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Editorial Introduction

Kenneth J. Fasching-Varner
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Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education is excited to announce the co-editorship of Kenneth Fasching-Varner (Louisiana State University) and David Lee Carlson (Arizona State University). With our co-editorialship we bring new moments and interesting contextual approaches to enhance the important and critically engaged work that *Taboo* is known for. This is our first full issue under our editorial leadership where we ultimately selected the final pieces for inclusion. Over the remainder of this year, and even into early next year, we will be releasing several new issues that combine backlog from the previous editorial team/s and special issues selected by previous editors. In each of these issues we will aim in our introduction to contextualize the genesis of the issue.

By 2019 we aim to be in the full swing of our own independent editorial decision-making. To that extent we have also reached out far and wide to assemble to most critically engaged and prestigious editorial board for *Taboo*. This issue lists the new members in the front matter, and you will see that the board is composed of distinguished scholars who, in their own right, have worked to make their own critically engaged and 'taboo' impact on their respective fields of study. This issue also marks our first active publication activity since the inauguration and presidency of Donald Trump, and is being sent to the publisher on what has been described as the worst week in Washington of the Trump Presidency (departure of Press Secretary, Chief of Staff, the incoherent rant of the new White House Communications Director, a new anti-trangendered policy for the military sent by tweet, the public rebuking of the President by the Boy Scouts of America, and the failure of Republicans to repeal or replace 'Obamacare.' Since his election on November 8th 2016, his subsequent transition period, and the first months since assuming office we would feel comfortable saying that the new predictable is that nothing is predictable, and the need for critically engaged scholarship more important than ever.

Laid against a backdrop of xenophobia, racism, homophobia, and an under-

whelming lack of engagement with reality and truth, we find ourselves in the most unstable point of our collective lifetimes. The world is treated daily to alternative facts, alternative considerations of truth, and a seeming alternative reality, where even the most inner circle of Trumpdom is subject the his bullying behavior. It was estimated that he has sent around 1,000 tweets in his first six months, but has been responsible for no single piece of legislative advancement. We will treat Trumpdom with its own forthcoming special issue.

What has not changed in these times, however, is the marginalizing of people and communities where oppressed identities exist. In the K-12 sector children of color and those from marginalized and oppressed groups are still receiving sub-par education; within the Higher Education sector, issues related to access (or lack their of) and financial manipulation still dictate the landscape, and the general condition of the poor, silenced, and oppressed remains complicated. Literally we saw a Secretary of Education confirmed who lacks the basic skills or experience to do the job. It is important for us to note that while rich and accustomed to using her access to money for political persuasion, Betsy DeVos is not unique in many ways compared with other secretaries of education who have represented neo-liberal positions driving toward privatization. We have seen the largest chanter of the "Lock Her Up" brigade resign in embarrassment amid lies and compromising national security behavior, and we have seen the vertigo-like spinning orbit of a White House in disarray. In these times it might be easy to crawl into bed and stay there hoping for the next three years and six months to pass by quickly.

But, this issue reminds us that the need for critical voices and perspective is not just necessary in these times but can still flourish as rays of light in what seem to be otherwise dark times. This collection of articles spans considerations from PreK-12 through Higher Education and out to society at large. The unifying theme seems to be looking inward, toward self, and holding ourselves critically account-able at the same time we hold institutions, organizations, and others accountable for their behavior.

As we introduce each piece of this issue we will also share a comment about each article from the reviewers of these pieces that resonated with us in our decision to publish these pieces in this issue. In "The Twin Tales of Whiteness: Exploring the Emotional Roller Coaster of Teaching and Learning about Whiteness," Cheryl E. Matias, Allison Henry, and Craig Darland explore critical issues related to race broadly and whiteness specifically with a critically self-reflexive set of stances. Well conceptualized within the literature, personal and critical, and engaging we are excited to see the well interwoven personal, theoretical, and practical considerations moved forward by this piece. One reviewer of this piece said "beyond necessary, this piece beautifully pushes readers to find spaces to disrupt and engage with considerations of power, privilege and whiteness."

In "How We Make Teaching Remain a White Profession: The Teacher of Color in the Urban High School Genre Film," James L. Hollar delicately uses a self-critical

stance to speak to his own complicity in marginalization of students of color while speaking eloquently to the larger issues surrounding the recruitment and retention of teachers of color as well as how students see themselves, using film as a backdrop to look at the pervasiveness in dominant group use of marginalizing text. One reviewer shared "it is so nice to engage with a larger critique where the author also implicates their own positionality and responsibility with work at hand—I say this not in a congratulatory way but in a way that recognizes that we have to take that stance more often to make change."

In "Where are the People of Color?: Representations of Cultural Diversity in the National Book Award for Young People's Literature and Advocating for Diverse Books in a Non-Post Racial Society," Steven T. Bickmore, Yunying Xu, and Myra Infante Sheridan provide a thoughtful qualitatively embedded discussion within a quantitative examination of race/ethnicity and gender in the National Book Award for Young People's Literature. What we love about this piece is that it was rejected by another journal largely in part because of reviewers fears about the complex notions of race brought up in this piece—in other words the reviewers comments ended up reflecting a very fear the authors have when diverse literature is not operationalized in the literature lives of readers. In a unique approach the authors are able to talk through that rejection of the piece initially in another journal adding a critical and taboo perspective; we are not used to making transparent the processes by which scholarship and journals reflect a dominant conservativism wrapped up in the alleged neutrality of peer review. Having read those initial reviews as well as the manuscript we are thrilled to publish this piece. A *Taboo* reviewer said "Yes. Yes. Yes. We need more pieces in the literature that both trouble the complexities of difference in larger contexts but that also reveal the way that this thing called scholarship operates in pernicious ways to gatekeep a whitewashed perspective on what makes the light of scholarly day."

In "Following Pebbles By Moonlight: Elementary Students Shed Light on Power, Peace & Violence in Response to the Classic Tale *Hansel and Gretel*," Molly Quinn and Debbie Sonu examine issues and ideas of power, peace, and violence with children through the use of fairy tale—specifically *Hansel and Gretel*. We engaged with the larger ideas of agency and subjectivity that the authors move forward in this piece as a mechanism to give feet and movement to critical literacy. As one reviewer said "we have in this piece a well conceptualized empirical study that complicates the notion of child as simple and in need of simple contexts to have simple conversations, and I am reminded in this piece how important it is not just to engage students at highly critical levels but those engagements have profound critical engagement opportunities for adults."

In "A Critical Race Counterstory: Chicana/o Subjectivities vs. Journalism Objectivity," Sonya M. Alemán provides a much necessary discussion, situated within Critical Race Theory, to look at how notions of objectivity are used to further silence people of color within journalism contexts. We appreciate the use of

counterstory telling in the piece and the way that the counterstory serves as a site of transformation. One reviewer said "when CRT and counterstory telling are done well they move the conversation forward in provocative an interesting ways that are generative and not simple stories of story sake and this piece does just that."

Finally, in "Critical Multicultural Education as an Analytical Point of Entry Into Discussion of Intersectional Scholarship: A Focus on Race, as well as on Class, Gender, Religion, Sexuality, Dis/Ability and Family Configuration," Christine Clark, Mara Sapon-Shevin, Mark Brimhall-Vargas, Tarryn McGhie, and Sonia Nieto provide a thorough, in-depth, and nuanced layered analysis that adds a complex dimension to what has become an oft-overused concept—intersectionality. We are grateful for their attention to detail, to the pragmatic and scholarly consideration of how to engage more reflexively as it relates to identity research. Well conceptualized and critically engaged scholarship, like this piece, is important in times that we have already suggested are less than critical. One reviewer said of this piece "reading this article was like engaging with a nesting doll— no detail left unearthed, beautiful and complex at once, and many ways to engage, re-engage, and contemplate the thinking at hand."

As we close and in addition to the new editorial board, we would also like to welcome Drs. Donna Y. Ford (Vanderbilt University), Renee DesMarchelier (University of Southern Queensland), and Stephen J. Ball (University of London) who have joined the editorial team at *Taboo* as Senior Editors. We look forward to our collaborative endeavors together. If you are interested in reviewing, submitting an article or book review, and/or engaging in other ways please, do not hesitate to reach out: e-mail us at submissions@taboo-journal.com. We accept manuscripts on a rolling basis.

In Solidarity,

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The Twin Tales of Whiteness
Exploring the Emotional Roller Coaster
of Teaching and Learning about Whiteness

Cheryl E. Matias, Allison Henry, & Craig Darland

Abstract

Teaching about race is understandably daunting, taxing, and emotionally draining especially within the U.S. context where whites significantly outnumber People of Color as teachers. In order to co-create a more humane and racially just society in the U.S. and beyond, however, race educators and scholars remain steadfast in their pedagogies and curricula, hoping that the "burden" of teaching teachers (a majority white) is a small price to pay for the hope of a better society. This article examines what happens when one educator refuses to remain silent about race—moreover whiteness—in a graduate course consisting mostly of U.S. white teachers. Employing critical race theory (CRT), critical whiteness studies (CWS), and critical emotional studies (CES) to position our narratives and analyses, we detail the emotional roller coaster we all undergo when teaching for racial justice. In doing so, we begin a journal that therapeutically understands our racialized emotions for the hope of racial harmony.

Keywords: Whiteness, Race, Teaching, Curriculum, Pedagogy, Antiracism.

Introduction

Teaching about race is understandably daunting, taxing, and emotionally drain-ing (Williams & Evans-Winter, 2005) especially within the United States (U.S.) context where 86% of teachers are white and the majority of U.S. K-12 students

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are of Color (NCES, 2012). The U.S., additionally, proclaims itself as the land of the free and the home of the brave despite the fact that race relations have not improved. Yet, race scholars and educators worldwide persist because "overturning white domination in the world is an enormous, seemingly insurmountable task," yet chosen in order to "love humanity" (Matias & Allen, 2013, p. 298). That is, in order to co-create a more humane, racially just society in the U.S. and beyond, race educators and scholars remain steadfast in their pedagogies and curricula, hoping that the "burden" of teaching teachers (Williams & Evans-Winter, 2005) is a small price to pay for the hope of a better society. Yamamoto (2000) describes this process as a necessary commitment to racial justice; others, like Freire (1993), suggest it is a humanizing love, one that indeed incurs pain and violence. Regardless to how the movement is coined, in order to transform the educational system as a socially just vehicle for racial change, teachers themselves must see how race matters in everyday curriculum and pedagogy (Zamudio, Russell, Rios, & Bridgeman, 2011). As educators, if we continue to remain silent on the issues of race, we perpetuate the pervasiveness of colorblind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2010), and the greater danger of proclaiming false comfort in the uncomfortable state of race.

This article examines what happens when one educator refuses to remain silent about race—moreover whiteness—in a graduate course consisting mostly of U.S. teachers, many of whom are white. Essentially this paper seeks to answer the questions: *What are the emotional dynamics white students undergo when learning about whiteness from a female Professor of Color and vice versa?* And, posit *to what extent does understanding these emotional processes produce favorable conditions for antiracist teaching?* Although the latter suggests a causal link, it does not seek to prove that link in this particular paper. The question, rather, seeks to highlight how changed disposition may give rise to the potential for antiracist teaching later on. To answer such inquiries we, the authors, must first articulate the theories and methods from which we draw our analyses. Particularly, we focus on critical race theory (CRT), critical whiteness studies (CWS), and critical emotional studies (CES) to position our narratives and analyses. Second, we describe emotional events that occurred in the graduate course from three different perspectives using a narrative style and include analyses from these multiple perspectives to see the interdynamics of race and gender. Finally, we offer implications to the field of race education, and education in general. We hope that by sharing our emotional journeys we can create a better portraiture of the interdynamics of learning about whiteness while operating under it.

Before illustrating the inner emotional dynamics of teaching race, we position our identities for the purpose of acknowledging our racial locations and their inherent perspectives. Cheryl Matias is the professor of the graduate critical issues in American education course in question, offered as an elective for many graduate programs. Identifying as a brown-skinned Pinay, her research specifically investigates the emotionality of whiteness in teachers, particularly because the majority

of American teachers are white and often teach in communities predominant with students of color (NCES, 2012). Allison Henry took the course as a white female graduate student to fulfill her final requirement for her master's degree in education. She works as a literacy coach in a public school populated with predominantly middle class, white students, and is now pursuing principalship. Craig Darland is a white male and also took the course as a graduate student to fulfill his requirement for his master's. As a middle school teacher in the largest urban city of the state for nearly fourteen years, he has had many experiences with his students of color. Both graduate students took the course expecting to learn "race-neutral" issues in American education, and were initially "scared" (Allison) and "shocked" (Craig) to learn that the course had an explicit focus on race. We came to this paper because the two students often found themselves spending extra time discussing their feelings and thoughts about learning the course material with the professor outside of class. This happened so often that we collaboratively decided to write about our journeys in the course. Ultimately, our motivation for writing the article was about sharing the journeys we experienced when teaching and learning a curriculum and pedagogy that deconstructs whiteness. Although there were three students of color in the course who claim the course empowered them—later one of the students of color wrote a long unsolicited email to the dean about how the course empowered her identity as the only Black Puerto Rican in her schooling process—the focus of this article will be on how those who are racially identified as Whites engage with curriculum and pedagogy that deconstruct whiteness.

Theoretical Framework

This article assumes three things: (1) race, with specific attention to whiteness, is always operating; (2) experiential knowledge with race is predicated on one's racial identity and thus how one experiences the world[1]; and (3) education is a key vehicle to transform the ideologies needed to support social change. Acknowledging these assumptions, we draw from CRT and CWS to frame our analyses because both theories are founded on the acknowledgement of the endemic nature of race (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Leonardo, 2009). With respect to identifying the emotional journey of learning about whiteness, however, we draw from CES to excavate how our emotions are not innate feelings developed in a vacuum; rather, they are expressions produced in relation to the social positions we occupy. As such, feelings are not isolated sentiments exempt from the happenings of the world around us.

First, CRT, though birthed from critical legal studies (Bell, 1992), has been increasingly applied to education (Taylor, Gillborn, & Ladson-Billings, 2009) because of its parallels to institutional racism. Although CRT examines the dynamics of race and racism (how it is expressed, felt, understood, etc.), the dynamics of whiteness is better explained through CWS. That is not to say that one theory is preferred over the other; rather, we employ both theories so that the analyses

account for how these dynamics are understood, while also deconstructing how whiteness enacts, oppresses, and defies (see Leonardo, 2013). Race, in this sense, is two sides of the same coin: one side represents the experiences of People of Color, the other represents the experiences of Whites. Although we understand that the experiences of Whites and People of Color are never homogenized we do look at how experiences are generally felt under a larger system of race. That is, People of Color will experience race differently but all do so because of white supremacy. To solely focus on one side does not allow for a nuanced illustration of the emotional interdynamics that occur between white students and their Professor of Color while learning about whiteness. Thus, we employ both.

With respect to race and education, Lewis & Manno (2011) argue that race—more specifically white supremacy—has embedded itself in the systemic processes of schooling because "schools do not merely produce racial subjects; they produce racial disparities in life outcomes" (p. 109). Leonardo (2009) argues that whiteness has become so invisible that its strategies become seemingly "innocent or harmless" (p. 79). Yet whiteness in education nonetheless "perpetuate[s] white racial supremacy through color-blindness, historical justifications, and sleights of mind" (p. 79). In order to assuage past racialization processes of schools, educators banded together to offer multicultural education (Banks & Banks, 2009; Nieto & Bode, 2008, Sleeter & Grant, 1988), culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010), and culturally relevant curricula (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Teacher education programs are challenged to incorporate these curricular and pedagogical approaches (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Yet, in its incorporation of such techniques, teacher education haphazardly overlooked its own manifestations of whiteness and how they may impact the original racially just intent of such techniques (Matias, 2013b). Without an honest examination of whiteness, such socially just strategies leave whiteness intact (Allen, 2004).

Second, the study of race is emotional. The oft-cited trope of research on the emotionality of race is how Whites resist (Rodriguez, 2009), act hysterically (Gonsalves, 2008), cry (Frankenberg, 1993), and/or get angry, all of which are explicated within the transdisciplinary nature of CWS. Equally important, however, is how the emotionality of race is expressed and felt within people of color. For instance, faculty and graduate students of color experience racial battle fatigue in the academy by virtue of racial stereotypes, presumptions, and whiteness exerted (Fasching-Varner, Albert, Mitchell, & Allen, 2015; Stanley, 2006). Such fatigue is saddening, maddening, and exhausting. With respect to CRT's and CWS's intersectional approaches, this pain is rearticulated in the intersection of race and gender claiming that, because the academy is replete "with its masculine bent, there is no easy way to articulate or deal with the emotional, psychic, or the spiritual" (Gutierrez y Muhs, Niemann, Gonzalez, & Harris, 2012, p. 7).

Emotions, and the critical study of emotions, also play a vital role in deconstructing whiteness. In general, emotions "impact teaching and learning significantly" (Winans, 2012, p. 150), especially when topics produce uncomfortable emotionalities.

By emotionally distancing themselves, students inadvertently "reinforce rather than question inequitable social norms" (Winans, 2012, p. 152). Winans (2012) demands that education include critical emotional literacy so that it becomes a social practice that provides a means of analysis or "an ongoing critical inquiry regarding emotions, an inquiry that allows us to attend effectively to difference and identity" (p.152). For the purposes of this article, applications of critical emotional literacy allow for critical analyses of emotions so that we can investigate from where these emotions stem.

Instead of assuming that emotions emanate from one's innate sensibilities, Ahmed (2004) posits that emotionality "is clearly dependent on relations of power, which endow 'others' with meaning and value" (p.4). Boler (1999) corroborates this claiming that "feeling power refers to the ways in which our emotions, which reflect our complex identities situated with social hierarchies, 'embody' and 'act out' relations of power" (p. 3). Henceforth, emotions are not isolated from the context and the power structures embedded in those contexts. Rather, emotions become a process of social interaction, one which is bound by the rules of power. Race, for example, is one structure wherein whites are positioned as "normal" and "superior," while People of Color are categorized as "different" and "inferior." In order for the structure of race to manifest systemically, the process of white supremacy ensues via enactments of whiteness. Allen (2001) suggests "Whites, whether knowingly or not, act as agents of whiteness in the surveillance of white territories, thus constructing psychosocial spaces of trauma and alienation, such as schools, for people of color" (p. 480). It is within these domains that emotions are situated and cannot escape the subtleties of white supremacy.

Consider the oft-invoked emotions of guilt, anger, and denial when engaging a critical race dialogue with white students. Such emotional expressions are often categorized as *white resistance*, routinely and "performatively staged in the classroom" (Ringrose, 2007, p. 328). Left unexamined, these emotions become recentered "in ways that serve to reinscribe whiteness as the normative centre for discussion while continuing to marginalize other social groups (Solomona, Portelli, Daniels, & Campbell, 2005, p. 166). This reflective pedagogical analysis reconsiders the complexities of emotions, particularly the emotionalities of whiteness, so that as antiracist white educators can deconstruct their emotions and thus engage in prolonged projects of racial justice.

Using a trifecta of CRT, CWS, and CES provides a more nuanced interpretation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning about whiteness and the emotional dynamics in doing so. For when these theories are used together, we are better able to situate the narratives while providing an interpretive analysis of how the emotions that stem from learning whiteness—while operating under its influence—manifest themselves.

Methodology

In order to answer the posed questions above we employ a methodological strategy that best captures the learning and teaching journey of both the students and professor specifically with regard to the curriculum and pedagogy. Though this method is by all means not the only method one can use to document a journey, it is the preferred method because our means of understanding our feelings in response to teaching and learning about whiteness was wrought with infinite sensations, uncertain paths, and insecurities as to why we felt the way we felt. Thus, we align ourselves with the tradition of *teacher reflection* because "teachers begin to reflect authentically on past experiences beyond the walls of the classroom to address the idiosyncrasies that prevail in classrooms" (Milner, 2003, p. 195). Since we are educators, we opt to use race reflection to "locate experiences that can guide [our] thinking and teaching" (Milner, 2007, p. 586). Specifically, we located our emotional experiences of teaching and learning whiteness based upon the curriculum and pedagogies employed in the course. True to the method of teacher reflections, included as narratives here, we wrote these narratives after the course was completed to best capture our emotional journey throughout the entire course. Thus, the pedagogy for the course did not include personal emotional reflections instead we re-read some of our course assigned essays and online postings to identify our feelings.

Revisiting our experiences unearths our initial emotional journey of teaching and learning about whiteness, especially in U.S. graduate education courses where the majority of students (pre-service or in-service teachers) is white and the professor may not. Although there are some teacher reflections that may reflect inconsistencies (Mansour, 2013), we opted to review each other's essays that were assigned in the course and our course online postings while doing additional independent research on whiteness. We acknowledge that upon each re-read of our course essays and postings there were a range of emotions experienced; to concentrate fully on the emotionalities that were present during the course itself, however, we opt to construct narratives as a reflective method of capturing our journeys. Thus, each re-read of the essays and online posting from the course coupled with new resources in whiteness literature helped us construct our narratives after the course ended. In doing so we better understand the emotional dynamic between teaching whiteness and learning it and how we were emotionally responding to it.

Background

The course is an elective graduate course offered every fall and spring semester, enrolled mainly by U.S. K-12 teachers. It is designed to "provide an examination of the social values and philosophical foundations in contemporary U.S. American society which shape or influence the aims, methods, content, problems, and controversies facing the American educational enterprise" (Course Syllabus). The intent of the course is to "prepare critical educators with a critique of the hegemonic

philosophies and social values that pervade both society and U.S. American urban education while developing a critical activist stance against these oppressive mechanisms" (Course Syllabus). Since the focus of the course was about U.S. American urban education, it is befitting to focus our literature and theoretical framework in the U.S. context. The two students whose narratives are included in this article are co-authors of this paper and completed the course in different semesters, spring 2014 and fall 2014 respectively, with Henry acting as a teacher's assistant in the latter. Seventeen graduate students were enrolled in the fall 2014 course with a majority of the students from the School of Education, three students were of color, and the rest were racially identified as white.

Narratives

Cheryl Matias' Narrative

I took with me on the first day of class all the racial microaggressions (Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, & Esquilin, 2007) I had to endure as a young-looking, female faculty member of color, teaching graduate courses that are predominated by white teachers. Each semester my students second-guessed my intellectual abilities or accused me of being biased against them because they were white and I was not. They would send me emails instructing me to print out their assignments or threaten to go to the dean if I did not heed to their uncomfortable emotional condition when talking about race, as if I was a customer service representative. In order to assert my status, I had my students call me "Dr." instead of by first name as I usually did in the past when teaching in a state previous that that had a majority of students of color. I frontloaded my credentials, something I knew my white male colleagues did not have to do.

Additionally, I had to include a disclaimer on my syllabus that "warned" my students that they would learn about "tough" stuff and would need to engage with the argument instead of refute it merely because they "felt bad." I added that they would be graded on how they demonstrated their emotional investment in the course and their learning. I included a bulleted list of what an emotional investment may look like. Some examples were seeking further knowledge of the subject outside of class with the professor, writing blogs, organizing field trips to museum exhibits on race (e.g., Colorado's History Museum exhibit on Race: Are We That Different?), or involvement in student groups or community organizations that also promote racial justice. Additionally, I lectured on the first day of class what emotions might be felt when discussing whiteness such as fear, guilt, anger and/or dismissal. One way to do this is by asking my white students why they do not want to talk to "Uncle Joe" (a fictitious white uncle who is very adamant that race does not exist) about racism at the Thanksgiving Dinner table. Despite the fact there are some who may want to challenge Uncle Joe in an argument over white privilege, I opt to list on the board the reasons

why my students might not want to talk to some of their white family members about white privilege. Some say "Uncle Joe" will:

- be angry,
- deny everything,
- ask them to prove white privilege with detailed evidence,
- deem everything they say as irrelevant, from only one perspective, or of the passed and not present,
- become defensive,
- shout,
- resist,
- take things personally instead of focus on larger systemic issues,
- react instead of learn, etc.

Then I let my students know that when they read articles written mostly by Scholars of Color that focus on whiteness they too may react like Uncle Joe, and that, in and of itself, is the enactment of white emotionalities that we will be deconstructing for this course. Specifically, the students know we will be interrogating the following: Where these emotions come from? Why are these emotions there? Why do so many people have these same emotional reactions to whiteness? By doing so, my students are aware that I know of these emotional displays and how, upon their surfacing, they can severely limit their willingness to learn. By frontloading emotions students can begin to identify them and process how emotions are an important factor in how we choose to learn or not learn about race. Hence, doing this activity, creates a critical space that acknowledges white emotionalities instead of rendering them as invisible as hegemonic whiteness itself.

Further, instead of sidestepping hard discussions by focusing the racialized educational disparities between People of Color to whites (which is only a symptom), I opted to focus on the disease itself: whiteness and white supremacy. Doing this, I know my mainly white students will find discomfort because although they are aware that African American and Latino students have lower graduation rates than whites or Asian Americans they often still describe this disparity using deficit approaches such as "they don't speak English," "their parents don't care," "their culture does not value education," etc. Therefore, the onus of failure is placed on the students and their families, never upon the teacher, the processes of schooling, or the educational system writ large. They typically have not explored a deeper examination of the larger systemic reasons.

To better illustrate this mentality, I drew from a class discussion about the presence of metal detectors in certain high schools. One student claimed that his urban school, filled with Black and Brown students, does have metal detectors. When I asked if the school had a history of gun violence, he said he was unsure, then quickly added that it "had to because African Americans and Latinos have a propensity for crime." He backed his claim by pointing out that African American and Latino males mainly populate the prison system. On the one hand, the student

could clearly see the racial disparities in the prison system; yet, what he could not articulate the more nuanced understanding of how African American and Latino males are strategically targeted and racially profiled as criminals. Other students chimed in to this end, explaining that Blacks are more likely to get pulled over and that most violent mass school shootings are perpetrated by white males in predominantly-white schools. Upon hearing this racial reality, the student grew increasingly frustrated and seemingly obstinate in his position. Here the emotionality of whiteness came into play more clearly: no amount of statistical proof could increase this student's understanding of race, unless we dove right into the problem itself: that of whiteness. Hence, the curriculum I used was strategic in learning about the overarching disease of whiteness and white supremacy, thus providing a deeper rationale behind the already understood (or misunderstood) statistics. That is, I had to create a curriculum about race that centered on how whiteness and white supremacy "colors" statistics.

As a former K-12 Los Angeles schoolteacher and having been raised in public schools there too, the majority of my teachers and colleagues were People of Color, many who grew up in the same communities in which they now teach. In this course this was not the case. Many of my students in my graduate courses at this institution were white teachers who taught in communities of color that were greatly different from their own home communities. I had to change my pedagogy to find a pedagogy that teetered between disrupting whiteness and ensuring I was not victimized by it. So, I used laughter, social media, and/or popular culture to disrupt whiteness. At the same time, because Women of Color are often presumed incompetent (Gutierrez y Muhs, et al., 2012), I had to be steadfast in my dominance, which countered the literature on critical pedagogy (Freire, 1993; Giroux, 1988). Essentially, I had to realize that whiteness was operating regardless of my professorial standing (Author 1, 2013a), and the only way to debunk it was to expose its violent nature (see Leonardo & Porter, 2010) which I knew students would find intimidating. In fact, I knew it would be more intimidating for my white female teachers than my white male teachers since women of color (specifically, Asian American females) are often reduced to sexual fantasies of dominance due to heterosexual white supremacist patriarchy (Espiritu, 2001). So, I made hard pedagogical decisions by calling out whiteness ideology, and at times forcibly had the rest of the class take onus of the whiteness ideology.

I recall a class discussion in which a student (a former teacher) argued why "they" (Students of Color) are failing. He argued that Students of Color lacked motivation. After no one spoke up (which is a common practice in white complicity), I questioned the class by asking, "So you all think like this, right," challenging them to step up and take onus.

Despite how racially microaggressive my students' behaviors were, I had to remember that I was responsible for their learning, impacting how they will teach the next generations of Students of Color. There was a time when I engaged a

counterstory in the discussion to illustrate a larger dynamic of racial prejudice. Such a practice, according to CRT, is methodologically sound because it counters majoritarian stories that are often left unchecked (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001). In response, one student claimed I needed to stop personalizing the matter and be more objective, assuming that his statements, claims, and inquiries about his experiences in teaching urban students of color were more objective. Although this was clearly an exertion of the power in whiteness, which assumes its legitimacy and objectivity, I had to rethink this situation as a teachable moment for both student and professor. As a student, he had to learn how he was exerting his whiteness, while I had to relearn how to approach this racial microaggression pedagogically.

Allison Henry's Narrative

I signed up for the course assuming we would examine contemporary issues plaguing education like poverty, funding, and equity. As a white educator, examining the pre-course survey questions, I was surprised and a bit threatened: each question seemingly held a hidden agenda, one I assumed would determine just how racist a person I might be:

> Question: In your opinion, why do urban schools struggle?
> Question: Are there differences between urban students and suburban students?
> Question: What does an urban classroom look like?

I was afraid to answer the questions honestly because I was petrified knowing my words would be examined and was concerned with what they might uncover about myself. To protect my privilege, I remained vague and filled with a sense of obliviousness: "I think the main difference between urban and suburban students is their access to experiences." When asked what an urban classroom looks like, I could only guess because I have only taught in predominantly white, suburban schools:

> I would imagine the rooms are filled with students who excel, who struggle, who could care less, who couldn't care less, who are active in the school, who rarely attend school... I would also imagine there may be a greater variety of access to funds among students.

Repeatedly I avoided using any verbiage that had to do with race or ethnicity. Whitewashing the notion of poverty, I used terms such as "access to funds" and "access to experiences." I knew I was trying to make my perceptions of urban schools seem just like "other schools," but I was too afraid to admit that I was really comparing urban schools and students to my view of what is normal − in a word, whiteness (Allen, 2004). I entered Dr. Matias' classroom for the first time with my completed survey and chose to sit at the side of the classroom, hoping to go unnoticed, fearing my white body would betray me. From the moment Dr. Matias walked in, I was overwhelmed by her. Her energy, humor, and intelligence filled the

room. I remember being overcome with intimidation. She spoke openly on topics that I deemed taboo, topics of social justice, race, and privilege. She spoke in a manner I had never heard from a professor before, using Spanish words, Filipino words, Black diction, and profanity. She also used terms I hadn't allowed into my vocabulary such as "social capital," "critical race theory," "privilege," and the most troublesome of all, "whiteness."

It wouldn't be until midway through the semester I would realize Dr. Matias' pedagogy had been deliberately chosen not only as a means to protect herself, but more importantly to push the thoughts of her students enveloped in whiteness. Being a middle-class white woman I was accustomed to many things—excess funds to treat myself to dinners, coffees, vacations, etc.—however, I was not accustomed to having these privileges and my whiteness examined, especially by a person of color (Allen, 2004). As I progressed through Dr. Matias' class, the content and discussions we had regularly confronted me with the impact of my privilege and my whiteness. Initially this process made me itchy, especially as it was led by a woman of color, one who, unlike me, was clearly well-versed and thoroughly experienced in racial dynamics. An emotional response developed within me. I became bitter and scared; I didn't like the taste of my exposed privilege. For the first few weeks of class, I was afraid to speak, afraid to offend. I whitewashed my verbiage and relied on my colorblindness to maintain a sense of political correctness.

In the coming months, Dr. Matias insisted I identify with my racial positionality—after all, I didn't choose the skin I was born into but I am eternally impacted by it, and I began to see the need to expose my whiteness (Matias, 2013c). Therefore, I began to speak from the view of a middle-class, white, single motherscholar[2] and I was able to identify how I was afforded privileges others were not. However, after Dr. Matias had the class read Giroux (1988) and Allen (2004) I truly started to see things differently:

> Giroux's (1988) discussion of hidden curriculum awakened me to a world of sleeping giants: ideas of supremacy and power were running rampant in the daily actions and words of the educators I know and respect. Everywhere I turned and every conversation I had began to ooze undertones of [oppression], illuminating my own personal blindspot to my whiteness, to my privilege, to my contribution of hegemonic structures and ideas (Allen, 2004).

For me, this was a turning point. I felt determined to expose this world to anyone else who had lived a colorblind life of privilege. I committed myself to spreading the word of my new truth in my class reflections.

> Being born into privilege and being born white has necessarily placed me in a position of power and prestige. I acknowledge the perpetual benefit all Whites have gained from this position. I also acknowledge that in order to stop this, …the system that created it must be destroyed (Allen, 2004). As a result, I have waged a conscious war against the impact these hidden structures and ideas have on me and my surroundings... I am committing to confronting ideas, traditions

> and structures that exude oppression I am committing to listening to the "spark of knowledge" only the oppressed can teach me. I am owning the fact that I am by nature an oppressor. However, I refuse to remain idle and content in my privilege (class reflection paper).

The problem with whiteness, I learned through the required readings brought forth by Dr. Matias, is the seductive power it exerts on the privileged. The comfort and luxury of my whiteness was a lure, baited and dangling in front of me, and I found many opportunities to revert to a colorblind, pseudo-post-racial version of myself (Allen, 2004). More than once during the semester I slipped out of my positive and forward-moving stage of disintegration and landed in the angry and finger-pointing position of reintegration (Tatum, 2003) and became worried about every word, action, and thought.

Dr. Matias could see this thinking in her students' writings and discussions. It was at that point the she had us read an article entitled "On the 'Flip' Side: A Teacher Educator of Color Unveiling the Dangerous Minds of White Teacher Candidates" that illustrated the toll taken on people of color who choose to educate white students about whiteness. Up until that point, the impact of my existence as a white woman on an educator of color hadn't even crossed my mind because, as Tatum (2003) suggests, I had never really examined my whiteness and therefore felt the idea of race wasn't about me. Reading that piece, very strong emotions emanated from me:

> I felt guilt for her pain. I felt guilt for her fear... I felt guilt for this fucked up, stratified society in which we exist because somehow my skin color, my upbringing, my financial standing affords me a sense of superiority that I hadn't even begun to acknowledge…(my class reflection).

I couldn't stomach the notion that as a white person I had unknowingly committed acts of whiteness that were abusive to people of color. I started writing about how angry and defensive I felt. In that moment, I became aware. I came to understand the act of humanization and realized this journey *had* to be about me; that race was about me. I did this in one of my class reflections

> I have to acknowledge what it is exactly I have spent my entire life denying. I have to acknowledge the structures that produced the faux feeling of colorblindness that I use to protect myself and wage war on others (Allen, 2014). I want to be held accountable, but more importantly I want to never contribute to someone's sense of pain again. I am eager to learn, to know better, and to do better... I want my whiteness to be examined and my privilege to be exposed (Tatum, 2003).

Dr. Matias spent sixteen weeks laying out a curriculum that would deliberately, consistently, and critically confront my whiteness. She developed opportunities for me to safely examine my privilege and the impact it has on others and myself. By the end of the semester, I finally felt "comfortable in my uncomfortableness" and was willing to stop hiding "behind a façade of innocence or normalize[d] speech"

(Matias, 2013a). I had finally become able to openly address issues of race with my peers, colleagues, loved ones, and even my superiors. Through my new sense of optimism I have been able to develop and pursue the opportunity to write a semester-long course for my predominantly middle to upper-class, white, middle school students on the issues of whiteness and privilege. In class we regularly deconstruct issues of race as well as the emotions that come up while examining these issues. While my personal learning journey resulted in an awakening of hopefulness and optimism, it started with intimidation, fear, and defensiveness. However, my heightened understanding, passion for, and commitment to anti-racist pedagogy both inside and outside of the classroom wouldn't have been possible without deconstructing my initial emotionalities of whiteness. In the end, it seemed that all my life I was humming a song about race, however in my blissfully ignorant state of wanting to not be a racist, I refused to know the lyrics of the song. Deconstructing my emotionalities of whiteness I finally learned the lyrics to that song. Meaning, I have developed from simply being "not a racist" to being actively anti-racist and thus I find myself with more emotional fortitude to engage in longer projects of racial justice such as the social justice course I am now teaching in my middle school and the social justice student organization that I facilitate for my campus.

Craig Darland's Narrative

Having been an educator in an urban environment for the past fourteen years, I assumed Dr. Matias' course would focus on topics like poverty, family environment, state funding, changes in educational law, and possibly teacher evaluation systems, all of which I believed I had a great deal of knowledge about.

Walking into Dr. Matias' classroom for the first time was not intimidating to me at all. Although being a white male makes me a minority among students in these courses, I've never felt this to be a disadvantage. Never in my life had I been made to feel like I was a minority in power. I soon learned that a minority in numbers does not necessarily mean I was a minority in power. That is, I learned that being one of the few white males in the course does not mean that patriarchy and sexism ceases to exist in society and within the classroom. This came from reading an article called, "The Flip Side" where the author indicates that although she is the professor of the course and has professorial standing over students she is still outnumber by the whiteness of her students. At first glance, I was a little taken back by Dr. Matias' physical appearance. I'm not used to having my professors look the way she does. She is an Asian-looking woman of slender build. She has fair and beautiful features with the face of a woman in her mid- to late-twenties but she has the eyes of a woman much older. In short, I was comfortable, at least at the start. That first class she told us that we would be forced to feel emotion. Upon hearing this I questioned her in my mind. *Who does she think she is? What makes her think she has so much power over me?* I felt, at the time, that being forced to feel emotion was an arrogant and presumptuous

stance. I really did not take her seriously up until now because before meeting her emotions were never a part of my learning.

It was a pre-course survey that forced an emotional response from me. I remember that after I filled it out one question particularly bothered me:

> Question 11: Have you had experiences/relationships with people of color in authority? Describe. Have you had experiences/relationships with people of color not in authority? Describe.

I remember judging the question itself: What was she trying to do? "The president's Black after all," I said to my girlfriend that night. I was both angry and annoyed that Dr. Matias would even suggest that having a Person of Color in authority was something strange at all. The question seemed absurd to me: "Why would the color of a professor matter at all?" I responded with vigor, feeling strongly that I was correct in my assumptions about race:

> I wouldn't think it would be any different, knowledge is knowledge and doesn't matter who's dishing it out. I really think the race issues continue because of questions like this that seem to have some desire to keep it on the table. Get over it already, the president's Black.

My answer was based on a refusal to accept racism, operating under the false understanding that racism was beaten down during the Civil Rights Movement. I felt attacked for being white; as if I was being unfairly judged for something a distant ancestor might have done long before me. I was of the opinion that economic class was the only factor keeping people of color from achieving their desired place in western society. "White privilege" was not yet in my vernacular.

As the course continued, my emotional state of mind started to unravel. Learning about race, racism, and white supremacy was extremely difficult for me as a white male. I completely rejected white privilege for weeks! I kept justifying that everything I had was solely based on my own effort and had nothing to do with being a member of the dominant white race. I grew anxious over attending Dr. Matias' class. This course caused me to feel badly about everything I was coming to terms with. I felt personally attacked because I was white. For many weeks I rejected the material completely and it was noticed by Dr. Matias in this e-mail:

> Dear Craig,
> Stemming from your comments last night it appears you have some misunderstandings and personal reactions to the readings that you need to work through. We want you to be successful in the course and personalize the correct information from the readings, thus it is important to correctly understand the key concepts of the readings. In order to better support you through the process of emotionally investing in your learning process we request an appointment to go over the readings and your thoughts and feelings about them. Please let us know your availability. Personally, I will make time for you.
> Respects, Profe

This e-mail angered me as I was still refusing to acknowledge white privilege at all. In doing so, I'd be forced to acknowledge that I had been living under a false understanding about race and racism. I was understandably defensive and angry as acknowledging white privilege would change my view of self. My response to her blatantly showed my anger:

> Profe, I would love meet with you sometime but just to be clear, I have no misunderstanding as to what the readings were saying. I simply don't agree with their conclusions, or yours. I fully understand all the key concepts in those readings and can prove that through a verbal discussion. Understanding what they're saying doesn't mean I have to agree with them. I hope you don't expect your students to blindly agree with every reading you give them. I hope you aren't having a personal reaction to the opposition I gave to the readings last night. I look forward to meeting with you in the near future to resolve whatever issues you're having.

As the course went on I begrudgingly started to absorb the readings and slowly recognized a truth of unfair and unjustified white supremacy that was painful to think about. Dr. Matias forced me to engage in an emotional response by refusing to allow me to passively sit in class without openly interacting with her and the readings. I think the reading that had the largest impact on me was Beverly Tatum's (2003) book *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*:

> Several years ago, a White male student in my psychology of racism course wrote in his journal at the end of the semester that he had learned a lot about racism and now understood in a way he never had before just how advantaged he was. He also commented that he didn't think he would do anything to try to change the situation. After all, the system was working in his favor (p.13).

This was an eye-opening comment to me. On a small level, I agreed with that student and that disgusted me to my very core. I was forced to think of myself as a white person who was contributing to the oppression of people of color. Was I that type of man? Did I really care so little for justice? It shook up my understanding of self. I remember thinking, "No, I couldn't be that unethical a person, could I?" This was the moment in the course when my thinking changed from unaware or possibly ambivalent to becoming critically aware of my place in this world. It was then that I realized that white privilege existed and it was because I was benefitting from it that I was ignorant to its very existence: "…for many Whites, this new awareness of the benefits of a racist system elicits considerable pain, often accompanied by feelings of anger and guilt" (Tatum, 2003, p. 9). I think my shame was what kept me from acknowledging my white privilege for so long, even when its undeniable existence was surrounding me. It was my place in society as a white male that was allowing my mind to refuse to acknowledge what was so clearly right in front of me. Openly discussing and agreeing with the idea that I was privileged was painful for me. It implied that I'm successful not solely because of the merit of my actions

but because I've had an unfair advantage my entire life. Coming to terms with my white privilege was depressing.

As a white person, I went through a myriad of emotions at this realization. I felt that I was being a traitor to my white race by entertaining the idea. Justifications came to my mind. I felt a need to justify white privilege or rationalize it in some way. To acknowledge that I was a racist, passive or otherwise, was emotionally taxing. Dr. Matias noticed my change of mood in class sent me an email inquiring; I responded:

> Profe, my mood has changed because I've come to accept the truth of these articles that we're reading. Honestly I'm still upset sometimes because I find these readings insulting and at times, biased. But my ability to reason and reflect has helped me to come to terms with this new knowledge I'm absorbing. Really it's an eye opening and fascinating experience to view the world differently after 38 years of seeing, thinking I knew what was going on. I feel like I should say 'thanks' but I'm not going to do that because now I'm depressed and angrier than I used to be.

The readings and enlightenment I underwent throughout the course in addition to my interactions with Dr. Matias facilitating that learning structured and developed my growth as human being. I credit myself with a high level of empathy that recognizes a long life history of initially failing to later understand the better path. However, the path cannot be clear unless I have a teacher who is fully committed to my learning inasmuch as she demands that I commit to her. Once I began to see the truth of white privilege through the curriculum and the pedagogy of my professor, it wasn't much of a stretch for me to believe that I had once again been wrong. Although I think that many people are stubborn once they reach a certain age—for I was close to 40 at the time—and success in life, it was also in part of my lack of exposure to the curriculum and engaged pedagogy of whiteness that transformed me. The aspect of my personality that made it possible for me to unlearn what I had initially learned about race and white supremacy (which was not real) is in the fact that I am acutely aware that most of my successes in life have come only after several major failures. Meaning, I know that I don't often get it right the first time and this characteristic allows me a certain freedom when evolving my points of view. Although I initially found it very difficult to accept the nature of white supremacy, my professor's insistence that I emotionally commit to the material gave me the space to fail and grow anew, knowing that when I did fail she would be there to pick me up again.

As the course wound down, I began to feel that I now had a duty as an educator to do something with my new understandings of race, racism, and white supremacy. Refusing to openly discuss white privilege and racism was no longer an option— I had an obligation to humanity to share my newly found knowledge and help the next generation of learners see the truth. Now, I feel a need to bring up the idea of white privilege in almost all settings I find myself in. Currently I'm finishing up my Master thesis on the nature of white privilege as it pertains to the arena of comic book superheroes. This course, Dr. Matias and the learning I underwent as a result of the

emotional enlightenment/transformation have forced me to share my understanding of white privilege in my current academic field of study, my social interactions with friends and on various forms of social media. I am optimistic as to what my future holds as far as teaching whiteness and constantly struggling with the nature of white supremacy and how it affects our world. However, I could not even get to the place of optimism and hopefulness until I was aware of the latent white emotionalities that first surfaced upon learning about whiteness. As such, I focused on my initial emotions. As a teacher, I know the impact I can have on the next generation of freethinkers and now thanks to Dr. Matias I no longer shy away from discussions of race and white privilege, I actively seek out the hard conversations and share what I have learned.

Analysis

All three narratives describe our journey of teaching and learning about whiteness with different apprehensions about it. In strategically designing the curriculum to directly address white supremacy and how that impacts our educational system, the professor forced her students to emotionally confront their own white privilege. This is seen when during a class conversation stereotypes about Black and Brown violence was being recycled. Though the class remained silent, the professor questioned their silence by modeling how it associates with complicity. That is, since silence is an act of white complicity it allows dominant ideologies in whiteness to go uncontested. She placed the onus back onto the students saying, "Because you are not saying anything does that mean you are complicit in this line of reasoning?" Until she forced them to confront their emotional deflection did the students speak up about their beliefs; many that countered the previous stereotypes about Black and Brown male violence. This became a pedagogy the professor had to enforce in order for the students to engage with instead of "Uncle Joe-ing" the curriculum.

Different emotions such as intimidation to fetishism were expressed by both students. Allison and Craig interestingly described the professor's physical appearance in different ways. True to the nature of race and gender, the reaction from the white female (Allison) to a female Professor of Color (who looks Asian) was that of intimidation: "From the moment Dr. Matias walked in, I was overwhelmed by her. Her energy, humor, and intelligence filled the room (Allison)." This intimidation factor is widely discussed in the literature of Black feminism (Hills-Collin, 1986, hooks, 1993, Lorde, 2007). Davis (1983) argues that the historical relationship between Black female slaves forced to be mistresses to their white male masters placed white females between their gendered subjugation and racial domination. On the one hand white women were unable to challenge patriarchy, specifically white supremacist patriarchy. On the other, they exerted their white supremacy in the maltreatment of the Black female slaves. Therefore, as hooks (1994) suggests when the power dynamics places a female of color in an institutionally higher position, white women are threatened or intimidated.

The emotional dynamics of Craig differed. As a heterosexual white male, his response centered on her physical features: "I'm not used to having my professors look the way she does. She is an *Asian-looking* woman of *slender build*. She has *fair and beautiful features* with the *face of a woman in her mid- to late twenties*… I was comfortable, at least at the start (emphasis added)." Espiritu (2001) argues that Asian American women are either labeled "Dragon Ladies," who are sexually dominant, or "China Dolls" who are to be sexually dominated, yet both depictions serve the sexual fetish of straight white men. Meaning, there was less to be intimidated by when the male student interacted with the female professor, however, the Asian American stereotypes and gender stereotypes of fetishism were still operating.

The most recurring theme in all three narratives is emotions. The professor deliberately included emotional investment as gradable classroom participation claiming that without emotional investment white teachers will not engage in projects of racial justice in the classroom. Craig acknowledged that "[Dr. Matias said she] would force us to feel emotion" which encapsulates his emotions of defensiveness and anger that was capture in many of the emails he sent to her. Allison described how the professor's forceful attempt to have students recognize their own whiteness made her feel "… bitter and scared; I didn't like the taste of my exposed privilege." Meaning, Allison underwent emotionalities such as vulnerability and reluctance upon her initial contact with the content and the professor. The professor did put emotional investment as a part of the syllabus and on the syllabus, explicated ways emotional investment can be graded. For example, she explained to the class starting a blog, organizing outside field trips that relate the course topic, create a panel presentation, write editorials on local teacher's outlets, post on the online discussion thread additional resources or engage in prolonged discussions. These were all examples of how to emotionally invest in the learning. The goal for her was to have students show they were committed to learning about race beyond their own discomfort about the topic. By doing so Craig moved from defensiveness and anger to acceptance and thankfulness while Allison moved from reluctance and vulnerability to vigilance and activism.

Each narrative demonstrates how emotionalities play out in the classroom and thus how they influence the teaching and learning of whiteness. Emotions become a possible conduit for how white teachers learn whiteness and how professors (of color or not) engage in teaching about whiteness to white students.

Craig noted the benefit from the professor's emotional commitment to his learning via her emails; this is the same investment she asked of her own students to learn their whiteness. Allison wrote: "Dr. Matias challenged me to analyze my whiteness as well as my contribution to oppressive racial dynamics." Herein lie the twin tales of whiteness: one is about the professor teaching about whiteness while she operates under the hegemony of it, the other is when students learn about the debilitating mechanisms and effects of whiteness while exerting it themselves.

Implications & Recommendations

As both students and professors of race, we needed to first identify our emotionalities in response to learning or teaching about whiteness, then self-reflect upon those emotionalities in order to better understand. As students, we may have felt resentful, guilty, angry, defensive, and/or fearful, yet we recognize these feelings as a process of whiteness instead of mislabeling them as mere reactions to a curriculum we did not agree with. Identifying our emotions made us realize more intimately how whiteness operates in our daily lives. As professors—specifically as professors of color—we learned that our past experiences with whiteness, though scarred, still had to be vulnerable and open to re-receive new white students. Too often the onslaught of racism and white supremacy hardens the heart of people of color, which helps us survive (Lorde, 2001). Teaching and learning about whiteness is, at best, a risk. As such, both professor and students must be willing, trusting, and vulnerable enough to take the plunge together.

Acknowledging the emotionality of whiteness then has many implications for teaching, learning, teacher education, and the field of social justice altogether. For one, further studies can be made to gauge the levels of emotionality expressed while learning about whiteness. In doing so, educators can find more effective routes in antiracist teaching, pedagogies, and curricula.

Second, with respect to promoting socially just projects, education can become a more formidable front runner when engaging antiracism. Beyond transdisciplinary studies of race, we hope that by positing the interdynamics of the emotionalities of learning and teaching about whiteness will bring the field of education into a new light, especially with regard to its role in transforming society. Hopefully, the field of education, rooted in the hopes of social justice (Freire, 1993), will be seen as a larger contributor for political, social, and philosophical theorizations and action of race.

Finally, imagine the possibilities of racial healing when we actually engage instead of suppress our emotions. We hope that upon addressing our racialized emotions, we open the door to a more humanizing love (Matias & Allen, 2013). The realities of resistance, denial, anger, and guilt are embedded in the curricula and pedagogies of race. Disregarding these emotions is dangerous because it can produce disingenuous antiracist educators who are unwilling to emotionally invest in racially-just projects but feign commitment. Engaging emotions, can produce antiracist educators who do have the emotional fortitude to remain committed to racially-just education.

Therefore, in order to push forward into realms of antiracist education—one that acknowledges whiteness as the precursor to race issues—we recommend that education must consider the ways in which classrooms are also therapeutic sessions. In this course, the professor included an explicit statement that students must demonstrate a deep emotional investment in their learning. Perhaps this should

be a requirement when one is preparing to be racially just advocates. However, in order to engage in such therapeutic work the professors themselves need to have experience in investigating their own whiteness through critical self-reflection. Essentially, they must see themselves as racialized bodies whose experiences, credentials, ideologies, and even emotions are structured within the hegemony of whiteness based upon their racial positionality. As Freire (1993) suggests those in oppressed positionalities see the system of oppression more clearly than those in the oppressor position. hooks (1993) and Hill-Collins (1989) both corroborate this with respects to the intersectionality of race and gender when they claim that Black women are more sensitive to the dynamics of race and gender because of their racial and gender identities. As such, delving deep into one's emotionality and requiring it in class is yet but one way to include emotions as a viable unit of analysis in the maintenance and deconstruction of whiteness. In this particular class, the professor uses the final project for the course for the benefit of the public good by having the students do a poster presentation in a local organization, business, school, etc. Students are evaluated based upon their involvement to organize the event, contribute to ongoing online discussions, participate or encourage others to participate in local or national events that corresponds to the course. In fact, during the semester in question, the students organized an extracurricular field trip to the community dialogue after the viewing of the documentary "I'm Not Racist... Am I?" at the local museum. Needless to say, if one truly emotionally invests then it will show. The determination of that investment should always be determined between the relationship established between professor and students.

Additionally, the process of critical self-reflection should not look the same between students of color and white students because they occupy different racial locations and positionalities. Hence, as professors, we cannot expect standardization in our curricula and pedagogies because, as we decolonize both minds with regards to race and whiteness, we do so.

Another recommendation is individual assessment. The professor provided copious amounts of individual feedback as a pedagogical tool to engage students individually. If white racial identity, as Helms (1990) suggests, is a progression of stages, then it would be erroneous to assume that white students are on the same progression trajectory.

Conclusion

This article illustrated the emotional interplay between a female Professor of Color and white students when teaching and learning about whiteness in a graduate course that make up the twin tales of whiteness. Although our self-reflective narratives are in no way the complete answer in the process of finding the most effective pedagogies or curricula to address racism, it is a starting point in the much-needed excavations of suppressed racial emotionalities that play out in our teaching and

learning processes. For educators, the emotional bound felt in the daily interactions with her/his students are, at times, unquantifiable. Yet despite this, it is nonetheless, felt, understood, and impactful in the ways we teach. Therefore, feelings are natural beats that occur when the heart of the class is felt and are rich with context, instructional possibilities, and excavation.

Intimidation, fetishism, defensiveness, anger, trust, vulnerability, and reluctance were just some of the emotional aspects felt in response to the curriculum and pedagogy of whiteness. They were also felt in response to the professor who delivered the curriculum and pedagogy. Though replication of such a dynamic may not be the same because of the variant factors that inhabit a classroom, it is noteworthy to recognize because if the majority of U.S. teachers are still overwhelmingly white and and so are professors, then similar situations as our will become more prevalent. Just as we cannot ignore or silence the issues of race in classrooms, we cannot ignore or silence the presence of racialized emotions brought about when learning about whiteness. These feelings, in essence, are instructive in how we, as educators, continue to implement racially just curriculum and pedagogy. In fact, racially just teaching is more than mastering learning objectives listed on the syllabus. Rather, it is about therapeutically understanding our racialized emotions for the hope of racial harmony. Thus, when we ignore what we truly feel, we ultimately risk our chance to racially heal together. And that...is a risk not worth taking.

Special Note

To students (like Allison and Craig) and professors (like Cheryl) who forever commit to learning and teaching even when the content is difficult.

Notes

[1] Although we are sensitive to the fact that there exists a wide array of racially microaggressive experiences among people of various racial categories, this article acknowledges that regardless to the experience one thing remains constant: that they are all structured in response to a white supremacist and racist structure. Meaning, they are only felt in the racially microaggressive way because of the fact that racism and white supremacy exist. As such, in order to interpret how whiteness is felt and expressed, writ large, this article takes on general experiences to understand how our personal (micro-leveled) feelings in this course can play a role in the larger system of race (macro-leveled).

[2] Deliberately one word similar to Leonardo's (year) postulation of raceclass as one word. Meaning, one does not exists without the other.

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How We Make Teaching
Remain a White Profession
The Teacher of Color
in the Urban High School Genre Film

James L. Hollar

Abstract

This article discusses how a particular urban high school genre film depicts a teacher of color as a site of failure for students of color. The depiction here is representative of a larger culture of poverty discourse directed at students of color as well as teachers of color. This work acts as a response to Bulman's 2005 text, Hollywood Goes to High School, especially the conception of the "outsider as teacher-hero" figure in such films. The depiction of the teacher of color as the failed insider is discussed to contrast the white teacher as hero. Such a discussion of the cultural representation of teachers of color is relevant given the continued stagnation in the number of teachers of color when compared to white teachers, even as the percentage of students of color in U.S. public schools continues to increase.

Keywords: teachers of color, high school, urban, culture of poverty

Introduction

An all-too common trope in contemporary media forms is the "at-risk" youth of color. He or she is used to represent the hopelessness of urban existence, much like shattered windows in a dilapidated building. Often in television and film, both these symbols meet in a classroom within a school that looks like something out of Kozol's *Savage Inequalities*. The youth of color is sullen, removed. In such moments in school genre films, however, I find myself drawn instead to the front of the classroom, to the teacher. As a former high school English teacher, this is not too surprising. As a white teacher who taught in a diverse, working-class

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community for several years, further, I must admit to once looking at students of color and seeing sullenness when I should have been thinking about my own teaching practices.

My preparation in becoming a teacher started early with films like *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* (1982) and *The Breakfast Club* (1985) in which white teachers are seen as buffoons, or worse, as the enemy, within the suburban high school environment. On the other hand, films like *The Principal* (1987) and *Dangerous Minds* (1995) depicted white teachers as both rebellious and victorious in urban settings. It was an easy choice I suppose. Although I did not have the term back then, I very much wanted to be the "teacher-hero" discussed in Bulman's *Hollywood Goes to High School* (2005). Such a teacher is an "outsider, a representative of the middle-class work ethic comes to the school to 'save' the students by teaching them how to be utilitarian individuals" (Bulman, 2005, p.54). Once I started teaching, however, I quickly began to see the many limitations of such a perspective and, more importantly, realized how little else I had to offer my students, especially the 'sullen' ones. So, I decided I needed to go back to school. But that is a longer story.

Instead, what follows is my effort to examine one particular cinematic example of a teacher and how she, as a female teacher of color is represented. Although *Finding Forrester* (2000) came along too late to impact my own miseducation of teaching, I have good cause for wanting to "talk back" against it now (hooks, 1989). As a high school English teacher, I pushed "teach" with *Finding Forrester* when I taught a Creative Writing elective class. I am saddened that I showed the film to my students without also using it as a way to critique its use of myths surrounding race, gender and class. More personally, it is troubling to consider how this film may have been 'read' by my students of color. This reveals, unfortunately, the white person having good intentions: I figured *Finding Forrester* was a whole lot better than *Dead Poets Society*. Given our failure, and I say 'our' as a current teacher educator, in finding ways to diversify the teacher workforce, such depictions and the narratives of failure that follow, must be countered if we are to thoughtfully discuss how to encourage students of color to become teachers of color.

Thus, my work here discusses how a particular urban high-school genre film depicts a teacher of color as a site of failure for the student of color, and one that must be replaced by a white teacher in order for that student to succeed. Such a depiction is representative of a larger culture of poverty discourse directed at teachers of color. My work acts as a response that both honors and challenges the work of Bulman, especially Chapter 3 of his *Hollywood Goes to High School*, entitled, "Fighting the Culture of Poverty: The Teacher as the Urban School Cowboy." The representation I discuss offer an essential contrast to the "outsider as teacher-hero" concept laid out by Bulman, yet also attempt to ask what connections might exist between them and why teaching remains a profession dominated by white people.

"Fighting the Culture of Poverty" Still

Although persuasive work has been done to show how notions of culture of poverty have infected schools (Valencia, 1991), two crucial points still must be made. The first is that culture of poverty thinking remains pervasive, not only in long-standing school policies, but also in what some call reform (Gorski 2012). The second, and the point I would like to focus on in this section, is the negative impact of culture of poverty discourse within these films on teachers of color (and those thinking about becoming such). The discourse of these cinematic representations involves how teachers of color are perceived as lacking in their ability to reach "their" students of color.

A brief look at the primary documents that popularized culture of poverty notions is offered here. For example, from Lewis' (1968) foundational treatise, "The Culture of Poverty":

> …by the time slum children are aged six or seven, they have usually absorbed the basic values and attitudes of their subculture and are not psychologically geared to take full advantage of the changing conditions or increased opportunities that may occur in their lifetime. (p. 188)

Lewis blames the 'slum' student for not being able to understand the future advancement inherently possible within our schools and larger society.

Banfield's *The Unheavenly City* made another step in the evolution of culture of poverty thinking in 1970. In these two passages, Banfield again blames the individual for not being able to envision a successful future:

> [An individual] is lower class if he is incapable of conceptualizing the future or controlling his impulses and is therefore obliged to live from moment to moment. (p. 48)

> Lower-class poverty, by contrast, is "inwardly" caused by psychological inability to provide for the future, and all that this inability implies. (p. 126)

This notion of the future considers the ways in which one's orientation towards work, investing in education and financial security, and even a view of pleasure, are all found to be absent in the 'lower-classes.' Thus, locked within a culture of poverty, these people supposedly aren't interested in acquiring job skills for a future occupation, don't save money or invest for the future, and can't delay pleasure for a more substantive reward in the future. Although the idealized (and dominant) culture is separated from the culture of poverty in many ways, the distinction Banfield makes above is essential in determining what kinds of teachers these students need.

These culture or community-wide deficiencies travel into our schools through policies and reforms, but also impact the day-to-day interactions between teachers and students. In *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*, Valenzuela writes of U.S.-born Mexican students being subjected to the "uncaring student prototype" (1999). Valenzuela's work details teachers who find

deficits in how their students undervalue education, but are unwilling to question how such attitudes could be simply a defense mechanism. We see many instances where this deficit thinking is inscribed on both low-income students and students of color. What is even more insidious perhaps is that such thinking continues to be passed along generation after generation under the banner of educational reform.

One such example is the 2003 book *No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning*. In this deeply troubled, yet sadly prescient reform text, Thernstrom & Thernstom (2003) seem to serve as two of the possible birthers to this particular contemporary repackaging. The Thernstroms contend that standards-based testing and charter schools are the way to solve our educational woes. Consider the following from *No Excuses*:

> These schools also aim to transform the culture of their students…When it comes to academic success, members of some ethnic and racial groups are culturally luckier than others…Family messages don't always mesh well with the objectives of schools…Schools can do much to close the racial gap; students, however, have to do their part: coming to school on time, attending every class, listening with their full attention, burning the midnight oil. (pp. 4-7)

In terms of locating these repeating, only slightly modified historical trends regarding students of color, Brown's "Same Old Stories: The Black Male in Social Science and Educational Literature, 1930s to Present," is insightful. Although Brown focuses on how "social science and education literature has helped to produce a common-sense narrative about all Black males," his work can be applied to other students of color. Brown writes,

> While much of the research from the mid-1980s through the present has given significant attention the social, psychological and educational issues of Black males, it was clear that the analyses used were far from new. Certainly, researchers have attempted to avoid using culturally deficit models for explaining Black male conditions, however, many of the theories about Black males were simply a rehashing of arguments made in previous decades.

Such deficit thinking is exactly what is being recycled in work like the Thernstroms'. Brown rightly contends that these "new" models are the "same old stories." My own contention is how teachers of color are represented within media, particularly in the urban high school genre film, is very much cultural deficit models at work.

Contrasting Teachers of Color with Teachers of Whiteness

The intersection of factual experience and cinematic fantasy provides an interesting space to consider how cultural myths of teaching continue to thrive in our national consciousness. More specifically, I want to focus on how beliefs concerning both students of color, as well as teachers of color are produced. In such a form of production, cultural myths surrounding the "differences" between

both teachers and students of color and white teachers and white students are perpetuated.

In the opening minutes of *Finding Forrester*, Jamal Wallace's teacher, Ms. Joyce, attempts to engage him in a class discussion of Edgar Allen Poe's poem "The Raven." Ms. Joyce knows of Jamal's knowledge with the work, but is unable to entice him into sharing this interest in the classroom setting.

> Ms. Joyce: Poe wrote his most famous piece, The Raven. A poem he wrote while he was strung out on coke and obsessed with death.

> Student: The Raven is like the football team. They're obsessed with death, always get their ass kicked.

> Ms. Joyce: Baltimore Ravens: only pro football team named after a classic poem. Anyone read it? "Once upon a midnight dreary while I pondered weak and weary" Jamal, how about it?

> Jamal: I never read it.

The reason for this reluctance is presented to the viewer as rational: Jamal doesn't want to be identified by his peers as interested in poetry. Bulman's valuable critique of the urban high school film centers on such moments when students like Jamal are not "allowed to fully express themselves as free individuals" (2005, p. 43). He continues: "The academic failure of students in poverty, according to American cultural beliefs and the fantasies of Hollywood, is due entirely to the attitude and behavior of the individual and not to any obstacles in the social structure" (p. 47). Although Bulman is persuasive here, a much closer look should be taken to at the particular role Ms. Joyce plays here as Jamal's teacher. In the film, Ms. Joyce is not allowed to express herself either, nor is she given agency to act in ways that would empower Jamal's intelligence. As a teacher of color, she is the *failed insider* that must come before the white "outsider as teacher-hero".

In a subsequent scene Ms. Joyce meets with Jamal's mother and informs her of Jamal's high-test scores yet middling grades. Jamal's mother can only shake her head and remark on the many books Jamal is always reading. She tells Ms. Joyce they are books she herself has never read. Although we can assume Ms. Joyce has, such shared knowledge is overwhelmed by the "culture of poverty" surrounding Jamal. Thus, he is shown as a bright kid, but one left to wallow in both a school and home environment unable to fully tap his potential. The fact that the representatives of both school and home are African American women is a sad commentary on the film's use of race and gender to establish a sense of failure as inevitable in Jamal's life. Moreover, the absence of African American men in both Jamal's life, as well as the film itself, represents another all-too common trope within films depicting poor families of color. The genderedness of the urban school and home is not surprising then, but still contrasts the male-driven narrative that follows. Simply put, Jamal needs to find a white male teacher.

But instead of focusing on Forrester as the "outsider teacher as hero," I want to discuss the other white teacher Jamal encounters: Professor Crawford. Bulman describes him aptly as the "pompous and condescending writing teacher" (p. 124). As a white male teacher, he is the complete opposite to Ms. Joyce. Moreover, the elite private school represents the class(ed) trip Jamal needed to take in order to escape his fate in the urban school. This move to an elite school should look familiar to anyone familiar to the voucher programs and charter schools that hold such prominence in contemporary school reform. And although he doubts Jamal's intellect from the start, Professor Crawford is able to create a classroom space where Jamal's intellect is valued. For example, the scene in which Jamal challenges Prof. Crawford and the two finish each other's sentences is, although combative, in direct contrast to Ms. Joyce's 'failure' to create a classroom environment where intelligence is expressed to the awe and wonder of teacher and students alike. Here is the exchange:

> Prof. Crawford: Perhaps the challenge should have been directed elsewhere. "It is a melancholy truth that even...
>
> Jamal: "great men have poor relations" Dickens.
>
> Prof. Crawford: "You will hear the beat of..."
>
> Jamal: Kipling.
>
> Prof. Crawford: "All great truths begin..."
>
> Jamal: Shaw.
>
> Prof. Crawford: "Man is the only animal...
>
> Jamal: "that blushes... or needs to." That's Mark Twain.
>
> Jamal: Come on, Professor Crawford...
>
> Prof. Crawford: [shouting] Get out!
>
> Prof. Crawford: [whispered] Get... out.
>
> Jamal: Yeah. I'll get out.

Although Professor Crawford's suspicions of Jamal are depicted as both racist and classist, and he is humiliated by the end of the film, he is still effective in ways Ms. Joyce was not. As a trope himself, Professor Crawford represents the teacher you did not want, but end up needing.

In Bulman's reading of *Finding Forrester*, Jamal "doesn't need the (elite) school to have a bright future…As an underprivileged, black, and academically gifted student from a world far removed from that of the elite school, it is Jamal who has lessons to teach" (p. 124). But this interpretation fails to consider the meaning behind the implied failure of both Ms. Joyce and the urban school. After all, at the end of the film, Jamal is still at the elite school, perhaps now taking an

independent study with the now woke Professor Crawford. The contrast between Ms. Joyce, the female teacher of color in the urban school and Professor Crawford, the white male teacher at the elite private school, is an aspect Bulman ignores perhaps because Ms. Joyce is seen so briefly. I would argue that a better discussion of such representations of teachers of color, particularly African American women teachers, seen other films like *Teachers* and *The Principal* as well, is needed as both a complement and a corrective to Bulman's valuable arguments concerning the urban high school film genre.

Such a discussion must involve not only a closer look at race and gender, but how these identities intersect with class as well. Ms. Joyce is perhaps more a failed outsider given her status as a middle-class professional. And so even though teachers of color are present in the urban school, they still fail to reach 'urban' youth. Such dynamic shows and reifies the belief that a culture of failure is embedded in communities of color regardless. This 'failure' is inevitable once teachers of color attain this 'middle-class' position, as they are so far removed from their 'urban' students' lives that all the culturally relevant pedagogy in the world won't help them (re)connect.

Implications for Understanding Difficulties in Recruiting Teachers of Color

An essential relationship to discuss is the one between the high-school genre film as a cultural product, and the how this material is interpreted by young people of color considering a career in teaching. In order to discuss this relationship I lean on Johnson's (1986) concept of the "circuit of cultural production." The four features of Johnson's "circuit" are discussed here:

> The qualitative researcher can ask (1) where do cultural themes come from, (2) what possible meanings do they bear, (3) how do the subjects of the study interpret the meanings, and (4) in what ways do these interpretations affect the daily lives and routines of the people being studied. (Apple & Carspecken)

And so, in hopes of making the connection between these films and the messages they sent a bit clearer, I rephrase the above questions to more closely fit my topic here:

> (1) where do the cultural themes about who a teacher is come from, (2) what meanings do they bear regarding race, gender, and class (3) how do young people of color then interpret the connection between how teachers are depicted in film and their own identities, and (4) in what ways do such interpretations affect how these young people of color think about teaching as a possible profession?

Since the urban school film uses the teacher of color as a site of failure, it should not come as a surprise that young people of color pause before entering the teaching profession. Teacher educators like myself, interested in recruiting and retaining more teachers of color, must first understand how difficult it might be for young people of color to take an interest in teaching given how our culture produces, and

reproduces, this role of failure in the classroom involving not only the student of color, but the teacher of color as well. Since "interests" are often imagined through "cultural productions of them," a student of color may experience a "mismatch between one's interests and the culturally shaped ways in which one thinks and talks about them" (Johnson, 1986, pg. 43). Such "interest" is structured within larger society and then reinforced (or locked) by various other (real) failings around the schooling young people of color receive. Only then can we, as teacher educators, seek answers to who is interested in teaching and who isn't and why?

A study of the high school genre film can expand our discussions of the teaching population we need and the kinds of teachers we tend to imaginatively envision. These films are cultural productions that exist as a dialogue about what we think of when we think about the next generation of teachers. The critique of film as a mirror onto larger societal forms of representation brings an essential interdisciplinary quality to my work as a teacher educator. Such cinematic representations can be used in my own classrooms environment to discuss concepts of race in American schools. These representations, embedded in so much of our visual culture, can be integrated just as teachers so often do with representations within literature. The fact that these images are so accessible to students makes them even more useful as a way to introduce them to the patterns of characterization that swirl around them. Thus, these movies are used as "cultural models" to scaffold the more complex notions of representation for my students (Lee, 2007). Then after recognizing these representations, we can teach, and learn ourselves, what they say about our society.

For instance, one way to extend such a critique is to take this way of seeing into how contemporary news media depict our schools, especially those "urban" schools that mirror the ones depicted in the films I have discussed here. A lesson could consider how teachers in these schools are presented in various media platforms. The question becomes, is there a similar limitation, or representation to how teachers of color in particular are depicted in these "real" places? Next, the "final frontier" would be to not only critique such images, but also to view them alongside the cinematic representations.

Perhaps the quickest way such an understanding can be gained is to remain focused on the teacher of color as a character in film and literature. Students could simply be asked to gather examples from a wide range of representations. The curricular inclusion here would certainly be a powerful way to underscore how the pattern of a representation of failure is constructed as a cultural product.

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Where Are the People of Color?
Representation of Cultural Diversity in the National Book Award for Young People's Literature and Advocating for Diverse Books in a Non-Post Racial Society

Steven T. Bickmore, Yunying Xu, & Myra Infante Sheridan

Abstract

Guided by the research question "How are the diverse issues of race/ethnicity represented in the NBA?," this descriptive content analysis examines the representations of author gender, author race/ethnicity, protagonist race/ethnicity, protagonist socioeconomic status, and genre of the 100 National Book Award finalists and 20 winners from 1996 to 2015. The dataset indicated that there are problematic representations of race/ethnicity, and the National Book award is not as diverse as we have expected. Of the 23 culturally relevant texts in the National Book Award, only 5 are winners. The results of this study show that using only award lists to guide teachers' book selections is problematic.

Keywords: Diversity; Young Adult Literature; Book Awards; Culturally Relevant Pedagogy.

Introduction

The thinking about this paper began in earnest the week after Jacqueline Woodson won the National Book Award for Young's Literature (NBA). Since the beginning of my academic career, I, Steve, have tried to convince preservice teachers to include more diverse books in their classrooms. I have brought their attention to

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list of awards—The Coretta Scott King Award, the Pura Belpre Award, the Printz Award, Amelia Elizabeth Walden Award, the Stonewall Book Award, among others. The NBA, however, is the most prestigious. I had hoped that Woodson would win the award and was astonished when the joy of the movement was overcast by Danny Handler, aka Lemony Snicket, with a racial joke.

It was clear to me that we were not in a post racial society. I thought about how diversity—especial racial diversity—was represented among the short lists of the NBA over it relatively short history. What would a simple quantitative evaluation of the nominated authors and the novels' main characters say about the representation of diversity in young adult literature (YAL). The next fall of 2015, I found myself at a new university teaching a graduate course focused on race, class, and gender. The idea for the paper resurfaced and two doctoral students, one a Latina from southeast Texas and one an international student from China, were interested in working on the article. In part, they wondered if their identities were present in these award-winning books. The fall of 2015 would be the announcement of the twentieth winner. As a result, we began analyzing the 100 finalists. We worked on the article and submitted a draft to a journal that focused on YAL.

The paper was rejected in early April of 2016. This happens; all of us that work in the academy know that a paper can be rejected for a number of valid reasons—not the right fit, the wrong call, not polished enough, bad interpretation of data, or just not focused as accurately as it might ought be. It is not unusual for authors and reviewers to radically disagree. In this case it seemed that we, as authors and the reviewers, agreed on the need for diverse books in the hands of students and teachers, but there was a gap in the method of reporting the raw results about the award and how much opinion and advocacy should be included. Should an article include open advocacy for change, for deeper inclusion of diverse authors, and for the use of awards in instructional situations. As authors, we read the tone of the comments of the reviewers who were suggesting that, yes, we need diverse books, but aren't we doing better? There are more diverse authors, aren't there? Perhaps we are doing better and perhaps we are not. Clearly, there are more awards that focus more directly on minority groups and concerns. Does the existence of these awards, however, excuse the dominant award, the NBA, from including a more balanced representation of diverse authors and characters? Could it be that over the course of 20 years the very best books in terms of literary quality were not written by diverse authors, even though their books won awards in other venues? Perhaps we did need to pull back and make a simple first step by reporting the facts.

So, let's back up a bit. The paper was being written as Donald Trump announced his candidacy for the President of the United States (June 2015) and announced that when Mexicans arrive from Mexico, they are not sending the best. Slowly, he began to distance himself from other Republican hopefuls. He did so as he claims to "Make America Great Again," while suggesting a ban on Muslims, a revelation of how he talks about women in private—at least once, and how he represented a

reporter with arthrogryposis. Now, just as we finish these comments in January of 2016, a few days before the inauguration, President Elect Trump strikes back at the 21st winner of the NBA award, U.S. representative John Lewis, who won with his coauthor, Andrew Aydin, and illustrator, Nate Powell, for *March Book Three* (2016). This action proves to be ironically fortuitous of the purposes of this paper's analysis. To be fair, John Lewis claimed that, due to what he perceives as significant Russian meddling, Mr. Trump is not the legitimate president. To balance that, during a significant portion of President Obama's eight years in the presidency President Elect Trump questioned his legitimacy by hanging on to the birth certificate issue. Apparently, what is good for the goose isn't good for the gander. President Elect Trump's attack came in a tweet—the new form of intense political commentary and disagreement. President Elect Trump claimed that John Lewis was "…all talk, talk, talk—no action or results. Sad!" It would be hard to argue that John Lewis has been all talk and no action.

On the other hand, given recent political events, public commentary in social media, and plans for boycotts and marches, it might be easier to argue that the results of the work of John Lewis, Martin Luther King Jr., and President Barack Obama have not advanced racial relationships in the U.S. to the degree that many citizens in the U.S. might have imagined. Does this dispute between these two high-profile political leaders from two distinct sides of ideological isles, furthermore, represent our inability to discuss differences? We are a diverse country, hopefully, and can in-depth discussion of diversity in YAL can stand as a proxy for our attempt to communicate and move forward?

Now back to the reviews and our reactions. Absolutely, we wanted the paper published. We followed the suggestions to limit the editorial comments and focus in on just presenting the quantitative data from the study. We did not discuss, for example, the other awards and how they might be replacements for the big award. Do books by diverse authors get ignored by the NBA because publishers or others assume these books will get recognized by the more focused awards? While the reviewers point to other studies that deal with the lack of diversity in publishing, these studies do not focus on how this lack of diversity plays out in awards. These studies, furthermore, focus on children's literature and not young adult literature. One reviewer points to Hill's *The Critical Merits of YA Literature* (2014) and Hayn and Kaplan's *Teaching Young Adult Literature Today* (2012). Both books do treat the importance of diverse books and the authors are well aware of this since the first author wrote the foreword in the first and contributed a chapter in the second. Nothing in either book, nevertheless, tracks how diverse Young Adult Literature in represented any award.

We spent too much time, previously, discussing the speed in which social media seems to address these crucial issues, while academic publications are slow, methodical, and, in our opinion, often too neutral in their interpretation of the data. We also wanted to discuss cultural relevance, how authors do or do not

identify their identity or ethnicity, or how teachers include (or not) these texts in classroom libraries or instructional units. As a result, we did everything we could to restrict and curb our qualitative researcher impulses. We reported the facts about how and when diverse authors and their books appear among the 100 books that made the first 20 short lists and, additionally, the twenty winners of the award. As you might assume, the list of items we wanted to discuss are really a list of topics for further research and discussion. We believe that our following analysis of the NBA states the facts and will exist as a stimulus for further research and advocacy pieces. Work that will help us understand the urgency behind such groups such as We Need Diverse Books and the Black Lives Matter movement. Work that will help the young adult research community advance our understanding of diversity among the body of books called young adult literature and how that literature is used in classrooms.

Framing the Conversation

Race and ethnicity issues in children's literature and Young Adult Literature have had a dominant presence in social media over the last two years and any google search about the issues will point to more current discussion, observations, and editorials. We focus on two events in late 2015 to serve as a frame. Two children's titles, Ramin Ganeshram's *A Birthday Cake for George Washington* (Ganeshram & Brantley-Newton, 2015) and Emily Jenkins's *A Fine Dessert* (Jenkins & Blackall, 2015), refocused public attention on how slavery was depicted in children's books. Scholastic's pulling of *A Birthday Cake for George Washington* (2015), more specifically, has been viewed as a victory in response to People of Color's (POC) backlash against the book. Ramin Ganeshram's (2016) response in *The Guardian*, however, repositions the book's "banned" status. In a tweet, Ebony Thomas (2016) indicates that some people are trying to frame the situation not as "banning," but as a publisher's withdrawal of the book as a consequence of negative reviews and censures. The issue of race/ethnicity in children's and YA literature and #WeNeedDiverseBooks campaign, as a result, were on the stage again. Indeed, as we finish the first draft of this manuscript, a similar conversation was occurring in the run up to the presentation of the 2016 Oscars. Chris Rock not only lampooned the racism surrounding the Hollywood film industry, but also made an inappropriate joke about Asians (Ryzik, 2016). We do not believe we can laugh our way out of the issue.

This article is not the first call for finding diverse books and how they are represented. In 1965 Larrick published a groundbreaking piece "The All-White World of Children's Books," emphasizing that only 6.4% of the total 5,206 children's book published from 1962 to 1964 included one or more Blacks in the illustrations. Many of us who study and research young adult literature (YAL) wonder how much the first call for diverse books has moved us forward in representing diverse populations and how People of Color are represented in children's literature and YAL now

during the second call. We also wonder if the influence of both the call for diverse books movement along with such movements as "#BlackLivesMatter" and "We Need Diverse Books" are helping us identify and provide culturally relevant books for the increasingly diverse populations of students in America's public schools? As we were thinking about these questions, we focused on some well-known national literary awards for young adults, specifically, the National Book Award for Young People (NBA). We focus on this award because The National Book Award for Young People's Literature is a subcategory under a large umbrella that attempts to represent the best in American publishing. In addition, as we began the paper the award had published the short list for the twentieth year and no study had recorded or documented its record of diversity.

When Jacqueline Woodson won the NBA for *Brown Girl Dreaming* (2014), she became not only the first African-American woman to win the award in 19 years, she became the African-American winner, period. We wondered if an analysis of the award could provide any insight to whether or not there has been progress since the Larrick (1965). In other words, is the renewed call for more inclusive book sponsored by the We Need Diverse Books campaign—and others—a needed reminder? With that in mind, we began a content analysis of the 100 books that made the shortlist of the NBA from 1996 to 2015. This is not a critique of the award committees, of the quality of the winner, or of the process of the NBA award. We ask, instead: How is racial/cultural diversity evident or not in this collection of quality texts in 20 years of NBA history? What can we learn through conducting a close analysis?

What scholars and authors are doing on social media, as well as what we are trying to do here, is to "cultivate a system of children and YA literature—reviewers, librarians, educators, professors, publishers—that holistically integrates people of color" (Kraus, 2016, para. 18). Several academic have blogs that push the academics dialogue faster than the publication of scholarly reports (Teri Lesesnse, Writers Who Care, and the Nerdy Book Club are good examples). The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore the racial/ethnic representations in the NBA, in order to raise people's awareness within the YAL industry (including publishers, writers, academics, teachers, librarians, and readers).

Methods

Guided by the research question, we did a descriptive content analysis (Krippendorff, 2012) of 100 NBA winners and finalists from 1996 to 2015. Initially, we put all 100 books in an Excel spreadsheet in the order of the year they were awarded/honored.[1] We put the winner of each year as the first one in each group and highlighted them in yellow in order to distinguish them from the finalists. Thus, the categories we began with included: author, author gender, author race/ethnicity, protagonist, protagonist gender, protagonist race/ethnicity, protagonist SES,

setting, genre, and grade levels. After cataloging all the information, we recorded the frequency of each subcategory separately. We collected data on all 100 finalists and then isolated the findings of the 20 winning titles. We develop a set of criteria for each of the categories that we planned to investigate.

Author Race/Ethnicity

From the outset of the study, we were sensitive about identifying an author's race or ethnicity. We did not want to be the agents of naming. Authors' self-identification was the determining factor as the information was found in their personal website or other sites--such as publisher's websites etc. For example, An Na, author of A Step From Heaven (2001) self-identified as Korean-born Children's book author, so we classified her as Asian American as well as Korean American. If authors did not self-identify, however, meaning that they might put labels like "American author" in their bios, we classified them as unspecified. If they were unspecified, we looked for further details in other sources to see if there are any indications of birth place, family heritage, etc. For example, Gene Luen Yang, author of *American Born Chinese* (Yang & Pien, 2006), is labeled as an American writer. When we look at his biography in detail, we found that he is the son of Chinese immigrants. His father was from Taiwan and his mother from Hong Kong. Thus, we put him in a larger category of Asian American as well as smaller category of Chinese American.

Protagonist Race/Ethnicity

Determining a protagonist's race/ethnicity was occasionally more difficult than determining an author's race/ethnicity. In Virginia Euwer Wolff's *True Believer* (2001), for example, the protagonist could be any ethnicity. In most of the 100 books, the protagonist's race/ethnicity is easily identifiable. For genres like fantasy, adventure, and murder mysteries, however, it was difficult to locate the protagonists' race/ethnicity, because many authors did not provide sufficient character descriptions. Thus, we also classified them as undetermined. For science fiction, many of the text included non-human protagonists, so we classified them as undetermined. Some non-fiction books included multiple protagonists of undetermined ethnicities.

Findings and Discussion

We deliberately combine the findings with a discussion. While we are presenting quantitative data we feel compelled to give context and explanations that might help the readers begin to see the implications of the quantitative findings within the large world of young adult literature. These books do represent literary quality. Throughout the discussion we will explicate our data points, but will do so by also pointing to surprises in the findings—both findings that suggest movement towards addressing diversity and those that suggest there is more work to be done.

Race/Ethnicity of Author

We looked at the ethnicity of the authors of the 100 texts: 77 texts were written by White authors (or unidentified authors) and 23 texts were written by non-White authors. When isolating the 20 winning titles, the data shows 15 were written by White authors and five were written by non-White authors (See Table 1).

The representation of the authors of color is spread out in unpredictable ways. We found that, in 2015, 2012, 2008, and 1997, all finalists are White authors. In essence, the 23 texts by diverse authors are spread out over 16 years, representing an average of close to one and half authors during those years. We found that, in 2013, 2010, 2007, 2002, 2001, 1999, and 1996, more than one text written by non-White authors were recognized. Among those seven years of more than one ethnic finalist, only three years, 2013, 2007, and 1996, have non-White winners. In 2013, Cynthia Kadohata's *The Thing about Luck* (Kadohata & Kuo, 2013) wins the award. While Kadohata is not the first Asian author to be nominated, she is the first Asian (Japanese American) from any subcategory to win. In 2007, Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (Alexie & Forney, 2007) is the winner, and in 1996 Victor Martinez's *Parrot in the Oven—Mi Vida* (Martinez, 1996) is the winner. We note Sherman Alexie is the first Native American to win the NBA, although Louis Erdrich, who wrote *The Birchbark House* (Erdrich, 1999) was the first Native American nominated as a finalists in 1999. Victor Martinez is the only nominated Mexican American in the first 20 years of the NBA, winning in the award's inaugural year, 1996. It is noteworthy that the NBA has both a Native American and a Mexican American winner, but there is a lack of inclusion within the award. In short, these two authors run the risk of existing as token inclusions in the classroom if and when teachers new to the genre of YAL look to this award

Table 1
Ethnicity of Authors

	Finalists	Winners
White	77	15
African American	10	1
Chinese American	2	0
Native American	2	1
Armenian American	1	0
Haitian	1	0
Japanese American	1	1
Korean	1	0
Korean American	1	0
Mexican American	1	1
Palestinian	1	0
Polish American	1	0
Vietnamese American	1	1

for guidance. We document that the NBA has not nominated any Native Americans as finalists for eight years (not since 2007), and has not recognized any Mexican Americans since the first year of the NBA (1996). Followers of young adult literature might wonder about the absence of Joseph Bruchac, Pam Muñoz Ryan, Benjamin Alire Saenz, and Matt de la Peña among others.

In the last five years, the NBA selected Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming* (2014), Cynthia Kadohata's *The Thing about Luck* (2013), and Thanhha Lai's *Inside Out and Back Again* (2011) as winners. If we look at the 20 winning texts, the first non-White winner was awarded in 1996, the year the NBA started. It took 10 years to have another non-White winner, Sherman Alexie, in 2007. However, the next gap is smaller, three years, to see the next winner in this category, Thanhha Lai, in 2011, and we observed that a non-White authors won the NBA more frequently in the last five years than the during the first 15.

When we look at African American and Asian American authors' award nominating experiences in the NBA, we see different pictures than the ones created by looking at the Native Americans and the lone Latino author. Looking at African American authors in the NBA history, we found that the first nominated African American was Walter Dean Myers for *Monster* (Myers & Myers, 1999) in 1999, but it took 15 years for the announcement of the first African American winner, Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming* (2014), in 2014. Though there were 10 nominated titles from 1999 to 2014, there was only one winner. It is also noteworthy that of the ten books, Woodson and Myers wrote six (three each) of the nominated books and Williams-Garcia wrote two.[2] While ten books were nominated, they represent the work of only five authors. Anyone familiar with African American authors of YAL might wonder about the absence of several important authors—Sharon Draper, Sharon Flake, Nikki Grimes, and Christopher Paul Curtis among others.

Asian American authors' award-nominating experience is also unique. The first Asian American nominee was An Na's *A Step from Heaven* (2001) in 2001, but it was 10 years before Thanhha Lai's *Inside Out and Back Again* (2011) won the award. Since the inception of the award, there are only six titles with authors who can be described as Asian in any manner beginning in 1996 with Helen Kim's *The Long Season of Rain* (Kim, 1996). The next appearance of an Asian author is five years later in 2001 with the South Korean born American author An Na's *A Step from Heaven* (2001). The next arrival is in another five years later with Asian American author Gene Luen Yang's *American Born Chinese* (2006). After that there was another five year wait until Vietnamese American Thanhha Lai's *Inside Out and Back* (2001) was nominated and then wins the award in 2011. Only two more books by Asian authors are nominated and both in the same year, 2013. First, Gene Luen Yang received a second nomination for his novel *Boxers and Saints* (Yang & Pien, 2013) and second, Japanese American Cynthia Kadohata received a nomination for *The Thing about Luck* (2013) and it won the award.

We note, additionally, that outside of these large racial/ethnic minorities within

the United States (African American, Asian American, Mexican American, and Native American), other minority authors were nominated but did not win. For example, the NBA nominated the first and only Korean author in 1996, the first and only Polish American author in 1998, the first and only Armenian American in 2000, the first and only Palestinian-American in 2002, and the first and only Haitian-American in 2007.

Race/Ethnicity of Protagonists

We were also curious about the ethnicity of the protagonists. Of the 100 texts in the finalists list, we identified 45 White protagonists, 37 non-White protagonists, and 18 protagonists with undetermined ethnicity. (See table 2 ethnicity of protagonist).

Except for the 18 unidentified protagonists, the majority, 46, of the remaining 82 titles featured White protagonists. In order to see the racial/ethnic representation in NBA clearly, we felt it is necessary to juxtapose the ethnicity of authors and protagonists in our discussion, because the academic debate on who should write about certain cultures (i.e. cultural insiders or outsiders [Cai, 2002]) is ongoing.

Of the remaining 36 texts featuring non-White protagonists, 16 portrayed African Americans. We found, however, that the NBA only has 10 titles written by African Americans, and we explored this inconsistency. We found that the six titles highlighting African American protagonists were written by White authors. White authors wrote about African Americans, and slightly over one third, or six of the 16 titles presenting African Americans protagonists were written by cultural outsiders. We found that there are three titles featuring Africans, and they were all written by White authors. Two of these titles were written by the same author, Eliot Schrefer, and one by Nancy Farmer.

Table 2
Ethnicity of Protagonist

	Finalists	Winners
White	45	9
Undetermined	18	2
African American	16	3
Asian	5	2
Asian American	4	1
African	3	0
Native American	3	1
Armenian	1	0
Haitian American	1	0
Mexican	1	1
Mexican American	1	1
Middle Eastern	1	0
Polish	1	0

When we look at the winning texts starring African American main characters, there are a total of 3 texts. *Brown Girl Dreaming* (Woodson, 2014) is the only text, however, written by a cultural insider. The other two titles (Phillip Hoose's *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* [2009] and M. T. Anderson's *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, V1* [2006])were written by White authors.

Looking at the time span of all the nominated and winning texts, we found gaps. The first book featuring an African American was nominated in 1999, Walter Dean Myers' *Monster* (Myers & Myers, 1999). The first book starring an African American protagonist to win the NBA was not until 2006 when M. T. Anderson's *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, V1* (2006) won. Those who follow the NBA, however, waited until 2014 to witness the first book written by and about an African American to win.

The cultural insider and outsider issue also echoes the award-winning experiences of books portraying Asian American authors. In the NBA award, no cultural outsiders have written about Asian American cultures. All four books starring Asian American protagonists were written by cultural insiders, Asian Americans of several subgroups. We did discover some cultural outsiders wrote about Asian culture—a distinction we are making that signifies books written about protagonists in Asian countries, not Asian Americans within the United States. Of the five texts featuring Asian protagonists, three were written by White authors and two by cultural insiders. Two of these texts, *Never Fall Down* (2012) and *Sold* (2006) were written by Patricia McCormick; the first features a Cambodian and the second a Nepalese. The final text in the group written by a White author is *Homeless Bird* (2000) by Gloria Whelan, the winner in 2000.

As we looked at all the texts introducing Asians and Asian American together, we also found gaps across the time span. The first text featuring Asians was nominated in 1996, the first year NBA started, and four years later the first book with an Asian protagonist won. It has been 16 years since *Homeless Bird* (Whelan, 2000) won the award, and since then, there have been two books nominated with Asian protagonists in 2006 and 2012, but no winners. The first book starring an Asian American, An Na's *A Step from Heaven* (2001), was nominated in 2001. It took 10 years to observe the first book featuring an Asian American, Thanhha Lai's *Inside Out and Back Again* (2011), to win the NBA in 2011.

Of the three books starring Native Americans protagonists, two were written by cultural insiders, which are Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (Alexie & Forney, 2007) and Louise Erdrich's *The Birchbark House* (1999). The other one portraying Native Americans, Debby Dahl Edwardson's *My Name is Not Easy* (2011), is written by a White author. We discovered that books featuring Haitian American, Middle Eastern, Armenian, Polish, and Mexican American protagonists are all written by cultural insiders, except one book featuring a Mexican, Nancy Farmer's *The House of Scorpion* (2002). We also noted that

author Nancy Farmer also wrote a 1996 nominated text, *A Girl Named Disaster* (1996), from a cultural outsider perspective.

Implications

We also realize that many titles written by racially/ethnically diverse groups involve characters struggling with issues of identity, social inequality, poverty, and other difficulties. For the purposes of our study and to represent the 23 percent of texts that were written by non-White authors, we created a category called Culturally Relevant Texts (See Table 3).By culturally relevant, we mean those texts that are written about a culture by cultural insider and engage students within that culture, who would not otherwise not see their culture reflected in a book. Subsequently, even though some authors have written books about a culture that is not their own in an open-minded and balanced way, we have excluded these texts from our category. We recognize and applaud their literary merit, their usefulness in the classroom, and their value as an introduction to outside readers to cultures they do not experience. Like fiction on any level and for any audience, part of a text's value exists in its ability to offer vicarious experience. Nevertheless, the purpose of the study is to focus attention on how both the nominated and winning texts in the 20 year history of the NBA represent diversity. To conclude, we focus on what the group of culturally relevant books show us beyond the obvious quantitative data we have presented and discussed above (See Table 3: Culturally Relevant Texts).

Although mainstream YAL often deals with issues of identity, because adolescents of color are more aware/reflective of identity than their dominant culture counterparts (Tatum, 1997) key among the issues in this group of 23 texts that we have labelled as Culturally Relevant Texts is identity. Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming* (2014), for example, illustrated her struggles of growing up as a black girl in America and how that shaped her identity throughout. Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Story of a Part-Time Indian* (Alexie & Forney, 2007) also demonstrated a funny, but painfully real, story of how a Native American boy struggles to find a better life through education and experiences off of the reservation. Titles about Asian Americans also include identity struggles. Most of the titles in this collection are immigrant stories depicting protagonists struggle as immigrants in the U.S. An Na's *A Step from Heaven* (2001), an example of this, portrays a Korean girl as she transitions from being Korean to being American; Gene Luen Yang's *American Born Chinese* (Yang & Pien, 2006) rendered an American born Chinese boy's confrontations with heritage, family expectation, and assimilation.

One of the problematic findings, in terms of what this group of texts might say to the large population of students in urban and metropolitan communities with growing diverse populations, is its depiction of impoverished settings. If teachers choose books from our Culturally Relevant Texts list, are they still choosing books

that focus on adolescents who not only struggle with identity, but seem to do so in challenging, racially charged settings, with depictions of poverty, and opportunities that might appear surreal given the bleak surroundings? Can these books also serve as beacons of light and possibility? We believe they can, but adolescents also need to learn to navigate these difficulties with the aide of culturally competent teachers. We continue to argue that these texts are of high literary quality and can be nuanced in theme, structure, and presentation. We will also advocate for more diverse books with a wider variety of settings, characters, and situations that more accurately represent a large range of racial/ethnic realities.

To further illustrate our findings, we point to Sherman Alexie's (2011) well-known online article entitled "Why the Best Kids Books Are Written in Blood." He argues good stories are always depicting the painful life. Literature, thusly, should be written to give children weapons to survive their painful life instead of providing protection for children to escape the reality. In response to Sherman Alexie's opinion, we found that many of our Culturally Relevant Texts could be considered

Table 3
Culturally Relevant Texts
*Indicates a Winning Title

Book Title	Author
19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East	Nye, Naomi Shihab
A Step from Heaven	Na, An
American Born Chinese	Yang, Gene Luen
Autobiography of My Dead Brother	Myers, Walter Dean
Boxers & Saints	Yang, Gene Luen
*Brown Girl Dreaming**	Woodson, Jacqueline
Carver: A Life in Poems	Nelson, Marilyn
Forgotten Fire	Bagdasarian, Adam
Hush	Woodson, Jacqueline
Inside Out and Back Again	Lai, Thanhha
Jumped	Williams-Garcia, Rita
Lockdown	Myers, Walter Dean
Locomotion	Woodson, Jacqueline
Monster	Myers, Walter Dean
No Pretty Pictures: A Child of War	Lobel, Anita
One Crazy Summer	Williams-Garcia, Rita
*Parrot in the Oven: Mi Vida**	Martinez, Victor
*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian**	Alexie, Sherman
The Birchbark House	Erdrich, Louise
The Legend of Buddy Bush	Moses, Shelia P.
The Long Season of Rain	Kim, Helen
The Thing about Luck	Kadohata, Cynthia
Touching Snow	Felin, Sindy M.

as stories "written in blood" that reflect children's lives and provide them the tools to traverse the challenges they encounter.

As we discussed the findings, at various points we were confounded by too many singletons; too many examples of a single text to represent a group. Our primary example is Victor Martinez. A span of 20 years is too long for him to stand as a representative of the large portion of Latino students in America. Not to mention that they are not only Mexican, but Costa Rican, Honduran, Guatemalan, Peruvian, Brazilian, and so on. We struggled with the term Asian American as well. We do not believe that Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Laotian, or Cambodian, etc., peoples have the same experiences. We feel that returning to our former quick suggestion to "examine the award winner in the NBA" is insufficient. Instead it seems essential to direct them to the Pura Belpre Award, the Coretta Scott King Award, the John Steptoe Award, Printz Award, the Stonewall award, among many others, that focus on the contributions of diverse authors. For individuals to develop as culturally competent teachers, we encourage wide reading, to explore multicultural approaches to teaching and discussing complex problems in a diverse society.

Given the demographics of America's teaching force, many of our practicing teachers continue to be White middle class females who find themselves as cultural outsiders in the schools they teach. We claim it as inappropriate to offer book lists that are 75% White authors and only 25% diverse if they teach classes that can be 40%, 50% or even 100% populated by students of color.

Notes

[1] A permanent link to NBA and analysis for this paper: http://www.yawednesday.com/national-book-award-for-young-peoples-literature.html

[2] While planning the coding, we did not consider how frequently a given author has a book nominated. However, as noted in the discussion of African American authors, the issue becomes important. We discovered that 18 authors received multiple nominations. There were three authors, Woodson, Myers, and Sheinkin, with three nominations and 15 with 2 each. Among this group, six authors, or a full third, have won the national book award and none of them won for their first nomination. Indeed, Woodson won with her third nomination. Both Myers and Sheikin, even with three nominations, have not won.

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Following Pebbles by Moonlight
Elementary Students Shed Light on Power, Peace, and Violence in Response to the Classic Tale *Hansel and Gretel*

Molly Quinn & Debbie Sonu

Abstract

This paper, drawing from a multi-site qualitative study in New York City elementary classrooms, considers student ideas about power, peace and violence in response to shared reading and discussion of the classic folk tale, Hansel and Gretel. From a critical literacy perspective, the construction of agency and subjectivity within this context in relation to such ideas via engagement with literature and in literacy practice is explored.

Key Words: Peace and violence, critical literacy, elementary education, reading response, children and folktales, read aloud, peace education.

Introduction

But when Hansel and Gretel saw that the birds had eaten all of the breadcrumbs they had dropped, they knew that they were lost. Wandering through the dark thick forest in search of home, tired and weary and hungry, at last they came upon a clearing, and a lovely cottage made of nothing but candy…

For many children, being read or told folk tales continues to be a treasured pastime. Each one of us, in our own way, can recall being tucked away amid the blankets and pillows, enamored with the magical and mystical encounter between good and evil, the 'once upon a time' beginning and the satisfaction when good

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prevailed, even if somewhat violently. If memory serves, too, the versions upon which we were raised were not the more whitewashed ones of today—birds pecked out Cinderella's evil step sisters' eyes, the three little pigs cooked up the wolf and ate him, and yes, Gretel pushed the old woman of the candy cottage into the oven and burnt her to a crisp. Of course, what child, what child in you or me, wouldn't love the delightful image of finding ourselves before a house made of delicious sweets? Or the heroism of a young sibling who triumphs over the wicked witch? Or the rewards of jewels and treasures after a harrowing escape? When captivated by the story, the reality of the violence disturbs none.

Thus, it was no great surprise that the story of *Hansel and Gretel* (Lesser, 1984) came to mind as a textual tool through which to learn from and with children about power, peace, and violence, and the potential relationship of such to our educational life and pedagogical living. In this paper, we share young children's understanding of this story. During a focus group session, we read aloud the pages of this beautifully illustrated book, crowded in by the eager faces of the young children we had become familiar with over the course of three months. We hoped for them to be agents in the deconstructive and reconstructive practices of engaging literacy as both subjective experience and political phenomenon (Moje & Lewis, 2007). Critical literacy frameworks (Jones, 2012) grounded us towards the aim of purposefully cultivating conditions that make possible the construction of subjects who feel enabled to discuss the embodiment of peace and violence through the characters presented in the timely classic *Hansel and Gretel*.

This paper draws from a larger multi-site research study in four elementary schools across New York City, in which we designed a series of classroom observations, focus group experiences and individual semi-structured interviews with young elementary-aged children and their teachers. In hopes of shedding light on children's understandings of peace and violence, and additionally what such understandings might mean for cultivating classrooms for peace and nonviolence, we connected with teachers dedicated to such endeavors. Through such, we worked with approximately twenty children between the ages of 7-11, who in school hallways and after-school classrooms would share with us their musings on peace and violence. In total, four focus group interviews were conducted in which children drew images and concept maps of peace, created peaceful characters and their nemesis, then developed and plotted stories. The second of these focus groups involved a reading and analysis of the coveted fairy tale, *Hansel and Gretel*.

This paper first briefly discusses folktales as a unique genre of children's literature, particularly in relation to *Hansel and Gretel*, and engages critical literacy and notions of the subject as one way to account for lived experience in textual practices. In following, our discussion turns toward the children's responses to *Hansel and Gretel*, particularly how they attend to character development and analysis and their concerns over power, peace and violence. In this paper, we present their possible explanations of the story, the oft-times complex and contradictory appearances of

moral dilemma and decision, as well as the villainous to the peculiar, and in doing so, seek to elicit a larger conversation on the pedagogical possibility available when addressing issues of violence in the classroom and with children.

Once Upon A Time

Hansel and Gretel is a story involving hunger, poverty, betrayal and death. Amid demonstrations of power and violence, it is also a narrative of victorious and peaceful conclusion—embracing the typical "happily ever after" fairy tale ending. It tells of two children, Hansel and Gretel, who are left deep in the forest by their parents, after their mother persuades their father that such abandonment is necessary if they are not all to starve from poverty. Once in the forest, the children happen upon a candy house of a witch who eats children. As they hungrily partake of its sweets, they are greeted and invited in by the witch, only to be enslaved by her. The witch forces Gretel to labor, and keeps Hansel in a cage, fattening him up in order to cook him later for her dinner. Scheming to prepare and eat Gretel first, the old woman asks the girl to see if the oven is hot enough for Hansel. Outwitting the witch, Gretel shoves her into the oven instead, and frees Hansel. Gathering up all of the witch's treasures for themselves, the children are at last found by their father who has been looking for them. They learn also of their mother's death, yet the tale ends with a scene of happy wealth and reunion.

When first abandoned by their parents, Hansel and Gretel make their way home by the light of the moon, which shone on the pebble path Hansel had created. Our work here has been similar, seeking to follow pebbles by moonlight, the trails of thought and meaning illuminated in and through our dialogues with children. No full light of the sun exists, nor clearly marked paths herein, yet as we seek a way toward some present home of understanding, a new trail can be gleaned—if even marked by eaten breadcrumbs, conflicting parents, unanswered questions and ambiguous returns.

Particularly since the landmark article by Larrick (1965) entitled, "The All-White World of Children's Books," there has been concerted effort to expose children to a diversity of stories from a diversity of cultural traditions (Yokota, 1993). Issuing from intuitions over the profound relationship between literature and identity, cultural variants of more mainstream tales came to once dominate discussions in the field of multiculturalism and children's literature (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Yet, the abiding appeal and influence of folk stories, particularly fairy tales, remain generally unquestioned (Zipes 2006, 2008). Perhaps due to the inspiration of Walt Disney, Pixar, and the global film and entertainment industry, a good deal of folk literature has become immortalized by and for many generations on the "big screen,"—e.g., *Cinderella*, *Beauty and the Beast*, etc.—thus rendering them exempt from a concern that this literature, and the failure to critically engage students with it, may serve to normalize, validate and propagate a landscape of structural and cultural violence that has become a specter of American life.

Scholarship on fairy tales and folktales, a genre of literature to which most if not all American children become familiar, has been aimed at better understanding this enduring interest and influence. Some such literature has focused on the important social function served by these narratives, in relation to cultural evolution or the "culture industry", even the ways in which these stories illuminate the fissures between truth and falsehood in present society (e.g., Zipes, 2002, 2006, 2008). Up until more recent times, a larger and more longstanding body of work, largely rooted in psychoanalysis, has drawn attention to the symbolic, even archetypal, dimensions of such tales—articulating patterns of the human psyche, primitive expressions of a collective unconscious. Herein, the process of individuation, for example, may be elucidated, offering guidance for self- transformation and -growth. Aspects of a folk or fairy tale may represent aspects of a child's experienced personality, internal processes (i.e., the id, ego or superego), or significant others in his or her life (e.g., Bettleheim, 1976; Fromm, 1951).

From such interpretive approaches, the violence prevalent in many of these stories may have a certain therapeutic value, in that it assists the unconscious in mediating between bodily and social desires, much like as in dreams—in fulfilling fantasies not to be pursued in the actual course of living (Haase, 2000). Some research, though, directed specifically at violent scenarios in such literature (e.g., Collins-Standley, 1996), and response to or reception of them, has challenged such a view, drawing attention to the ways in which these stories compel the suspension of judgment, and seduce one into authorizing violence, into receiving as normative a world, for instance, wherein males are dominant and females are inferior, accommodating and in need of men to rescue or rule them (e.g., Katz, 1977; Wood, 2001). Along this line, contemporary work, thus, has further sought to critically analyze and address the complex and disconcerting messages the tales may convey, particularly about race and gender (e.g., Baker-Sperry & Grauerholz, 2003; Bourke, 2011; Davies & Saltmarsh, 2007; Hurley, 2005; Tatar, 2003; Temple, 2005). Additionally, as more attention has been brought to the violence endemic in many of these folk stories, new versions have been created with less objectionable scenes, and characters of various ethnicities have also begun to appear. Storylines, however, are in many ways largely still preserved and restored, and investigations into peace and violence through the use of such literature, particularly in local contexts, remain sparse and underdeveloped.

Literature, Literacy & the Literate Subject

Literature, literacy, and literate subjectivities are and have been central features of curriculum and pedagogy in elementary classrooms and much has been made by scholars in the way of education and schooling as a reflection and perpetuation of society's values and purposes (i.e., Apple, 2004, 2006; Asher, 2009; Freire, 1970/1995). This focus on social context comes as a push away from understandings of literacy as an individual cognitive process and has incited a conceptual turn

toward more critical and sociocultural explanations that focus attention on the social embeddedness of literacy practices and discourses. While literacy can be understood as technical skills and acquisition, proponents of critical literacy, a term we employ for the purpose of this paper, argue that not only do texts play an important role in the construction of human subjects, given their particular histories and discursive circumstances, but also that texts have the potential to enact identities insofar as they can be used as tools for self-formation and consciousness, even for liberation against social marginalization and injustice (Freire, 1970/1995).

Most certainly not neutral nor purely technical, critical literacy is intimately tied to notions of self, identity, and subject formation, tied to the particular world-view or condition within which an individual is constituted, formed, or interpolated, ever changing yet rooted. In her important work on gender and literacy, Davies (2006) explains how Butler's theory of subjectification illuminates literacy practices in ways that account for the postmodern concern for interiority and the psychic life of the subject. The individual subject, here, is made possible through the paradoxical act of submission to a condition that exists before, during, and will exist after the life of the subject. These forces, cultural models, attitudes, beliefs and values, precede and exceed the subject; it is the individual whose formation depends upon the mastery of and submission to these specific conditions. Therefore, we each as individuals enter into and through, and are dependent upon, a condition of possibility that presents us with the peculiarities of our existence, the external and social forces that press upon our very being, those that we bring "to the table" when engaging with text.

The literate subject—in this case, the young elementary-aged child—will bring forth through his or her engagement with the text a subjecthood made possible through engagement with the discursive practices and cultural models of her or his condition. Therefore, the meanings brought to a reading of Hansel and Gretel, for instance, are not randomly conjured but rather pulled from the 'available fabric' that forms the base from which an individual person speaks. Yet at the same time, this does not mean subjecthood should be understood as deterministic and reductive, nor are readers passive to any norms that dictate and define their future by pre-conceived social, political, or economic terms. On the contrary, subjects, including the young children in this study, carry the potential to subvert and eclipse the social forces of their condition. Instead of simply absorbing the lessons presented to them, in part through folktales and storytelling, they carry the potential to exercise a kind of agency, a radically conditioned agency (Davies, 2006), through which they critically examine the conditions of their existence with the agency to resist and disrupt the powers that act upon them.

In sum, the agentic subject exists paradoxically due to this fundamental dependency on the social condition that at the same time produces and sustains the ability to resist and be otherwise. Such ambiguity and contradiction lay at the heart of critical literacy frameworks that seek to understand this relationship between the subject and its condition as constructed through literature and literacy practices.

While literacy practices have come to symbolize for many a tool for liberation and social equity, it is also important to recognize that these discourses may in fact work to normalize and naturalize the very unjust practices that critical literacy proponents attempt to overturn. A necessary step in opening the possibility for agency amongst teachers and students is a careful examination of the meanings that are made when attempting to make sense of the social world, in this case the meanings drawn around peace and violence.

Context and Methodology

We began just such work at four elementary classrooms taught by New York City schoolteachers who each in their own way, by their own account, intentionally sought to take up the pedagogical pursuit of peace with their students. Over the course of three intense months, we visited classrooms on a weekly basis, collected student artifacts, conducted a series of four focus group interviews, and individually interviewed approximately twenty children ranging from 7 to 11 years of age. During these focus group sessions, we invited these children to share and draw their ideas and experiences of peace and its opposite, create their own peace and opposite-of-peace characters, tell stories about these characters, and take and talk about photos of peace or its opposite as lived in their daily lives. Here we focus on one of the 40-minute focus group meetings in which children responded to a shared reading of *Hansel and Gretel*. This focus group was conducted in four classrooms—two first-grade, one-third grade and one-fourth grade; respectively, in a charter school in East Harlem, a public school in the Upper West Side, one on the Lower East Side and the other, in the South Bronx.

These schools—and these classrooms—share similar demographics as well: primarily low-income students of color (mostly black and Hispanic, qualifying for free lunch) in overcrowded conditions and somewhat stressed as a result of school test score deficiencies. This 'statistical' portrait, however fails to illuminate the cultural riches and commitments of these communities, or the gifts and interests of the children in these classrooms. The first grade co-teachers in East Harlem, specifically, oriented their classroom community and curriculum around cultivating peacemakers. The other first grade co-teachers honed in on language and dialogue as a form of conflict resolution and agreement making. The third grade teacher pursued peace largely via rules and principles for an orderly life in school together. The fourth grade co-teachers engaged students in inquiry projects around violence in their neighborhood and what they might do to address it. Student participation was largely based on student interest and parental consent, as well as sensitivity to diverse representation (i.e., considerations of gender, ethnicity, background, perspective) and capacity for participation (i.e., willingness to speak and engage). Additionally, as we introduced the text of *Hansel and Gretel* to our participants in each class, we realized that these students also shared a lack of knowledge or

exposure to this specific fairy tale, particularly the traditional version—a few albeit mentioning an upcoming movie of that name about a witch-hunting duo, and one a remake, called *Hansel and Pretzel*—the influence of popular culture and media demonstrated generally more in their conversations than that of books.

Semi-structured protocols were developed prior to engaging the children, but as in qualitative research, lines of inquiry arose in the moment of curiosity or confusion and the children's interests and explanations became important leads to follow. Therefore, while we entered with an interest in understanding how children explained complex moral dilemmas and where peaceful and violent behaviors were rooted—poverty as the cause of child abandonment, the play of gender in violence, or places of peace found within the storyline—the children excitedly burst into personal anecdotes and flowered the tale with tangents of their own. We listened carefully to the course of their discussions, struggling at times with reeling the children back, deciding in the moment on what questions to forego and through which to probe deeper.

At the end of each focus group, we, as researchers, held lengthy debriefs about these complications, reflecting over the quality and content of our data, developing ways to enrich the conversation next time. These reflective researcher conversations were also audiotaped and transcribed, with all focus group sessions. Individually, we conducted an interpretive analysis across all data sets, which aimed at elucidating themes of peace and violence as well as distinctions that may have occurred due to gender, classroom context, or age. In other papers, we used cross-case analysis to purposefully differentiate among the four classrooms, but here, we were more interested in how the characters and events of *Hansel and Gretel* were understood by elementary-aged children more generally, and specifically in relation to power, peace and violence. Despite certain limits to such an approach and analysis, we found that our conversations with the children veered in this way, and were committed to listening to and learning from them, and the direction emerging via such dialogue. We welcomed this line of inquiry as the structure for the paper and present the data in this way with parenthetic descriptors at the end of each child's name. All names have been changed to assure anonymity.

Developing Character: Storied Persons

Gretel

Looking across the data, the children exhibited keen interest in the peculiarities of each character, who also brought them into the story, and more deeply, into conversation after we read it. Each had a good deal to say about these characters, particularly that of the sister Gretel and the bravery she exhibited when saving her brother. Framed as a heroine, children had less to say about her having pushed the witch and cooked her in the oven, a scene otherwise gruesome, and instead construed the moment as one of individual power and agency, affirmed by the children

to be a favorite. (The other favorite was when the children came upon and ate from the candy house, wherein they both, albeit somewhat thoughtlessly, demonstrate a capacity to attend to their own needs as well.) "The peaceful is killing the witch," remarks Kenisha (7 June 2011, Lower East Side), a third-grader, associating peace with Gretel's prowess and justifying her behavior; "…she did the right thing because she didn't want her brother to die." In seeking an explanation that defends Gretel's actions, first-grader Bill (2 June 2011, East Harlem) credits Gretel with certain emotions and intentions, going even further to suggest heartfelt remorse in the aftermath of her retribution. Bill continues: "Gretel, she felt bad for killing the witch." His classmate Parnes adds, "Gretel would have never done that if the witch wouldn't be so mean. We all know that" (2 June 2011, East Harlem).

Some students also insert themselves into the story as Gretel, and more empowered than Gretel actually is in the telling, Kenisha (7 June 2011, Lower East Side) claims, "Nope, I'll say (to the witch, about serving her): 'No, unless you let my brother go!'" However, while Kenisha holds Gretel in high regard as the redemptive protagonist of the story, she also expresses surprise that Gretel, as "always a nicer little girl," was the one to kill the witch. She adds, "Boys dominate girls, that's the story." While she admits that girls "cat fight" sometimes, her peer, Aimee (7 June 2011, Lower East Side), counters: "Girls only do good stuff." And Wayne, another second-grade classmate concurs, bringing boys into the discussion, and adding: "Boys are like evil people! I'm not evil, I'm just saying" (7 June 2011, Lower East Side). Whether archetypally or stereotypically in stories or in actual life, it is insinuated that violence, perhaps, is more affiliated with men and masculine power, even so far as saying that acts of violence can be more naturally understood as germane to their nature. Gretel, as the female character, is most highlighted as a person of peace and the character with whom the children most identify, even though it could be said she engages in an act of violence, and the most overt one of the story. Masculinity and femininity are constructed in traditional oppositional and hierarchical terms, reflective of the discursive patterns and cultural norms present within the condition of the children's subjecthood. Reductive in their understanding, the children reinforce essentialist claims that ignore within-group or across-group differences and rather submit to the gendered subjectivities that ascribe violence to boys even when such theories are countered by the actions of Gretel (as well as of the witch, and even the abandoning mother).

Especially in the fourth grade class, the talk of violence and the deeds of Gretel generate much excitement and even laughter. The fourth-grader Jason, in affirming Gretel for her fearlessness, remarks, "I want to be the little girl, punching the grandma like that" (26 May 2011, South Bronx). Some of the younger children, too, comment on it being 'funny'—the witch being burned up, and Hansel and Gretel eating up the house so that they might not have anywhere to live (1 June 2011, Upper West Side; 7 June 2011, East Harlem). Herein, students are mostly satisfied and not terribly disturbed by the killing or by the death of

the witch. Gretel is a character that is good and peaceful because justice, either as retaliation or self-defense, is realized through her. "Just because they are bad people," says third-grade Aimee (7 June 2011, Lower East Side), "it is a little bit okay to kill them." While the word 'justice' is never actually uttered by the students, an abiding theme of fairness and justice pervades their discussion of Hansel and Gretel. This sense of justice that is somehow satisfied in the old woman's death is one that resonates with Lawrence Kohlberg's (Kohlberg and Lickona, 1976) pre-conventional and conventional stages of moral development. In this theory, the goodness or badness of moral action is determined not by the meaning of that action but by its physical consequences. Therefore, the actions of Gretel are judged by the efficacy of her heroism, not by the violent means through which she arrives at such liberation. These cultural models for goodness and badness are gauged in accordance with how well they instrumentally satisfy one's own needs, needs that are met through notions of fairness, reciprocity, and a social order oriented around reward and punishment, 'an eye for an eye' and the consequences that correspond to particular actions.

The Witch

The old lady, or witch, not only acts violently, imprisoning Hansel and setting Gretel into forced labor, but relishes in the violence, actively fattening up the boy and deceiving the girl in order to cook and eat them. To all the students in the study, she is clearly 'bad' (Aimee, 7 June 11, Lower East Side), representing the opposite of peace and a power at odds with peace. Thus, for many, a favorite part of the story included not only Gretel pushing the witch in the oven but also the actual fact of the old woman getting cooked and killed (John, 26 May 2011, South Bronx) herself. Nearly unanimously, too, there is the confirmation that she deserves to, and must, die in the story because: "the grandma was mean and wanted to cook the kids…" (Bill, 2 June 2011, East Harlem), or as third-grader Kaya (7 June 2011, Lower East Side) puts it: "because she is mean. She's nasty. She's violent and she's vain." Perhaps students most easily adopt this view because the actions of the old woman are physical and direct, as different from the cumulative traumas endured from abandonment or poverty as concerning the parents and children in the story. The old lady who is in the story identified as a witch, essentially a stranger, is also presented with no relationship to the children or parents in the story—though, oddly, some of the students do call her 'the grandma' when speaking of her.

There is also no hint given in the text itself of any possible reasons or extenuating circumstances that may compel the witch's ill will and evil purpose toward Hansel and Gretel, although a most interesting discussion arises among the third graders (7 June 2011, Lower East Side) about the witch's story, in which they suggest that the real culpability for the witch's evil may lie with the witch's own mother. Along these lines, three students discussed:

> Kenisha: I think the witch was a little baby girl that was so nice, but she saw her mom say, "I don't like my children", and she told the baby to be an evil baby and she went up to be an old witch.

> Kaya: …the mom told her to be bad and then when she grew up and she started to be bad and boil people and do what her mother said, but her mom was dead so she probably thought that "I should do the right thing so that my mom can be happy."

> Aimee: …and now she feels so bad that she turned even more wicked, and since she was so bad when she was small, now she killed [the children].

Here, the children freely create a storyline in explanation of the witch's character, placing the witch within a context that helps them make meaning of the unfolding plot. They bring theories of motivation and human behavior to what they observe, as well as the capacity to theorize on their own, invoking their knowledge of cultural norms as they make sense of the world and the actors within it (Wellman, 1990). Through a kind of collaborative co-authorship, they conclude that the maternal figure in the life of the witch is culpable of her propensity for violence. The potential for Hansel and Gretel to become 'bad' is there too, they hesitantly consider, given the meanness of their own mother—but Kenisha, at last, finds a way to redeem them from such a fate, thinking perhaps not, because their mother "went coo-koo; they ran away and went into the woods."

A secondary explanation for the witch's depravity, one of which the fourth graders spoke of more frequently than the younger children, was economic hardship. Jason (26 May 2011, South Bronx), at the first sight of the old woman and not yet knowing of her treasure, declares: "I can't be trusting poor peoples. They be looking like that." Though nothing in the story explicitly points to the witch's poverty, nor is a causal link between economics and violence hinted in the story (unless perhaps the purposeful abandonment of the children by their parents due to poverty is deemed violent), some children seem to consider that poverty and hunger might serve as a disruption to peace, even compelling one to act violently. The issue and question of trust appears quite profoundly for the children particularly its role in establishing genuinely peaceful relations—the children here trusted the witch, who, it turned out, was not at all trustworthy.

The children in this study also exhibit a strong faith in and affirmation of justice, wherein one receives one's just desert for one's actions, and a belief that revenge and violence is justified and even peaceful when taken against an individual who has committed an act considered bad or evil. However limited or primitive its conception, children advanced and commented on particular plot lines which shed light on the necessity for consequences and included some line of reckoning: John's (26 May 2011, South Bronx) plan to kill the parents off early; Aimee's (7 June 2011, Lower East Side) idea for the children to stab the witch with a knife instead of burning her up; and Latoya's (2 June 2011, East Harlem) suggestion that: "They could have just smacked her and went away. So you get payback!"

Some of the children deemed it only right that the children take the witch's treasures after they have killed her. Kenisha (7 June 2011, Lower East Side) explained, "Because she needs to repay them. She be like, 'Give me them! Give me them! Get some water! I'll make you boil fat!'" Even though some were saddened by the death of the mother, these specific children alluded to reprisal fulfilled therein as well. Bill (2 June 2011, East Harlem), in a reading of the parents, predicted early on: "When they were mean to their kids, they died. That is what I think." In conversation emerging from talk about the story, some children even spoke of relatives in jail. Of her relative, Kenisha (7 June 2011, Lower East Side) concluded: "He needed a consequence." Here, Kenisha draws from her own life story to make sense of the characters present in the book.

The Mother

While the mother is not spared judgment, the students, especially the younger ones, demonstrate more ambivalence or conflict in making such verdicts. Described as "being bad," (Grace, 2 June 2011, East Harlem) and as having "bad ideas" (Parnes, 2 June 2011, East Harlem), this description of the mother delineates her somewhat from the witch who was simply described as bad. In some cases, the children rationalize the mother's actions, introducing feelings on her part to mitigate the severity of her intentions and postulating alternate story lines. In commenting on the character of the mother, the children first express shock and a great deal of surprise in hearing that the mother wants to abandon her children. The first graders, almost collectively and immediately ask "Why?" (1 June 2011, Upper West Side; 2 June 2011, East Harlem). Among the fourth graders, Jason (26 May 2011, South Bronx) interjects, "Unh! I want to go like this—'*Mom, why you left me for?*'" and John retorts, "*How dare you!*" John, who often turns his focus to violence, even relishing and finding excitement in violence, comments: "I would have just killed the parents right there. I would have stabbed them in the head and took their money." There are also responses of anger and thoughts of retaliation, such as Kenisha's cries (7 June 2011, Lower East Side), "If that was my mom, I'd be like, '*I don't love you anymore—Good Bye!*'"

The mother, as a principal figure responsible for the creation of peace, is also one protected by the children through reluctance to name her as fully and indubitably bad. For example, in condemning the mother's behavior, considerations are also brought into play concerning the family's plight of hunger and poverty. To this end, Jason (26 May 2011, South Bronx) thinks, "They are that poor. I guess because they didn't have no food, no shelter, like that…. If they had had *dough*." His classmate Jim elaborates upon such, "they don't want their kids to die, so they are like, '*You know what, if we leave our kids, maybe they will have somebody to take care of them*'." With resolve first-grader Bill (2 June 2011, East Harlem) similarly reasons, "The mom wanted to escape from the kids…. Yes, she had a reason. So her and her

husband could have the food for themselves. She should be sharing the food with her kids." Third-grader Kaya (7 June 2011, Lower East Side) comments, "Because she wanted to get rid of the children…. Because she's mean and she didn't find no food, she moved the children away from them and then buy some food and eat it by themselves." The third graders (7 June 2011) talked a good deal among themselves about the problem of having no money, how expensive it is to live with more and more people under one household, and the threat of starvation leading to death.

As for the story's end, questions and concerns arise, relatedly, about how the mom actually died and whether or not she had to die in the story. In a conversation among the first graders, Parnes (2 June 2011, East Harlem) says, "I didn't like when the mother died…. Because something might happen to those kids." Bill (2 June 2011) also shares, "I think when his mother died, that would make me sad if my mother died." Immediately, the mother figure is absolved of her action in the face of death, the children relating personally, and deeply, to the possibility of losing a mother, their mother. Brittany (7 June 2011, Lower East Side), a third grader, wonders, "But why would she want to get rid of the children? You never know if they might be still alone, then you might miss them. Then you want to go find them." Kenisha responds to Brittany, "She wants to find them. She misses them." Interestingly, the third graders decide the mother could live and become good and nice again, the only character in the story that the younger children refuse to admit might be morally and incorrigibly corrupt.

In classic mythology, the image of the mother is commonly portrayed as a goddess, a daughter, as earth and so on, and despite stereotypical representations, which vary across time, contexts, and cultures, the archetypical image of the mother is oftentimes associated with notions of care, love, and protection (Gibson, 1988). However, in *Hansel and Gretel* the story unfolds from a mother who exhibits very few if any of these characteristics and in effect catapults the tale of abandonment, tragedy, loss, and in the end, return. Such portrayals of the non-mother, an ominous mother figure who exhibits little care for her children, is interestingly deconstructed by Laura Gibson in her work on *Alice's Adventures In Wonderland*. She describes the scene when Alice first encounters the Duchess who is sitting on a three-legged stool in a dark smoke-filled kitchen nursing a baby who is howling and distraught from the utter chaos around her. Violently shaking and tossing the baby, the Duchess comes to signify the very epitome of the non-maternal, at one point throwing the child towards Alice before running off to play croquet with the Queen. However, the malevolence of the Duchess is undercut when the baby turns into a pig, a relief to the idea that a woman could ever abandon her baby, and moreover, is pardoned when it is realized that the Duchess is powerless and terrified of the Queen, a Queen who we learn never actually beheads anyone since her husband quietly pardons them all without her knowledge.

Although in *Hansel and Gretel* we surprisingly discover the mother's demise at the end of the story, a fate different from the 'mothers' portrayed in *Alice's Adven-*

tures In Wonderland, the children seem unsettled with the potentially traumatizing version of an uncaring mother, and instead, express disbelief in her heartlessness. The children's compulsion to create alternative plotlines that nullify or redeem the terrifying and violent actions of the mother figure is similar to the way in which Lewis Carroll brilliantly captures the terrible mother in both the Duchess and the Queen, then ruptures their disturbing quality by rendering the baby a pig (there was no mother) and revealing the Queen's lack of power (the result of her insidiousness never comes to fruition).

The Father

The father, as a figure of peace, or not, complicates this scene further too. While the third graders do not say much about the dad in the story, who in many ways is a bit peripheral and somewhat absent as a whole, the first graders clearly saw the father as a peacemaker dominated and under the control of the mother. First-graders, Reggie (2 June 2011, East Harlem) highlights how much the dad cares, while Parnes (2 June 2011) says of him: "The father was kind of sweet to the kids." Comparing the father's behavior to that of the mother, another first-grader Grace (2 June 2011) adds: "because the mom was being bad to the kids and dad was being good. The dad disagreed because he liked the kids…" Bill (2 June 2011) agrees, "because the dad was very peaceful to the kids," and Parnes (2 June 2011) thinks that "he was ignoring the bad ideas from the mother." About the father's part in the abandonment scheme, one third-grader (Aimee, 7 June 2011, Lower East Side), explains that "he knows that if he doesn't agree, the wife will keep saying: '*please, please, please, please, please!*'" John (26 May 2011, South Bronx), a fourth grader, similarly moves toward placing blame on the mother for the father's actions: "…mom will probably get a shotgun, trying to leave their children….what the father is going to do?" For all the children in the study, it is not simply action that determines one's propensity towards peace or violence, but also intentions and feelings.

Jason and John, though, also argued over the father, and in the end John seemed to persuade Jason from his original position of judgment against the dad to one in which he was without blame, a character allied with peace.

Jason: He is not a good person! He left them!

John: Remember in the book he said, regret, he said he regret leaving them, but the mom was upset that they came back.

Jason: The dad had no choice because the mom would have killed him… probably would have did something… Because how he left the kids, I would have said like this to my wife—

John: Jason! Jason! He had no choice. She got pregnant with the kids…. The dad is good. The dad is good.

> Jason: The dad had no choice, but to let the kids go, but he knew what the son was trying to do: walk his way back home. I think the mom died because he killed her.

For John and Jason, the father exercises his own will only under the authority of a nagging wife who with ill intentions persuades him to abandon his own children. Perhaps because the two students are boys, they identify with a father figure, wishing to redeem, justify, or excuse his behavior. The father, then, is represented as weak or ineffectual, rather than being 'bad' or culpable. The ways in which masculinity and femininity are accomplished are intimately linked to how agency and power are produced. The boys, one of whom is estranged from his father who at the time of this study was incarcerated on a sexual assault charge, spoke often of his father's innocence and the antagonistic women who caused injury to his family structure. Here, the ongoing maintenance of self through literacy practices reflects in part the gendered frames that make an aggressive wife and an immobilized husband recognizable to the children.

Gendered subjectivities, where the boys defend the father, become subject positions made available through their particular historical and discursive conditions. The boys deploy the story of *Hansel and Gretel* to change reality, to refuse accusations against the father, perhaps their own fathers, and in doing so exercise their agency to rewrite the narrative, convincing each other of the reasonings and justifications behind the action. The intention becomes the focus; the conversations are taken up in this way. For all the children, significations of peace or violence, including moral designations of 'good' or 'bad' are rooted in relationship with others and the most powerful of these are unsurprisingly those that remind the children of their own mothers and fathers.

For the children, human agency is constrained and directed in powerful ways by history, experience, memory, and context. It was believed, generally by all the children, that certain events can inevitably lead to one's actions and involvements in future bad or future good. They expressed acknowledgment of and accommodation for cause and effect, wherein violence is cyclical and subject to a kind of 'domino effect'. "If they [the parents] had dough, like dough, dough. Like money, they could have gotten some food for his wife and the kids," Jason (26 May 2011, South Bronx) relates. "If they never left them [Hansel and Gretel], they [the children] wouldn't have found that grandma." Michelle, a first grader, described it this way: "I think the mom and dad put them in the woods, and then they found the house" (1 June 2011, Upper West Side). The first graders agreed, then, that if the children hadn't nibbled on the candy house, they would not have been 'snatched up' by the old woman either.

Conclusion

It is now generally accepted by those in the field of critical literacy that the social positioning of persons (or groups) through text, if not in relation to concepts

of peace, is a primary means by which subjects are produced (McDaniel, 2006). Even as the meanings, modes, mediums, and messages have undergone a great deal of change, particularly in a world that is less book- and print-based and increasingly mediated via the digital, what we read and are compelled to read in school continue to be the stories we hope to tell the next generation about what and who matters, where we have been and where we are going (Pinar, 2012). For manifold reasons, if not educating for peace and nonviolence, what we read affects us, changes us, and impacts who we become in ways both intended and not (Rorty, 1997)—this perhaps particularly and most powerfully true for children, as well.

In this paper, we have explored with children the potential lure and pervasiveness of violence in the fairy tale *Hansel and Gretel*. We are reminded of how gendered identities and primary relationships play significant roles in the literate subjecthood of the young and that literacy practices are embedded within the particulars of familial roles and responsibilities, an impulse to protect the mother, defend the father, and stand up valiantly for a sibling in danger. We are also reminded that children are not only produced by the social forces that dictate for them the meanings of peace and violence, but that they also expound upon and add to such cultural models in order to surface intention and meaning. Therefore, while conditions ask them to submit and re-inscribe gendered scripts of peaceful and non-peaceful characteristics and behaviors, children simultaneously enact a sense of agency in re-writing the story and transforming the narrative into one that for their particular circumstance answers to their needs and desires.

Within the burgeoning field of critical literacy (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993),—also rooted in Freire's work (1970/1995) and affirming kinship with the works of critical multiculturalism (May & Sleeter, 2010), critical peace education (Hantzapoulos, 2011) and anti-oppressive education (Kumashiro, 2000), among others—concern has been raised about how scholarship that aims for equity and social justice continues to elide the complexity of violence as both a theoretical and pedagogical undertaking. More recently, a call has been made for localized studies into classroom practices and research that elucidates the possibilities of teaching for peace, especially given the multiplicity of expectations and meanings individuals bring to their understandings of peace (Bajaj, 2008). One fruitful lead is to follow studies such as the one conducted by Elizabeth Yeoman (1999) who uses case study research to understand how children draw from intertexual knowledge to produce disruptive stories that challenge conventional storylines, in this case about gender. She argues that within the domain of critical literacy, the role of the teacher is of crucial importance for exposing children to even the possibility of alternative discourses that produce new meanings and modes of resistance.

The summons is for greater contextualized, situated perspectives (Gur-Ze'Ev, 2001; 2011) that make use of storytelling to illumine the cultural scripts to which children become familiar. Such values and ways of knowing, by way of ordinary daily activity, come to light in a more focused way as children engage with literature.

This study has revealed the necessity of engaging children in such discussions and of listening to them about such concerns. Children read with, through and against the characters and plots in the stories they encounter. They work and rework, in and out of schools, the settings and situations of their own lives, as they are involved in the plotline and character shifts in texts. This suggests the pedagogical capacity to gather possible treasures for curriculum and pedagogy in the way of educating for peace and nonviolence. Further inquiries can extend upon this work to better explore: what do young children know of, experience, and have to say about, power, peace and violence in their own lives, in their classrooms, and in the world? How can we critically and meaningfully dialogue with them about this knowledge? What roles might literacy, literacy practice, and engagement with literary texts play in this work? How do we as adults learn from and with children, in seeking to co-create curriculum and pedagogy to counter violence, cultivate peace, and promote productive and transformative subjectivities and engagements of power?

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A Critical Race Counterstory
Chicana/o Subjectivities vs. Journalism Objectivity

Sonya M. Alemán

Abstract

This essay employs a critical race counterstory to problematize how traditional journalism pedagogy's conflation of diversity and integration curbs the presumed aptitude for improved coverage of racial and ethnic communities linked to students of color. The instructional material used to teach *objectivity* to mass communication students, student newspaper articles, as well as personal, professional and communal knowledge inform this composite narrative about the fictional experiences of two undergraduate students of color enrolled in a college news writing course. The tale edifies the way *objectivity* in journalism practice functions to perpetuate an unnamed system of whiteness that ultimately stifles that craved acuity attributed to students of color. Journalism educators are urged to re-image their pedagogy in six ways in order to draw in the racialized perspectives of underrepresented students symbolized by the main characters in the counterstory—ultimately affecting positive change in the reporting practices of *all* journalists.

Introduction

Mass communication scholars have amassed evidence of biased, hegemonic and exclusionary media coverage, imagery and newsrooms (Cortes, 1983; del Olmo, 1971; Gutíerrez, 1980; Lewels, 1974; Maxwell, 1988; Mize and Geedham, 2000; Montalvo and Torres, 2006; Poindexter, Smith, and Heider, 2003; Rivas-Rodriguez, 1998). Fittingly, integration of newsrooms and journalism classrooms attempt to redress this dismal representation. University-sanctioned journalism education,

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however, remains uninterrogated for how it incorporates the lived experiences of students of color in the curriculum. This essay explores how Chicana/o students experience these classroom spaces through a critical race counterstory. Derived from instructional material used to teach *objectivity* to mass communication students, student-generated newspaper articles, and classroom observations, this counterstory unpacks the ways institutionally-prescribed journalism curriculum suppresses the contributions of aspiring Chicana/o student journalists. The composite narrative aims to inspire journalism educators to merge both the bodies and perspectives of racially and ethnically marginalized students in mass communication training.

Nearly half of all degreed journalists, and over 80 percent of entry-level reporters, are trained in journalism or communication departments. Consequently, these spaces deserve scrutiny. Much of the research on diversity and journalism education (Becker et al, 2006; Endres & Lueck, 1998; Manning-Miller & Dunlap, 2002) conflates the bodies of students of color as the solution for improved news coverage of racial groups (Baldasty et al., 2003; de Uriarte, 2004, 2005; Deuze, 2006; Glasser, 1992). Because nearly 70 percent of journalism students are white (Lehrman, 2002), and are trained predominantly by white professors (de Uriarte, 2004), the contention is that without students of color embodying an alternative perspective, white students will not develop multiperspectival views (Kern-Foxworth & Miller, 1993).

De Uriarte (2005) argues that while integration remains vital to journalism education and the industry, it will be ineffective if the ideological components of news writing remain uninterrogated. Students from racial or ethnic groups have comprised about 25 percent of journalism students for decades, (de Uriarte, 2004), but what is their experience in these classes? Do they maintain a coveted unorthodox viewpoint with which to sway white classmates? Or does the academic socialization dilute their insight? Given that by 2035, 40 percent of journalism students will be racial or ethnic minorities (de Uriarte, 2004) and communities of color will compose nearly half of the U.S. population by 2030, these questions hold particular resonance for journalism educators.[1]

Purpose

In this essay, I employ a critical race counterstory to explore how the conventions used to teach *objectivity* encumbers an aptitude attributed to students of color; positing that integration alone will fail to improve news coverage of communities of color. Instead, I advocate for incorporating the lived experiences of students of color into the journalism curriculum, so that the subaltern standpoint actually impacts the reporting practices of *all* future journalists. I begin by summarizing the theoretical and methodological constructs of critical race counterstorytelling. Next, I detail the data informing the counterstory. The counterstory follows, a composite narrative about the experiences of undergraduate Chicanas enrolled in a newswriting course who live through, write about, and read student-generated

news reports of immigration reform.[2] It underscores how traditional journalism curriculum expunges the cultural sensitivity a Chicana journalist might possess that could reshape majoritarian modes of reporting. The concluding section analyzes the counterstory and exhorts journalism educators to envision a pedagogy that dismantles the whiteness embedded in the curriculum in order to better represent the actualities of people of color.

Critical Race Theoretical Framework

Critical race theory studies and seeks to transform the relationship of race, racism, and power (Taylor, 1998). A key tenet problematizes racism as an endemic, institutional, regenerative, and insidious (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001) two-pronged system that benefits members of the dominant group through white privilege (McIntosh, 1990), while oppressing non-white others. A second principle deconstructs how bastions of majoritarian ideology—colorblindness, neutrality, meritocracy—perpetuate and mask white privilege (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Valdes, Culp, & Harris, 2002). Objectivity, for instance, is one such master narrative (Lyotard, 1984; Giroux, 1983) that is critiqued as a racialized discourse based on individualism and merit that obscures the normalization of white privilege (McIntosh, 1990) and renders the subordination of people of color (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso 2002; Tate, 1996; Valdes, Culp, & Harris, 2002).

A third component values experiential knowledge from people of color as sources of fulfillment and communal empowerment (Valdes, Culp, & Harris, 2002). Critical race theory is theoretically-driven, but experientially-based in the narratives of people of color (Lynn, 2002). Critical race scholars advance the wisdom of those who experience racial oppression, noting these voices lack access to institutional power. CRT scholars' raced-based epistemologies arise from the social, cultural, and political conditions people of color endure that differ from worldviews held by members of the dominant race (Delgado Bernal, 2002).

Counterstorytelling

A methodological tool critical race theory employs is the counterstory. Similar to the counternarratives used by standpoint feminists (Nelson, 1995, 1996), counterstories challenge majoritarian stories (Yosso, 2006), or the "bundle of presuppositions, preconceived wisdoms and shared cultural understandings" by persons of the dominant race in their discussions of race (Delgado, 1989, 61). They center the White, male, heterosexual, middle class identity as the norm (Delgado, 1995). Majoritarian stories function as master narratives and reinscribe the myths of meritocracy and colorblindness, purport neutrality and commonsense, and invoke

stereotypes that vitiate people of color as dim, criminal, and depraved and exalt whites as intelligent, lawful, and moral.

Alternately, a counterstory is a parable, a chronicle, or a fictional narrative that centers the experiences of minoritized communities and individuals in order to "cast doubt on the validity of assumptions and myths, especially ones held by those in power" (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, 144). The disenfranchised have recounted counterstories throughout history: the oral histories of African American slaves, native peoples, and the satirical *cuentos* told by Latina/o communities. They emerge from the "voice-of-color-thesis," (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, 9), an outlook on racial oppression unavailable to those who lack a collective history of racial oppression. Counterstories not only deconstruct dominant discourses by attacking deficit notions (Valencia, 1997) about people of color, subverting the status quo, exposing White privilege and locating complicity in replicating systems of oppression, but they also serve creative purposes, like building solidarity amongst members of disenfranchised groups, nurturing community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2006), adding to collective memory, and strengthening resources for resistance and survival.

Ultimately, counterstories build community between both whites and non-whites (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001) by relying on principles of narrative theory in order to effectively tell stories that reduce alienation and build bridges across racial divides. These strategic devices adjust perceptions about the supposed shortcomings about people of color and reveal the inner workings of white entitlement.

Counterstories take various forms, including autobiographical, biographical, or composite (Yosso, 2006). The composite counterstory crafts characters that are amalgams of minoritized individuals. Four types of data—empirical data (focus groups, surveys, or interviews), secondary data, (literature or statistics generated by the social science, humanities, or legal fields); legal documents and proceedings (filings, rulings, briefs, opinions), and individual experiences, assets, cultural intuition (Delgado Bernal, 1998) or researcher knowledge (Yosso 2006)—inform the characters, dialogue, and storylines. The counterstory featured here is fashioned from a combination of these types of sources to validate the experiences of Chicanas engaging journalism course material to learn or unlearn journalism practices. The next section outlines the three sources used to compile this counterstory.

Sources of Data and Methods

The first source is the journalism textbook, *Reporting for the Media* (2005) by Fedler et al, one of the five "most widely used modern textbooks" (Mindich, 1998, 8)[3] in journalism schools and departments nationwide. Textbooks carry significant weight (Apple, 1988; McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006; Mirando 1998, 2001), impacting daily classroom interaction, course design, structure, and objectives, as well as acting as gatekeepers of legitimate knowledge. Most undergraduates read anywhere from 25,000 to 30,000 textbook pages while earning their degree, (Apple, 1988;

Hardin & Preston, 2001), consuming this information "with a fairly uncritical eye," (Clawson & Kegler, 2000, 181). The politicized process influencing textbook content legitimizes certain ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives, while devaluing other types of knowledge. Nonetheless, students often interpret the information as incontestable (Hardin & Preston 2001), precluding them from interrogating it for "missing, misconstrued, and misrepresented voices" (Ndura, 2004, 152).

The table of contents and index of *Reporting for the Media* yielded roughly nineteen pages of text for analysis.[4] Guided by a critical race lens, I scrutinized the text for ways in which objectivity was operationalized as an achievable and essential goal for aspiring student journalists. Also, I looked for discourses that normalized white privilege or white supremacy—either by the absence of discussions about race (Crenshaw, 1997), by othering non-white individuals or groups, or by benchmarking a white experience.

Eight news articles about issues impacting the local immigrant and Latina/o community written by student journalists for a daily campus newspaper published during the spring of 2006 also generated the counterstory. A college newspaper is often the first training ground for journalism students (Hardin and Sims, 2008; Wickham, 2004). Limiting the content to student-produced news articles underscores how mass communication students manifest the reporting practices mapped out by the aforementioned textbook. College newspapers are often disparaged for their deficient coverage of communities of color, as well as for their predominantly white staffs (Garza, 1997; Hardin & Sims, 2008; Lederman & Shea, 1993). While the sample size was small, it revealed how student news accounts mirror the lamentable coverage of communities of color by mainstream media (Mize & Geedham, 2000; Montalvo & Torres, 2006; Poindexter, Smith, & Heider, 2003; Rivas-Rodriguez, 1998).

In the tradition of other critical race counterstorytellers, (Alemán Jr. & Alemán, 2010; Baszile, 2008; Dixon & Dingus, 2007; Smith, Yosso, & Solórzano, 2007; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, 2006; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Villalpando, 2003; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002), I also drew from the recollections of peers, students, friends, family, and acquaintances who advocate for these communities. Additionally, I incorporated my experiences working with Chicana/o mass communication students in journalism classrooms.

Hence, an academic textbook, student-produced media, teaching experiences, and communal activism converge in the counterstory. The tale distills these multiple data sources through the perspective of two hypothetical college Chicanas attending Pioneer University, a fictional four-year Research I university in the western United States pursuing a degree in journalism. They both are enrolled in a newswriting course and use Fedler's (2005) book as their main text.

Counterstory

Isabel Nuñez awoke seconds before her alarm went off. As she reached to

shut off the radio, her arm paused midair when she heard Juanes singing "*Camisa Negra*." She sang along to her favorite Latino artist, convincing herself that today, her second month into her second semester at Pioneer University was going to be a good one. As the first in her family to go to college, Isabel constantly agonized over her torn feelings about the *orgullo* she felt by honoring her family with that distinction and the isolation that plagued her on the predominately white university she attended (Yosso, 2006). But today, well, today she would wear her favorite black shirt—inspired by the master *Columbiano* himself—and she vowed to voice her dissatisfaction with the constraining news writing norms taught in class. After yesterday's events, she could finally identify the vexing feeling that had lingered since she turned in her first writing assignment about Pioneer students who participated in a recent march for immigration reform. She interviewed members of MEChA (*Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán*),[5] other student participants, and a professor who had issued public statements against immigration reform in order to balance out the piece, reluctantly incorporating some of his comments about immigrants committing crimes and crowding schools. She also cited two reports: one that said immigrants displaced low-skilled U.S.-born workers and another that said local and federal governments benefit from the sales and property taxes that all immigrants pay. Because she had to write using inverted pyramid style—with the most important facts or source at the beginning of her article—the professor's comments and statistics outranked the MEChA students, who ended up in the last paragraph of her piece. Despite her exemplary grade, she felt dirtied after she wrote it, but couldn't express why. Nor could she formulate a question to ask about her troubled thoughts in class. Isabel had anticipated honing her journalistic skills when she enrolled for this course last semester, but so far the material, assignments, and discussions felt foreign to her. If she wanted to be a reporter, Isabel knew she had to do well in this class. She paused as she layered on her wooden beaded bracelets depicting images of *santos* and *la Virgen de Guadalupe* to recall what her friends had helped her figured out yesterday afternoon….

Mechistas and Walkout!

After her last morning class, Isabel and her friend Lisa Garza joined their fellow MEChistas for a viewing of the movie *Walkout!* It was the first time Isabel had seen the film and the injustice depicted in the movie lodged tears in her throat, preventing her from speaking during the question and answer session afterwards.[6] Especially disturbing were the scenes depicting the actual news coverage of the 1968 walkouts and the unprovoked police brutality against young high school students. The reports used in the movie sounded like the copy she had turned in, but Isabel realized that they in no way depicted what actually happened to the student protestors.

Daniel Zapata, co-president of MEChA, raised the issue of media coverage when he discussed the scenes from the movie that illustrated the public's inaccu-

rate perception of what MEChA and the Brown Berets stand for. "It was almost comical to see the FBI and cops taking pictures of the members and keeping files on them. It reminded me of an article that ran in the campus newspaper earlier this semester. A spokesperson for the Minutemen said that MEChA was a radical group that advocated the return of the southwestern United States back to Mexico" (Gardiner & Muir, 2006). A chuckle spread throughout the room. Daniel, who was engineering major, continued after the room quieted down, "I know that those of us who belong to MEChA because of the cultural solidarity and support we give each other (Villalpando, 2003) think that it is laughable. But I distinctly remember that article because it ended on that quote, without refuting or substantiating it, like it was a fact just because someone said it."

"Yeah, I remember that article, too," said another girl Isabel recognized but only knew by her nickname, *Güerrita*. "It was about how the Minutemen were opposed to in-state tuition for undocumented students. The paper ran it the day we organized our march to the capital in support of in-state tuition, *pero* it was all about how the Minutemen are opposed to it and how expensive and discriminatory the law is for white people. Everything that guy said was undisputed, like he was an expert," she paused. "*N'hombre*, the whole reason he was there was in response to the walk *que nosotros* organized, because of our democratic efforts to be a voice for the most vulnerable of our society—but do they write anything about that?" The room cheered in support of the girl's comments.

"I was the only MEChA student quoted in the article," said Gloria Lopez, a tall senior that Isabel met her first week on campus. She was the one who recruited Isabel into MEChA. "The reporter included my quote about the racial undertones to all the recent immigrant bashing, but follows it with a line that says we cry racist when we run out of facts. *Me da tanto coraje* when those in positions of power define what racism is and who is or isn't. Shouldn't the people who have to experience it everyday be the experts on what is or isn't racism?" (Matsuda, 1995). Again, the room buzzed with agreement and *gritos*. People began to talk among themselves and Isabel finally trusted herself to speak.

Journalism 101

"Lisa, remember the article that ran after the Dignity March?" Isabel asked her friend. Lisa nodded. She kept up with current events and paid attention to the media a lot because she, too, was a communication major. They were in different sections of the same news writing course so they compared notes a lot.

"Of course. I remember the lead because it said that only 10,000 people participated, when other estimates had it closer to 20,000 and some even at 40,000 to 90,000 (Breton, 2006b). I kept reading to see what MEChA student they were going to quote because we all worked so hard to organize it and I figured they would incorporate a student angle. But instead, the only sources were the mayor,

who spoke before the march began. You know how news always has to come from a sanctioned government official," she nudged me (Fedler et al, 2005, 271). "And the guy from the Minutemen, a student with a white-sounding last name who admitted to being at the march on a whim, and then a university student who marched with the Minutemen." Lisa was two years older, but only one semester ahead of Isabel in credit hours because she had to work two jobs to help support her family and pay for school. "Why are you asking about that article?"

Isabel responded, "That Minuteman guy's is not a government source—why is he quoted everywhere?"

Lisa said she thought it had to do with the way reporters try to present both sides of every story. "It is like the chapter we are reading on objectivity for class tomorrow," she said. "In order to demonstrate objectivity, you have to balance your article with at least two viewpoints. You don't have to be an authority—you just have to have to be willing to voice your opinion on the record. As long as the reporter notes that someone else but themselves said it, then the piece is balanced," Lisa took a drink from her soda (Fedler et al, 2005, 66-70, 135, 246). Isabel remembered her own piece and felt a troublesome sense of guilt.

Her memory of the march still filled her with a warm glow. The Dignity March reached historic proportions and Lisa was right—no one could agree on how many people marched that day. If she had written that article, how would she ascertain that fact? Who would she ask? Who would she believe? It involved some judgments—some sort of filters—even just to ascertain how many people were there. Isabel was so glad she could count herself among the thousands and so her memory of what happened was the one she shared with her family back home. They had seen news coverage of it on television, but were in awe at Isabel's tale of innumerable and far ranging solidarity.

"You know what else bugs me about that article?" Lisa continued after she chugged down her drink. "Again it has to do with balance. No matter what estimates you use about how many of us were there—it was a thing of beauty, *que no?*—we were such a show of strength in numbers. Thousands of us to a handful of Minutemen, yet for the sake of balance, the reporter has to present both sides as if they were equally important to that event," (Fedler et al, 2005,135).

Isabel nodded in contemplation. They walked around a bit and then decided to each head home to finish up homework. Isabel said goodbye to Lisa outside the library and jumped on the bus back to campus. Deep in thought, Isabel kept asking herself if that was how she was going to pay her family and friends back when she began her journalism career—by reflecting a version of reality so distorted from what her family actually experienced (Villalpando, 2003)?

Isabel decided to collect those articles her friends had talked about tonight and read over them, comparing it to the material she was reading for class. She read exhortations that good journalists should be objective, neutral, unbiased observers, who merely gather facts and convey them (Fedler et al, 2005, 66, 135, 153),

but she knew it worked had differently in the movie. And now that she thought about it, it worked differently in the student newspaper and in the writing she did for class. She printed out the articles they referenced from the online website for the campus paper and some additional ones. This year had generated a lot of news coverage regarding immigrants. The proposed legislation to repeal in-state tuition for undocumented students that Daniel brought up caused a lot of debate and was covered in three articles, as well as the nationwide immigration reform bill that prompted that historic march. In addition, Isabel found four other articles that discussed immigration in some way (Breton 2006a, 2006b; Gardiner 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2006d; Gardiner & Muir, 20006; Gehrke, 2006).

She sat down with her textbook and the freshly printed articles and began making some notes. The pieces seemed to follow the standard format outlined in the text: neutral in tone, opposing sides discussed. She couldn't figure out why that felt inauthentic.

She decided to call Lisa, even though it was pretty late. She knew Lisa's mom was already at work—she worked cleaning office buildings late at night—and so she wouldn't disturb her. Isabel was pretty sure Lisa would be happy to help her think through some things.

"*Bueno*," Lisa answered after the first ring. "Lisa, it's me Isabel. I have been thinking—"

"Of course you have!" Lisa laughed, "I think I was kind of waiting for your call. This afternoon *nos dio* a lot to think about, huh?"

"Yeah. I came home and downloaded the articles we talked about tonight and even found a few more and I get that the techniques the book explains force this imagined objectivity on the things they cover, but I can't figure out exactly why it works that way or how to report differently. Any ideas?"

"Are you sure you are ready for my theory?" Lisa countered. She was often accused of seeing conspiracy in everything, and joked about it often.

"*Andale*, just tell me," Isabel urged.

"OK. I think it comes down to race. I think the whole idea of objectivity is racist, but not in the way we normally think about race."

"But race isn't supposed to have anything to do with it! In fact, there wasn't much in the text that links race and objectivity. For example, did you see the section about stereotypical 'isms'? It says that most newspapers have guidelines that say you are not even supposed to mention race unless it is 'clearly relevant to the story'" (Fedler et al, 2005, 68).

"I know. Point to the part where it says why a reporter shouldn't ever mention the race of white people," Lisa challenged.

"What do you mean?" Isabel asked, surprised.

"In all the pages assigned for class tomorrow, there are two sections that even mention the word race and they are all in conjunction with discussions of people who are non-white. The rest of the chapter talks about "the typical American or

average person" as an empty, race-less shell. What that really means is a *white person*. Whiteness stands for normal, for not diverse, for not different. And this is the perspective that is neutral, that is objective (Fedler et al, 2005, 69; Dolan, 2005). And we all believe it because who has all the power in our society? *No es nosotros*," Lisa paused.

Isabel frowned. She scanned the textbook material quickly, trying to find a section that didn't sound like it assumed whiteness was the measuring stick for how things should be understood in the world. Lisa certainly made sense when talking about white people having power. It was not difficult to see who had access to most of the resources in this country. But she still needed a little more clarification on Lisa's theory.

"O.K. *A veces eres un poco loca*, but I think you are making sense about this. But how does your theory show up in these articles?" Isabel countered.

"Let's start with the one about the Utah-Mexico relationship—did you print that one out?" (Gardiner, 2006d). Isabel pulled it to the top of her stack. She had scanned this one as it printed out and recalled that it was about a study analyzing the economic relationship between Utah and Mexico. The report documented that Mexican immigrants contribute nearly $70 million dollars a year in taxes to the U.S. and Isabel thought it presented the immigrant community in a positive light, especially since most anti-immigration rhetoric depicted Latinos as a drain on society. Lisa drew Isabel's attention to the very last line.

"'For many people, the very rapidly growing Hispanic population is almost invisible'—*oye*, do you feel invisible Isabel?" She laughed before continuing, "This report makes people look more broadly.' What 'people' do you think he means? Us *Inmigrantes?* I don't think so. Those 'many people' who don't see Latinos—are white people. But he doesn't have to say it. They are PEOPLE. Normal people are white. The rest of us, well, we are 'invisible' at best."

Isabel was intrigued. "What else?" she asked.

Lisa asked her to find the article on another report recently issued from a different university professor. This one indicated that, "Latinos have become the most segregated ethnic group." The headline got Isabel's attention.

"Hey, *porque dice* 'become,' *como si* it happened by magic or something?" Isabel probed.

"*Exacto*. Now you are thinking. This whole article makes it seem that there are some natural or biological forces at play—not humanly constructed policies and social practices that have been institutionalized to oppress one group and privilege another one—or worse, that Latinos are bringing economic inequities onto themselves. Even though the author clearly points to a racial divide, the rest of the neutral, passive, nonjudgmental language that doesn't dig deep enough behind the numbers to find the systemic reasons for the discrepancies in capital." Lisa quickly read off a few lines to illustrate her point.

"'The increased segregation is a result of the dramatic increase in Latino im-

migrants. Do they stay in segregated communities, or do they integrate? There are often few quality job opportunities in those communities,'—like jobs just automatically decide where to locate themselves. There is no discussion about the different access to power and capital between Latinos and whites that contributes to these segregated situations," (Martin and Davis, 2001). Lisa finished, out of breath. She quickly inhaled and then said, "White people operate as if they are unquestioningly deserving of their privilege and access and it has been so ingrained and accepted by us all, that it never gets questioned why they have it and others don't. It is normal for them to have this entitlement (Wise, 2008; Tatum, 1992, 1994; McIntosh, 1990). And reporters who are forced to write in these seemingly objective ways, perpetuate this idea, too," Lisa sighed.

"You have given me a lot to think about." Isabel said.

"*Pos que bueno. Necesitamos pensar asi*, Isa. We have to be critical, even when it is hard to in class because we might be the only ones who think that way," Lisa encouraged. Isabel knew she was right. She thanked her friend, hung up, and went to bed and slept soundly until Juanes jolted her out of bed.

More Than a Body

As she walked into class at 8:00 a.m., Isabel replayed yesterday in her mind and knew she was prepared for more than today's discussion. Her desire to be a journalist coincided with her passion to be an advocate for her community—she didn't want to disconnect those dreams. From the way she was recruited into this program, she knew that the institution and the industry needed people of color like her to join the press corps. But her presence did no good if she reported stories of her community similar to her White counterparts—ones that reinforced the status quo, but were disguised in impartiality. She needed to develop her writing so it resounded with the disenfranchisement experienced by members of her community and was laced with messages of empowerment and advocacy. If she wanted to do well in the courses for her major, however, that meant conforming to norms that prohibited such activism. Navigating this conflicting terrain would be no easy feat, but she knew a first step was challenging the restrictive standards against which her writing would be measured. She didn't quite know what form her writing should then take, but that wasn't going to stop her from ensuring that her presence in the classroom did indeed help transform coverage of her community. She refused to ignore where she came from or why she was there, which was going to give her the confidence to ask some hard questions in class today.

Discussion

The story unfolds through Isabel Nuñez's struggle to reconcile her lived experience of marginalization with both mainstream media accounts and her burgeoning training as a journalist. Initially, Isabel feels dissonance between her social reali-

ties and her developing reporting skills, but through the help of fellow MEChA members and a politicized Latina student—Lisa Garza—she notices the unspoken ideologies protected within the long-established blueprint of news writing. It also shows the dilemma students like her encounter: adopt the idealized professional norms unquestioningly, implement the customary rubric knowingly and harm her community inadvertently, or jeopardize her very education by challenging them. Journalism educators have yet to explore these quandaries when calling for greater racial representation in their classrooms.

Lisa's deconstruction of the textbook with Isabel exposes how Whiteness is ensconced in the core of journalistic traditions. She points to the way the text does not consider "white" as a race, but rather typifies its normalcy. As she explains to Isabel, "people" refers to white people, but remains unmarked. Her sharp eye understands *objectivity* as a reinscription of white discourse and dominance. African American journalist Jill Nelson (1993) pinpointed this correlation in her memoir *Volunteer Slavery: My Authentic Negro Experience*. As a reporter for the Washington Post, she wrote that Black journalists wrestle daily with objectivity, "a notion she equates with a white voice" (qtd in Mindich, 1998, 4). Furthermore, additional studies have revealed how Black reporters produce news copy from a white viewpoint (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) or that "the hegemony of whiteness can persist even in a newsroom with a relatively high level of racial diversity" (Pritchard & Stoubely, 2007, p. 232). Lisa and Isabel challenge the directive to write 'objectively.' Although merely at the cusp of re-envisioning journalism practice, these women recognize that adopting standard techniques of newswriting saps their inimitable voice.

The written assignment Isabel alludes to exemplifies how indoctrinating Chicana students, as well as other students of color, with traditional writing styles and values not only stifles this ability, but also proves dysfunctional for their families and communities. Although Isabel adheres to the sanctioned guidelines for her first assignment, she later taps into her collegiate support network to help her make sense of her discord. Scholarly critiques of objectivity shaped the censures MEChA students voice at their gathering and to Isabel. For example, MEChA members articulated that striving for 'balance' in news articles leaves attributed opinions as potential sites for perpetuating racist ideas, reinforcing dominant and deficit ideologies (Yosso, 2002) about communities of color, like the misperceptions of the purpose of MEChA. Condit and Selzer (1985) noted that the conventions of attribution—binary viewpoints juxtaposed and framed by quotation marks—are an essential marker of objective news reporting practices, yet obscure the motivations behind those quotations. Without this transparency, those statements lack contextualization and distort rather than reflect reality because they equalize viewpoints, ignoring power differentials between parties (Condit & Selzer, 1985). In an examination of historical newspaper accounts of lynching, Mindich (1998) contends that five traditional components of objectivity—detachment, nonpartisanship, inverted pyramid structure, facticity, and naïve empiricism—all mask cultural biases, hinder-

ing comprehensive representations of the horrors endured by the African American community during Reconstruction. Lastly, Lisa suggests that relying on expert sources often means that members of racially marginalized communities acting as civically engaged citizens are disregarded and silenced. Dolan's (2005) analysis of newspaper coverage of the controversy over a Chicana artist's rendition of *La Virgen de Guadalupe* in New Mexico concurs that these standards "privileged the almost exclusively male protester" and left "many underlying issues surrounding the controversy largely unexamined" (379).

Isabel feels culpable for perpetuating these detrimental tendencies—even if only in a class assignment—and reflects on her role in the class and profession as one of the few persons of color. *What does she have to offer if she does nothing differently from her White counterparts?* she ponders. Recognizing that she embodies a distinct set of experiences, Isabel wants these to inform her writing in a way that enriches the quality of life of her community. She wants her words to enact social transformation, but realizes doing so is antithetical to the teachings in her textbook. The counterstory, then, attempts to re-tether the social responsibility of the press with advocacy that a misguided adulation for *objectivity* has unfastened. Moreover, it suggests that allowing students of color journalists to shape their reporting in this way may rectify coverage that has damaged these communities for so long, as well as reinstate the advocacy function of the press for all of society.

Conclusion

The preceding counterstory reveals refutes the notion that the newsgathering and reporting paradigm is a deracialized practice. While a myriad of factors proscribe comprehensive coverage of communities of color, the concept of *objectivity* as currently edified by a widely used journalism textbook impedes this transformation, as does the undetectable system of whiteness implanted in journalism practice. Isabel's growing awareness exemplifies the realization mass communication scholars must face: the news paradigm is always already racialized to serve the interest of the majoritarian group. It must be overhauled so that it no longer privileges one viewpoint. Even though *objectivity* has been problematized for decades (Gans, 1979; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001; Mindich, 1998; Mirando, 2001; Schiller, 1981; Schudson, 1978; Tuchman 1972, 1978) it is still promulgated by media educators as a key component of journalistic writing and remains emblematic of the profession (Condit & Selzer 1985; Schudson qtd. in Hackett, 1984). The textbook analyzed here (Fedler et al, 2005) expressly exhorts students to be objective reporters, solidifying it as a cornerstone of journalism education (Hulteng qtd. in Condit & Selzer, 1985, 211; Mindich, 1998).

The counterstory also exposes how populating journalism classrooms with Chicanas and other students of Color inoculates them with conventional news writing standards—particularly *objectivity*—negating epiphanic revolutions of journalistic

writing. Media instructors must engage the question about what students like Isabel offer the practice of journalism besides her presence in order to recalibrate journalism curriculum to better accommodate their assets. Rather than simply concerted efforts to recruit underrepresented students, reinvigorate journalism pedagogy by dismantling the white normative standards in journalism education. If revivifying coverage of diverse communities is a sincere goal, then these traditional standards deserve this level of scrutiny. Otherwise, the rationale that Chicanas and other student of color journalists possess an acumen that can transfigure news gathering and writing to better represent the their racially and ethnically disempowered communities is thwarted. By heeding the stories that Chicana student journalists like Isabel and Lisa might share—albeit unorthodox ones—journalism educators can begin the long-overdue task of revisioning journalism pedagogy.

Notes

[1] See the downloadable excel table titled Projections of the Population by Net International Migration Series, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: 2010 to 2050 located at http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/2009comparisonfiles.html.

[2] The unnamed city and state in this essay prop up the plot of the counterstory. It is the locale in which the author-scholar-activist experienced, endured, and witnessed the events reimagined through the narrative. The city and the state are emblematic of large predominantly White metropolitan communities that have seen exponential demographic shifts in their populations and whose educational, government, and cultural institutions are struggling to either accommodate or repudiate those residents.

[3] Faculty colleagues attested the widespread use of this textbook. Moreover, the Monument Information Resource (MIR at http://www.facultyonline.com)—a database for college instructors and faculty to review textbooks—indicated a preponderance of faculty members used this text during the spring 2006 semester. MIR also ranks textbooks according to sales data gathered from college bookstores.

[4] (Several studies provided a useful model for this technique. See Hanson, 1999; M. Hardin & Preston, 2001; Mirando, 1998)

[5] MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán) is a Chicano student organization often criticized as a separatist organization partly because of a phrase from one of MEChA's guiding documents, *El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán*. It reads, "*Por La Raza todo, Fuera de La Raza nada*" is often misconstrued to mean "for the Race, everything, for those outside of the Race, nothing." MEChA members interpret the phrase to mean: "By the people, everything; outside of the people, nothing," which echoes the sentiment, "United we stand, divided we fall."

[6] *Walkout!* (2006) is a film directed by Edward James Olmos for HBO about the 1968 walkouts during the Chicano civil-rights movement in California. Over 10,000 Chicana/o students walked out of their predominately Latina/o high schools in East Los Angeles and boycotted classes in order to protest the inferior quality of their education. Their actions received local and national attention and support. See Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) for more information.

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Critical Multicultural Education
as an Analytical Point of Entry
into Discussion of Intersectional Scholarship
A Focus on Race, as Well as Class, Gender,
Sexuality, Dis/Ability, and Family Configuration

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Abstract

This article examines the uses of intersectional analysis in three research arenas: the school-to-prison pipeline, religious identity and curriculum development, and inclusive education. More specifically, this article explores how scholarly inquiry shifts, even when all three arenas use an overlapping dimension of analysis (race), as well as when they use other unique dimensions (class, gender, religion, sexuality, dis/ability, and family configuration). The research on the school-to-prison pipeline explores white female teacher disciplinary practices with minority male students. The religious identity and curriculum development research examines

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the false separation of state and religion, and constructed conflict between religion and sexuality in teaching and learning. The inclusive education-focused research problematizes ability grouping in schools, especially for so-called non-traditional families. The article explores how scholarly inquiry shifts, even when all three arenas use an overlapping dimension of analysis (race), as well as when they use other unique dimensions. Intersectional analysis is revealed as always uncoverable in scholarship, once researcher intersectional consciousness emerges.

Keywords: Race, Critical Multicultural Education, Intersectional Scholarship, Socioeconomic Class, Religion, Dis/Ability, Family Configuration.

> God[dess] made us different nations and tribes that we may come to know one another.
>
> —Qu'ran 49:13

Sociopolitical Multicultural Education as an Analytical Point of Entry into Discussion of Intersectional Scholarship

In 2013, Samoa Air became the first and, to date, the only airline where passengers weigh in and pay by the pound. Self-described as a "national carrier" and "100% locally owned," Samoa Air flies routes connecting the Samoan Islands (Samoa Air, 2013, para. 1). These islands are home to some of the world's largest people measured by weight. The World Health Organization reports that 86 percent of Samoans are obese, and 93.5 percent are overweight, making Samoa the "fattest" country on earth (Cunningham, 2010, para. 7). Chris Langton, a white Australian, average-sized, male, and Samoa Air's chief executive officer, developed the pay-by-the-pound or "pay as you weigh" policy which he defends as follows: "It has to be a fair system no matter what you're shipping—whether it's people, whether it's cargo. An airline only has weight [not seats] to sell. That's its product. And you're asking people to buy as much weight as they need" (Tracy, 2013, para. 2).

In reconsidering the U.S. Civil Rights Movement from an intersectional posture, Fayazpour (2013) described it as seeking to bring about the *Right* [of people of color] to *Move* freely in society. From this analytical perspective, Samoa Air's airfare schema clearly disproportionately limits the movement of people whose identities converge at the intersections of race, class, and gender—people of color, the poor, and women (CDC, 2009; Nevins & Hoffman, 2012). According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), social class, measured by income and education, is a more powerful predictor of obesity than genetics. Blacks, Latinas/Latinos, and Native Americans are 5-18 percent more likely to be obese and 30-50 percent more likely to have a lower median income than Whites and Asians, and these trends are more pronounced for women in all of these groups (CDC, 2009, Figure 19.2).

Restricting peoples' movement/s also allows for heightened surveillance of them. In 2012, Alexander described the current era of mass incarceration in the United

States (and related global implications) as a new form of Jim Crow segregation. According to Alexander, not only does a permanent under caste, largely comprised of people of color, live in actual lock down (prison), even when "free," various forms of physical and psychological border patrol mechanisms operate in society to continuously hyper-segregate the world's poor into geographically demarcated urban and rural badlands.

Alexander's analysis extends into the public educational arena. Building on the work of many other scholars examining what has become known as the "school-to-prison pipeline," Alexander reviews how zero tolerance policies are used to systematically deny students from historically under-represented social identity groups (including those from religious and sexual minority groups and non-traditional family structures), especially those marked as having a disability, from accessing a quality education (Ball & Harry, 1993; Bell, 1992; Brimhall-Vargas, 2011; Clark, 2004; Ervelles, Kanga, & Middleton, 2006; Ervelles & Minear, 2010; Ferri, 2010; Pugach, Blanton, & Florian, 2012; Sapon-Shevin, 1994; Sapon-Shevin & Zollers, 1999). For example, when students from more affluent, predominantly white schools exhibit acting out behaviors, the institutional response has been to improve the quality of education; whereas, when students from lower income and higher minority school communities behave in the same manners, policy responses have focused on increasing disciplinary protocols (Clark 2012; Harry & Klingner, 2006).

Born and reared in the everyday and academic borderlands from which intersectional consciousness emerged, sociopolitically-located multicultural education has long argued that if public education were to do for all students what it has historically done for primarily white, at-least-middle class, male, Christian, heterosexual, and, among other signifiers, abled students, gaps in educational outcomes between various student groups would erode (Adams, Griffin, & Bell, 2007; Banks, 2004; hooks, 1993; Nieto & Bode, 2012; Sleeter, 1996). Through sociopolitically-located multicultural education, all students can come to meaningfully find themselves in the curriculum, and through the curriculum, in history and in the contemporary world. In bridging the divide from academic freedom to lived freedom in the everyday, educational justice engenders social justice.

Using Intersectional Analysis in Intersectional Scholarship

In this article, intersectionality—the systematic study of the intersections of race, class, gender, religion, sexuality, dis/ability, family configuration, and the other dimensions of difference (Crenshaw, 1989)— can be understood as a shifting, changing concept that is flexible enough to encompass both the large-scale historically constructed and hierarchical power systems that organize our social life, and the micro level politics of interpersonal interactions. Growing out of *outsider-within* sociologies (Collins, 1998; Giroux, 2013), multiracial feminisms (Weber, 2007; Zinn & Dill, 1996), and *border* and *diaspora* studies (Anzaldúa,

1999; Shukla, 2003), intersectionality has become a way of examining difference in a number of fields of study—increasingly, including *sociopolitically-located multicultural education* (Nieto & Bode, 2012).

An intersectionality-based approach to scholarship views outsider-within and border aspects of race, class, gender, religion, sexuality, dis/ability, family configuration and other dimensions of difference as interlocking inequalities and, therefore, aspects that must be simultaneously considered in conceptual and theoretical analyses of liberation, as well as in practical efforts to achieve social justice. Intersectional scholarship requires a commitment to re-thinking and re-shaping concepts and theories that have treated these systems as discrete, as well as to the practice of these newly articulated concepts and theories in the everyday.

Accordingly, this article reviews intersectional scholarship in multicultural education that is intentionally sociopolitically-located, thus, explicitly anti-oppressive in its point of entry to analysis. Specifically, it examines the uses of intersectional analysis in three research arenas: the school-to-prison pipeline, religious identity and curriculum development, and inclusive education. Each arena engages racial identity, but in a different analytical location—primary, secondary, or tertiary—relative to two other intersectional identity dimensions. The article explores how scholarly inquiry shifts, even when all three arenas use an overlapping dimension of analysis, as well as when they use other unique dimensions.

Our research on the school-to-prison pipeline uses race relative to class and gender to explore white female teacher disciplinary practices with Latino and black male students (Clark, 2004, 2012; Clark & McGhie, 2013). The religious identity and curriculum development research prioritizes religion, while also exploring race and sexuality, to examine the false separation of state and religion, and constructed conflict between religion and sexuality in teaching and learning (Brimhall-Vargas, 2011; Brimhall-Vargas & Clark, 2008; Clark & Brimhall-Vargas, 2003). The inclusive education-focused research uses dis/ability to also explore family configuration and race in problematizing ability grouping in schools, especially for so-called non-traditional families (Sapon-Shevin, 1994, 2007, 2010; Sapon-Shevin & Zollers, 1999). In this research the phrase "ability grouping" is used to describe what gifted, general, and special education do: group students by perceived abilities or lack thereof, without questioning whether those groupings are, first, based on accurate assessments of students' knowledge bases and skills, and, second, based on social constructions/false reifications of "ability" altogether (e.g., what counts/is counted as ability, and who decides). Additionally, a non-traditional family configuration can mean single parent, same-sex parent, blended, intergenerational/extended, foster/adopted (formally and informally), or mixed (e.g., cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, cross-nationality, etc.).

Because each research arena also engages the discrete dimensions of the other two in some way (for example, dis/ability factors into the school-to-prison pipeline arena with respect to special education over-referral, and religion and sexuality are

integrally connected to family configurations, etc.), intersectional analysis is revealed as *always uncoverable* in scholarship, once researcher intersectional conscious-ness emerges. This article calls attention to this consciousness in considering the implications of it for the researcher as well as the "researchee." If researchers are unaware of how their identities and related standpoints and positionalities inform their scholarship, the veracity of the evidence articulated in their scholarship can-not be ensured, even in the most non-traditional, as well as, critical, emancipatory, etc., research contexts.

> Intersectionality as an analytical tool is not simply focused on the cross-section or bi-section of two or more dimensions of identity or fields of study (Crenshaw, 1991). Having two or more (multiple) dimensions of identity—for example as a black, working class woman, with a learning disability, or as a white, middle-class, able-bodied male—while interesting to tease out in scholarship contexts, is not the same as having an intersectional identity. Likewise, conducting research from a shared (interdisciplinary) point of entry of—for example, African American studies, sociology, Women's studies, and disability studies—while, again, may be intellectually engaging, is not intersectional scholarship and may not employ intersectional analysis. This is because, according to Crenshaw, the purpose of intersectionality is to reveal the interests of those who are rendered invisible by 'the system' precisely because they lack power in that system. So, for example, if the system 'sees' white and male interests, it can be made to also see white female interests buoyed by race (whiteness), and black male interests buttressed by gender (maleness). In so doing, it reveals that it cannot see blackness and femaleness. With this purpose in mind, in engaging the concept of intersectionality, drawing from and building on intersectional scholarship, and employing intersectional analysis…the interests of those who are persistently unseen in education can be brought forth… (Horsford & Clark, 2015, p. 62).

In this article those interests are particularly, but not exclusively, race-based, and engage understanding of racial identity as inextricably linked to racial standpoint and positionality, meaning that how people identify and how their identities are perceived is sociopolitically-located (situated relative to systems of power over time).

School-to-Prison Pipeline:
Teacher Disciplinary Practices and Student Success

The "school-to-prison pipeline" (STPP) refers to the formal and informal educational and law enforcement processes and policies (and the prejudices—ac-knowledged, covert, and denied—that underlie both) that have the effect of pushing PK-12 students, predominantly Black and Latino males, out of school and into the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems (Clark, 2012). The research on the STPP discussed here is intentionally intersectional in examining the ways in which race, class, and gender reciprocally inform each other, at the same time prioritizing the issue of race, thus making it the primary research concern.

Purposes and Objectives

This research examines the STPP through analysis of teacher disciplinary practices, broadly considered to include the nature of their relationships with students, non/engagement with parents, pedagogical approaches, and classroom management techniques. The primary research questions examined are: *What, if any, correlations between students' race, class location, and gender and teacher disciplinary practices can be discerned?* and, *How do these correlations relate to the STPP?* Ancillary research questions also considered in this article are: *For whom is school rarely or never a pipeline to prison, and why?* and, *What are the disciplinary practices that lead to this inevitability, and why?* In this research, race, class location, and gender are complexly understood and, thus, carefully discerned in manners that intersect with skin color, ethnicity, nationality, and first language; zip code/neighborhood, family configuration, and student/parent employment status; and, gender identity and expression, respectively.

Framework, Modes of Inquiry and Data Sources

This research uses a Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework to surface how whiteness, and the privileges flowing therefrom, operates in PK-12 public schools to perpetuate racism in education, chiefly manifest in the racial performance gap for especially black male youth (Bell, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 2006). This research describes the critical ethnographic study of PK-12 teachers in a large school district in the urban Southwest that was undertaken to ascertain credible answers to the afore-referenced research questions. Through analysis of teacher disciplinary practices gleaned from classroom observation notes, patterns in teacher disciplinary practices are identified and discussed as evidence that the real or perceived race, class, and gender of PK-12 students, impacts teacher mis/understanding of student behavior and, thus, teacher decision making regarding the need to engage (or not) student behavior from a punitive posture.

Discussion of Findings

As a part of a course-based research project on racial and gender disparities in teacher disciplinary protocols in PK-12 public schools, five research teams, comprised of two or three graduate student researchers, each identified a public PK-12 school teacher to observe in their daily teaching routine. The project sought to determine if any correlations could be drawn between the teachers' classroom management practices and the subsequent overrepresentation of especially black men in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems through what the course defined as the STPP. This pipeline emerges as a result of teacher, curricular, administrator, and policy biases that operate to unfairly advantage white and least middle class students, and erroneously disadvantage students of color and/or working class students (Alexander, 2012; Clark,

2004, 2012). For example, a group of white students engaged in typical "horse play" are often ignored, while a group of black students similarly engaged are written up for behavioral misconduct. This example is particularly salient as the major finding in this research was that the one teacher observed who had strong classroom management skills did not contribute to the STPP; the other four, all of whom had poor classroom management skills, created a climate for student misbehavior that did or could eventually, through disciplinary referrals, contribute to the STPP.

Each research team's teacher was identified using pre-existing connections (familiarity sampling) within a single, large, school district in the urban southwestern United States. Research teams only disclosed—to the teachers and, where relevant, principals—an interest in observing teacher classroom management practices, but nothing further to avoid impacting teacher behavior in ways that might undermine the study. While this non-disclosure of the full observational purpose can be viewed as subversive (and, consequentially, further viewed as necessary or problematic, etc.) on the part of research team members, the purpose of this work was to document practices in order to assist teachers, school leaders, and educational communities to do a better job serving students in high needs schools, not to shame, demonize, and/or lay blame for the systemic failure to serve.

Each research team developed a critical ethnographic research-based framework (Carspecken, 1996; Dunbar, 2009; Fettermen, 1998; Frank, 1999; Hammerseley, 1990; Madison, S., 2013; Madison, D., 2005; Soyini Madison, 2005; Spradley, 1979; Thomas, 1993) to structure their classroom observations. While these observations were the focus of the research, educational practices not exclusively at the classroom level, nor solely related to teacher instructional habits, that fed the STPP were also identified. In short, teacher classroom management strategies, whether they fed or starved the STPP, did not operate in isolation of the larger school climate and culture.

Team 1. Team 1 was comprised of two Asian women and one Latina; one of the Asian women was a liaison to the elementary school site chosen for volunteers from her place of employment. This school is a "turn around" school; high minority, low income, and historically poor performing according to district metrics, thus targeted for improvement (NVDOE, 2013). Since becoming a turn around school (in 2004), attendance, parent involvement, homework completion, grades, and test scores have improved, largely attributed (by the school community as a whole) to the **autonomy** *given to the principal*, a black woman, the district hired and charged with realizing improvement, and *given by the principal* to the school's teachers. It is troublingly of note that part of the turn around narrative of this school was the promotion of it, by school leaders, teachers, and district reports, as more racially diverse or "less black" (only 66%) than it appeared to research team members to be "in person" (90+%). Similarly, teacher demographics are *verbally* described as "predominantly white," while *visual* representations suggest a predominantly black teaching force, other teachers of color, and white teachers.

This team chose a black male teacher, hypothesized that his teaching pedagogy would not feed the STPP, and was able to confirm this through observation. This teacher demonstrated highly effective classroom management skills, including the use of specific culturally responsive praxis. For example, the teacher addressed all of his male students as "son" and all of his female students as "young lady," and he grouped students by gender when assigning them in-class work to complete. He also disciplined students using humor, without raising his voice, and in an efficient manner (he did not dwell on incidents), strategies he considered to be "good" teaching practice. He has never made a disciplinary referral.

Team 2. Team 2 was comprised of one white woman and one white man, both were teachers at the middle school site chosen. This school's student demographic is predominately Latina/Latino (41%), with 28% white students, 17% Asian students, and 10% black students; these students are taught by a majority of white, female teachers (NVDOE, 2013).

This team chose a white female teacher, hypothesized that her teaching pedagogy would feed the STPP, and was able to confirm this through observation. This teacher is known for her hyperbolically enthusiastic training of other teachers in the use of a pre-packed curriculum aligned with various teaching standards and touted to improve standardized test scores. After three years of school-wide implementation of the curriculum there has not been any measurable improvements in these metrics. This teacher is generally considered to be a "good" teacher by school leadership, but known to be the opposite by many teaching colleagues. While this teacher does not make frequent disciplinary referrals, her over-reliance on formulaic approaches to teaching clearly bores students. Determined not to be deterred in using these approaches, she continues to teach "the curriculum" while her students, albeit quietly, disengage from her and individually occupy themselves (reading, writing, and using personal or classroom media). Though this teacher makes only occasional disciplinary referrals, largely proportional to school racial demographics, though disproportionally male, her pedagogy creates fertile ground in her classroom from which STPP trends could emerge and proliferate.

Team 3. Team 3 was comprised of two white women and one black man; one of the women was a teacher at the elementary school site chosen. This Title I school has a majority white student population (42%), but, combined, black (19%), Latina/Latino (22%), and Asian (5%), and "other" (12%, including mixed-race) students comprise over half of the entire student body (NVDOE, 2013). The majority of the school's teacher workforce is white and female. Upon entering the school for observations, the black male research team member was required to show identification, but the non-school affiliated white female team member entered the school without being asked for identification. During observation visits, all research team members observed that the school exhibited obvious class crowding and a pattern of isolating students of color in part-time "pull-out" and/or special education classes. Several minority

male students were also repeatedly observed roaming, even playing, in the school halls for extended periods of time without adult supervision or engagement.

For this team, the school principal identified a white male teacher considered to be a "good" teacher and willing to be observed. Observations revealed this teacher to be wholly unprepared to differentiate instruction for different student needs; he also expressed frustration that all students were not learning at the same pace. The teacher spoke to white female students much more frequently than others, and only complimented white student performance on assignments. The behavior of one minority male (Latino) student was socially constructed in the classroom as "bad" and other students were instructed to report his behavior to the teacher if it bothered them. The teacher also isolated students, across race and gender, with various special education designations (RTI, IEP) in one corner of the classroom.

Going into their research, Team 3 did not have a specific hypothesis as to what their observations might reveal to them relative to the STPP. However, though their teacher was not known for making disciplinary referrals, like Team 2's teacher, his pedagogy creates classroom conditions that clearly favor the emergence and proliferation of STPP trends.

Team 4. Team 4 was comprised of two white women and one Latina; one of the white women was a teacher at the high school site chosen. This tech-focused school is touted in district marketing materials as having 100% "highly qualified" teachers, the majority of whom are white women; 70% of the student body is comprised of students of color (including 8.5% who identify as bi- or multi-racial), and just less than half of the student population qualifies for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), which is relatively low for schools in the district (NVDOE, 2013).

For this team, the school principal identified a white male teacher with the highest disciplinary referral rate, who was also the most receptive to being observed. This teacher is well known to have poor hygiene, and regularly self-identifies to others that he is "ADHD" (has an Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). He is also casual to the point of being inappropriate. For example, he makes stereotypical comments ostensibly to try to engage students of color and female students. These comments appear to be dismissed by students as a function of the teacher's obviously poor social skills and ill attempts at humor. Because the teacher assigns seats based on student last name order and periodically reverses these assignments, he believes that all of his students have equitable access to him in the classroom. However, the teacher was observed to be inconsistent in interactions with students—some students, regardless of their assigned seats, got a lot of his attention, others almost none. The classroom itself was observed to have "no life" (e.g., decorations), which negatively differentiated it from other classrooms, especially science classrooms, in the school.

Like Team 3, Team 4 did not have a specific hypothesis as to what their observations might reveal to them relative to the STPP. Their teacher turned out to be textbook example of how teacher disciplinary practices (and the lack thereof)

aggressively feed the STPP. Despite this teacher's obvious significant challenges, school leaders and teaching colleagues alike consider him to have "good" content knowledge in a high demand content area (advanced science). This led research team members to wonder not only if the same problematic behaviors would be considered so incidentally in teachers from other demographic groups and/or in other content areas, but also if the bar for success would be much, much higher.

Team 5. Team 5 was comprised of one mixed black and white (European) woman, one Asian woman, and one white woman; none had a school, administrator, or teacher connection at the high school site chosen, but one had a district-level connection that facilitated their access. The school was chosen for its demographics. According to publically accessible district data (NVDOE, 2013), in 2012-2013 the school had a 20% role out of students to behavioral schools, 700 for suspension and 10 for expulsion. For suspension, black students were represented at 2.5 times (10.7%), and Latina/Latino students at 2.1 times (19.6%) of their proportions in the school population (4.25% and 9.22%, respectively). For expulsion, black students comprised 50%. Overall, the school has only a 5% minority student enrollment, proportional to the demographics of the immediate community that hosts it (USDC/USCB, 2013).

For this team, the school principal identified a white male teacher who was in his first year of teaching, thus used to being, and perhaps therefore willing to be, observed. This teacher exhibited very poor classroom management skills that he tried to counter with highly didactic, teacher-centered approaches to teaching. Despite his obviously poor teaching ability, students in the classroom largely behaved as if nothing was wrong.

Team 5, similarly to Teams 3 and 4, did not have a specific hypothesis as to what their observations might reveal to them relative to the STPP. But, they did anticipate that blatant discrimination toward students of color would have become visible to them in some way given the combination of the school's overall rate of behavioral referrals and the teacher's teaching challenges. Upon reflection, research team members expressed the sense that the teacher's novice status provided the principal advance "cover" for responding to any concerns she may have anticipated they would surface regarding his classroom management. Further, precisely because of the school's role out rates, there were very few students of color left in the school—the pipeline was, in essence, dry because the "crude" had already been exhausted. This left research team members to conclude that the proclivity to refer students out of the school had an impact on controlling the behavior of the few who remained; demographically even more isolated, they were more apt to conform, to be "good." In the end, the team was left feeling as though the school sent them away saying, "There's nothing to see here, because everything here is fine, just fine."

Conclusions and Significance

A unifying theme in this research is described by Juárez and Hayes (2012) as

the "problem of good" (p. 183). This problem shows up in teaching in the perpetual credentialing of educators who are unprepared to effectively teach students of color. These educators, and those who prepare them, are, perhaps, well meaning, have command of their subject areas, and can recite chapter and verse about the latest classroom management strategies being discussed in the educational research, but they cannot meet the educational needs of students from high minority/low income communities. Ascribed with formal power in the classroom and lacking sociopolitically-located multicultural educational training, teachers, especially white teachers, often fail to recognize how their classroom disciplinary practices disproportionately erroneously target and, thus, negatively impact their minority students in their classrooms. However, when these same teachers are made aware of their identity-based, standpoint-based, and positionality-based biases and, further, learn alternative strategies for engaging *with* these same students as their educational *allies*, instead of continuing to amplify the STPP, they become dismantlers of it (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Howard, 2006).

Religious Identity and Curriculum Development: The Lived Experience of Spirituality in Schooling

The role of religion in public education had long been the source of tension. Avoiding or proscriptively limiting the discussion of religion in schooling precludes students and teachers from bringing their full selves into schools and classrooms, and from seeing their religious, spiritual, and/or secular identities reflected back to them through curricular engagement (Brimhall-Vargas, 2011). The research on religious identity and curriculum development discussed here is intentionally intersectional in examining the ways in which religion, race, and sexuality reciprocally inform each other, at the same time prioritizing the issue of religion, and locating race as the secondary research concern.

Purposes and Objectives

This research takes up challenges and extends existing and unfolding simplistic discourse on identity politics, prejudice reduction, and anti-intellectual theology. Using intersectional analysis to reconsider human identity formation beyond 'either/or' constructions in traditional research on religious identity, this research seeks to rename identity so as to capture the wholeness and movement of it in a manner akin to how poetry seeks to bring forward complex of experiences of truth (Allport, 1950; Allport and Ross, 1967). In developing curricula informed by student and teacher co-created identity narratives, identity becomes a more fluid concept, negotiated in ways that avoids false dichotomies and oppressive relegation to silent spaces. Thus, this research seeks to enable educators to actualize an *allied vision* of religious, racial, and sexual curricular identity (Crenshaw, 1991).

Framework, Modes of Inquiry and Data Sources

Grounded in the philosophical work of Derrida (1978, 1982, 1989), Gadamer (1989), Heidegger (1962), Levinas (1979), and Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1968), the research at focus here engages the concept of phenomythology—the existential weaving of myth and phenomenology together to uncover and illustrate that what may be a universal search for ultimacy and liminality in life's small events, is revelatory of the larger significance and deeper inward meaning of life itself (Brimhall-Vargas, 2011). It borrows from Seidman's (1996) overall concept of "queerness" as a dispositional element where participants freely expand their intersectional religious identity through the *phenomythological* process. Van Manen (2003) iterates a process by which intersectional identity-based philosophy can be used to conduct phenomenological research: evidence is amassed through iterative processes of single and group structured conversations that also contain periods of reflective writing as well as non-traditional forms of phenomenological expression such as art, poetry, and music (Brimhall-Vargas, 2011; VanManen, 2003). Resultantly, the identity narratives discussed are drawn from single and multi-person conversations, reflective writing assignments, and an art project. This is consistent with phenomenological study.

Discussion of Findings

When considering the various junctures of identity (religion, race, and sexuality, among others) of this study's participants, their narratives make clear a strong resistance to having their identities *overly* reduced in any form of research, and by extension, in other taxonomic environments, such as education. Indeed, these participants identity meta-narratives that are not simply logical, sequential, and perfectly coherent from which generalizations can be drawn (Allport, 1950; Allport & Ross, 1967; Campbell & Moyers, 1988).

Accordingly, the use of an intersectional analytical lens to explore their religious identity allows for a "queer" expression of religion that emerges from and maintains an unfinished and evolving nature in which a key element of this queerness is the consistent desire for freedom from identity label constraints, and where identity is understood as having a "potential" future existence (Heidegger, 1962; Seidman, 1996). Participants suggest that this freedom is derived from a purposely-unmoored positionality that is often misunderstood relative to a centralized (and privileged) norm. Without a doubt, "queer" demands an exacting a price for the freedom it gives, but a balanced approach to this term yields a broader and more perfect image of those possibilities.

The implications for curriculum here are equally complex. Though curricular engagement with religious identity is often considered to be fraught with especially legal dangers in the public PK-12 educational context, the costs of non-engagement are usually paid by those students whose religious identities are misunderstood, mi-

noritized, or openly demeaned. Thus, providing space for religiously queer expression of such identities lends to the creation of a more democratic classroom experience for all students (Brimhall-Vargas & Clark, 2008; Jardine, Clifford, & Friesen, 2003).

In seeking to engage students with sociopolitically-located multicultural curriculum, this study suggests that educators need to remain aware of four crucial intersectional identity dynamics often only made visible through religious conversion: (1) religion and race are often conflated to a degree that allows little room for dissent or nuance by in-group members in either their religious or racial identity to the point of erasing some peoples' experience altogether; (2) intersectional experiences provide a unique standpoint from which to understand polarizing aspects of race and religion; (3) religion/race intersectional identities are further differentiated by overlaying oppressions based on gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation and heteronormativity; and (4) many of these specific religious identity dynamics exist in a larger context of all religious identities (and, by extension, all theologies) enveloped within the larger racial system of whiteness.

When observing religious identity closely, it appears that religion cannot be adequately defined through racial narratives or histories. Yet, those who deviate from religious/racial norms are often placed in a quandary of needing to "settle" the dissonance of an interior religious reality that is threatening to sever the relative safety of their membership in their racial group, or even more importantly, in their family. This process can be particularly difficult for those individuals who, despite experiencing racial subordination, nevertheless experience religious privilege through membership in Christian faiths. Two participants in the study, Juanita, a Filipina Hawaiian who was raised Catholic, and Mujahid, an African-American man who was raised Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal (AME), recount narratives of racial disconnection and isolation when they decided to become a member of a different religion. Juanita's narrative suggests that to simply *be* Hawaiian in her town and, thus, a member of that Hawaiian community meant that she had to be Catholic. This dissonance with religion had a corresponding effect on her connection to her racial community, so much so that she felt she needed to physically *leave* Hawaii altogether in order to enact a more complex, and more meaningful, religious identity. Juanita's analysis of these circumstances makes clear that she believes this was a "choice" was forced upon her. She says, "See, the Catholic Church was taken away from me, and I think I had huge resentments about it, about the way it was taken away from me." Mujahid expresses a similar sense of disconnection from his racial community when he pursued a non-Christian religious journey. He describes this disconnection as a kind of death, an extremely painful one, though, in retrospect, he describes it through a seemingly comforting metaphor. "What looks like death to a caterpillar is actually a butterfly." Here he indicates the extreme fear of separation and disconnection, but understands that it provides him a new and different kind of fulfillment.

It also becomes apparent that religious conversion narratives offer unique insights

into the interplay of religious and racial identity by providing an "outsider-within" perspective and standpoint from which to examine race in particular (Collins, 1998; Crenshaw, 1991). When religion and racial identities become highly conflated, Mujahid and Juanita suggest that they need a new standpoint from which they can analyze and understand their own religious and racial identities. When asked whether he might have joined another Christian group, Mujahid suggests, "I'm not sure now if I had known Christianity [then] the way I know it now, whether I would have converted to Islam." But then I said, "Yes, I would have—because *I needed to convert in order to be able to see it. I couldn't have seen it while I was there"* [emphasis added]. Juanita considers Buddhism as a place where she was able to truly "see" Catholicism and her racial identity. She says, "Later in years, *after I became a Buddhist and really understood the Catholic Church*, I thought, 'How stupid.' I mean, I would have left it [anyway], so why resent the fact that that was done to [me]?"

Deep exploration of the multiple dimensions of queerness of religious, racial, sexual, and gender identity can be drawn forth (as in educare) through appropriate comparison to mythological fiction. Specifically, this research makes use of *phenomythology* (the phenomenological exploration of identity through the genuine engagement of myth as "truthful fiction") to illustrate complex interplays of identity not visible elsewhere. Juanita's and Mujahid's narratives are reflected through the story of the Mayan twins, Hunahpu and Xbalanque, as they traversed a heroic journey through difficult trials called "houses" (Campbell & Moyers, 1988).

One such trial illustrates the crucial nexus of religion, sex, and gender identity and expression for Juanita, who in addition to being a Filipina Asian-American is also an openly post-operative trans woman. Juanita's story suggests a similar theme to the story of the Mayan twins where Hunahpu's body needs to be transformed to move forward in the trials. Despite coming out early as gay (and having a boyfriend in her early teen years), Juanita's Catholic upbringing, coupled with the promptings of an inner voice, told her that she could not be male and engage in sexual relations with another man. Thus, she concluded that she needed to become a woman to be consistent and whole in her religious upbringing and told her priest of this decision during confession. She was then excommunicated.

Juanita's engagement with the Catholic Church was sincere on some level. She was trying to resolve what she saw as the conundrum presented by church dogma and her emerging sexuality and gender identity and expression. But, the negative reaction she received from her priest when she revealed her decision to seek sex reassignment meant that she would no longer be considered Catholic by the church, even as she, personally, was attempting align herself with Catholicism. Juanita's struggle here was in deciding which part of her identity she would keep, Catholicism or maleness. In considering what Juanita would give up, she weighed her options carefully and ultimately chooses to reify her religious identity through physical transformation. Ultimately, Juanita suggests that the choices she saw before her were limiting, leaving her with less than what she might have been with more religious options. Now in

her sixties, she says she would not have undergone sex reassignment, because she feels she could have been trans or gay without it. Juanita is clearly at peace with her life choices and does not live in anguish over past decisions. Yet, her narrative is one which gives clear insight into the power religion and religious identification have in defining parameters one's own engagement with one's own body.

Hunahpu and Xbalanque were born when their mother, Xquic, communicated with the severed head of their father, Hun. Another trial they endured involved them retrieving the buried remains of their father, after which Hunahpu attempted to rebuild him. Although Hun's body was made whole again he was not the same and was unable to function as he had previously. When observing the Gordian knot that is religious/racial identities, it becomes clear that such struggles inevitably happen within a larger context of whiteness. As an African-American Muslim convert, Mujahid wrestles deeply with what it means to be African-American and not a Christian, in wondering about his own racial "place." A particularly poignant memory of this dynamic centers around a conversation he had with his mother over popular representations of Jesus as white that she keeps framed in her home among pictures of their African American family. Mujahid says to his mother: "Ma, you know the white man is out of place. He just don't seem to fit in the family photo gallery right here." [Mom replies:] "Boy, that's my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Not deterred, Mujahid presses that the picture is an object of racial education to younger generations of African Americans where white people are placed into the image of God. He illustrates this point by calling a niece to come and identify the picture. He asks his niece "who is this white man," she replies, "Him? God." The impact was clear. Over time, Mujahid's mother removed the racially white picture of Jesus—once metaphorically decapitated, this "father" could not be made whole again as white. In this exchange, Mujahid indirectly reveals a major reason why he chose Islam in his religious conversion: Islam's aversion to having God depicted in human form. This had the effect of making God more equitably available across human differences such as race, which had particular importance for Mujahid's experience in which so much racial iconography is covertly and overtly racialized as white.

Conclusions and Significance

The identity narratives suggest that intersectional identity development must be deeply understood as a complex phenomenon often mirrored in the mythological *heroic journey* commonly found in cultures around the world (Brimhall-Vargas, 2011). Linking this journey to education, curricula must be extended to explore the (dis)connections between ontological and sociopolitical identity, especially at the intersections of religion, race, and sexuality. Such curricula is more responsive to the needs of all students, particularly those whose identities, standpoints, and positionalities situate them at the center of these intersections, yet still in the margins in public schooling.

Inclusive Education: "I'm Complicated So It's Complicated;" Intersectionality and Advocacy Across Differences

Inclusive education is an educational model that affirms, as a right, every child's full access to the general education classroom, no matter the extent to which any child may need modifications, adaptations, or support to learn in this classroom (Sapon-Shevin, 2007). The research on inclusive education discussed here is intentionally intersectional in examining the ways in which dis/ability, family configuration, and race reciprocally inform each other, at the same time prioritizing the issue of dis/ability, and locating race as the tertiary research concern.

Purposes and Objectives

In seriously considering the ways in which the intersections of dis/ability, family configuration, and race complicate understandings of inclusive education, the question of and how best to advocate *with and for* students with multiple marginalized identities, standpoints, and positionalities becomes immensely complicated and seemingly impossible to adequately answer. The research at focus here engages this question, first from an historical vantage point in seeking to make it more manageable, and, second, in the context of everyday life in school communities in identifying a durable strategy for realizing the advocacy goal.

Framework, Modes of Inquiry and Data Sources

The concept of advocacy in the inclusive education arena has been limited by its failure to take into account intersectionality. This research uses grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000; Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to examine why attempts to address discrimination in schools at the intersection of dis/ability, family configuration (including same-sex parents), and race often fail. These attempts are re-considered through an *ally-building* lens (Broido & Reason, 2005). More specifically, through secondary data analysis a grounded theory emerges about the role that intersectionality-informed allyship can play in improving educational inclusion for students with different abilities, especially those from non-traditional families and/or who are of color, that takes into account the complex deficit orientations in schools that particularly negative impact the students at the junction of these multiple identities.

Drawing connections between anti-oppression and inclusion advocacy points of entry into research, this work analyzes historic and continuing tension between and across dis/ability, family, and race. Historically, there has been little discussion about the role of dis/ability within the larger discourses of diversity (Pugach, Blanton, & Florian (2012) and, similarly, those advocating for the inclusion of persons with disabilities often neglect to name or consider other forms of identity which impact participation and representation within the broader society. Although Erevelles, Kanga,

and Middleton (2006) and others have argued for the need to critically explore the connections between "historically disenfranchised groups within educational contexts" (p. 77), the over-simplified linking of dis/ability and other dimensions of diversity can be highly problematic. For example, children of color in the foster care/adoption system are most likely to be taken in by same-sex couples if they are to be taken in at all (Raible, 2012). Students of color are also routinely over-referred to special education (Harry & Klingner, 2006). These linkages beg scholars and activists alike to more deeply consider how discrete prejudices become inter-tangled and, thereby, confound assumptions about capacity (physical, developmental, and psychological) with those related to sexuality and race, among others. In so doing, these prejudices are reified as causal or deterministic (Ferri & Connor, 2006).

This work examines attempts to "fix" differences, rather than address one's own and others' limited, dangerous, and damaging responses to perceived differences and putative disabilities. This examination is undertaken intersectionally (e.g., to examine how children with Down's syndrome are subjected to facial surgery, how narrow legal definitions of "family" particularly limit non-traditionally-configured households, and how covert racial identifiers are used to systematically track students of color) to reveal deeper understandings of oppression, concomitant with explicating the manners in which advocacy and related ally-building can mitigate oppression.

Discussion of Findings

How do various identities become conflated and what are the effects of that conflation on the subsequent advocacy that occurs? This secondary data analysis uncovered four such conflation trends that serve to ground a theory of allyship by examining how identity concerns are engaged and continuously sought to be resolved (Charmaz, 2000; Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). These trends are described under the following sub-headings: Totalizing, Desirability, Erasure, and Facile Solutions. Following these descriptions, underlying motivations for all four conflations trends are discussed.

Totalizing. Although most people, including PK-12 teachers, would acknowledge that every person/student has multiple identities, sophisticated advocacy across multiple identity dimensions is limited by the notion of a master identity or a totalizing narrative. For example, a student has two moms, is African American, and uses a wheelchair because she also has cerebral palsy. Often, the disability image is so overpowering to "viewers" (parents, teachers, other students) that they fail to "see," much less recognize and consider this student's other identities, discretely or intersectionally (in sum) (Adams, Griffin, & Bell, 2007; Lawrence, 2005; Merleau-Ponty, 1968; Pugach, Blanton, & Florian, 2012; Pugach & Seidl, 1998; Weber, 2007).

Desirability. Again, though the reality of multiple dimensions is generally understood, it is considered desirable to render some identities invisible as a form

of so-called advocacy for them. This is an especially common occurrence in elementary special education classes and often considered "good" inclusion practice. For example, some might argue, albeit problematically, that a high quality inclusion classroom is one in which the students with disabilities cannot be distinguished from those who have none. Of course, a high quality inclusion classroom might have some universal elements—for example, every student is engaged, no student is isolated in the corner of the room with a Velcro fastener appended to their side, and every student's name is on the classroom job chart. But, the tendency toward totalizing, and the invisibility it can lead to, abound in reading between the lines of definitions of so-called "good" inclusion classrooms. In sum, if a good inclusion classroom is one in which students with known disabilities are not visible, then inclusive educational space in which students' disabilities are extremely obvious would, ostensibly, have to be characterized as bad or, at least, as not as good (Ball & Harry, 1993; Pugach, Blanton, & Florian, 2012; Pugach & Seidl, 1998; Sapon-Shevin, 2007; Sapon-Shevin & Zollers, 1999).

Erasure. Once again, in acknowledging the intersections of multiple identities, another challenge to educational advocacy is the way in which certain identities erase others or, at least, cause them to become inconceivable. For example, it is not uncommon for students with disabilities to be infantilized by parent statements such as, "He has the mind of a four-year-old," or "She'll always be our little girl." Such characterizations fail to acknowledge the full humanity, including the interests and concerns, of students with disabilities; in fact, these students' interests and concerns may be much more akin to those of their chronological-age peers than the adults raising them imagine or understand them to be. For example, a 15-year old Latina with spina bifida who has limited control of her body and labored speech is, like other adolescents, likely to be coming into her sexuality and, thus, interested in dating, romance, and intimacy. The failure to acknowledge the sexuality of people with disabilities is a chronic problem and one that leads to a secondary problem: even when their sexuality is recognized, it is generally assumed to reflect proclivities that are dominant in society and/or that mirror the parents own attraction norms: heterosexual, intraracial, and/or intrareligious, among others (Gatztambide-Fernández, Harding, & Sordé-Martí, 2004; Haddad, 2013; Pugach, Blanton, & Florian, 2012; Pugach & Seidl, 1998; Raible, 2012; Weber, 2007).

Facile Solutions. In advocating to reconcile the inequitable ways in which various intertwined identities are compromised, it is important to be wary of so-called solutions put forward that are, upon closed examination, revealed to be overly facile. For example, the overrepresentation of students of color, especially black males, in special education is well documented (Alexander, 2012; Clark 2004, 2012; Giroux, 2013). This reality is reflective of the ways in which these boys' active bodies are culturally misunderstood, by their usually white female teachers, as deviant, often dangerous, and in need of remediation typically provided in highly racially seg-

regated educational spaces (Clark, 2004; Erevelles, Kanga, & Middleton, 2006; Ferri, 2010; Ferri & Connor, 2006; Harry & Klingner, 2006; Howard, 2006). It is equally well documented that students of color are vastly underrepresented in gifted and talented education (GATE) programs (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Sapon-Shevin, 1994, 2007). Admission to such programs is often based on standardized test scores (even though these scores cannot be correlated to program performance outcomes), family income and/or educational background, and teacher recommendation, thus it is not considered surprising that these programs are over-populated by white, middle-upper class students from families with highly educated parents (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Nieto & Bode, 2012; Sapon-Shevin, 1994).

Efforts to reconcile these related inequalities have included in-service teacher trainings on classroom management skills that omit direct discussion of race, class, and gender issues, as well as the impact of unconscious and implicit biases on the development of those skills (Adams, Griffin, & Bell, 2007; Giroux, 1999; Lawrence, 2005; Howard, 2006). Reconciliation efforts have also focused on intentional efforts to recruit more students of color to GATE programs, often tethered to changed or expanded admission criteria which has done more to reify the perception that students of color, working class students, and first generation college students are inherently less qualified, than to dispel the false meritocracy embedded in these programs' structurally-biased admissions protocols and processes (Erevelles, Kanga, & Middleton, 2006; Ferri; 2010; Nieto & Bode, 2012; Pugach, Blanton, & Florian, 2012; Pugach & Seidl, 1998; Sapon-Shevin, 1994).

These efforts also remove the imperative that general education, and general education classroom teachers, teach curricula and through pedagogies that are reflective of and responsive to all learners, including those who enter those classrooms with various advanced skill sets. As a result, so-called advanced students who may, in fact, have challenges in many areas, do not get those challenges remediated, and, likewise, the extraordinary talents of so-called general and special education students are often overlooked because deficit paradigmatic views pre-dominate in teacher preparation, and thus in teachers' views of them (Clark, 2013; Ferri & Connor, 2006; Giroux, 2013; Howard, 20006; Nieto & Bode, 2012).

Discussion

This last trend can be seen as, perhaps, the key challenge that faces advocates for quality education for all students. Not only must these advocates pay attention to the ways in which multiple identities both reinforce privilege and/or compound discrimination, they must carefully examine the overall educational structures and system within which education is taking place. In so doing, they must ask what policies and practices will lead to socially just, quality educations for all, carefully weighing and balancing specific students' rights to receive differential education based on their histories, current circumstances, skills, and interests,

and the right of all students to secure an equitable, thus equally high quality, education.

In facing this key challenge—in paying attention, examining, asking, weighing, and balancing—they must, underneath it all—*see*. The literature reviewed for this study is riddled with persistent and newly emergent educational concerns manifest largely because of overt and covert fidelity to the mythology of "color blindness" (Alexander, 2012; Broido & Reason, 2005; Howard, 2006; Nieto & Bode, 2012; Pugach, Blanton, & Florian, 2012; Pugach & Seidl, 1998;). Generally, this mythology seeks to promote the idea that it is possible, indeed laudable, to fail to acknowledge a student's racial or ethnic background. It is not uncommon to hear teachers brag, "I don't see color. I don't care if a child is black or green or purple, I am going to teach him [or her] just the same." The inclusion of colors such as green and purple in this oft-heard phrase is particularly troubling, not only because it negates the importance of racial identity, but because it has the added effect of mocking the idea that color matters and that specific colors—white and black—matter most (Alexander, 2012; Clark, 2004, 2012; Milem & Hakuta, 2000). It is hard to imagine teachers proclaiming themselves "nature blind," or saying, for example, "When I go out in the woods, I can't tell a tree from a bush, I have no idea what specific flowers are, I do not even notice when some are red, and I never notice if there are clouds in the sky." Yet, in educational contexts in which very dire human realities are at stake, "not noticing" is falsely likened to a more evolved consciousness than noticing is. Lauding "blindness" is also problematic in the disability arena in which, for example, people who are actually blind (e.g. cannot see), are still quite capable of highly astute and nuanced perception, knowing, and understanding (Ball & Harry, 1993; Sapon-Shevin, 2007; Sapon-Shevin & Zollers, 1999).

Compounding this erroneous commitment to "not noticing" and, thus, not naming singular identities, much less multiple ones, is the way in which each of our own individual identities and related histories make it difficult to simply notice differences, as well as mistreatment, discrimination, and outright oppression along other's identity dimensions. Numerous workshops on challenging oppressive behavior, particularly racism, homophobia and ableism, often make use of an activity in which participants are asked to share (with a partner) either a time when they attempted to challenge some form of oppression, or a time when they did not challenge such (Adams, Griffin, & Bell, 2007; Ball & Harry, 1993; Sapon-Shevin, 2007; Sapon-Shevin & Zollers, 1999). After participants share their stories, analysis of responses ask participants to share what they thought contributed to, or got in the way of, their ability to challenge.

Participant report-outs suggest that both their ability or inability to challenge was predicated on them holding or not holding positions of power, and having or not having a lot of information about the issue of oppression at focus. Impetus to challenge also came from feeling passionate about the mistreatment (especially if they took it personally), whereas disinclination to challenge was additionally tethered

to fear for their safety, or an unwillingness to deal with the discomfort disrupting the status quo might cause them, including the potential to damage their relationships with "offenders." Perhaps most telling, however, is that most participants who opted not to intervene didn't do so because they were not even aware that oppression had occurred; they lacked sufficient knowledge to be able to discern that a remark or policy was, indeed, oppressive. For example, if one is unaware that Muslims generally do not eat pork, one would be unable to challenge the suggestion to a religiously diverse cohort, "Let's all go out for ribs," as problematic.

Too often, able-bodied teachers fail to recognize the ableist language they use with students, like "*walk your talk*" (phraseology commonly used in social justice circles, including from that perspective in this article). Further, school officials from overwhelmingly middle-class, white, and heterosexual families are predisposed to overlook the additional challenges a Daddy-Daughter *dance* might present for students from various other racial, class, or family configurations. Clearly, meaningful educational advocacy and ally building require significant cognitive and non-cognitive development to fully embrace and enact students' lived experiences of intersectionality. But even as this development is under way, simply developing an awareness of what one does not know and that there is always more to know, can enable one to begin to ask questions that will affirm, rather than disaffirm, all students, between, among, and across all discrete and multiple identity dimensions.

Conclusions and Significance

There are both significant parallels and distinctions in terms of how dis/ability, family configuration and race have been responded to within the hegemonic context prevalent in most school settings, past and present. It is vitally important for all educators to engage inclusive education with sophisticated understanding of how the misinterpretation of non-dominant cultural values and practices intensifies, even if inadvertently, non-dominant group oppression (Pugach & Seidl, 1998). Understanding intersectionality enables better allyship within, as well as across, categories of difference, thereby holding the greatest promise for meaningfully improving educational outcomes for all students, but especially for students whose identities, standpoints, and positionalities have led them to be multiply marginalized.

Troubling Intersectionality, Identity, Standpoint, Positionality, and Allyship

Increasingly over the last fifty years, notions of identity hybridity and fluidity ubiquitous to intersectionality have come under critique in Post-Colonial and Cultural Studies circles (Gatztambide-Fernández, Harding, & Sordé-Martí, 2004). Such notions have been characterized as manifestations of Westernization that contribute to the dissolution of indigenous culture. "Strategic essentialism" is offered

to cross-identity positional postures as a lens through which Western influence on intersectionality can be negotiated and problematized (Spivak, 1986, p. 45).

Accordingly, the scholarship herein can be understood to have employed race to examine identity in a strategically essentialist manner. All three studies employ race as an analytical tool, but each study assigns it a different degree of analytical weight. Clark & McGhie argue that while race, class, and gender are all factors in the disproportionately negative educational outcomes of especially black male students, race *continues* to matter more and most (Bell, 1992; Milem & Hakuta, 2000). Brimhall-Vargas describes the influence of race on religion to reveal, for example, the embedded whiteness of theological text and, thus, how the so-called separation of religion and state in schools actually operates in such a way as to ensure that Christian hegemony is proliferated, largely unfettered, in the curriculum in ways that concomitantly promote white supremacy and heteronormativity (Carter, 2008; Haddad, 2013). Sapon-Shevin surfaces the overrepresentation of children from historically underrepresented racial minority groups among those characterized in schools as having a disability, as well as among those who are most likely to be formally or informally adopted into unconventional families (Pugach, Blanton, & Florian, 2012).

Intersectional scholarship can likewise inform students and teachers of their own situated statuses and how, in moving beyond a heroes-and-holidays-oriented multicultural education that leaves issues of power and oppression unexamined, they can push back against these limiting positions (Nieto & Bode, 2012). Accordingly, intersectional scholarship enables analyses of different identities, standpoints, and positionalities and related oppressions of various groups in manners expressly designed to facilitate the development of students and teachers as *strategically essential allies* in the struggle for social justice.

Critiques of allyship, especially as this concept has been codified in social justice work/education, raise concerns as to how people, especially those from dominant identity groups, thus conditioned by various forms of privilege, can join *with* "others" in manners that are not, in some way, still colonizing (i.e., inclined to take over despite operating under the auspice of working against hegemony) (Broido & Reason, 2005). The distance between word and deed is salient here—talking the talk of allyship, but not walking the walk of it (the embedded ableim in these expressions nothwithstanding, as previously noted). But some critiques of allyship have even problematized its talk, arguing the notion of "voice"—finding voice, using one's own voice, giving voice to—is located in Western ideals that valorize representative pronouncement over silence used communicate what cannot be spoken in the context of oppression, as well as what is meant when silence is absent (Candel, 2014; Frantz, 2013). Encouraging members of a specific dominant group, relative to a specific non-dominant group liberation struggle, to work against the hegemony at focus as it derives from/is manifest in their own dominant group community has been one counter-colonizing approach to allyship. The scholarship

herein seeks to e-x-t-e-n-d counterhegemonic ally consciousness and the praxis it informs to enable teachers and students to work as race, class, and gender allies to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline, to develop an allied understanding of how of school curricula has religious, racial, and sexual identity, and to establish school communities in which ability, family, and race are *seen*—individually and in sum—as foundational to ally-building.

Pedagogical Implications of Intersectional Scholarship

Like researchers, teachers can learn to understand the multiple identities, standpoints, and positionalities that both they and their students bring to the educational context of schooling. In so doing, they can expand the concept of intersectionality by disrupting limited and limiting understandings of teacher and student identity, standpoint, and positionality, and articulate ways in which understanding issues of intersectionality and multiple identities, standpoints, and positionalities can help teachers and students to become better allies towards those experiencing marginalization and exclusion.

This Freirian concept of teaching against oppression is manifest in Nieto's sociopolitically-located multicultural education (2012), in Sleeter's multicultural education as activism (1996), in Banks' (2004) ethnic studies-linked access and power orientation to multicultural education, and in the praxis of myriad social justice educators who focus on interrupting and challenging classism, racism, homophobia, ableism and other forms of oppression ("isms") in schools and the larger communities in which these schools are located (Adams, Griffin, & Bell, 2007). Teaching against oppression enables teaching about identity, multiple identities, and intersectionality, and requires critique of other teaching models that do not address these complexities.

For example, although two individuals may both identify as people of color and gay/lesbian, other identities (such as class, gender, size and religion) may substantially affect the ways in which these individuals are viewed and treated. Thus, it would be an oversimplification of a teaching against oppression pedagogy to characterize it as simply teaching about the "authentic" knowledge borne of oppressor and oppressed group identity. To the extent that this oversimplification manifests in this pedagogy at all, it is focused more on group experience than knowledge; and to the extent that it is about knowledge, it is about knowledge that derives from experience. A teaching against oppression pedagogy does not focus on the discrete experiences that people have in society as members of groups as if each such group experience operates in isolation of the other, but it *does* consider how all the experiences that people as members of societal groups have—the function of past, continuing, and new systemic stratification—has led to their on-going differential access to full participation in democracy.

A teaching against oppression pedagogy *might* suggest, but never rigidly insist,

that there are experiences that people in the same group are likely to share that people outside the group are not. So, for example, by virtue of being wealthy or poor, White or Black, male or female, Christian or Muslim, etc., there are experiences that one is likely to have and other experiences one is unlikely to have. By virtue of having/not having these experiences, knowledge is developed—experiential knowledge. But the development of this knowledge is not "perfect"—not everyone in a group will have the experiences commonly associated with their group, not everyone in a group who does have these experiences will process them the same way (i.e., develop the knowledge commonly derived from the experience) even if most will. Precisely because people are members of more than one group they must negotiate the interplay of multiple experiences and the often competing/conflicting knowledge deriving from each one. A teaching against oppression pedagogy *might* also recognize that some people outside a group may develop approximate knowledge or intellectual understanding of that group 's experience and related knowledge deriving therefrom, even if most will not.

But, a teaching against oppression pedagogy *always* seeks to elucidate an important reality: that one can never know someone else's experience organically if it is not one's own—one may know the history, cultural traditions, etc., of another group, one may even know about others' experiences in copious detail, but one cannot not know, in the organic sense, what it feels like to be what one is not. This dynamic is made more complex when what one is, is complicated by one's multiple group memberships.

A teaching against oppression pedagogy is situated in power and privilege and oppression and discrimination dynamics, but not solely concerned with the marginalization of "the other." It is also concerned with (and independently so) revealing the privilege of "the non-other," as well as about reframing the discourse from the other to the otherizing, from the marginalized to marginalizing, from the minority to the minoritizing, etc., among, between, and across multiple other and non-other groups. In this way, a teaching against oppression pedagogy *seeks* to ensure that "the other" has agency, rather than being defined by and limited to "victim status" (hooks, 1993). Perhaps Freire (2000) most astutely captured the layered complexity of what a teaching against oppression *seeks* to accomplish here in his codification of the concept of "false generosity" in describing the struggle of all people to become more fully human:

> …the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity…become in turn oppressors of the oppressors, but rather restorers of the humanity of both.
>
>   This, then, is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well. The oppressors, who oppress, exploit, and rape by virtue of their power; cannot find in this power the strength to liberate either the oppressed or themselves. Only power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both. Any attempt to "soften" the power of the oppressor in deference to the weakness of the oppressed

almost always manifests itself in the form of false generosity... In order to have the continued opportunity to express their "generosity," the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the permanent fount of this "generosity" which is nourished by death, despair, and poverty. That is why the dispensers of false generosity become desperate at the slightest threat to its source.

True generosity consists precisely in fighting to destroy the causes that nourish false charity. False charity constrains the fearful and subdued, the "rejects of life" to extend their trembling hands. True generosity lies in striving so that these hands—whether of individuals or entire peoples—need be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, working, transform the world (pp. 44-5).

So, while no person exists solely as a member of a dominant or non-dominant group, and while most people have some ability to move between dominant and non-dominant group experiences, supremacy and subordination persist, and their persistence has pernicious effects on the daily lives of those who are the most consistently and pervasively disadvantaged in society.

Against the backdrop of this complex reality, teachers and students (and parents) must, through a teaching against oppression pedagogy, ally to co-construct classrooms as oppositional spaces in which they ally further across multiple identities to fight against all "isms" (not against one another) and for equity and social justice (Giroux, 1999). Classroom-based allyship that calls attention to power differentials only reifies powerlessness if those differentials are not contested in the daily enactment of teaching and learning—if they are talked about, but not walked (enacted) in negotiating the reciprocity of teaching and learning in the everyday (Freire, 2000). Thus, a teaching against oppression pedagogy requires fidelity to an on-going process of critique and self-critique in the co-construction of co-stewardship of classrooms as democratic communities in which students, teachers, and parents work together to realize and live revolutionary citizenship in the everyday.

Coda

Increasingly, young people are moving away from singular identities (based only on race *or* class *or* gender *or* religion *or* sexuality *or* dis/ability *or* family configuration, among other dimensions of difference) that many of the adults who work with them—especially as teachers—still hold to with steadfast allegiance. As a result, a generational divide, rooted in outmoded understandings of multiculturalism, exists that can exacerbate the development of crucial student/teacher relationship building that is foundational to student success. Bridging this divide requires especially multicultural educators to intersectionally reframe debates about identity. By building conscious awareness, knowledge, and understanding of how intersectional identity manifests in the lives of children and youth, as well as adults, all educators can become more effective in their work to close the academic

achievement/performance gap, and in seeking to create more inclusive, democratic educational institutions.

A step in this direction might engage pre- and in-service teachers in self-reflexive dialogue in the teacher education and/or professional development classroom, guided by Freire-inspired (1970, 1990) problem-posing prompts, perhaps configured as follows:

(a) What does it mean to me to be an ally to others when my "most salient" identity or identities is/are dominant?

(b) What does it mean to me to have others be an ally to me when my when my "most salient" identity or identities is/are non-dominant?

(c) What does it mean to me to have others be an ally to me when my when my "most salient" identity or identities is/are BOTH dominant AND non-dominant?

(d) When I think of a time when I believe I was a successful ally to people with identities that are not salient for me, I come to evaluate this time as "successful" allyship because…

(e) When I think of a time when I think I struggled or failed to be an ally to people with identities that are not salient for me—I come to evaluate this time as "failed" allyship because…

(f) For me, the "the basics of allyship" for multiple identities are…because…? I can develop this allyship posture by…? I can support the development of this allyship posture in others by…?

(g) The experiences I have had with allyship related to multiple identities—personal and collective—in organizations, institutions, etc., are…? The nature of these experiences was…(e.g., good, bad, etc.), because…?

(h) True and/or false for me: To be my ally you have to know me and something about my oppression—that my oppression happened.

(i) True and/or false for me: To be a "full" ally to me, you have to take into account all my identities.

In considering the sum of one's identities, some being sources of affirmation and joy, others of marginalization and pain, it becomes clear that no single identity operates on its own. In putting any two identities together, the source assessment inevitably shifts, perhaps making one more powerful, more vulnerable, or a combination of both.

Race; color; ethnicity; Deafhood; geographic origin; immigration status; language; caste; socioeconomic class background; employment status; sex; gender; gender identity and expression; family configuration; sexual orientation; physical, developmental, or psychological ability; Veteran's status; age or generation; religious, spiritual, faith-based, or secular belief; physical appearance; environmental concern; and political affiliation are just some of the multiple identities that not only

teachers, but students bring to the classroom. In teacher education and professional development arenas, the mere of these topics is often met with a sense that giving them further attention is "forbidden" (Lawrence, 2005, p. 1434). Teacher educators must talk and walk directly into the forbidden to expand their conceptions of multicultural education and diversity training through engagement with progressive scholarship developed in the interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary fields of African American Studies, Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, as well as cultural studies, gay and lesbian studies, area studies, labor studies, and social justice education, among others. This scholarship provides new and more robust understandings of difference, both in the United States and globally, which in turn inform cutting-edge advances in the pedagogy through which this scholarship can be imparted in the classroom. While scholars in a number of fields study dimensions of difference and use difference as a way of explaining various identity dynamics in their research, what distinguishes intersectional scholarship is that it is interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary and, in so being, it focuses upon the ways myriad dimensions of identity interconnect, creating new and distinct social identity formations, and, ostensibly, from which more robust solutions to identity-based inequities in schools can be immediately tackled and durably resolved.

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Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education
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Vision and Scope

Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education is an academic forum for the transdisciplinary study of the dynamic and complex relationship between the various competing and complementary aspects of education broadly defined. *Taboo* is grounded on the notion of radical contextualization. To investigate the notion of radical contextualization, we encourage scholars to draw from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives to contest current taken-for-granted approaches in education and in the academy. Some of these approaches include, Post-Structuralism, Feminist Studies, Actor-Network Theory, Queer Theory, New Materialism, Historical/Genealogical, Affect Theory, and Critical approaches to race, class, and gender studies. Beyond simply articulating critical perspectives we seek contributions willing to stake the unsaid and the previous and current unconsiderable and/or irreconcilable. We encourage work that seeks to wrap its lips around the complex, chaotic, and cutting edges of the sayable and knowable. We want to push readers and contributors to perform complex questioning of the very ideas that have become all too common-place within traditional academic journals. We specifically foster discussions across and through different disciplines including explorations into how intertextualities and intersectionalities operate throughout and within different educational times/spaces/places. The journal encourages papers from a wide range of contributors who work within these general areas. We also encourage research that pushes the methodological boundaries. *Taboo* seeks a dialogic series of interactions that push place, space, and time boundaries as well as invites a leaning in and pushing back approach. Not only do we seek content that engages these values, but we also favor unique, controversial, and continually complicated forms and modes of presentations. As its title suggests, *Taboo* seeks provocative and controversial submissions.

Reviewer Questions and Criteria

When submitting a piece for consideration, please know that reviewers will be asked the following questions about your manuscript:

How does the manuscript take up a transdisciplinary study of the dynamic and complex relationship between the various competing and complementary aspects of education broadly defined?

How and to what extent does the manuscript address the notion of radical contextualization?

How does the manuscript investigate the notion of radical contextualization?

How do scholars draw from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives to contest current taken-for-granted approaches in education and in the academy? (Some of these approaches include, Post-Structuralism, Feminist Studies, Actor-Network Theory, Queer Theory, New Materialism, Historical/Genealogical, Affect Theory, and Critical approaches to race, class, and gender studies).

Beyond simply articulating critical perspectives how does the manuscript stake the unsaid and the previous and current unconsiderable and/or irreconcilable?

How and to what extent does the work seeks to wrap its lips around the complex, chaotic, and cutting edges of the sayable and knowable?

How does the manuscript push readers and contributors to perform complex questioning of the very ideas that have become all too common-place within traditional academic journals?

How does the manuscript foster discussions across and through different disciplines including explorations into how intertextualities and intersectionalities operate throughout and within different educational times/spaces/places?

How does the manuscript foster research that pushes the methodological boundaries?

How and to what extent does the manuscript foster a dialogic series of interactions that push place, space, and time boundaries as well as invites a leaning in and pushing back approach?

To what extent is the content of the manuscript provocative and controversial?

Types of Manuscripts

Articles: Taboo accepts what might be called traditional academic articles. We also encourage scholars to write and produce research that exposes the limits of this form as well as compose research in modes that would not be considered in mainstream academic journals. We expect thoughtful, provocative, and well-researched articles, but we also encourage authors to play with form and content. There is no word limit. Articles will go through a double-blind peer-review process. Authors can expect to receive a decision in 3-4 months.

Rants: *Taboo* accepts opinion pieces on any topic. Rants are designed to be thoughtful and passionate pieces that utilize research in a provocative manner. Rants will go through a double-blind peer-review process. Although there are no word limits to Rants, we would expect that they would not exceed 1000 words. Authors can expect to receive a decision in 1-2 months.

Book Reviews: *Taboo* encourages authors to write critical book reviews and submit them to the book review editor. We would like authors to be creative in their book reviews. This creativity can occur in several different ways. Authors could review award winning books from their national organization; authors could review 2-3 current books in a given field or on a specific topic; authors could review books that are critical of one another. There are a variety of ways to conduct a critical book review. We want authors of book reviews to be provocative with opinions supported by relevant evidence. All book reviews go through a double-blind peer-review process. Authors can exepect to receive a decision in 1-2 months.

Guest Edited Special Issues: *Taboo* accepts proposals for special issues beyond the two annual issues. To propose a special issue please send a detailed 500-1000 word description of the issue, a draft of the call for manuscripts, a tentative timeline, and the curriculum vitae of the guest editor(s). Editors are required to ensure that all articles in the special issue go through a blind-peer review process. Editors will be asked to submit final manuscripts with peer reviews to the editors on the negotiated deadline. The entire special issues or specific manuscripts of the special issue may also go through an additional peer-review and/or editorial review process with *Taboo* prior to publication. Authors can expect to receive a decision in one month.

Submitting a Manuscript

Please adhere to the following criteria prior to submitting your manuscript:

1. Send a cover-letter with your manuscript and address the following items:
   a. Author(s) Names, addresses, and Institution(s),
   b. Title of your manuscript.

    c. Manuscript Type (Article, Rant, Book Review, Guest Edited Special Issue).

    d. Please address how your manuscript fits the scope of the journal.

    e. Please indicate that the research complies with the rules and regulations of the Institutional Review Board of your particular institutions (if applicable)

    f. Please indicate that the article is not under-review for another peer-review journal and will not be submitted for review during the peer-review process with *Taboo*.

    g. Please submit the names of three potential reviewers for your manuscript.

    h. Indicate the style of your article (i.e., APA, Chicago, Hybrid).

2. Word Count: *Taboo* has no word count requirement.

3. Style: Please know that *Taboo* publishes articles that adhere to the guidelines of the *American Psychological Association (sixth edition)*. We also remain open for author to play with academic style.

4. Please attach two copies of your article to the email in PDF format. One of these two copies must be prepared for the blind review process.

5. Contributors are asked to send manuscripts electronically to either Editors-in-Chief:
    Kenneth J. Fasching-Varner or David Lee Carlson at
    submissions@taboo-journal.com

Review Process: Issues are published twice a year (winter and summer). The deadline for the Spring issue is March 15 and the deadline for the Fall issue is August 15. *Taboo* prides itself on timely and useful feedback on all manuscripts. Reviewers are strongly encouraged to provide timely and nuanced feedback that leans into and pushes back against articles and to be a part of the dialogue that occurs within the journal.

Acceptance: Once your article is accepted in the journal, the author(s) will be asked to transfer copyright of the article to *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*. The transfer will ensure the widest possible dissemination of information. We have an acceptance rate of 15%.