We March On: Voices from the Women's March on Washington

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Abstract: Protest marches are an important means of political expression. We investigated protesters' motives for participating in the original Women's March on Washington. Two research questions guided this study. First, to what degree did concerns about gender injustices motivate marchers to participate? Second, to what degree did marchers' motives align with the goals established by march organizers? Seven-hundred eighty-seven participants responded to three open-ended questions: (1) Why did you choose to participate in the march, (2) What did you hope to accomplish, and (3) What events during the 2016 presidential election caused you the greatest concern? Responses were coded thematically. Findings indicated that gender injustices were not the sole source of motivation. Most respondents were motivated to march for a variety of reasons, hoped the march would function as a show of solidarity and resistance, and indicated that the misogynistic rhetoric of the 2016 presidential campaign was a deep concern. Finally, the comparison of respondents' motives and organizers' stated goals indicated a shared sense of purpose for the march.

Keywords: feminism, Women's March, political communication, motive, intersectionality

ON JANUARY 21, 2017, AN ESTIMATED seven million people joined together across all seven continents in one of the largest political protests the world has witnessed. The Women's March on Washington, including its over 650 sister marches, is considered the largest of its kind in U.S. history (Chenoweth & Pressman, 2017; Wallace & Parlapiano, 2017), and it is one of the most significant political and rhetorical events of the contemporary women's movement. The impact of the march was more than short-term (McCarthy & Epstein, 2018; Virgil et al., 2018). The higher than expected turnout and the extensive media coverage energized the global women's movement. To leverage the momentum of the march, organizers launched the "ten actions in 100 days" campaign. By outlining a subsequent series of steps, this model helped marchers channel their outrage into sustained political activism during the Trump administration's first 100 days. The march is also credited for fueling the dramatic cultural shift in attitudes about sexual harassment seen in many countries. Campaigns such as #MeToo and #TimesUp

capitalized on the energy created by the march to achieve their ends (Cochrane, 2017). The long-term impact of the march also included a dramatic increase in the number of women running for and winning elected offices in 2018 at both the state and national level in the US (Tacket, 2017). Furthermore, although annual follow-up marches have seen the numbers of protestors decrease, the ripple effects of these marches continued to influence the social and political empowerment of women.

Over the years, feminists have widened the range of available communication strategies and tactics for political expression, and they changed the nature of that expression to encompass more individualized and private means (Sowards & Renegar, 2006). Furthermore, scholars have reconceptualized the nature of activism, relying less on the notion that it must be organized, collective, and public (e.g. Goodwin & Jasper, 2004; Morris & Browne, 2001). Still, today's feminists are nevertheless sometimes faulted for their failure to adopt more traditional modes of activism (Banet-Weiser, 2015). In reality, today's feminists combine various communication strategies and tactics, both traditional and contemporary.

The Women's March combined a well-established form of political expression, a march, with contemporary social media to announce, organize, and sustain feminist activism. Marches are more than a publicity spectacle. Marches are a time-honored public ritual of civic participation, a kind of ritualized symbolic action, that allow citizens to express political power, foment collective resistance, demand social and political change, recommit to core values, and create community and solidarity, among other functions. In this regard, marches are a means of creating cultural meanings, a significant form of rhetorical expression for marginalized groups in particular (e.g., Barber, 2004; Einwohner et al., 2000; Jasper, 2014; Kelly and Breinlinger, 1995; and Klandermans, 2004).

Like many contemporary social justice efforts, the Women's March depended on social media. A grandmother living in Hawaii, Teresa Shook, posted a call to action on Facebook the day after the 2016 election, beginning the process of organizing the march. Seventy percent of protesters heard about the march from Facebook, and an additional 13 percent heard about the march through Twitter (Larsen, 2017). On the actual day

of the march, more than 11.5 million posts were shared over social media (Cohen, 2017). The combination of traditional and contemporary communication strategies and tactics afforded protestors a powerful means of political expression.

Studies of the Women's March on Washington

Initial research indicated that women's rights and gender injustices were the primary motivation for marchers (Fisher et al., 2017; Lopez Bunyasi & Watts Smith, 2018). Specifically, the election of Donald Trump and the sexism of the 2016 presidential campaign prompted marchers to take to the streets, including those who had not identified as feminist previously (Brewer & Dundes, 2018). Misogynist comments from Trump regarding pussy-grabbing, "nasty" women, and "blood coming out her wherever" brought the political rhetoric to a level many characterized as obnoxious, menacing, and revolting (e.g. Chozick & Parker, 2016; Khomami, 2016; Prasad, 2019; and Talbot, 2016). In many ways, the march offered an alternative narrative to Trump's misogyny (Just & Muhr, 2018). Still, even though the march protested the erosion of women's rights, the march invoked conventional definitions and expressions of femininity (Boothroyd et al., 2017).

Other research indicated that people joined the Women's March for a variety of reasons in addition to concerns about gender. Fisher et al. (2017) correlated gender, race, and age with issues marchers felt were most salient, leading the researchers to conclude that "participants were not just motivated by issues related to women but were actually motivated by a diverse set of issues connected to intersectional concerns" (p. 2). *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* devoted an entire issue to the Women's March, illustrating the variety of concerns marchers held. Topics explored in this issue included the role of race (Moss & Maddrell, 2017), definitions of femininity (Boothroyd et al., 2017), urban versus rural participation (Graddy-Lovelace, 2017), and intersectional feminism (Gökarıksel & Smith, 2017), among others.

Intersectionality and inclusion challenged the movement. Scholarship is divided as to whether the march successfully exemplified intersectional feminism. Some people chose

not to march based on concerns regarding commitments to intersectionality (Vardeman & Sebesta, 2020). For example, a variety of issues affected African American women's decision to attend or not attend the march (Lopez Bunyasi & Watts Smith, 2018). Many women of color believed that the march functioned more to provide white women a means of protesting the election's outcome rather than as a way to address social injustices related to race and class (Brewer & Dundes, 2018; Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2017). Undocumented people, transgender advocates, and activists holding more radical perspectives often not reflected in electoral politics also expressed grievances. In addition to the intense emotions driving participation (Gantt-Shafer et al., 2019), concerns regarding intersectionality and the march challenged coalition building within the larger women's movement (Berry & Chenoweth, 2018; Burns-Ardolino, 2019).

Other scholars argued the women's march successfully advanced intersectionality. Presley and Presswood (2017) concluded, "despite initial critiques of whitewashing feminism, the Women's March thoughtfully addresses issues of solidarity and intersectionality from a point of transnational resistance and encourages demonstrators to unite in new formations of protest" (p. 61). Moni (2020) concurred: "it is noteworthy that the Women's March organizers did create the space for intersectionality and inclusion" (p. 8). Participants in the Women's March were more likely to prioritize intersectionality, especially if they were liberal or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) (Heaney, 2019).

The protest successfully garnered media attention. In addition to the sheer size of the turnout, the visual nature of the march, from protest signs to pink pussy hats, courted extensive media coverage (Kitch, 2018; Weber et al., 2018; Wrenn, 2018). Moreover, media framed the march in various ways. Weber's et al. (2018) framing analysis of protest-sign messages revealed five action frames: unity, women as powerful agents of resistance, re-appropriating Trump's misogynist language (e.g. "pussy"), criticisms of Trump, and defining and critiquing feminism. Nicolini and Hansen (2018) found that media coverage of the march and the organizers' website included four central frames: diversity, resistance, activation, and solidarity.

Social media played a particularly important role in both the organization of and follow-up to the movement. Baker's (2017) analysis of the #whyimarch hashtag indicated a wider range of motivations for joining the march, including equality, human rights, equity, respect, democracy, and racism. Other issues such as reproductive rights, the environment, social welfare, LGBTQIA+ issues, voting, and immigration also motivated marchers. Social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other platforms, recruited marchers and sustained activism after the event (Einwohner & Rochford, 2019; Kitch, 2018; Vardeman & Sebesta, 2020).

The impact of the march was wide-ranging. One positive outcome is that those people who marched indicated they were more likely to engage in activism in the future (Martin & Smith, 2020; Spencer & Verdeja, 2017).[1] Sister marches played a key role in continuing mobilization (Beyerlein et al., 2018). Another positive outcome was that the march increased the number of women and minorities running for the U.S. Congress in 2018, and it increased voter turnout in that election (Larreboure & Gonzalez, 2019).

The objective of this study was to explore protesters' motives for participating in the first Women's March on Washington. Specifically, we posed two research questions. First, to what degree did concerns about gender injustices motivate marchers to participate? Second, did marchers' motives align with the goals established by march organizers? We were interested in what led up to the decision to march as a particular form of political expression and what people hoped to accomplish by marching. We were also interested in whether rank-and-file marchers and organizers had a shared vision of the march.

We addressed these questions to extend research about intersectionality and the march. Intersectionality is a paradigm that addresses the multiple, overlapping, and cumulative dimensions of social identity as they relate to inequalities such as racism, genderism, classism, and heterosexism, among other forms of discrimination (Crenshaw, 1989). Guided by intersectional feminism, movement organizers identified a wide range of goals relating to these various inequalities. Determining if protestors' motives for marching aligned with these goals is intended to provide important insights into the potential

for coalition-building within the framework of intersectional feminism.

Method

To gather these political expressions, we began by posting a brief online survey on various social media sites and message boards related to the march prior to the event. We then distributed cards with a Quick Response (QR) code linking to the survey on the day of the event in Washington, DC (See Appendix 1)[2]. The instrument was intended to capture an important moment in history by allowing participants the opportunity to describe, in their own words, their motives related to their participation in the march. The instrument includes six demographic items. These items were used only to describe the characteristics of the sample, thus allowing us to understand whose political expression we would be describing and analyzing.

Surveys were completed by 787 people: 87.3% were women ($n = 687$), 5.6% ($n = 44$) were men, 0.6% ($n = 5$) were non-binary/third gender, 0.1% ($n = 1$) were transgender, 1.3% ($n = 10$) chose "prefer to self-describe," and 0.1% ($n = 1$) chose "prefer not to answer." The majority of participants, 576 (73.2%), identified themselves as straight or heterosexual, 66 (8.4%) identified as lesbian or gay, 67 (8.5%) as bisexual, and eight (1%) chose "prefer not to answer." Most of the participants, 621 (78.9%), reported their race or ethnicity as white or Caucasian, seven (0.9%) participants were Black/African American, 17 (2.2%) were Hispanic/Latino, five (0.6%) were Asian/Asian American, 25 (3.2%) were mixed race, 24 (3.0%) were Jewish, and six (0.8 %) individuals described their race/ethnicity as human. Most of the participants, 572 (72.7%), identified themselves as Democrats, 104 (13.2%) identified as Independents, seven (0.9%) as Republicans, and 67 (8.5%) chose "other." The majority of participants, 283 (36%), reported marching in the District of Columbia, 73 (9.3%) marched in Indiana, 40 (5.1%) in Ohio, 36 (4.6%) in New York, 16 (2.0%) in California, and 16 (2.0%) in Michigan.

In addition to demographic questions, we asked background questions about past and future activism. When asked if they had engaged in activism related to women's/gender issues prior

to this march, 52% said yes, and 29% said no (19% did not answer). This response adds further support to the claim that the march motivated people who had not previously engaged feminist activism. When asked if they planned to engage in other forms of activism related to women's/gender issues in the future, 70% said yes, and 11% said no (19% did not answer). Sixty-four percent of participants categorized themselves as "somewhat more" or "much more" politically active as a result of the 2016 election. These responses add further support to the claim that the march had a long-term impact.

The main focus of our research was on the following open-ended questions, each of which queried about motives for political expression: (1) Why did you chose to participate in the Women's March?, (2) What did you hope to accomplish through your participation in the Women's March today?, and (3) What specific events related to women and gender during the 2016 presidential campaign and election caused you the greatest concern?

We developed a thematic coding scheme by reading the open-ended responses to the three questions (See Appendix 2). After development and refinement of the coding system, the authors and student research assistants coded each of the open-ended responses. Each participant's response was coded at the level of the thought. In these open-ended questions, participants typically wrote paragraphs in which multiple, thematically distinct motives were present. As a result, the same paragraph typically contained more than one code from the scheme. Since the goal was to capture the range of motives in the minds of the participants, no attempt to select a single or even a dominant theme was made. For example, Participant 21 responded to the first open-ended question with the following statement:

> The candidacy and election of Donald Trump constitutes a threat to all people in terms of their civil and human rights. I believe that this is especially true for women, people with disabilities, LGBTQ people, people who are racial/ethnic/religious minorities. I fear that the gains that have been made will be lost.[3]

This response was coded in three broad categories: "issues related to women and gender," "issues other than gender," and "opposition, resistance, and protest."

Results

Why People Chose to March

Responses to the question concerning why participants marched are presented in Table 1. What perhaps is most striking about responses to this question is that issues related to women's rights or gender are the third most frequent broad category. Contrary to what may have been expected for a women's march, participants were more likely to cite one or more social or political issues making up a group of motives that were not directly related to gender. These responses included the following subcategories: supporting the oppressed; challenging racism and xenophobia; addressing injustices related to social class; attending to military issues; confronting religious discrimination; opposing violence; supporting LGBTQ issues; championing immigration rights; defending the environment; promoting health care; protecting the social justice gains of the past; sustaining human and civil rights; advancing education; and disability rights. For example, Participant 151 stated, "I choose to March because I supported many of the issues that were being represented: Black Lives Matter, refuges and migrants support, anti-Islamophobia, supporting planned parenthood, women's rights, human rights, supporting Paris agreement on climate change, and science."

The second most commonly expressed motive centered around the desire to show opposition, protest, or resistance; issue demands; or express anger. Typical among these responses were statements that named Donald Trump specifically and expressed a need to stand up to him or to oppose his administration. For example, Participant 33 said:

> I stand in opposition to Trump, his administration, and the foundation of their approach to politics, systemic oppression (or rather their lack of acknowledgment of these things) and their racism, sexism, basically

everything. I want to demonstrate that I stand against him and them.

Table 1.
Why People Chose to Participate: Number of Motives Stated in Broad Categories

Broad Coding Category	Number of Motives
Issues Other Than Gender	787 (33.12%)
Show Opposition, Protest, Resistance, Issue Demands, Express Anger	520 (21.89%)
Gender Issues	405 (17.05%)
Solidarity & Empowerment	195 (8.21%)
Be Heard/Dissent	116 (4.88%)
Educate/Raise Awareness	82 (3.45%)
Show of Force	70 (2.95%)
Expected to Accomplish Nothing	9 (0.38%)
Uncodable	14 (0.59%)
No Response Given	178 (7.49%)

The march was billed as a women's march, and the majority of marchers were women. However, gender-based concerns and women's or feminist issues ranked as the third most common group of motives after social and political issues other than gender and the desire to oppose the Trump administration. In this broad category, responses reflected general statements

of support for feminism or women's issues as well as specific concerns revolving around reproductive rights. Participant 204 emphasized: "Because women are threatened with losing access to affordable, vital healthcare services and to losing the right to make their own reproductive health choices. Also, because the newly inaugurated president has shown an unprecedented level of disrespect toward women."

Expressions of solidarity and empowerment were the fourth most commonly expressed motive. Typical answers in this group involved expressions of solidarity, unity, community, and cooperation in addition to the desire to connect with like-minded others and not to feel alone. Participant 329 shared, "I felt alone and afraid after the election and was seeking solidarity," and Participant 101 concurred, "To stand in intersectional solidarity. To hold myself accountable. To use my voice. To experience history. To heal from election."

What Participants Hoped to Accomplish

As can be seen in Table 2, responses to the question concerning what people hoped to accomplish by marching most frequently emphasized showing opposition, protesting, showing resistance, issuing demands, and expressing anger. Participant 568 maintained:

> If anything at all, simply the show of numbers of how many felt it was important to be there. Though there were many different concerns, the number of people across the world who took time to show up that day shows that we are not alone. That number of people cannot be ignored.

Nearly as frequent as expressions of protest and resistance were motives related to solidarity and empowerment. Participant 780 asserted, "To be empowered. To surround myself with like-minded individuals. To make it visible to lawmakers they are being watched and our voices are strong." Participant 710 expressed:

To stand with the beautiful spectrum of women, men, children of all races, ethnicities, national origins, religions, sexual identities and say no to discrimination and totalitarianism. To do so as a coalition, to signal to everyone, especially the 53% of white women who voted for Trump, the importance of solidarity and activism. To stay true to the next generation of college and high school-aged students who need to see their elders visibly taking a stand for sustainability, for diversity, for action.

Table 2.
What They Hoped to Accomplish: Number of Motives Stated in Broad Categories

Broad Coding Category	Number of Motives
Show Opposition, Protest, Resistance, Issue Demands, Express Anger	393 (24.11%)
Solidarity & Empowerment	336 (20.61%)
Be Heard/Dissent	195 (11.96%)
Show of Force	180 (11.04%)
Issues Other Than Gender	169 (10.37%)
Gender Issues	73 (4.48%)
Educate/Raise Awareness	71 (4.36%)
Expected to Accomplish Nothing	9 (0.55%)
Uncodable	27 (10.86%)
No Response Given	177 (10.86%)

The desire to be heard, to dissent, and to make a show of force were also common motives. Participant 409 emphasized, "I wanted to show my dissent and I wanted trump to look out the window of the Whitehouse and see all our faces and know he HAD NOT BEEN ELECTED BY A MANDATE!!!" Participant 262 said, "We hoped to have our voices heard, and to give support to all of the causes represented in the Women's March manifesto. And also to feel support from our fellow marchers. We are all one!" Participant 280 stated, "I wanted to be part of a show of force against ignorance, hate and inequality."

Specific Concerns Resulting from the 2016 Presidential Campaign

The third open-ended question concerned which specific events related to women and gender during the 2016 presidential campaign and election caused respondents the greatest concern (See Table 3). Given the wording of the question, it is not surprising that the broad category of gender and women's issues represented the most frequent response. For example, Participants 34 and 507 articulated:

> Of greatest concern is the fact that Donald Trump (who I refuse to call president) demonstrated time and again that he is a misogynist, sexist, homophobic irrational person who is not prepared to serve as President of the United States. At the urging and with the full support of vice-president Pence and the majority Republic legislature, Donald Trump is prepared to strip women of the rights they have fought for over the last century, to defund Planned Parenthood, to overturn the Marriage Equality Act and strip LGBTQ individuals the right to legally marry. (Participant 34)

> The Access Hollywood Tapes were a big one, although I already knew that his ex-wife has filed sexual assault charges, so while not necessarily surprising, it was abhorrent. I also thought it would sink him in the race and it didn't and that is a very concerning thing to me, that people so easily overlook his abuse. His anti-choice perspective and rhetoric around reversing Roe V Wade.

His racism and xenophobia also directly impacts women. In a nutshell, everything about Donald Trump/Mike Pence caused me concern and was the motivation for attending the March. (Participant 507)

Table 3.
Specific Events Related to Women and Gender: Number of Motives Stated in Broad Categories

Broad Coding Category	Number of Motives
Gender Issues	740 (40.24%)
Issues Other Than Gender	573 (31.16%)
Show Opposition, Protest, Resistance, Issue Demands, Express Anger	279 (15.17%)
Solidarity & Empowerment	25 (1.36%)
Be Heard/Dissent	24 (1.31%)
Educate/Raise Awareness	21 (1.14%)
Show of Force	13 (0.71%)
Expected to Accomplish Nothing	8 (0.44%)
Uncodable	21 (1.14%)
No Response Given	135 (7.35%)

A variety of campaign events related to gender and women were cause for concern for participants. Table 4 presents the frequencies for the separate categories within the broader framework of gender and women's issues. Statements related to

reproductive freedom were the most frequent motives expressed in this category. Participant 258 emphasized, "Women's reproductive rights and the equal pay issue are my greatest concern right now," and Participant 37 underscored, "Trump emerging as the candidate and the hateful rhetoric used by him and his campaign and his supporters. The defunding of Planned Parenthood efforts and swift action to completely ban abortion make me very concerned for women's health and rights."

Table 4.
Specific Events Related to Women and Gender: Number of Motives Stated in Specific Gender Issues Category

Coding Categories: Issues Related to Women and Gender	Number of Motives
Fight for reproductive justice: pro-choice, abortion rights, reproductive rights, birth control access, contraception, Planned Parenthood, choice, anti-choice, freedom of choice, woman's choice, Roe, Roe v Wade, reproductive health	225 (55.56%)
Fight against violence against women: Sexual assault, pussy grabbing, grabbing, sexual violence, sexual predation, rape	160 (39.51%)
Support and/or speak up for women/challenge misogyny and patriarchy (general statements)	144 (35.56%)
Fight against objectification, disrespect, nasty women comments	75 (18.52%)
Support feminism, women's movement, women's rights (general statements)	49 (12.10%)
Support for Hillary Clinton	48 (11.85%)
Fight for equal pay	22 (5.43%)
Fight against sexual harassment	17 (4.2%)

Many marchers touched on themes of sexual assault, pussy grabbing, sexual violence, sexual predation, and/or rape. For example, Participant 60 bemoaned, "The pussy-grabbing video.... It brought back feelings of sexual trauma from my past," and Participants 421 and 154 lamented:

Oh man, where to begin... First of all, I am terrified of a president that consistently perpetuates an already way-too-prevalent rape culture, whether it be through degrading "locker room talk" or the sexualization of his own daughter. On top of everything else, the threat Trump poses to healthcare, specifically Planned Parenthood and the essential care it provides to women nationwide is sickening. (Participant 421)

The fact that Trump is a proponent of sexual assault and general mistreatment of women. I was in a mentally, physically, and sexually abusive relationship a few years ago, and it obliviated my heart to think that we could (and now do) have a president who did anything similar to what I survived to anyone. (Participant 154)

The discussion of sexual violence was followed in frequency by the need to challenge misogyny and patriarchy. Participant 260 stated, "All of them? The hate and misogyny were overwhelming. And THE most qualified candidate ever lost to a man who is possibly the least qualified candidate ever because she was a woman."

Finally, many people responded to this question by referring to disrespectful and objectifying references to women. Participant 358 said: "Oh god, where to begin? 'Nasty woman' comment at the debates encapsulated the hateful sexism of the race. Mocking disabled journalist, ignoring BLM, Putin bromance, pussy-grabbing, UGH HELP!" and Participant 465 said:

The possibility of reversing political gains related to reproductive choice and health access; Trump's narcissistic, misogynistic and dismissive stance towards women, as evidenced by his recorded statements about grabbing women's genitals and statements made during

the presidential debate with Clinton (e.g., calling her a "nasty woman.").

What was somewhat surprising in our results was that issues other than gender were so prevalent in response to a question which was worded in a way to illicit responses about gender-related concerns specifically. In addition to specific gender-related issues and concerns beyond gender, the desire to show opposition and protest were frequent responses to this question. For example, Participant 91 exclaimed:

> What didn't?! Were you away and missed out on that election? I suppose my largest concern is that this entitled idea that it is anyone's right to oppress another has become not only acceptable but encouraged or validated. The inability of so many to consider this country is here to serve someone other than themselves, the intolerance, the ignorance, the hate that is being applauded by our nation's (now) leader, makes me absolutely sick. Also highest on my list is the basic freedoms it seems are being set up to be taken away. I fear greatly for freedom of speech, press, and right to protest.

Goal Alignment between Organizers and Marchers

While many contemporary social movements embrace a strategy of de-centered leadership, whether or not there are shared perspectives, goals, and motives of leaders (or organizers) and rank-and-file members is of practical concern. The final issue addressed in this study explored whether the motives of the marchers aligned with the stated goals of the march organizers. The 13 goals posted by organizers on the 2017 Women's March website[4] (Park, 2017) included:

1. Gender Justice = Racial Justice = Economic Justice.
2. Women have the right to live a life free of violence to our bodies.
3. Justice for Police Brutality, Sexual Assault and Racial profiling against all women of color and Indigenous people.
4. Dismantling the gender and racial inequalities against women in the Criminal Justice system and preventing sexual

violence against incarcerated women.

5.   Promotion of Reproductive Freedom and fighting against any form of federal, state or local restrictions on all women's ability to access reproductive healthcare, birth control, family planning, abortion and STI/HIV prevention.

6.   Standing in solidarity with LGBTQIA individuals and demanding equal treatment in healthcare for these individuals with full anti-discrimination protection regardless of gender identification.

7.   Equal pay for equal work and workplace anti-discrimination against indigenous women, lesbian, queer and trans women.

8.   Domestic and Farm workers have the right to a living minimum wage. Sex workers must be included in labor protections. Exploitation for sex and labor is a violation of human rights.

9.   We must seek to break barriers and stand in solidarity with women with disabilities.

10. We seek an all-inclusive amendment to the 14th Amendment, as the current amendment does not serve to guarantee equity on the basis of race and/or sex. This will be referred to as the "Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S Constitution" and will guarantee equal rights without regards to race or gender, with each citizens' vote counting equally.

11. Immigrants and refugees deserve equal treatment regardless of status or country of origin and should not be subject to mass deportation, family detention or violation of due process. Migration is a human right and no human being is illegal.

12. Every person in the United States deserves access to clean water, clean air, and public lands. We demand that our land and natural resources be preserved and protected from corporate exploitation.

13. We must stand in arms to fight aggression caused by a war economy and fight back to a select party of wealth that use their political, social and economic influence for their personal agenda.

Findings indicated an alignment between organizers' goals and marchers' motives. As would be expected, organizers shared marchers' concerns regarding gender. Goals 1-7, 9, and 10 specify gender issues. Similarly, both organizers and marchers expressed concern for a wider array of injustices, not only those related to gender. Organizers' goals 8, 11, 12, and 13 illustrate this point. Moreover, many organizers' goals focusing on gender did so from an intersectional perspective, pointing directly to race, economic class, sexuality, ethnicity, and nationality as illustrated by goals 1, 3-5, 7, and 9-11. Another key connection is that both organizers and marchers emphasized solidarity as a top priority (goals 6 and 9). One key difference is that marchers prioritized "Show Opposition, Protest, Resistance," while organizers did not. Organizers also did not emphasize "Dissent," "Education/Raise Awareness," or "Show of Force." As might be expected, organizers' stated goals, overall, were more focused and concrete than respondents' survey answers.

Discussion

Onlookers may have assumed that participants in a "women's march" would be women, and that those women would be motivated to march because of so-called "women's issues" or feminism, especially in the context of a misogynist presidential campaign. Such an assumption is superficial at best and sexist at worst. While the majority of marchers and respondents to the survey were women, men and gender nonconforming people participated, too. Furthermore, the motivations of women marchers should not be over-simplified or essentialized based on gender. Not all women think alike, and their political motivations are not grounded in gender alone. Respondents to this survey clearly were not "single issue" protesters. Findings based on the question regarding what motivated marchers to participate were consistent with previous studies that reported a diverse array of concerns motivated the marchers (Faver, 2001; Fisher et al., 2017). Our respondents routinely listed multiple concerns thus reflecting varied and complex political motivations.

Findings from the second question—what did marchers hope to accomplish—also underscored the fact that gender was not the sole, or even one of the primary, issues motivating marchers.

Findings indicated that the primary goal marchers hoped to accomplish was "to show opposition, protest, resistance, issue demands, and express anger" followed closely by "solidarity and empowerment." Political pundits and scholars alike have cast the Women's March on Washington as a protest against Trump's election grounded in women's anger at the outcome of the election (e.g. Creedon, 2018; Hartocollis & Alcindor, 2017; Stein et al., 2017; and Wrenn, 2018). The findings of our study indicated that one goal marchers set out to accomplish was an expression of anger, but it was tied to a variety of other sentiments and not the sole goal. Protesters also hoped that the march would bring solidary and empowerment. For many participants, responses reflected a high level of cognitive complexity combined with a passion emphasizing emotions such as anger and fear. As stated by Woods et al. (2012), "emotions can transform passive citizens into defiant demonstrators, can colour experiences of political engagement and can inform decisions about how, when and where to protest, and when to stop" (p. 567). The implied and direct expression of emotion did not simply reflect self-interest but rather a more encompassing concern for the well-being of others, including the next generation, other women, and the nation.

Consistent with the first two open-ended survey questions, responses to the final question also reflected the fact that gender was not the sole or primary motivation for marchers. Even though the wording of this question invited respondents to contemplate gender, "issues other than gender" clearly occupied their motives alongside "women's issues." In this regard, common criticisms of the march as a "white women's response" to the outcome of the election are revealed as an oversimplification. While white women were the majority of marchers and respondents in this study, their motives were varied and reflected concerns about racism, religious intolerance, and economic class, among other injustices. Recognizing that women's political motivations are as varied as they are shown to be in this study emphasizes the importance of intersectionality to social protests such as the Women's March.

Naturally, marchers were motivated by issues relating to their own social identities, but they were motivated *more* by issues extending beyond those identities. Our findings provide further

evidence that people can be mobilized to protest issues beyond their own narrow interests. As Fisher et al. (2017) argued, "In contrast to social movement–oriented research that tends to take as a given that people who turn out for a particular march are explicitly motivated by that specific issue…we find that there is much to learn from looking at the varied issues that motivated participants" (p. 5). This fact speaks to the potential promise of intersectionality.

The first Women's March was controversial from the beginning, largely due to issues related to diversity. Initial organizers were all white women and the original name was the Million Women March—a name many in the African American community considered an example of cultural appropriation. Women of color, with both national and grassroots experience, joined the organizing committee, and they changed the name of the protest to the "Women's March On Washington" to honor Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy, doing so with permission of his daughter (Moni, 2020). With a more inclusive organizing committee, intersectionality came to inform the mission, agenda, and line-up of speakers at the 2017 march that included African American, Latinx, and transgender women.

Beyond the organizing committee, mission, agenda, and speakers, our findings indicated marchers' motives also reflected intersectionality. Respondents were motivated by and understood intersectional connections among gender and race, ethnicity, class, religious affiliation, LGBTQIA+ identities, and people with disabilities. Though marchers did not often use the term "intersectional,"[5] they consistently listed these inequalities together in the same response and acknowledged the connections among them. Consistent with previous research, we found support for the claim the march reflected intersectionality (Heaney, 2019; Moni, 2020; Presley & Presswood, 2017). Though the full promise of intersectional feminism is yet to be realized, the Women's March exemplified that promise, and it played a critical role in moving the larger women's movement in that direction.

In this study, we investigated the reasons people participated in a protest march and to what extent those motives were linked to the goals put forth by organizers. The results revealed that most protesters' motives and organizers' goals aligned. To

create a sustainable and inclusive women's movement, one with grassroots non-hierarchal leadership and comprising various coalitions, the movement must develop a shared vision of resistance and action. This alignment can provide a strong foundation for that shared vision. As Ketelaars (2017) argued, "it matters to what extent these reasons are aligned with the organizers' messages. Highly aligned activists, for instance, are probably more committed and loyal followers who continue to be involved in movement organizations in the long run" (p. 496). Since the original march, Women's March, Inc. convened a group of 70 movement leaders to create the "Women's Agenda," a set of 24 specific policy priorities to address each of the 13 goals identified above. The agenda was posted to the Women's March (2019) website (womensmarch.com), and people visiting the website can personally endorse the agenda. These endorsements provide organizers a means of monitoring alignment of their goals and protestors' motives between large-scale events such as annual follow-up marches.

This study was limited in that the sample lacked diversity in terms of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or racial/ethnic identity. However, the responses of those who chose to share their motives are still important to document and honor. The original Women's March has left an important political legacy. Future research should continue to focus on intersectionality, coalition-building, and political protest. Researchers should monitor who marches and why, how protest motivations change over time, and what activists hope to accomplish by protesting. As a sign of respect and gratitude for our participants, we offer one the final say in this study:

> I marched because I wanted to show our elected officials that women's rights are human rights and that we are watching their actions. I wanted to stand up for what I believe is right. I wanted to show that I am on the right side of history and that we will not go back. There were so many driving factors. I just knew I needed to be there to stand in solidarity with other women and men of all cultures, religions, races and backgrounds. This march was therapy after several months of grief following the election. It gave me hope and I want to see more options

for actions I can take to stand up for our freedoms. (Participant 667)

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Notes

[1]The questionnaire was written by the authors and Dr. Jennifer Martin who was at the time at the University of Mount Union. Approval of the project was granted by the University of Mount Union IRB. For this study, Daily and three student research assistants coded the data, and Capuzza and Daily wrote the article. Martin and Smith (2020) used data collected by Capuzza, Daily, and Martin in 2017. Using this data, Martin and Smith's study focused on marchers' previous experiences with and future plans for activism whereas this study focused on marchers' motives and their alignment with organizers' goals.

[2]Both Appendix 1 (the survey questions) and Appendix 2 (the coding

scheme) are available as supplemental material. They can be found in Women & Language Online:
https://www.womenandlanguage.org/44-1
[3]We have left participants' responses unedited for spelling and grammatical errors to preserve authenticity of their voices.
[4]While the original list of goals was listed on the Women's March website, the website has since been updated. The citation for the list as it was in 2017 is provided by Park (2017).
[5]The word "intersectional" appeared seven times in the entire data set.

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