), end up speaking more than other participants because David C (W) challenges their lived experiences as being untrue. Therefore, although these participants are speaking more, it does not mean that they are centered in this dialogue.

The Color of Fear (1994)

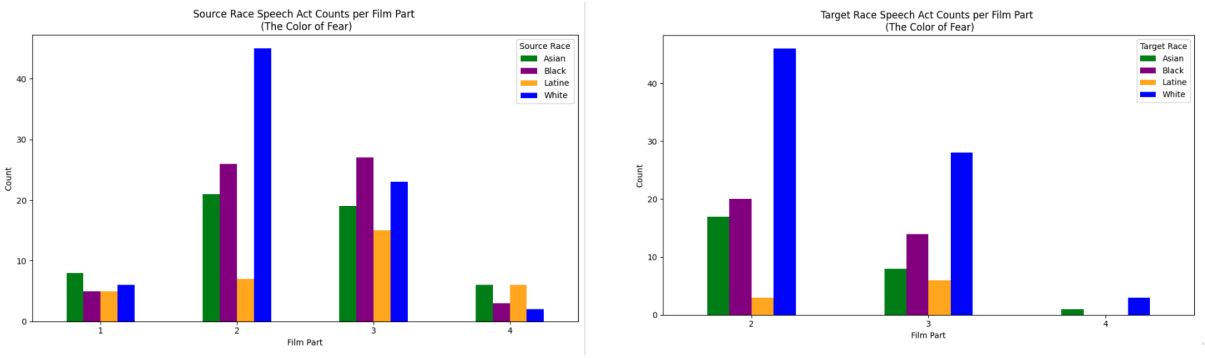


Figure 6.1: Source and Target Race Speech Act Counts per Film Part, *The Color of Fear* (1994)

Figure 6.2 shows *Skin Deep*'s breakdown of speech acts by race, and similarly to Figure 6.1, white participants speak a majority of the time in Parts 1 and 2 of the film. Part 2 is particularly clear in how much white participants both speak and are spoken to, with their category surpassing the other categories, even if they were added together. This illustrates clearly how white participants tend to dominate the conversation in these dialogues, and how that can have an effect on who else gets to share their stories in the space.

Skin Deep (1995)

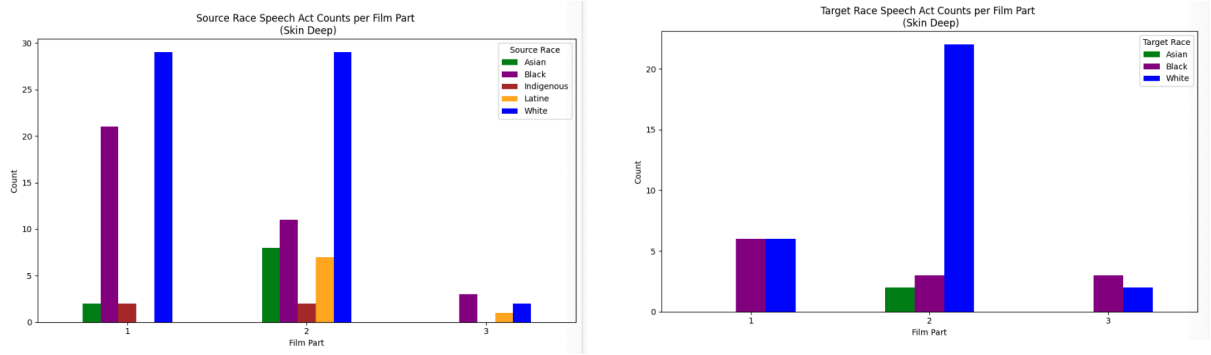


Figure 6.2: Source and Target Race Speech Act Counts per Film Part, *Skin Deep* (1995)

In contrast to Figures 6.1 and 6.2, Figure 6.3 tells a different story. In *Circles*, the group of participants is predominantly Indigenous, with just one white man. Although he participates, he does not end up speaking or being spoken to for the majority of the time in this film, as it is instead focused on restorative justice principles and has a more educational lens. This film does not follow the same structure as many of the other films, and therefore, its dialogic results differ as well. This shows that the patterns that are examined here are not just inherent to intergroup dialogues, but are particularly prevalent in the dialogue films analyzed in this research.

Circles (1997)

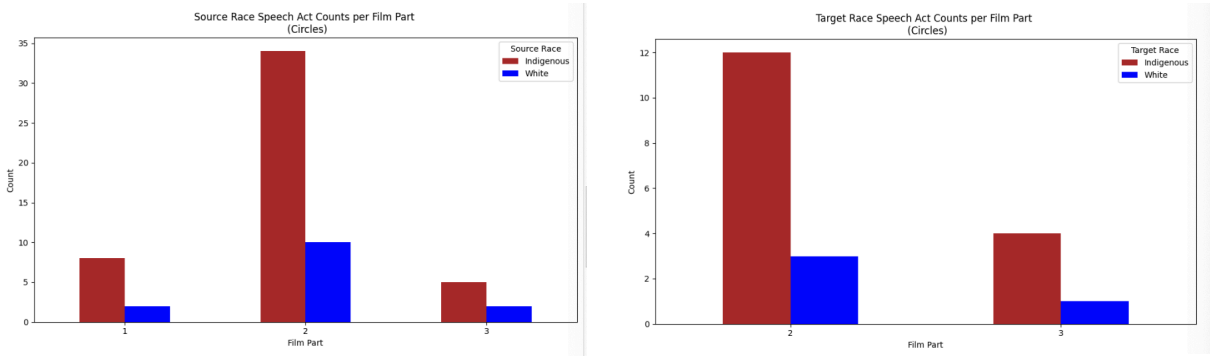


Figure 6.3: Source and Target Race Speech Act Counts per Film Part, *Circles* (1997)

Last Chance for Eden's pattern in Figure 6.4 shows yet again the trend of white participants both speaking the most and being spoken to the most of any one racial group throughout the dialogue. This is particularly clear in the middle parts of the dialogue, referenced above as the "storming" period, as this is where the participants push back on what the other is saying more. However, instead of this being an equitable dialogic space that values curiosity and increased understanding from a background of similar understanding, these moments end up being situations in which the white participants speak the most as they incredulously repeat that they do not believe that life is as difficult as the participants of color say that it is. Particularly in

Part 3, it is clear that white participants are spoken to much more than any other group, as it is during this time that many of the other participants of color educated the white participants on their points of ignorance and privilege.

Last Chance for Eden (2002)

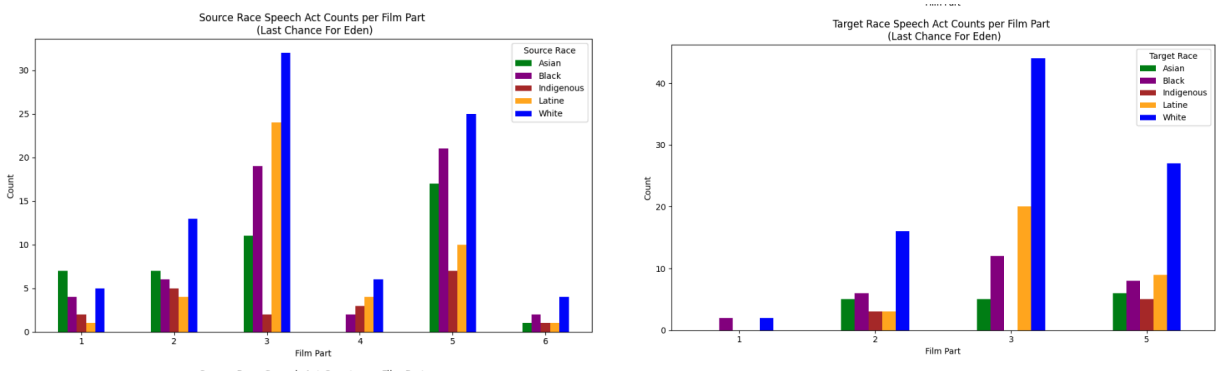


Figure 6.4: Source and Target Race Speech Act Counts per Film Part, *Last Chance for Eden* (2002)

Figure 6.5 is less varied in its target graph than some of the other films, but it still shows that *What's Race Got to Do with It?* follows a very similar pattern to the other intergroup identity-based dialogue films. Part 2 clearly shows that the white participants speak the most and are spoken to the most as they are centered in their navigation of realizing and coming to terms with racial reality in the United States. It differs slightly in that while some of the other films display this pattern across almost every part, this film only shows this strong of a pattern in Part 2, however this could be because each film does not follow the same artistic and dialogic arc, with a bit of room left for individual influence and spontaneity. With this in mind, it is still clear that this film overall follows the same pattern as the other intergroup identity-based dialogue films.

What's Race Got to Do with It? (2012)

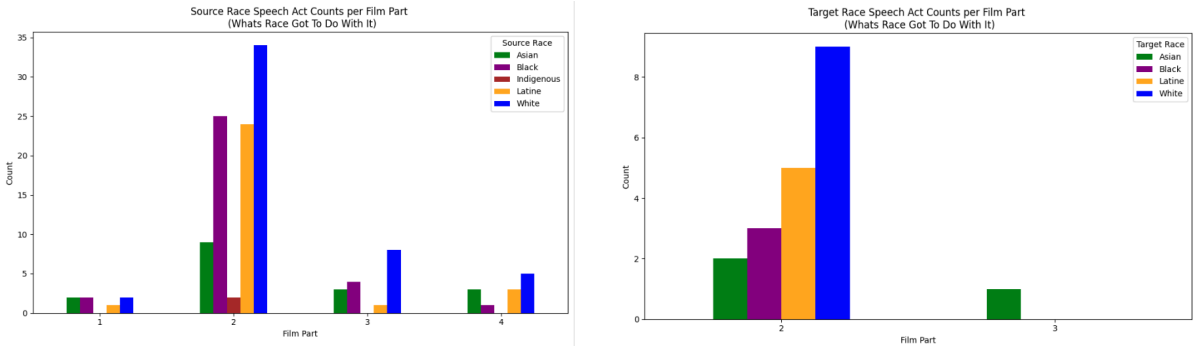
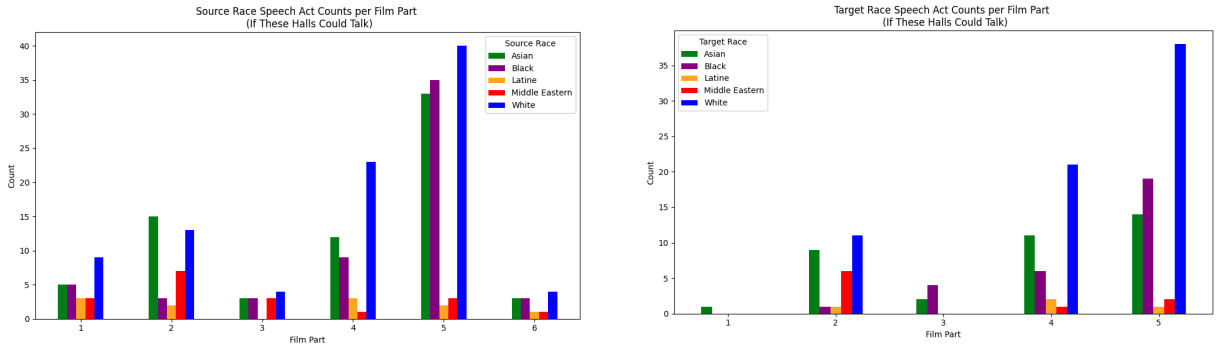


Figure 6.5: Source and Target Race Speech Act Counts per Film Part, *What's Race Got to Do with It?* (2012)

Figure 6.6 shows a clear arc in the dialogic focus of *If These Halls Could Talk* across each part of the film. The peak of the dialogue centers around the experience of the white participants, as their participation rises and falls with the narrative arc of the film. There is a peak of white participants both speaking and being spoken to in Part 5 of the dialogue, and this part is where the emotional "breakthrough" often occurs in these films. It is then quickly resolved with participants vowing to use what they have learned as they move forward in the world. This is clear in this figure, as there is a dramatic peak in Part 5 and then a quick and brief resolution in Part 6.

If These Halls Could Talk (2014)



If These Halls Could Talk (2014)

Figure 6.6: Source and Target Race Speech Act Counts per Film Part, *If These Halls Could Talk* (2014)

Circle Up is the other restorative justice-focused film, however, it follows a more similar pattern to the intergroup identity-based dialogues than that of the other restorative justice film. The fact that white participants speak the most, especially in Part 2, could be because this film, while it includes the experiences and stories of many mothers of many races, centers on Janet, a white woman, and the loss of her son. This is essential context for understanding Figure 6.7. It is still relevant to notice that this film follows a similar narrative structure to the intergroup identity-based dialogues, which will be explored further in their network maps and centrality scores.

Circle Up (2017)

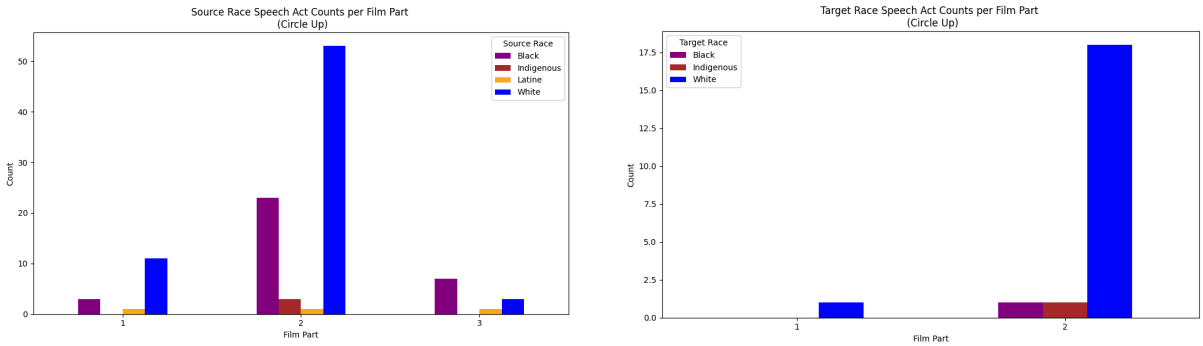


Figure 6.7: Source and Target Race Speech Act Counts per Film Part, *Circle Up* (2017)

Network Maps

While the Source and Target representations of these films are essential to understanding the overall patterns of which racial group spoke and was spoken to the most, more advanced measures are required to derive more detailed centrality conclusions. The following figures explore a more visual representation of the social communication networks created by these dialogues, and highlight how the participants are connected through dialogue, while emphasizing who is centered both physically and numerically.

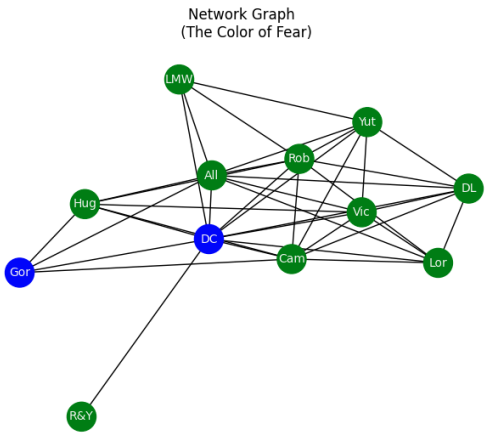
Figures 6.8 through 6.14 show two different understandings of network structure and centrality within them. On the left of each of these figures is a graph of the network structure of each of these films. Each network has nodes that are marked by a circle with each participant's name. These nodes have lines that connect them to other nodes, and these connections are edges that represent who each participant has spoken to or was spoken to by. This visualization illustrates the interconnectedness that communication networks produce. The participant nodes are further marked as either being blue for white participants or green for participants of color or all/camera. While this is more reductive than assigning a different color for each race and ethnicity for each participant, it is the clearest way to demonstrate how white participants are centered more than participants of color.

On the right side of Figures 6.9 through 6.15, there is a representation of the centrality scores of each racial group in the filmed dialogues. The higher the centrality scores, the more a category is centered in the dialogue, based on the number of degrees (or ties) that they have that connect them to the other participants through speech acts. These centrality scores are key to more fully understanding the nuance of the network visualizations. The networks are useful in

showing a physical representation of the centrality of certain participants, while the centrality scores provide essential context to the numerical representation of the participant centrality. The films are also arranged in chronological order of their release so that variation over time can be as clear as possible.

Beginning with Figure 6.8, we can see the network structure of *The Color of Fear* as well as each race's centrality scores. This film has one of the smallest casts of any of the films in this research, and therefore has the smallest number of nodes. Beginning with the network visualization, the three points that are centermost in the graph are All, Camera, and David C. This makes sense in the context of what has been established about the narrative structure of these films and how white participants are often treated as the center of the dialogues and the emotional arc of the films. In the centrality score, it is clear that the white participants have the highest score of any racial group, with a score of 0.86. This numerically represents the narrative and network pattern that has been outlined, showing that white participants are centered in this film's communication structures.

The Color of Fear (1994)



Centrality Scores
(The Color of Fear)

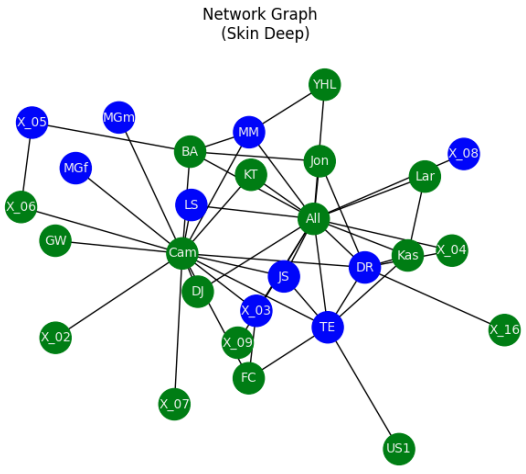
Source_Race	
White	0.681818
Latine	0.636364
Black	0.590909
Asian	0.545455

The Color of Fear (1994)

Figure 6.8: *Left*: Network Visualization of *The Color of Fear* (1994), *Right*: Centrality Scores by Race of *The Color of Fear* (1994)

Figure 6.9 shows the network graph and centrality score of *Skin Deep*. This network visualization is notably much more complex than that of *The Color of Fear*, as there are many more participants involved, as well as some side characters. However, by looking at the network structure, it is clear that many of the white participants are, again, centered in the graph, in particular, Dane Ray, Tammy Early, Judith Soto, Lisa Sanger, and Mark Mizone. It also shows that All and Camera are very well-connected nodes, as many participants often speak to them to accomplish different film objectives, such as providing backstory or speaking in generalizations. White participants also have the highest centrality score in this film, with a score of 0.11 compared to the other racial categories, with scores that are all less than 0.10.

Skin Deep (1995)



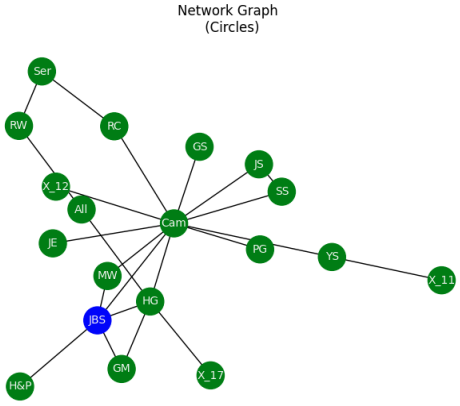
Centrality Scores
(Skin Deep)

Source_Race	
White	0.114815
Black	0.092593
Asian	0.074074
Indigenous	0.074074
Latine	0.061728

Figure 6.9: *Left*: Network Visualization of *Skin Deep* (1995), *Right*: Centrality Scores by Race of *Skin Deep* (1995)

Circles is a restorative justice-focused film, and therefore does not have a very similar dialogic structure as some of the other films do. However, it is important to observe that the patterns of centrality regarding white participants or characters in films such as these are consistent across both restorative justice and intergroup dialogue style films. Figure 6.10 shows the network structure of *Circles*, and although there is only one white participant, Judge Barry Stuart, it is apparent that he is right at the center of the network visualization. The film frames itself as an examination of Indigenous restorative justice principles and practices within Indigenous communities, and while that is what much of the film focuses on, it does include many clips of Judge Barry Stuart's perspective as a judge who has a history of working in punitive systems of prosecution. He is the only white participant in this film, and yet the centrality score of white participants is more than double that of the Indigenous participants. White participants have a score of 0.27, while their Indigenous counterparts have a score of 0.11. This is fascinating, as just how the intergroup identity-based dialogue films present themselves as practices in liberatory communication structures while inadvertently centering the racial perspectives of white participants, *Circles* presents itself as a film that seeks to illuminate the Indigenous wisdom of restorative justice, yet it ends up centering its one white participant.

Circles (1997)



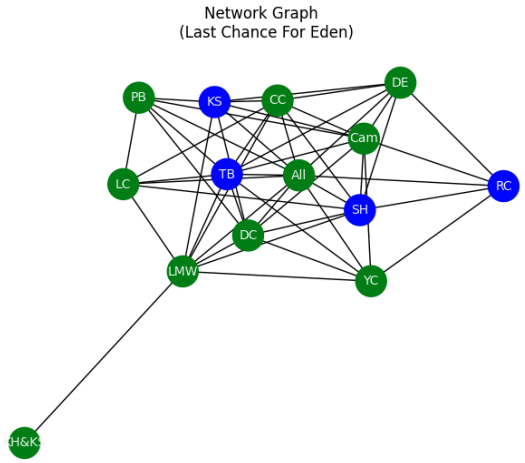
Centrality Scores
(Circles)
Source_Race
White 0.277778
Indigenous 0.111111

Figure 6.10: *Left*: Network Visualization of *Circles* (1997), *Right*: Centrality Scores by Race of *Circles* (1997)

Last Chance for Eden is the second of three films in this research that are directed by Lee Mun Wah. The network visualization shows three of the four white participants at the center: Karen Schwartz (W), Tom Burke (W), and Sandy Hill (W). At the very center of the graph is the "All" target. This authentically mirrors how the dialogue occurred, as it did very heavily feature those three participants and their journey of racial realization. It is important to note that in the centrality scores for this film, white participants do not score the highest. They have the third-highest score out of the five racial groups in this film. This is different from the other films, where the white participants had a much higher centrality score, and while that was a helpful metric to measure centrality sometimes, other times it falls short and fails to include the context and complexity of the dialogue. Just because the white participants spoke less overall in this film, they were spoken to very frequently and therefore very much centered in the dialogue. Although white participants do not appear to be centered in the dialogue through the centrality

score, they are centered through the narrative structure, which will be examined in more depth in Chapter 7.

Last Chance for Eden (2002)



Centrality Scores
(Last Chance For Eden)

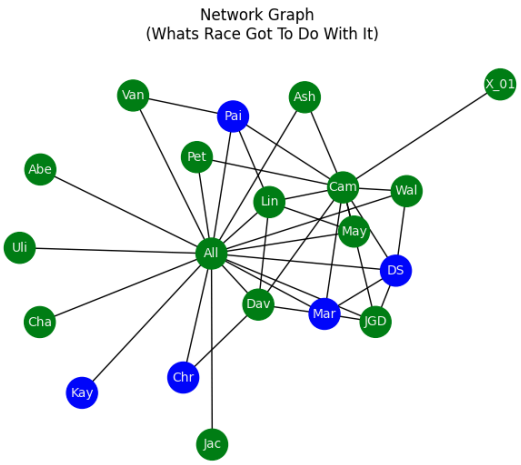
Source_Race	
Latine	0.615385
Asian	0.576923
White	0.557692
Indigenous	0.538462
Black	0.512821

Figure 6.11: *Left*: Network Visualization of *Last Chance for Eden* (2002), *Right*: Centrality Scores by Race of *Last Chance for Eden* (2002)

The network structure of *What's Race Got to Do with It?* is similarly diffused to that of *Last Chance for Eden*. Figure 6.12 examines the network visualization and centrality scores of *What's Race Got to Do with It?*, and although white participants are not overwhelmingly centered in the network visualization, they yet again have the highest centrality score. Neither of these representations of centrality can indeed tell the full story of centrality, but with the addition of qualitative analysis of this film, it is clear that the white participants are centered in their experiences. White participants such as Paige (W) and Mark (W) may not appear to be at the direct center of the network visualization, but they have more points of connection than many of the other dialogue participants. Although many participants are given time to speak, there is still an emphasis placed on the experiences in the dialogue of the white participants. Another factor

that may contribute to why the centrality scores are somewhat similar across most racial categories for this film could be that it focuses on a semester-long intergroup dialogue-style course. This added time and structural component could add to the exploration and development of more than just the white participants, and could have contributed to making the dialogue structure more spread out instead of exceedingly concentrated on the experiences of the white participants, as some of the other films are.

What's Race Got to Do with It? (2012)



Centrality Scores
(Whats Race Got To Do With It)

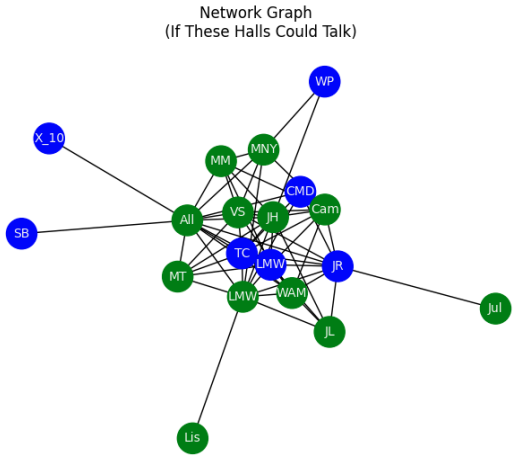
Source_Race	
White	0.178947
Asian	0.157895
Latine	0.157895
Black	0.115789
Indigenous	0.052632

Figure 6.12: *Left*: Network Visualization of *What's Race Got to Do with It?* (2012), *Right*: Centrality Scores by Race of *What's Race Got to Do with It?* (2012)

If These Halls Could Talk (2014) is the last of the Lee Mun Wah films that are included in this research, and as such, it occupies the most recent position in somewhat of a trilogy, alongside *Last Chance for Eden* (2002) and *The Color of Fear* (1994). Figure 6.13 outlines both the network visualization and the centrality scores of each racial group included in this dialogue. This film is another instance in which the centrality scores do not seem to heavily emphasize the experience of the white participants, despite their centrality in the network visualization. It is important to note that, similarly to in *Last Chance for Eden* (2002), centrality scores do not tell

the full story, but they can give helpful insight. In the case of *If These Halls Could Talk* (2014), white participants do not have a very high centrality score because many participants of color used their time speaking to educate the white participants on the truth of racism.

If These Halls Could Talk (2014)



Centrality Scores
(If These Halls Could Talk)

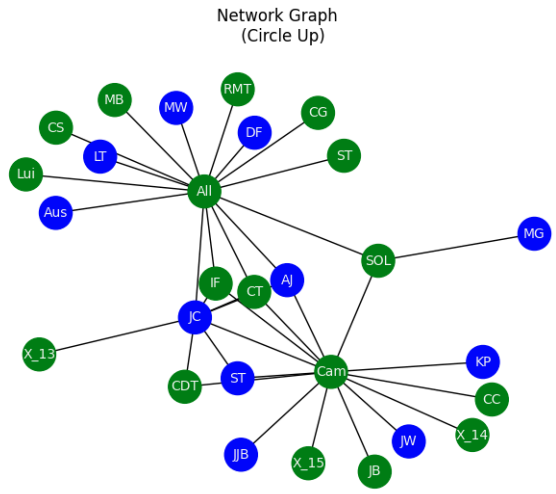
Source_Race	
Middle Eastern	0.500000
Black	0.402778
White	0.400000
Asian	0.333333
Latine	0.194444

Figure 6.13: *Left*: Network Visualization of *If These Halls Could Talk* (2014), *Right*: Centrality Scores by Race of *If These Halls Could Talk* (2014)

Circle Up (2017) centers the experiences of mothers and community members in Boston who have been impacted by the murders of their sons. It highlights the importance and the wisdom of restorative justice and circle processes to help communities process their collective trauma together, and to demonstrate just how deeply rooted the pain of murder becomes in the community, therefore encouraging young men to not become involved with gang activity and gun violence. This film mainly centers on a white woman, Janet (W), and her journey of processing the death of her son, which led her to hold circle processes for local young adults and teenagers. However, although it replicates the theme of white people being centered, particularly in stories of harm, this film is much more diffused in its power dynamic and centrality scores,

with Indigenous participants having the highest centrality score. As a film that centers the Indigenous practice of restorative justice, it seems right that Indigenous perspectives would be given more screen time. It bears repeating that centrality scores do not tell the full story, and yet in this case it is true that this film, while it is ultimately yet again focused on the emotional growth of a white dialogue participant, she has seemingly began to do the work already of deconstructing her understanding of racism and does not place that burden on the participants of color with whom she engages. This, therefore, allows Janet (W) and her fellow grieving mothers of murdered sons to engage in circle practices that come from a shared understanding of each other instead of an unequal educational and emotional power hierarchy.

Circle Up (2017)



Centrality Scores
(Circle Up)
Source_Race

Indigenous	0.111111
White	0.070707
Black	0.053872
Latine	0.037037

Figure 6.14: *Left*: Network Visualization of *Circle Up* (2017), *Right*: Centrality Scores by Race of *Circle Up* (2017)

Through a thorough examination of Source and Target speech act counts, network visualizations, and centrality scores, it is clear that the filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues in this research center the stories and educational journeys of white participants. None of these

metrics can decisively identify this alone, but the combination of these forms of analysis, along with qualitative examination, highlights the reproduction of patterns of structural racial inequity.

Chapter 7: Case Study in Racial Awakening

To get a more specific sense of these films and the narrative structure that is centered around a moment of racial awakening for white participants, this chapter focuses on two films in particular that illustrate this theme and the focus of this analysis. This chapter closely examines two of the three Lee Mun Wah films that are analyzed in this research – both *The Color of Fear* and *Last Chance for Eden.* These two films were chosen because they demonstrate how films that are both very clear in their white-centered narrative focus, such as *The Color of Fear*, and seemingly somewhat more diffused in their narrative focus, such as *Last Chance for Eden*, both engage in similar patterns.

The Color of Fear is a bit simpler in its power structure patterns, as there are fewer participants than some of the other films, and it is the oldest film. This results in a narrative that is focused on the emotional arc of the white participants, one in particular, and this is represented clearly in both the network analysis and the closer narrative examination. *Last Chance for Eden* was chosen because, although it follows a somewhat similar pattern in terms of centering the experiences and emotional arcs of the white participants, it is a bit less seen through the aforementioned network representations. Upon first glance, *Last Chance for Eden* might seem less focused on the experiences of white participants, as the network structure is more diffused than that of *The Color of Fear*, however, this close analysis shows that the network structure appears to be more diffused because there are more dialogue participants in *Last Chance for Eden*. Therefore, there are more overlapping experiences and identities included in the space, which impact the visualization but do not necessarily dictate who is centered in the dialogic space. Just because more people are speaking does not necessarily mean that a more varied group

of participants is being centered in the conversation. Both of these films result in the centering of the emotional and educational evolutions of the white participants in the space, even though their network representations appear differently, and this chapter aims to provide nuance and context to their interpretations.

Case study: *The Color of Fear* (1994)

The Color of Fear follows the dialogue of eight men facilitated by Lee Mun Wah in 1994. Two of the men are white, two are Black, two are Latine, and two are Asian. The first few minutes of this film follow each man introducing themself to the group, along with their self-identification of race and why they are there in the space. At this time, the audience can see a glimpse into what the participants' understandings of race are, and what some of their lived experiences are that might inform how they show up in the dialogic space. Lee Mun Wah provides context for what the space is and why they are there, including an overview of some of what they are going to talk about during their time together. The participants are encouraged to push themselves to be vulnerable and lean into uncomfortability throughout their time in dialogue. This is the first phase of the film – the introductory and foreshadowing of what is to come. This time gives exposition and sets up the structure for the rest of the dialogue. This period is also marked by an increase in talking to the camera or all, as since the participants do not know as much about each other yet, they are focused on making more general statements about their beliefs and identities that they choose to direct to the whole group and/or the camera, instead of just one person in the circle.

Following this initial phase, the dialogue becomes increasingly intense. It quickly becomes apparent that one of the white participants, David Christensen, does not believe that he

benefits from white privilege, nor does he believe that the experiences of the participants of color with racist encounters are valid. He challenges the Latine participants when they share their experiences of racism, and towards the Black participants, he claims that they are creating barriers to societal change and acceptance by having an attitude of victimization. In particular, David C (W) challenges Victor (B) and claims that he "blocks his progress" by focusing on how he has been silenced or discriminated against (Mun Wah, 1994). Victor (B) challenges David C (W) back by sharing more of his own lived experiences and encouraging him to realize that his experiences are not the experiences of all people, and that how he centers himself in the world furthers the aims of white supremacy at large. David C (W) is very resistant to this notion and continues denying benefiting from any privilege, and cites his difficult childhood as proof of the fact that he, too, has suffered. It takes the attention and education of the other participants sharing their experiences with racism with David C (W), followed by the input of the other white participant, Gordon (W), for David C (W) to consider that he might be limited in the way he perceives race in the world. When prompted multiple times by Lee Mun Wah to sit with the uncomfortability of the realization that life truly is very difficult for people who are marginalized by society, David C (W) begins to realize that he has been wrong both in the dialogue and in his previous racist actions. He then begins to cry and starts apologizing to the people of color in the group for his ignorance, to which they comfort him somewhat. The network structures of communication in this phase are most polarized – David C (W) talks for a majority of the time, then the other people of color talk primarily to him, challenging his perspective and offering their histories of racial harm in attempts to show him the realities that he is so resistant to accepting.

This moment of white tears serves as an emotional peak of the film. It is treated as a powerful culmination of conflict and education, where some level of progress has been reached

through the mutual work of the group to win over one participant with the truth. In a cursory sense, this is somewhat true. However, when pushed deeper, this is a way of narratively centering the educational arc of the white participants by aligning it with the narrative arc of the film. By treating the beginning, middle, and end of the white participants' educational and emotional journey as the grounding moments of the film, this structure centers the white participants experience as the "main characters" of the film while relegating the participants of color to the supporting cast, responsible for facilitating the education and emotional support of the white participants.

This leads into a third part of the film where the participants begin examining their own internalized racism, as well as ways in which the participants of color have experienced racism from other communities of color, including their own. They share experiences of colorism and harmful stereotypes that they feel other people of color have put upon them as a result of a white supremacist society. In this phase of the dialogue, there is a much more spread-out network structure of the participants, as many of them can share their experiences with more collective understanding now that David C's (W) ignorance has been addressed. Communication flows freely, and the structure is more diffuse in comparison to the previous phase.

The final phase of this film is the conclusion, filled with the takeaways of the participants and their hopes for the future. Similar to the first phase, this is marked by many comments directed to "All" and the camera. Participants share what the most impactful moments in the dialogue were for them, how they feel like they have grown or have been heard, and how they plan to act differently going forward to increase the understanding that they have garnered throughout the experience. There is an overall positive attitude toward the dialogue, and a common expression of gratitude and hope for change in the future. The white participants share

their hopes and plans for future self-education and allyship with people of color, and the people of color share plans for being more connected with their fellow community members, as well as continuing to fight for liberation. This part of the narrative structure is more spread out in comparison to the second phase, and aims to show a period of resolution and advocacy for more films like this one to be made in the future, to show people the power of communication.

This film was chosen as the first in-depth look into filmed intergroup identity-based dialogue because it was one of the first and most popular films made addressing this topic, and also because it is still frequently shown in the training of intergroup dialogue students and facilitators. It very clearly shows the distinct narrative stages that are common across these films in general, and shows clear examples of their defining features. It also shows one of the most clear instances of a white person who is ignorant of their privilege and of the realities of the participants or people of color in general. David C (W) is an example of many other white people who expect their lived experience to be the collective objective truth and are therefore ignorant of the experiences of people who are multiply marginalized. The first half of the film is him rejecting the truths of the participants of color in the space, and then pushing him back, saying that he should expand his understanding of the world past just himself.

It is important to note that at the beginning of the film, Lee Mun Wah (A) says that he picked each participant because of their "willingness to change and interesting perspectives" (1994). Similarly to how the films are not completely organic as they are edited into having clear and engaging narrative structures, their participants are not randomly assembled. Each participant was selected for a reason, and part of that reason very likely could have been that Lee Mun Wah (A) knew about their understanding of the world and what they could bring to the dialogic space. Lee Mun Wah (A) likely knew that David C (W) would be resistant to

understanding his privilege and positionality as a white man in America, and that the participants of color would be determined to show him the realities of their lived experiences, hopefully leading him to have a deeper realization of his positionality in the world. Further, while the dialogue was unscripted, Lee Mun Wah (A) likely also knew that there would be a moment of reckoning and general realizations of the white participants upon hearing the lived experiences of the participants of color.

Through this study of *The Color of Fear*, we can see that there are distinct roles that each participant plays, and that often the white participants are more ignorant to the realities of the participants of color, therefore putting themselves in the position where they require patient and repeated education in order of the dialogue to move forward meaningfully. This requires educational labor from the participants of color, and often leads to communication network patterns where many of the participants focus on talking to one participant, often many participants of color talking to one white person in hopes of opening their eyes to the truth of racism. *The Color of Fear* does not address this pattern of centering a large part of the conversation around the education of white participants. In Lee Mun Wah's next film, this is addressed head-on.

Case study: *Last Chance for Eden* (2003)

Nine years after *The Color of Fear*, Lee Mun Wah produced another similar film, entitled *Last Chance for Eden* (2003). This film features a larger group, this time including both men and women, of Latine, Indigenous, Black, white, and Asian heritage. This film follows a very similar structure to *The Color of Fear*, with more nuanced conversations across more facets of identity, including gender and sexuality. The "David C"-like characters of this film are Sandy (W) and

Karen (W), two white people who are very resistant to being seen as racist or intolerant, and yet do not acknowledge their privileges in society, very similarly to David C (W) of *The Color of Fear*.

Even with a larger and more diverse group, a similar structure from *The Color of Fear* can be seen. There is an initial period of introductions and sharing of people's general experiences and perspectives on race, gender, and other facets of identity. This is where the general understandings of societal oppression and privilege preliminarily come to light. Again, the dialogic structure in this first stage is more equitable and evenly distributed as each participant introduces themselves to the camera and the group as a whole.

Then, there is the initial storming period, where some of the first moments of conflict arise with the participants. This is where the white participants start becoming more bold in their statements and conflicts and start realizing that they are not as racially educated as they previously believed they were, and that society is much more racist than they believed it to be for the previous part of their lives. There is a particularly heightened conflict between Sandy (W), a white man, and Carlo (L), a Latine man. Carlo (L) shares personal experiences, lived trauma, and stories of racism in an attempt to educate Sandy (W) on the truth of societal racism. Sandy (W) refuses to acknowledge the possibility that his lived experience is not the same as the other participants in the space, and the dialogue gets so heated that Carlo (L), in a moment of frustration, asks for "facilitation, please" (Mun Wah, 2002, 30:09).

In this key moment, where Carlo (L) is sharing his vulnerable truth and Sandy (W) is repeatedly denying his lived experiences and deeming them invalid, the facilitators do finally step in, but when they do, they only address Sandy's (W) experience. They continue to prompt him to reflect more deeply by asking him questions about his held beliefs about the world and

why he doesn't agree that other people's realities could be different than how he had assumed. Eventually, Sandy (W) comes to an emotional realization where he begins to cry upon first discovering — and attempting to face — his white guilt. He is comforted by the group and is met with encouragement and compliments over his growth in the space.

The group then goes on a break, and during this time, we see them speaking in reality-TV confessional-style settings, where they share their true feelings about how the first part of the dialogue went with a camera in a room by themselves. These interactions give insight into how the participants are reflecting on their preliminary experiences in the space, including anything they felt did not go well. Sandy (W) expresses being exhausted from his emotional growth in the space and jokes that he had no idea what he was getting himself into. Carlo (L) shares that he, too, was exhausted, but he was not surprised at the outcome of the dialogue so far, as he is frequently asked to share his experiences with racism and then promptly not listened to or invalidated upon sharing those experiences. Sandy (W) leaves the dialogue with a positive, yet tired perspective, and Carlo (L) leaves the dialogue exasperated and defeated.

When the dialogue is reconvened the next day, the facilitators ask the participants how they felt about the first part of the dialogue. Some of the participants shared that they were feeling good about the last session and that they were looking forward to continuing learning and growing as a group, especially the white participants. Debbie (I), an Indigenous woman, brings up that she felt uncomfortable around the fact that Sandy's (W) feelings and experiences were addressed and focused on while Carlo (L) was left to deal with his experience on his own, especially when he was the one who was vulnerable and whose feelings were invalidated in the space. At this point, the facilitators ask Carlo (L) for the first time how he felt about the

experience and if there is anything they can do to support him. They apologize to him and then to the group as a whole for not addressing the harm with more care.

The fact that it took the advocacy of a woman of color in the space to prompt the facilitators to check in with a person who was harmed in a space and involved in a moment of conflict further highlights the fact that this film centers the experiences of white participants over participants of color. After Debbie (I) points this out, more participants start realizing how the white participants are centered in the dialogic space and realize that the systemic racism that they have been critiquing has been replicated in the very structure of how they are discussing it. Some participants continue to reflect on this and become more aware of its furthering throughout the rest of the dialogue. However, while this is a seemingly major realization and moment of pause in the film, narrative-wise, it is treated as more of a diversion from the main point than as a moment of re-evaluation.

It is important to note that a key part of official intergroup dialogue is the fact that dialogue is supposed to be a time where people share their lived experiences without fear of judgment or rejection, and that no one is trying to convince others that their point is the "right" point, or convince anyone to join their side of the argument. However, this framework does not stand outside of spaces of official and intentional Intergroup Dialogue facilitation. In these instances of the films analyzed in this research, these films are not officially facilitated or structured as official intergroup dialogues. This shows in how the participants do not all enter the space on a similar level of education on the topic of the dialogue, and becomes more apparent in exactly what this research works to illuminate – the fact that the participants of color are not allowed to simply be equal participants in the space, but since the facilitation has not provided an

opportunity for them to engage in a truly equitable way, they are relegated to the role of the co-educators in the space without being compensated or thanked for their labor.

At several points in the dialogues, it seemed like almost all participants and facilitators were turned towards the white participants, talking to them in an attempt to change their minds and help them grow. While this provided a powerful environment to foster introspection of the white participants, it also both infantilized them and placed them on a pedestal simultaneously. In *Last Chance for Eden*, this is seen through how Karen (W), a white woman, is treated in dialogue. As a white woman, it is clear that Karen (W) had been socialized to frequently view herself as somewhat of a victim due to the heteropatriarchy and ageism. However, Karen (W) did not realize that her whiteness heavily impacted how she is perceived and interacted with in the world, and so in the dialogue, when she is confronted with the realities of race, she expresses feeling "attacked" and highly uncomfortable.

Racialized weaponization of emotional responses

This theme of white people interpreting people of color sharing their own experiences of trauma and racism with them as acts of aggression or as "attacks" further emphasizes their own internalized racism and racialization of expressions of emotion. This is examined in more detail in the following chapter on sentiment analysis and its impact on the value of emotional labor. In this chapter, through the in-depth examination of these two films, we can see this phenomenon in its entirety. In these moments of white people expressing feelings of victimization over their invitation to question their internalized racism, the facilitators do not encourage them to further question why they feel attacked when people of color encourage them to unpack their beliefs. Instead, they allow the white participants to express to the group that they are being emotionally

and verbally attacked by the participants of color, painting them as highly irrational and emotionally volatile, while the white participants are the ones who are having the strong emotional reaction. There is an expectation of protection and safety by white people that permeates this dialogic space. Because society is so influenced by white supremacy, it is orchestrated to cater to the needs and experiences of white people.

Further, white people conflate safety with comfort, so when their perceptions of themself and/or of the world around them and their engagement in it is challenged in any way, they perceive it as a breach of safety and respond with strong emotional reactions in an attempt to regain comfortability and the feeling that they are right. Facilitators had the opportunity to push this further and offer education or insight into where this response comes from in a societal context of white supremacy, and yet they left the participants of color to do the majority of the emotional vulnerability and educational and emotional labor.

During the conclusion phase of each of these films, there is a period of hopefulness where the participants share what their main takeaways were and what they found to be the most impactful moments of dialogue, there is often a period in which the white participants share what they learned, expressed somewhat remorse for their previous ignorance, and bow to be better allies in the future. While this is admirable and certainly much better than the white participants wholeheartedly rejecting anything that they might have been encouraged to learn, it is yet another way in which the white participants dodge accountability for their behavior in certain ways.

By being made to feel comfortable and catered to throughout the process, the white participants are not pushed to dig deeper into their feelings of uncomfortability, and therefore do not do the essential work of pushing through their white guilt to realize that they have been

centering themselves and that they need to do the work to decenter how they think and act. Instead, these white participants continue to center themselves and engage in harmful white saviorism through claiming that now that they have learned what racism is, they will call it out whenever they see it and move forward being staunch allies. Not all of the participants feel this way exactly, but many of the white participants do not spend much time in the uncomfortable space of reckoning with their complicity in the white supremacist society and instead jump from not believing that racism exists, to finally understanding that racism exists, to the vow that they will bring anti-racism to their communities. This ends up being a reductive process of unlearning racism that completely skips over the foundational component of introspection.

Throughout these two films, we can see the narrative structure emerge that shows, in a more qualitative manner, the methods of centering that have been examined using network data in the previous chapter. These two films can help illustrate the themes around which this research revolves — validation, acknowledgment of labor, and emotional cycles — and their roles in how people communicate. This analysis of these two films shows a more detailed understanding of how these participants interact with each other, where these moments of conflict arise, and how these situations are handled by facilitators. It also allows us to hear from the lived experiences of the participants regarding their irrespective of the dialogue, which emphasizes the importance of valuing lived experiences along with empirical data. Across both of these films, more information on the first-hand experiences of the dialogue participants adds essential context to the network data that has been produced from their transcripts. This research seeks to allow an opportunity for these voices to be heard and for the experiences of participants who were not centered in the initial dialogues to be given a platform of importance. Although we can see that the narrative structure of these films placed the white participants at the center, it is clear that

participants of color like Victor (B), Carlo (L), and Debbie (I) provided essential labor that moved the dialogues forward, even though it was unfair for them to be expected to function as both educators and facilitators simultaneously, and were left unsupported for the most part by the facilitators.

Chapter 8: Changing Sentiment Over Time

Emotion and tone play essential roles in communication. Using sentiment analysis, it is possible to track different ways in which emotions are expressed through the words used. This can offer insight into the emotions being experienced by each dialogue participant, and the emotional labor they may be expending as participants in the dialogue. It is also essential to recognize the social and historical contexts in which certain displays of emotion exist and how they are used to advance certain goals, biases, and prejudices. The visualization that sentiment analysis provides allows for a deeper understanding of how white participants are centered, and how the emotional pain and labor of participants of color are used to advance the emotional and educational experiences of the white participants.

As previously observed in the narrative structure, the culmination of many of these dialogues comes when a white participant is taught by the other participants of color in the space that racism truly does exist, upon which point they begin to cry and, sometimes, apologize for their ignorance. The phenomenon of white people, particularly white women, using their tears to deflect responsibility and direct attention to themselves instead of to their erroneous ways of thinking and acting has been studied for decades. It aligns with the perspective that white people, particularly white women, are victims and that they should be catered to, protected, and made comfortable in all situations (Phipps, 2021). Although many of these dialogues critique that very phenomenon, they also exacerbate it by centering the emotional arc of white people as they realize their internalized racism. In *The Color of Fear* it is David C (W = White), in *Last Chance for Eden* it is Sandy (W) and Karen (W) (and to a certain extent, Rhonda (W)), in *If These Halls Could Talk* it is Leif (W), Tyanne (W), Joe (W), and Carmela (W), in *Skin Deep* it is Tammy

(W), Mark Mizone (W), Judith (W), Dane (W), and Lisa (W), and in *What's Race Got to Do with It?* it is primarily Mark (W) and Paige (W).

Expressions of sadness are often racialized and weaponized, either consciously or subconsciously, to deflect responsibility away from those who have caused harm in a space. It is also true that expressions of anger or frustrations, often by participants of color, are also racialized and weaponized, yet in very different ways. White participants often cry in reaction to realizing the realities of racism, however, it often takes great emotional and intellectual labor from participants of color to get them to those realizations.

The figures below in this chapter analyze the sentiment scores across each racial group across each film. On the left side of each figure is the source race sentiment means of each speech act and its sentiment subsetted by race and each film part. These figures show how sentiment is either greater or less than the neutral middle point of 0.0. Each speech act contains either more or less sentiment than this neutral point. This idea of sentiment is being used as a rough proxy for the emotional expression of the participants through their speech acts. It does not include their body language, which is essential to fully understanding the full emotional context of the participant's speech, but it is the closest estimate that is possible given the fact that this research works off of text data of filmed conversations. The figures on the left show the sentiment scores of the targets of each speech act. When each participant is spoken to, they experience an emotional reaction to what they are being told, and that is what the sentiment score is derived from. This is important because it shows how participants feel upon being spoken to, and that gives insight into how participants receive each speech act that is directed towards them.

Figure 8.1 shows the sentiment means for both the source and target experiences over each part of *The Color of Fear*. It shows how the sentiment changes across each part of the film;

however, Part 1 is not included in the target graph because all of the targets for Part 1 have no assigned race, as the target for every speech act in that part is the camera, which was not given a race in the analysis. Parts 1–3 have relatively low sentiment scores in both the source and target graphs, and the majority of sentiment recorded is in Part 4. The source graph shows the majority of sentiment expressed by Black and white participants in Part 4. As was examined in the case study of this film, it is clear that this sentiment shows itself in this section so much because Victor (B) and David C (W) have their most emotionally tense communication-based clash. Black participants exhibit higher sentiment scores in this part, and white participants have slightly less but similarly raised sentiment in the source graph, meaning that there was high sentiment in the speech acts spoken by both white and Black participants in this section. However, when looking at the target graph, there is no sentiment recorded from Black participants and very high sentiment scores from white participants. This suggests that while white and Black participants were the source of similarly emotionally charged speech acts, the majority of those speech acts were targeted toward white participants, and very few of them were targeted toward Black participants. This further emphasizes the centering of the white participants in this part, specifically because the white participants were the highest category of target with the highest sentiment score. In a heated dialogic moment, Black source speakers expended comparatively very high sentiment scores, but they were not spoken to with the same focus as they spoke to white participants.

The Color of Fear (1994)

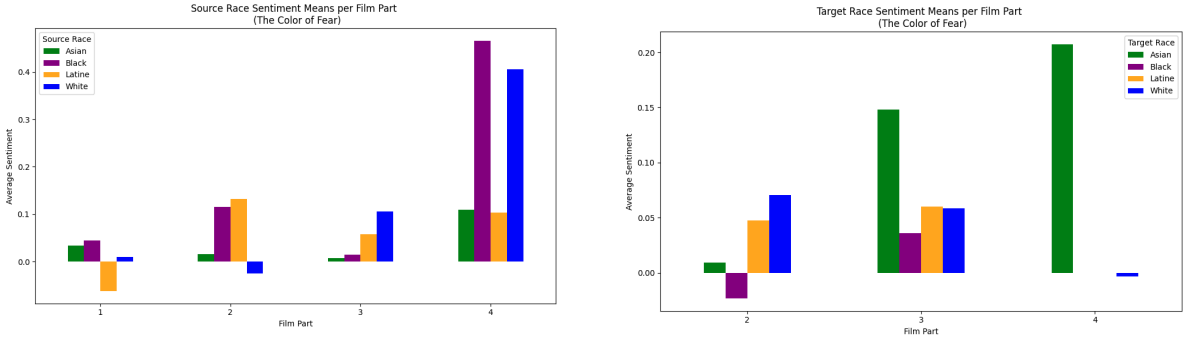


Figure 8.1: Source and Target Race Means per Film Part, *The Color of Fear* (1994)

Figure 8.2 shows how sentiment changes over time and has quite different results from Figure 8.1 in terms of the patterns that it highlights. In the source graph of Figure 8.2, the highest sentiment score across any of the parts is in Latine speakers in Part 3. This is similar to Figure 8.1 in that the highest sentiment score of the source category is in the last part of the film. This echoes the narrative pattern in that the end of the film is typically the moment of the highest or most extreme emotional culmination. This pattern is not necessarily continued in the target section of this film, as it shows fairly consistent high positive sentiment in each of the sections, with there being relatively high positive sentiment from white participants in Part 1, and then relatively high positive sentiment from Black participants in Parts 2 and 3. It is also important to note that the negative sentiment changes from Black target participants expressing slight negative sentiment in Part 1, while white participants express relatively high positive sentiment, to then Black target participants expressing relatively high positive sentiment in Parts 2 and 3 while white participants express slightly negative sentiment in both of those parts. This could be because, as the dialogue progresses, white participants learn more about the negative realities of racism, and participants of color become somewhat more comfortable sharing their stories with

the group. Another possibility for the emergence of these patterns could be because has been highlighted above in the narrative exploration— that the white participants began the dialogue in an ignorant space unaware of the realities of racism, and these films focus on the vulnerability and emotional labor of participants of color to educate the white participants on the realities of racism. This could explain why the target graph shows that the white participants start with such high rates of positive sentiment and then flip to being negative sentiment for the other two sections.

Skin Deep (1995)

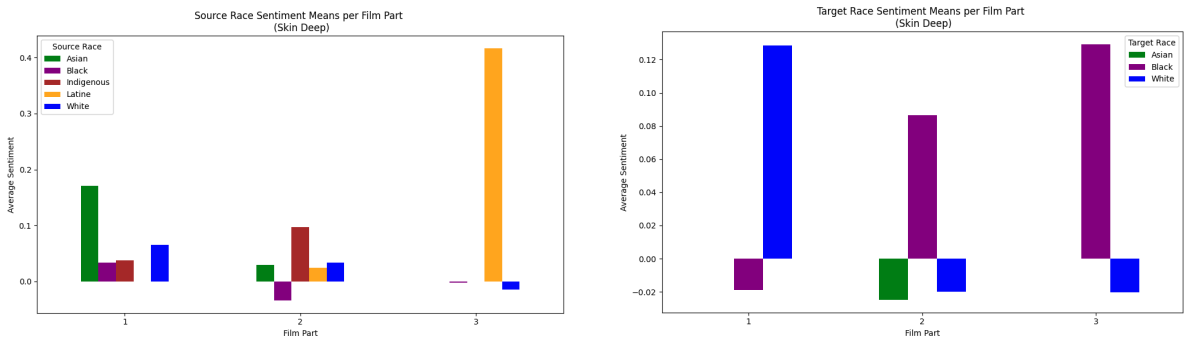


Figure 8.2: Source and Target Race Means per Film Part, *Skin Deep* (1995)

Circles is a film that focuses on restorative justice processes in Canada, and has a predominantly indigenous cast with one white participant. Figure 8.3 shows both the source race sentiment means and the target race sentiment means of each speech act. In the source graph, there is a clear increase in sentiment across all three parts. In Part 1, there is slightly more positive sentiment from the Indigenous participants than the white participants, and then in Parts 2 and 3, the white positive sentiment rises consistently while the Indigenous sentiment stays relatively unchanged. This further emphasises how the film is edited to follow the emotional culmination of the white participant, who is a judge, as he tells the camera about the importance

of Indigenous practices of restorative justice circle processing. In the target graph, only parts 2 and 3 are shown, as Part 1 simply is a stage where each participant introduces themselves to the camera, which was not assigned a race and therefore does not appear on this sentiment by race graph. It is clear that the white targets in Part 2 experience somewhat positive sentiment in comparison to the indigenous participants, and that in Part 3, the Indigenous target participants experience higher positive sentiment while the white target participants experience comparatively higher levels of negative sentiment. This could be because the white target participants who were spoken to began realizing the errors of the current legal systems and how restorative justice is essential in moving toward collective liberation.

Circles (1997)

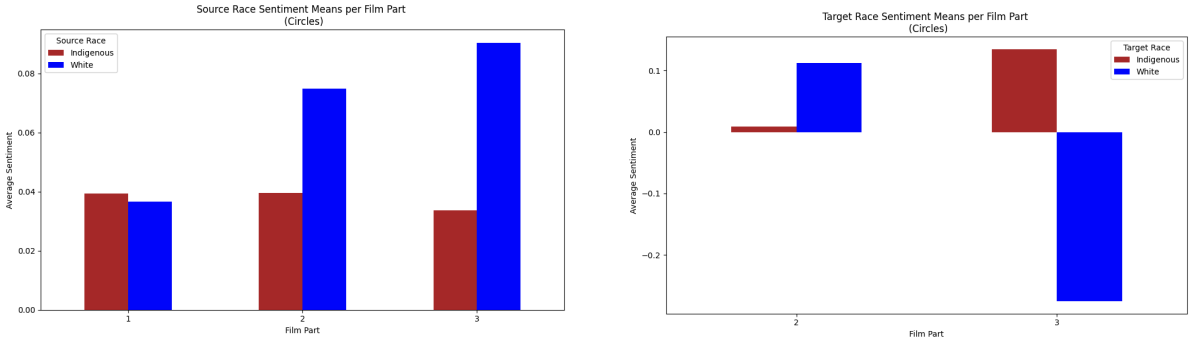


Figure 8.3: Source and Target Race Means per Film Part, *Circles* (1997)

Figure 8.4 shows the patterns of both source and target race sentiment means for each part of *Last Chance for Eden*. This is the last film where the highest expression of sentiment in the source graph is in the last part of the film. There is a relatively similar sentiment score across each part, although it varies by race. In Part 1, the highest positive sentiment scores are expressed by Latine and Asian participants. In part two, it was similarly distributed by Indigenous, Latine, and Asian participants. Part 3 had a similar distribution of sentiment across

all racial groups. Part 4 had the highest expression of positive sentiment from Indigenous participants, with slightly negative sentiment from white participants. Part 5 had the highest positive sentiment score from Latine participants, with slightly more negative sentiment from white participants than in Part 4. Finally, Part 6 shows a slight score of negative sentiment from Black participants and the highest positive sentiment score of any part of the film, expressed by white participants. This could be because the emotional culmination of the film follows the racial realization and reckoning of white participants, which culminates with intense emotional expression and then a phase of white people proclaiming all that they have learned and how they hope to combat racism. However, this is rarely followed by accountability.

The target graph of Figure 19 shows a consistent pattern of the decrease in positive sentiment of white target participants across the progression of the film. Parts 4 and 6 are omitted in the target graph because in those parts, the participants only spoke to the camera, which is not given a race, and therefore, there is no racial target data for those parts. The target graph begins with high scores of positive sentiment from the white target participants, which decreases consistently throughout the film, mirroring their experience with understanding the realities of racism in society. This pattern is also somewhat followed by the steady decrease of positive sentiment in Latine target participants, with their sentiment in Part 5 dipping into negative. Other races of target participants express slight negative sentiment in Part 2, and by Part 5, all target participant racial groups express slightly negative sentiment except for the white participants.

Last Chance for Eden (2002)

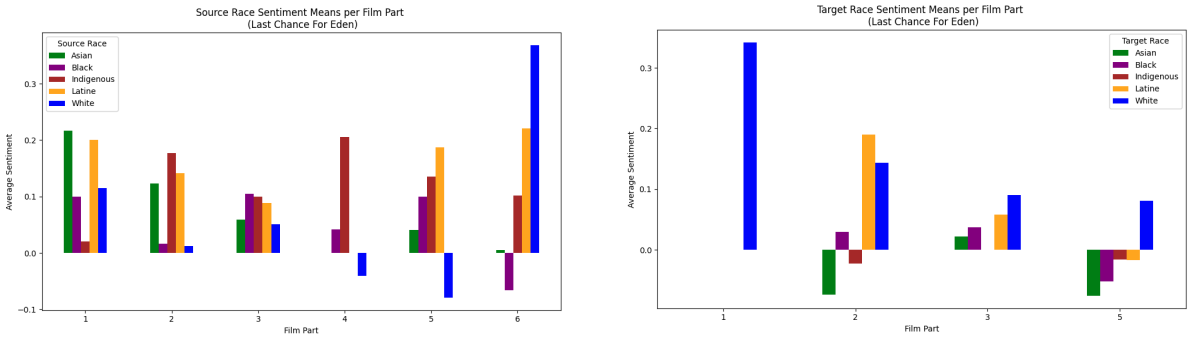


Figure 8.4: Source and Target Race Means per Film Part, *Last Chance for Eden* (2002)

Figure 8.5 highlights the patterns of the film *What's Race Got To Do With It?* across the film's four sections. Similarly to some of the other films, Part 1 and 4 are omitted from the target graph as they are sections in which each participant is introducing themselves to the camera (as in Part 1) or they are reflecting on their experience and vowing to do better in the future (as in Part 4). The source graph has the highest expression of positive sentiment in Part 1 by Asian participants. This falls into being slightly negative sentiment in part two, and then gradually builds back up across Parts 3 and 4. Latine participants begin with slightly negative sentiment in Part 1, but they also experience a gradual increase across the following sections. Black participants begin to follow a similar pattern, experience a slight dip into negative sentiment in Part 3, and then end with the highest positive sentiment of all racial categories in Part 4. White participants gradually grow in their positive sentiment with their highest score being in Part 4, and this being the clearest pattern suggests a similar conclusion as the previous graphs, that white participants enter the space feeling less educated about the realities of racism, and then through

the process of the other participants sharing their stories and experiences, white participants learn the truth, ending with grand proclamations of how they plan to be allies moving forward.

The target graph of *What's Race Got to Do with It?* shows a slightly less detailed story, as only parts 2 and 3 have viable data. White participants exhibit the highest rate of positive sentiment in part 2. Meanwhile, Asian, Black, and Latine participants experience slightly negative sentiment in this part. In Part 3, the only racial category shown is Asian participants, with a significantly negative sentiment score. This shows that Asian participants were the only racial group toward whom comments were directed in Part 3, and that all other comments must have been directed either toward Camera or All. It is important to note that this target graph shows no data for Indigenous participants, therefore showing that no comments were directed towards Indigenous participants throughout the whole dialogue. While one could consider that when participants direct their comments toward "All", the Indigenous participants are included in that, it is curious that all other racial categories of participants had comments targeted directly at them.

What's Race Got to Do with It? (2012)

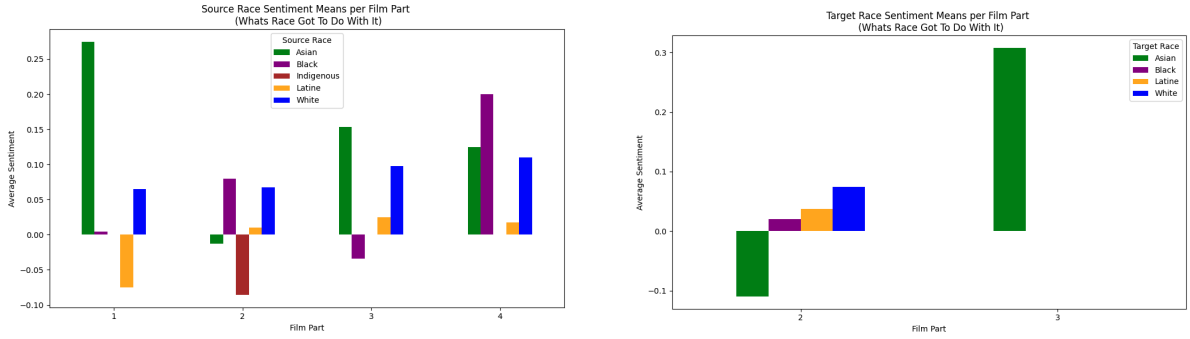


Figure 8.5: Source and Target Race Means per Film Part, *What's Race Got to Do with It?* (2012)

Figure 8.6 shows the sentiment expressions across both Source and Target speech acts throughout *If These Halls Could Talk* (2014). Across both the Source and Target graphs, there is very little sentiment recorded from white participants. However, there are very strong instances of both negative and positive sentiment from the participants of color. This is because, despite this dialogue centering on the racial education of the white participants, this was primarily achieved through the vulnerability and raw emotion of the participants of color. The fact that the white participants did not express much recorded sentiment does not prove that they are not centered; on the contrary, it shows that they had the privilege of not being as emotionally involved and invested in the dialogue as the participants of color did. This further emphasizes how emotionally taxing the experiences of the participants of color can be through educating the white participants by sharing their histories of trauma.

If These Halls Could Talk (2014)

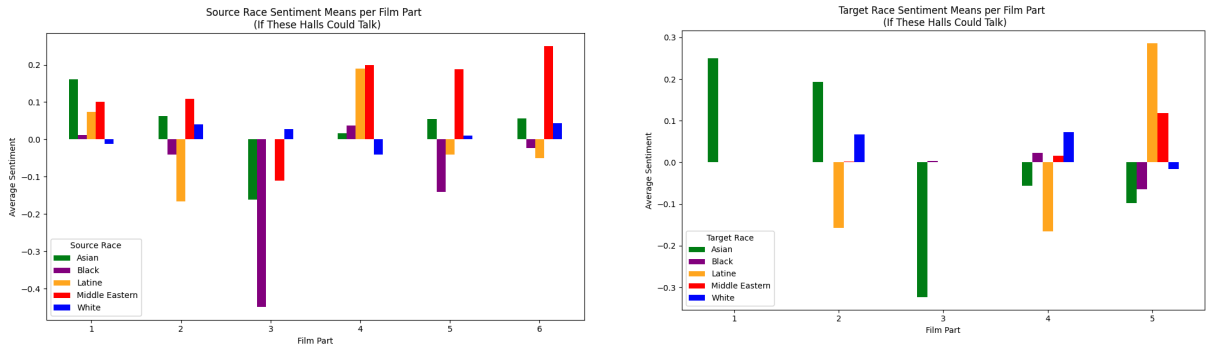


Figure 8.6: Source and Target Race Means per Film Part, *If These Halls Could Talk* (2014)

Circle Up (2017) offers the experiences of mothers of many racial backgrounds as they examine their relationships with grief in the wake of losing their sons to violence. In Figure 8.7, it is clear that the source speech acts of all races of participants across all sections of the film include a range of emotions, but the sentiment with which they speak to one another is

overwhelmingly positive. This could be because these mothers are sharing stories of harm and trauma, and they are not re-engaging with conflict, as is true for some of the other films. Indigenous participants both speak and are spoken to with positive sentiment across both the Source and Target graphs, because gratitude is being expressed for the ancestral knowledge of restorative practice that is being shared in the community. Even though this film heavily features the story of Janet (W), it is more diffused in who is centered— it allows space for other participants to share their experiences and allows for Indigenous knowledge to be shared and gratefully received.

Circle Up (2017)

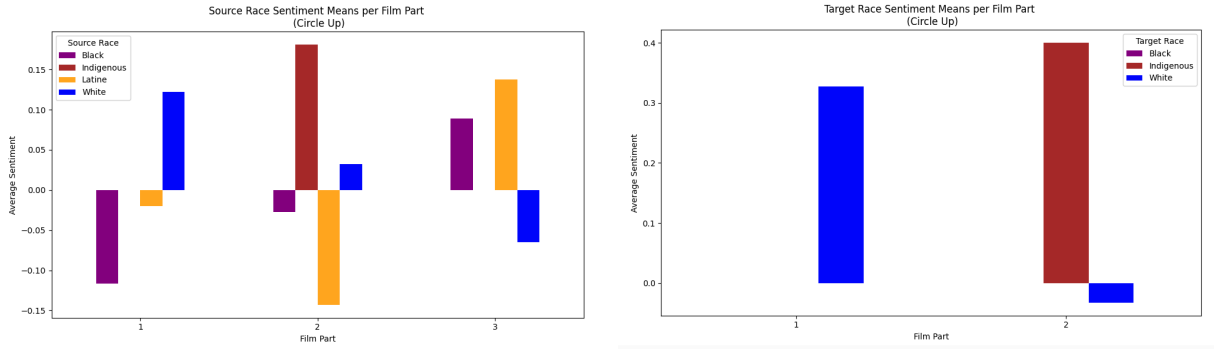


Figure 8.7: Source and Target Race Means per Film Part, *Circle Up* (2017)

Emotional and educational labor are often difficult to identify, yet using the sentiment analysis of both Source and Target speech acts across each film, overall emotion was able to be tracked and analyzed. This evaluation of sentiment further emphasizes the pattern that white participants are heavily centered in these intergroup identity-based films, and that their emotional comfort and educational support are largely provided by the participants of color in the space, with very little reciprocity, recognition, or gratitude.

Chapter 9: Discussion

Through the network analysis of these filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues, data were produced that show centrality frameworks in each of the films. The network centrality varies from film to film, but all of the films show similar patterns – white participants are centered in the dialogue, and it is visible in these networks of centrality. Further, through sentiment analysis, it is clear that the emotional patterns mirror the centering of the white participants and their emotional journeys at the expense of the emotional labor of the participants of color. In both situations — in the centrality networks based on how frequently participants of different races speak and are spoken to, as well as the sentiment analysis that interrogates the expressions of emotions from the participants — white participants are allowed and encouraged to explore their relationships with race as well as any emotions that may accompany that exploration, while participants of color are relegated to the role of unconsenting educators and emotional regulators charged with advising and validating the white participants instead of engaging more deeply with their own understandings and complex feelings around race.

White guilt & impositions of educational and emotional labor

These dialogues claim that they are taking a stand against racism and racist culture and are presenting a better world in which people engage in open dialogues with each other instead of staying in their ignorant echo chambers. While "dialogue across difference" is essential for building connections and working towards a more empathic and compassionate society, it is the perspective of this work that these films do not do enough to produce spaces in which people can speak their minds without suffering harm (Gurin et al., 2013). As shown in the centrality graphs,

these dialogues predominantly center white people and the audience or camera. Most of the graphs show that the majority of participants spend the majority of their time either talking to white participants, the camera, or "All". In many of these dialogues, white participants are the center of at least one of the sections of the dialogue, usually in the conflict sections.

There is a common cliché in these films that a white participant or participants come in ignorant of the realities of racism, and then the participants of color, and sometimes white allies, spend a portion of the time educating the white participant about the fact that racism truly does exist. This section of dialogue is not truly dialogue, it is education. The expectation in dialogue is that all participants come in ready to participate, with the understanding that they may be challenged to think outside of their comfort zones and push themselves as well as their preconceived notions.

These films, as they are not official intergroup dialogues (IGD), do not follow the same essential preparation sessions that typical IGD sessions follow. As these are films and not completely organic dialogues, they are edited in the previously mentioned narrative structures, partially to educate their audience, yes, but also for entertainment. This is why each film has a similar "gotcha" moment where the white participants finally realize the errors of their ways and frequently break down crying, consumed by their white guilt. White guilt and white tears, further, are not effective measures of accountability-taking for harm-doing and these responses to being asked to be accountable for their painful actions only reinforce the fact that white emotions and needs are centered in the space, with the participants of color there to educate, soothe, and absolve the white participants of any guilt or pain.

While the white participants seem to take accountability in the moment in many of these films, it seems unlikely that the true message of these dialogues will stick with them, as even

though each of them seemed to learn valuable lessons about the realities of life for the participants of color, the white participants were centered throughout the whole process. It is not lost on this researcher that much of this research seems to be further centered on these white participants and their patterns. It is not the intention of this research to give them further attention or to center them even more, it is simply the intention to bring to light the ineffectiveness of creating somewhat contradictory films that seem to be in the pursuit of antiracism that end up furthering the perspective that whiteness is to be catered to and centered. This research shows how the use of these films to train trainers or shape race-based dialogues may be amplifying harm. Future practitioners of IGD should take measures to not inadvertently allow these practices to be replicated in their own practice.

The participants of color who were centered the most in each of these films were those who ended up educating and speaking to the white participant(s) the most. Although these films were not scripted, they were edited in a way that presented major and minor characters. Those whose speech acts were shown on screen the most were made to be the major characters, and those who we heard from the least were made to be the minor characters. This research does not seek to say that intergroup identity-based dialogues center white people, it is simply a trend that has been observed through these subjectively edited and directed films. It is possible that in the raw footage, the people of color were able to speak to each other more freely, and the dialogue was not mostly centered around interactions of education with the white participant(s). However, it is important to note that we are only able to make assumptions on the data that we do have, and therefore, we cannot say that this is the truest representation of the data that existed at one time, but it is the data that we have access to.

Differences across dialogue structures – the power of caucusing

Not all dialogues centered white participants to the same degree. The films made earlier followed this pattern more explicitly than the newer counterparts, with the centrality networks becoming more varied and less clustered over time. The same is true for the dialogues themselves – while many of the dialogues experienced a point of heightened centrality, usually in a moment of conflict, many of them ended with more varied centrality networks. This shows that the films themselves try to portray a more positive, egalitarian end to whatever conflict-focused dialogue they primarily focus on. The most equally distributed centrality networks, however, are in those that utilize white caucuses. White caucuses are opportunities for white participants to discuss racism with each other, without the presence of participants of color (Kivel, 2011). Often, because of their internalized racism, white participants subconsciously view participants of color as overly aggressive, angry, and/or negative towards them. This is incredibly apparent in the prevalence of the "angry Black woman/girl" trope, where Black women are historically masculinized and seen as more aggressive whenever they express any form of emotion towards white people (Jones & Norwood, 2017). This phenomenon shows itself in the context of these dialogues in the moments in which white participants describe feeling "attacked" by the participants of color in the groups. This is often in a moment of conflict when the participants of color try to share their lived experiences with the white participants, with the hope that this will encourage them to think about the world and societal power structures from a more nuanced point of view instead of simply viewing the white experience as the universal experience. By believing that the lived experience of white participants is the truth for all participants, this

exposes the lack of racial understanding of the white participants and further centers the white experience.

In dialogues that utilize white caucuses as part of their racial dialogic strategy, white participants can speak to their fellow white participants about racism, with the hope that white participants who are further in their understanding of white supremacy and structural racism will be able to share their perspectives with the other white participants who have not understood that truth yet. Using these white caucuses, as they do in *What's Race Got to Do with It?* was more effective in getting through to less racially educated white participants because they were more likely to listen to a white counterpart explain racism to them, since their internalized racism led them to view white people as more rational and less aggressive than people of color (Kivel, 2011). This does not solve the problem of that deeply internalized racism that many white people hold, and is certainly not the only strategy in working on using dialogic frameworks to encourage more equitable racial perspectives, but it can be an effective beginning step in approaching racial dialogues on a more educationally equitable foundation. This is because white people are sometimes more likely to listen to their white counterparts, and with the expectation that those white counterparts had been educated by listening and learning from people of color who consented to being in positions of education and who were fairly and equitably compensated for their time. This allows for less people of color to be forced into the emotionally vulnerable and, often, painful, role of educating ignorant and resistant white people, while allowing some more racially educated white people to step up and bear even a small piece of the weight of racism, by engaging in vulnerable dialogue with their white counterparts.

One of the main findings of this work is that the participants of color were often used more as plot devices, sources of education, and emotional examples rather than as equally valued

dialogic partners. While the white participants were allowed to be less knowledgeable, make mistakes, and ask questions, the participants of color were expected to be all-knowing frames of reference for the racial learning of the white participants. Although these filmed dialogues are focused on cultivating opportunities for people of different races, ethnicities, genders, etc., to engage in cross-community conversation, they ignore the societal power implications of these experiences that inform how the people in the room are treated. Because these spaces do not acknowledge how these power dynamics impact how the participants see and treat each other in not only the outside world but the dialogues themselves, they treat all participants as though they are entering on equal footing without doing any educational work for those who do not know as much about the realities of racism. This leads to participants of color, who have more experience with racism and conversations, to be placed into the role of educators in the space, while white participants, who often do not have as much experience with racism and conversations about it, are left to be educated and emotionally cared for. This is not to say that participants of color should not be recognized and validated in their sharing of their lived experiences, but these filmed dialogues become more exploitative rather than validating and appreciative, since the participants enter the space expecting to all be treated as dialogue participants and then are tasked with educating and emotional caretaking of white participants. This research hopes to identify this pattern of inequitable power dynamics in dialogue so that situations like these filmed dialogues can be more equitably structured moving forward.

Implications & potential areas of expansion

This research shows how communication structures can reflect power dynamics, and in dialogues that are focused on connecting across difference, critical consciousness around who is

being centered could inform the creation of future programming. Firstly, it is important to consider why people communicate at all. All acts of communication seek to relay some message from one person or group of people to another. The ways by which these are expressed can include body language, the specific words used, and the tone in which the words are said. This research aims to highlight both the specific words, the frequency with which they were said, and the person or people to whom they were directed. By mapping the networks created by the patterns of communication, we can see power dynamics arise. Who speaks the most, and who is spoken to the most, can show who believes they are owed recognition, education, and attention from the greater group. This research often finds that the people at the center of these dialogues are white and experience several privileged identities that have caused them to be ignorant of many of the realities.

On the question of whether or not these dialogue participants center themselves or are centered by the other members of the group, it is most likely twofold. One reason these people in positions of privilege are so often centered in these dialogues is due to both their own internalized sense of ethnocentrism and racial and cultural hegemonic ideals of what is the common shared experience of people, particularly in the United States. The people who occupy many positions of privilege in these dialogues believe themselves and their experiences to be the norm, as they see themselves as the norm, therefore they push back and demand – either consciously or subconsciously – to be repeatedly educated on how they are wrong before begrudgingly and hesitantly changing their perceptions of society and the world. By requiring the other dialogue participants, often people of color, to educate them by sharing their often painful and traumatic lived experiences, the participant who incredulously challenges their attempts to educate them further requires these other participants to not only relive exceedingly upsetting

experiences, but also defend those experiences as being sufficiently painful as to prove their suffering valid to the initial participant. Further, it often takes several tries and multiple exchanges to encourage the initial participant to understand that their view of the world is limited, and this back and forth is what creates these patterns of centrality. While it is beautiful that dialogue can be a space where people can engage in productive back-and-forths that lead to one or both of the participants expanding their point of view, what is missing in these dialogues is the component of dialogic reciprocity. Reciprocity is missing in these dialogues because while both participants are exchanging words, one participant is forced into the role of providing educational labor. This unequal power dynamic created by someone in a position or several positions of power refusing to acknowledge their power further exacerbates that exact power dynamic by requiring labor from the other person or people with whom they are communicating.

This is where caucusing could be useful. Instead of placing the burden of education on the people of color in the space who have direct lived experience with racial discrimination and oppression, allies who have already been educated by people of color can use their privilege to educate the more resistant participants. These caucuses can be used in preparation for the greater dialogue, during a particularly tense moment of conflict, and/or when it feels like the dialogue is stuck in a loop of people's lived experiences being denied. By allowing a common ground of education and understanding to be cultivated before proceeding with the dialogue, there is more opportunity for reciprocal communication and less likelihood that systems of inequity will be reproduced through dialogues that center and cater to the points of ignorance of people in positions of privilege. To more equitably distribute the emotional labor and responsibility of educating society on anti-racism, people of privileged identities must take it upon themselves to educate themselves and their peers through frequent dialogue. Through this, people with

privileged identities (in this case, white people) can learn to affirm and appreciate the lived experiences of others instead of questioning their validity.

Further, this research highlights the role that emotional labor plays in communicating in groups of people with varying degrees of social privilege. In these dialogues, the audience witnesses the shattering of this understanding of the world from many white participants and the realization that the society that they have been living within is not a meritocracy, but a system in which some people are privileged and others are oppressed. To work towards dismantling systems of oppression, it is essential to build lasting relationships with community members. One of the most effective ways to achieve this is through open and honest communication. However, as this research has shown, communication must be handled in a way that recognizes and appreciates the structurally unequal and inequitable society that has been created by colonization and the culture of white supremacy that pervades society.

Kardia and Sevig (1997) highlight the differences between dialogue and discussion. Many of the filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues veer into debate and discussion instead of dialogue. Debate is outlined as when participants try to prove that their perspective is the "right" one or that it is the objective "truth" (Berman, (n.d.); Kardia & Sevig, 1997). Discussion is defined as a form of communication where participants focus on sharing "facts," and personal experiences are treated as less valuable. Dialogue, therefore, is when people listen to understand instead of listening to respond, and where lived experiences are valued as each person's truth. Although this research uses "dialogue" to refer to these films, not all of them meet that criterion all of the time throughout their lengths. It is nearly impossible to strictly maintain only one of these forms of communication permanently. For this reason, to work on listening to each other in a more deep, attentive, and compassionate way, it is only important that we work to dialogue

most of the time, and when we realize that we may have veered away into debate and/or discussion, to acknowledge what has led us there, reflect on what happened while in those forms of communication, and, if appropriate, return to dialogue.

Intergroup dialogue has the power to change the world through promoting interconnectedness through communication, and yet it is essential to keep the social imbalances in mind when organizing dialogues and participating in them, and ensure that it will be a space of listening instead of debating. When it comes to people of marginalized identities sharing their lived experiences, it is not a space for people of privileged identities to argue whether or not it happened, or whether or not it is valid. It is a space to share gratitude for the story being told and reflect on how that can inform the lived experiences. Staying curious instead of critical and recognizing where privilege plays a role is essential to maintaining respectful and compassionate dialogue.

Limitations & future opportunities

As perfection is often a goal of white supremacy, and inherently impossible to ever fully achieve, this research is not, and does not claim to be, perfect. There are many ways in which this data could have been interpreted differently. Although this research works toward highlighting the problems with centering people in positions of privilege in dialogue, it does this by highlighting how these people are centered, and therefore somewhat centering them yet again. Nothing is truly objective – this research hopes to emphasize the importance of uplifting lived experiences as valid, as none of us is the objective expert of anything other than our own lived experiences. With this in mind, there are a plethora of opportunities that this thesis does not explore that future research could expand upon.

This research uses filmed intergroup identity-based dialogues as its main source of data. While this dataset has been useful and fruitful for this senior thesis, the performance of similar analysis on more organic and less edited filmed forms of communication would also be intriguing. It is very likely that if unedited dialogues were observed, the communication networks would change significantly. Many of the films follow similar narrative structures, and while part of this may be because there are general and common sections of dialogue, a large part may also be because the directors and editors have edited them to fit a more easily digestible narrative structure. Unedited or even live dialogues would provide rich raw data that would provide a much more organic understanding of communication networks.

Similarly, it would be illuminating to observe in more depth the communication structures of communities that implement restorative justice practices. A case study could be conducted where a community is consensually observed and their connection structure is analyzed, and then when a harm occurs, the connection structure is re-evaluated to see if any ties seemed to be broken or damaged, and then throughout the restorative processes, the connection structure is further analyzed to see if any ties were able to be repaired or re-strengthened. It would also be compelling if the circle practices themselves were able to be observed in a way that protected, preserved, and respected the sanctity of the space while also allowing for the communication structure of those involved to be observed anonymously. If more research were done on the effectiveness of restorative justice practices and circle processes, more people would be able to see their transformative nature and allocate more funding to programs that provide restorative justice education and facilitation.

This research initially hoped to include gender in its examination of how these filmed dialogues for social change can sometimes replicate social systems of injustice and inequity. As

all facets of identity are interconnected, gender is an essential part of understanding how people view themselves and each other in the social landscape. Through this analysis, the impact of gender was briefly included through the mention of "white woman tears" and how white woman often use the societal view of them as victims and something to be protected to their advantage, albeit sometimes unconsciously, and further contribute to the unjust treatment of people of color whom they interact with. If this research were to be continued, it would be essential to include a focus on the role that gender plays in these settings of communication.

Further, as many intergroup and restorative justice dialogues are not filmed, due to privacy and sensitivity of the material, there is not an incredibly large range of dialogues to analyze. Due to the smaller pool of research, there is a chance that these findings would be skewed. Hopefully, more research on dialogue and communication structure within them will be produced in the future so that future researchers can build off of this work with a more robust range of dialogues. With more time and more resources, a project this rich in information could be expanded upon much more with more time. This research hopes to be a valuable addition to a conversation that will produce more work in the future.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

This research seeks to advance the discipline of social network analysis by applying its centrality frameworks to intergroup identity-based dialogues. Further, this research uses sentiment analysis measures to look into the rates of sentiment that appear in these dialogues, and what those sentiments potentially are. Through these measures, this research provides more context into who is centered in these dialogues, what practices can be taken to ensure that dialogues of the future are facilitated more equitably, and how the inherent interconnectedness of communication can be studied further.

Moving forward from this research, it would be valuable to pursue this work in a more long-term fashion, particularly on intergroup dialogues that are more organic in their capture. For example, if someone were able to gain access to the University of Michigan's filmed intergroup dialogue series, similar research could be applied to look at the dialogue structure of official IGD settings. A large caveat of this research is that the films analyzed are dialogue-style, not official Intergroup Dialogues. If more structured dialogues with participants who were more intentionally prepared and facilitated across more than one weekend or meeting were able to be analyzed, the network structures would certainly become more complex and nuanced in their centrality. It would be fascinating to see how the structures of these dialogues that this research has observed change over several meetings with the same group of people, and if they follow the same patterns throughout each meeting, or if they change.

It could also be interesting to look into how restorative justice circle practices differ more generally. In this research, it became clear that the filmed restorative justice documentaries did not share the same structure of interracial storming and then concluding, as the films were more

artistic and spread out in their structures and their community networks. This is because these films aimed to show how widespread these networks are and how restorative justice practices seek to involve all members of the community, since interconnectedness is so important to moving forward through moments of conflict or harm. It would be beneficial to build off of the research here to look into how these relationship networks are cultivated, what happens when ties are damaged through harm in a community, and then how using restorative and transformative practices can be part of working towards repairing community connections to foster connection and community instead of exile and social discard.

Overall, this research seeks to emphasize the importance of cross-community and cross-identity dialogue and how interconnectedness can be cultivated through conversation. In these conversations, this research aims to highlight some ways in which they are not as effective at providing an equitable environment for mutual growth, and instead often result in mirroring the social stratification of privilege that exists in the greater society.

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