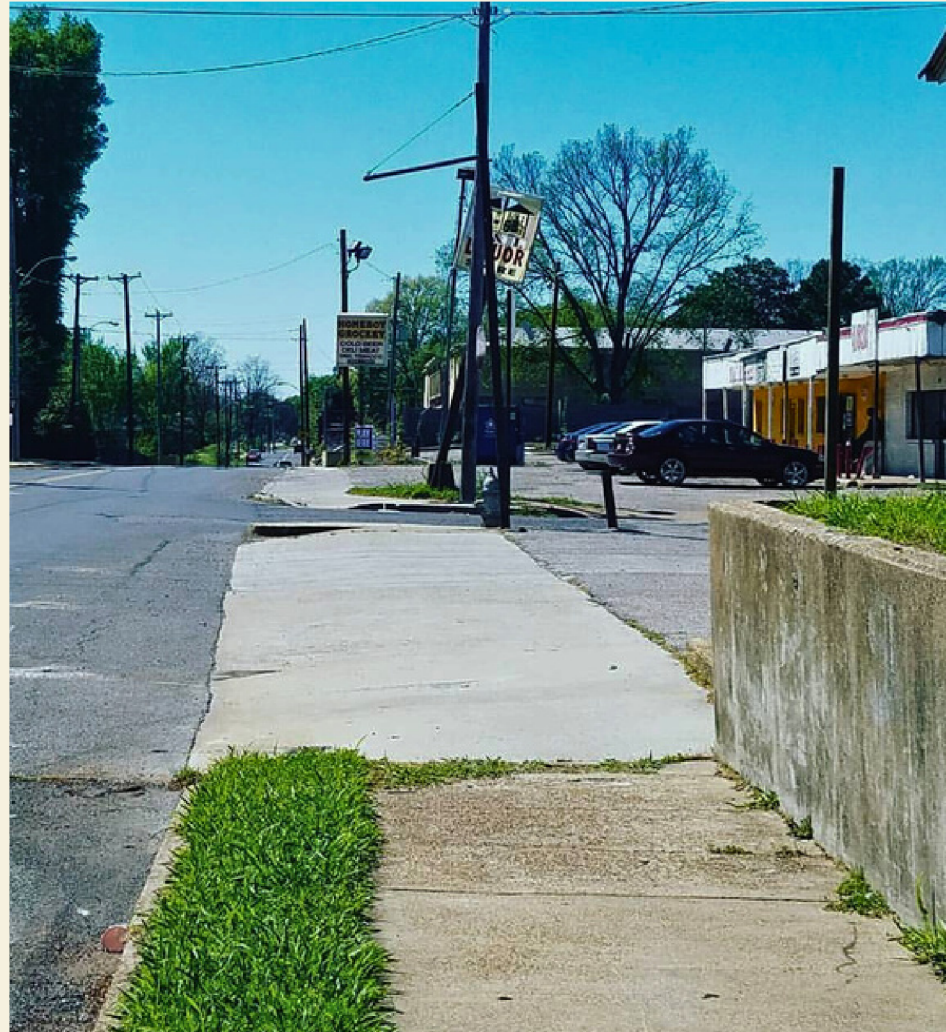


condensed positionality



"I do it for the kids in the hood, because I am a kid from the hood."

full positionality

Understanding the intersectionality of my identities and experiences is deeply woven into the fabric of who I am and how I interact with the world, my identity as a single, Black American, millennial cis-gendered woman, layered with my experience as a queer person, adds complexity to my worldview. I recognize that our personal narratives are not singular but are influenced by the myriad identities we hold and the societal structures we navigate. My journey is characterized by a duality of experiences, having grown up in the inner-city of Memphis, TN, and later transitioning into the realms of higher education and professional social work that afforded me to live all over the world and the United States. Therefore, in my interactions with others, I strive to be empathetic, open-minded, and inclusive, recognizing the unique backgrounds and perspectives each person brings to the table.

My educational journey, despite being spotted with academic failures that highlighted how deeply rooted my self-worth was attached to educational success, has equipped me with a unique lens through which I view power dynamics and social structures. Nevertheless, I am deeply aware of and strive to utilize the privileges and opportunities my education has afforded me responsibly. Being an educated person with invisible disabilities further adds to the nuances of my social positioning, highlighting the multifaceted nature of privilege and yet still being impacted by systemic oppression. While my professional status as a social worker and my educational achievements have granted me a degree of social mobility and status, as my experiences as a member of marginalized communities, I still must be mindful of the challenges faced by those of marginalized identities that differ from mine.

As a result, my values of being committed to social justice and equity are the core of who I am as I believe in actively challenging systems of oppression and working towards a more equitable society. My positionality also influences how I recognize and relate to those who are similarly positioned. I am deeply committed to amplifying the voices of marginalized communities, recognizing that my own experiences, though unique, share common threads with others facing discrimination and marginalization. Having navigated various social landscapes, my positionality allows me to bridge gaps in understanding between different communities.

My upbringing plays an important factor in shaping my perspective. The challenges of being a child of a single mother with her own unresolved trauma has given me a deep understanding of the nuances and disparities within Black families, such as violence and family dysfunction, while simultaneously being deeply rooted in traditional religious beliefs.

My positionality is also influenced by my faith journey, evolving from traditional Southern Baptist Christian beliefs to progressive, non-denominational Christianity reflects my acceptance of different worldviews and the importance of decolonizing faith practices.

