The Journal of

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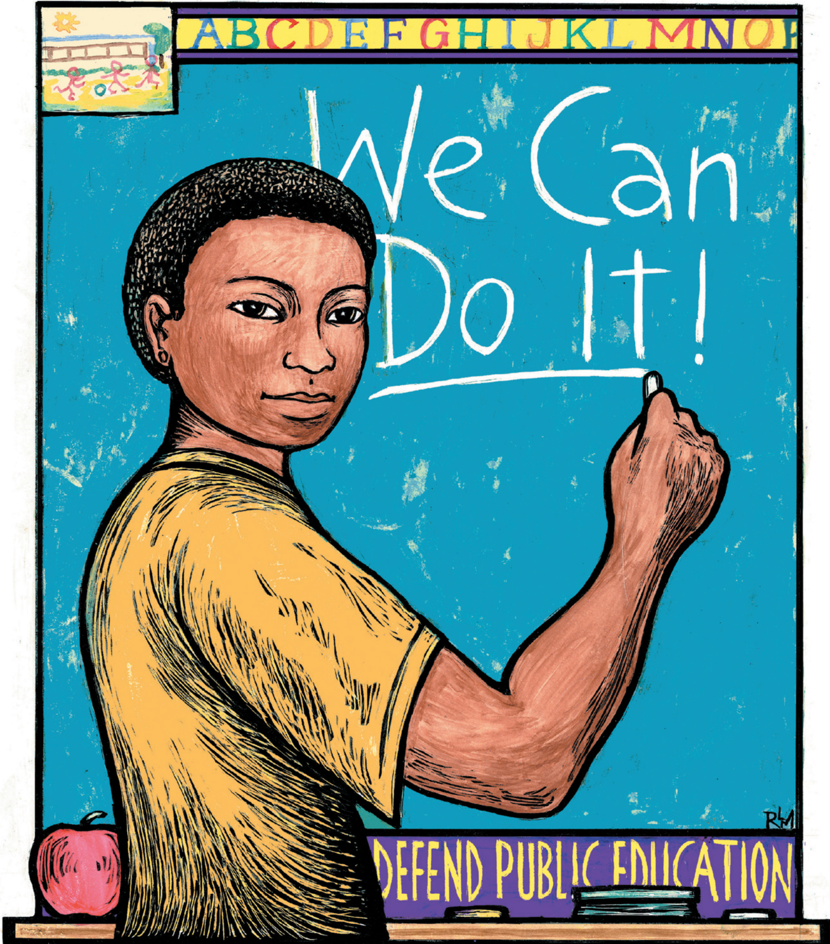

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Submission Guidelines
for *The Journal of Educational Foundations*

The Journal of Educational Foundations seeks articles and essays in four primary areas: (1) Exposition on the nature of the educational foundations—essays exploring the foundations, highlighting definition, interrelationships, strengths, difficulties, and other aspects of the combined fields; (2) Application of the foundations disciplines to an issue of significance—collections of articles around a specified theme, bringing to bear the nature of the various foundations disciplines on such themes. Information concerning themes for future issues of the journal may be obtained from the editor; (3) Methodology—articles exploring methodological issues of the foundations fields, stressing similarities and differences among the disciplines; and (4) Research—articles describing or reporting on new research in the foundations fields, with emphasis on interdisciplinary aspects of such research. All submitted manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the ***Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*** (6th Edition). A manuscript submission certifies that none of the contents are copyrighted, published, accepted for publication by another journal, under review by another journal, or submitted to another journal while under review by the ***Journal of Educational Foundations.*** All manuscripts should be submitted via e-mail to hartlepn@berea.edu and printed in Times Roman (12 pt.), double-spaced on 8½ x 11 size paper and accompanied by an abstract of not more than 120 words. To protect anonymity during the review process, the title page should be the only place in the manuscript that includes the author(s) name(s) and institutional affiliation(s). All other identifying references and notes should be removed from the manuscript before it is submitted for publication consideration. Submitted manuscripts should not exceed 7,500 words. Figures, charts, and tables should be consecutively numbered in Arabic. ***The Journal of Educational Foundations*** does not allow the use of footnotes or endnotes. References should be listed alphabetically by author at the end of the paper and referred to in the body of the text. If the manuscript is accepted for publication, the author(s) will be asked to submit a copy of the final post-review version of the manuscript via e-mail. Manuscripts accepted for publication are subject to copyediting. Manuscript submission indicates the author's commitment to publish in ***The Journal of Educational Foundations*** and to give the journal first publication rights. Upon publication, Caddo Gap Press owns all rights including subsidiary rights. We understand that in return for publication, the journal has the nonexclusive rights to publish the contribution and the continuing unlimited right to include the contribution as part of any issue and/or volume reprint of the journal in which the contribution first appeared by any means and in any format. Book reviews published in the ***Journal of Educational Foundations*** are intended to be as engaging, insightful, and well-written as articles that emerge from the referee process. Book reviews are also designed to provide readers with both accurate descriptions of the books being reviewed and thoughtful evaluations of their meaning, utility, and relevance for the professoriate, university personnel, policymakers, and/or educational researchers. All book reviews reflect the diversity of interests and viewpoints found within the various fields and disciplines of college and university settings, as well as discuss the book's likely contribution and value to academics and policymakers. Our policy is to assign books to specific reviewers. Please note that assignments do not guarantee publication. We are not opposed to considering requests for unsolicited book reviews. If at any time you have a book that you would like to review, please write to the editor with a brief description of the book and how the book is aligned with the mission, scope, and focus of the journal. The length of the book review should be between 3-5 double-spaced, typewritten pages (not to exceed 1,250 words). We encourage references outward to other books and/or relevant scholarly literature. All book reviews are required to follow the format of the ***Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*** (5th Edition). All quotations from the book being reviewed should include page references in parentheses instead of full references. Citations from other sources should include a full reference. Please forward all inquires to: Nicholas Hartlep, Editor, ***The Journal of Educational Foundations***, Educational Studies Department, Berea College, Knapp Hall 104B, Berea, Kentucky 40404. E-mail: hartlepn@berea.edu

Introduction

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Nicholas D. Hartlep
T. Jameson Brewer
Boni Wozolek

Greetings. We hope that this delayed issue of the *Journal of Educational Foundations* finds you well and adept at navigating this quasi-post-pandemic landscape. This issue, like much of our normal work in the academy over the last couple of years, suffered from the logistical cataclysm COVID wrought that we have now all experienced. True to form, we have curated an issue that crosses a wide range of topics that we in the social foundations of education find ourselves grappling with and evaluating. This includes rancorous debate over perceived implementation of critical race theory in K-12 schools that is largely driven by right-wing media outlets and astroturf intermediary organizations. This is important because the tensions caused by efforts to block teachers from addressing questions of equity, access, and historically accurate histories have had a lasting impact on the work we do, from the K-12 schools to higher education contexts. The articles in this issue explicitly and implicitly explore these impacts while presenting the significance of CRT in recognizing and elevating perspectives that are not grounded in Whiteness. Additionally, this issue includes authors whose work attends to decolonization and considers how we might subert cultural appropriation. Finally, these articles draw on cultural competencies that teachers bring into the classroom by foregrounding onto-epistemological lenses to encourage educators and students alike to understand educational leadership (and the world) through rich diversity. This work is significant for many reasons, not the least of which is that

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it attends to the constant and continued weaponization of the "other" as our enemy.

Additionally, we bring you four book reviews that show the depth and breadth of educational foundations across its theoretical and practical intersections. From counternarratives centered on Black families to mapping the relationship between foundations and critical geography and reviews focused on sociopolitical and cultural histories, these book reviews truly show the diversity of voice and perspective in the field. Each book review underwent a peer review process that was followed by a final editorial board review. As always, we encourage authors across contexts to submit a review that they believe speaks to the field. As COVID has been nested among local and less local oppressions, like the ongoing assault on reproductive rights, the maiming and killing of Black and Brown people, and the aforementioned attacks on critical race theory, we see these reviews as a service to the field; potentially providing a cursory glance at books while recognizing the book publications that grow and sustain our field.

We would also like to recognize, and welcome, Boni Wozolek as our new Associate Editor. Dr. Wozolek has served as our Book Review Editor and will join our efforts at championing the aims of this journal as well as helping plot our course in this new era. We have some exciting forthcoming announcements that include the development of a new and robust website where we will archive issues as well as provide a platform for multi-media expressions that serve as ancillary material to the articles that we publish. Additionally, we will be building out our social media presence. Thank you for your patience during the brunt of COVID and we eagerly look forward to new opportunities to share important work.

Critical Race Theory Panel Discussion

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Hope Smith Davis
Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy
Nicholas D. Hartlep
Marvin Lynn
Teresa Sosa

With contributions by
Alfred Guillaume, Jr.
Monica Porter
Yolanda Treviño

Introduction

Symposium on Educational Inclusion: What is Critical Race Theory in Education?

Indiana University South Bend hosted the Symposium on Educational Inclusion on November 12–13, 2021. The November 12 event consisted of a panel and other programming. This article began with an initial transcription of the panel that featured Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy, Nicholas D. Hartlep, Marvin Lynn, and Teresa Sosa. The authors of this article reviewed the transcript and revised portions to increase clarity and understanding.[1]

Hope Smith Davis: Indiana University South Bend wishes to acknowledge and honor the Indigenous communities native to this region, and recognize that IU South Bend was built on Indigenous homelands and resources. Indiana University South Bend recognizes the Potawatomi,

Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy is the President's Professor in the School of Social Transformation at Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona. Hope Smith Davis is dean of the School of Education at Indiana University South Bend. Nicholas D. Hartlep holds the Robert Charles Billings Chair in Education and is chair of the Education Studies Department at Berea College, Berea, Kentucky. Marvin Lynn is dean of the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Colorasdo at Denver. Teresa Sosa is an associate professor of urban teacher education at Indiana University Indianapolis. They participated in a panel discussion on critical race theory on November 12, 2021, as part of a two-day Symposium on Educational Inclusion at Indiana University South Bend.

Peoria, Myaamia, Kickapoo, Kaskaskia, Mascouten, and Meskwaki people as past, present, and future caretakers of this land.

The idea for this symposium was developed last spring and evolved over the summer through conversations with community members, state officials, representatives from Indiana University, and others. Literally dozens of people were consulted as the events took shape. There was an incredible amount of support for the work we were undertaking, and it merged with larger conversations about race and racism, equity, and inclusivity happening across IU and on our own campus. I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the planning for these events. I would also like to thank the Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs for their financial support of the program. Specifically, thank you to my Co-chair, Charlotte D. Pfeifer, who helped to hatch this idea many months ago, Demaree Dufour-Noneman, LaRonda Holman, Steve Gross, Stephen Salisbury, and Ryan Weber for their work behind the scenes

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the incredible work of the steering committee, comprised of almost 30 faculty and staff members from across campus. For months now they have been meeting to discuss and plan each of the events over the course of these two days, and we all should be extremely proud of their work. They have represented the campus well and exemplified how each one of us has a crucial part to play in making our campus a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment. Without our students and the support of our community, we would not be here.

I would like to welcome our guest panelists, who have generously given of their time (both this week, but over the course of their careers) to further critical and crucial conversations about race and racism from a variety of perspectives in a myriad of educational contexts. They will be more formally introduced in a bit, but thank you for being here with us!

Finally, I also would like to welcome you, the members of the audience, for being here tonight. The Symposium on Educational Inclusion is only a two-day event—one in which I hope you have been and will continue to participate—but it is just a single event. Over and done with after a few days. It is my hope that it becomes more than that. I hope that what we all learn through these discussions and presentations provides a solid grounding that will serve to better inform us all as we continue to have conversations about race, systems, and structures in the days, weeks, months and years to come.

As a Dean of a School of Education, I would be remiss if I stood here and did not take a moment to celebrate our educators, and to thank them for the work that they do, day-in and day-out in ever-changing,

often unpredictable circumstances to support the learning and growth of all students in their classes.

The School of Education Mission statement describes our desire to help our candidates become “analytical, competent, ethical, and reflective professionals who promote culturally-responsive practices in a pluralistic society.” This symposium draws on many of these outcomes from our mission, and we are proud to be sponsoring this event.

Never in our history have our schools served so many students from different racial, ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds—representing an array of stories, of learning strengths, needs, styles, and preferences—and our educators are charged to support every one of them individually and collectively. In the K-12 schools, our teachers often spend as much time with our children as they do with their own families. They form bonds, foster dreams, and provide structure—and the vast majority of them do this with a great sense of ethic, duty, and care. They do this because they believe in the power and potential of their students, and they do this even when there isn’t a pandemic.

The topic of this symposium covers kindergarten through graduate school, and, when I talk about educators, I am also talking about my colleagues in higher education—as they, too, are teachers dedicated to working to help their students reach their highest potential in ways that benefit us all. I’m talking about school administrators, counselors, facilities personnel, bus drivers, classroom aides, cafeteria workers and administrative staff. By the very nature of where they work, all of these individuals can be considered educators in some form, whether professionally credentialed or not.

It has been said much over the past year or so that teachers—educators—are heroes, adapting to the new instructional formats as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, putting in extra hours to meet the needs of their students, risking their own health to be in the schools, and creatively adapting and adopting as needed. This is true—however, this isn’t just about how educators react and adapt during a pandemic—it is the bread and butter of what teachers do every . . . single. . . day. It is an amazing calling —to be able to help shape the lives of future generations. It is extremely meaningful (albeit difficult) work—and it happens whether the Zoom cameras are on or off.

As one last, shameless, plug—you may have heard that there is a teacher shortage. If this type of direct involvement in helping to grow the next generation—to improve the lives of those in your community resonates with you, if you are inspired by what you hear and learn through this symposium—Indiana, and Indiana’s students, need you. Come talk to us about becoming a teacher.

Yolanda Traveño: So, ladies and gentlemen, I am honored and privileged to be with you, here this evening at the Indiana University South Bend Symposium on Educational Inclusion: Addressing the Barriers for Underrepresented Populations from Kindergarten Through Grad School. IU South Bend is a well-known beacon of knowledge and excellence, and a leader in experiential understanding and community engagement. It is strategically anchored in the preservation and sharing of the Civil Rights history of South Bend and surrounding communities through the forward-looking Civil Rights Heritage Center, where coalitions, working to address local and regional concerns, come together in community.

IU South Bend is shaping the future, while preparing the leaders of tomorrow. That's why it is this evening's discussion by a panel of nationally-recognized researchers who are actively working in and through the context of Critical Race Theory in education, that is not only timely, but critically important. Earlier this morning, I shared greetings from Vice President Wimbush, and Associate Vice President Watson. Allow me to also share an update of the IU Anti-racist Agenda and its initiatives. When former President McRobbie announced this effort in the summer of 2020, OVPDEMA, the office I work for, embarked in partnership with our university's campuses and supporters to ensure that this charge be met.

Efforts have included: the creation of a new pandemic health disparities fund to address health disparities specifically among Black and Hispanic communities across all campuses; a new health resources and services administration grant to help the IU School of Medicine better educate medical students to care for underserved populations; a new racial justice research fund to support IU faculty to research issues of racial equity and justice (thirty-one research projects have been supported to date; the renaming of the in- tramural center to honor legendary IU basketball player, Mr. Bill Garrett and a systemic review of named buildings or structures on all IU campuses to ensure that they are named for individuals whose values reflect those of the university; the creation of a police chief community advisory board to serve as a resource and connection between the IUPD campus division and the students, faculty, staff and the communities that that division serves; a $1 Million alumni gift to help the Kelley School and the consortium advance diversity in business education; and a Big-10 law school 12-week lecture series on race, law, and equality—a speaker series offered by the Big-10 law schools. Lastly, IU, as was mentioned earlier this morning, has recently made, by President Whitten, a $30 Million investment in faculty diversity hiring to hire a more diverse mix of faculty on all campuses. And that's just to name a few!

To keep track of where each campus is on its Anti-racist Agenda

journey, AVP Watson has created a dashboard that creates information that is reported to OVPDEMA from various administrators across the seven IU campuses. The purpose of this data is to advance the IU Anti-racist Agenda, to measure success, and to identify gaps in equity across student-facing operations.

OVPDEMA is committed to its partnerships with campus leaders to address our biggest challenges, to acknowledge that work still needs to be done, and, in order to meet our goals of institutional success, we need to include student success as well as meet our enrollment goals. The first step of this work requires the clear understanding of these challenges and what is needed for solutions and transformational change from noted scholars.

Critical Race Theory is one tool used to understand the historical barriers rooted in the intersectionality of race and power that still exist. The value of Critical Race Theory continues to be debated, especially within our school environment, so tonight it is my privilege to also welcome this distinguished panel of diverse scholars and researchers as they address this issue and the question: "What is Critical Race Theory in Education: A Panel Discussion with Researchers Searching for Equity in Schools."

Alfred Guillaume: Thank you Chancellor Elrod, and thank you, Dr. Treviño. My name is Alfred Guillaume and I am the retired Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs at IU South Bend, and also Professor Emeritus. It is my pleasure to welcome each of you today. It is also my huge honor to introduce our guests.

Marvin Lynn is co-editor of *The Handbook of Critical Race Theory in Education*. He currently serves as dean of the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Colorado at Denver.He has also served as dean at Portland State University and Indiana University South Bend and associate dean at the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire. Now, I did hire Dr. Lynn to be dean, and then I promptly left and retired. He is an internationally-recognized expert on race, education, the work and lives of Black, male teachers, and teacher diversity. He began his nearly 30-year education career as a teacher at a large, urban school district. A recipient of the Derrick Bell Legacy award from the Critical Race Studies in Education Association, he is also an experienced qualitative researcher who has led successful efforts to support schools and universities in their effort to more directly address the issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Dr. Bryan Brayboy is President's Professor in the School of Social Transformation at Arizona State University. He and I had a wonderful chat before and we have a common, past history. He graduated high school in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and I am a native of Louisiana, and I

just left New Orleans recently. Dr. Brayboy is the Director of the Center for Indian Education at ASU and co-editor of the *Journal of American Indian Education*. Previously he served as Visiting Professor of Indigenous Education at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Dr. Brayboy is a Fellow of the American Educational Research Association, a member of the National Academy of Education, and he has produced over 95 documents, including the 2005 article "Towards a Tribal Critical Race Theory in Education," as well as eight books, and a number of policy briefs for several federal agencies. His research examines the role of race and diversity in higher education with a focus on indigenous students, faculty, and staff.

Dr. Teresa Sosa is Associate Professor of Urban Teacher Education at Indiana University, Indianapolis. Her research broadens understanding of how literacy education can be leveraged to disrupt educational injustice by attending to pedagogical practices, discourse, and interactions and capturing students' response to their day-to-day educational experience. Dr. Sosa is currently working closely with a small group of first-year Latina teachers to support their commitment to equitable, anti-racist pedagogy. This work also provides a space for first-year Latina teachers to build kinship to validate their lived reality and support learning from each others' experiences as teaching and leading for racial equity that requires sustained inquiry that takes seriously teachers' full realities, practices, and questions.

Dr. Nicholas Hartlep holds the Robert Charles Billings Endowed Chair in Education at Berea College, where he serves as Chair of the Education Studies Department. He has published 24 different books in the field of education over the course of his academic career, two of which were named outstanding books by the Society of Professors of Education. He has received multiple awards in recognition for his work, including the 2020 Emerging Leader Award from the American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity, and the 2018 John Saltmarsh Award for Emerging Leaders in Civic Engagement from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, and also received the distinguished young alumni award from Winona State University. His research includes examinations of the model minority stereotype of Asian Americans, higher education leadership, teaching and transformation in urban education settings, and the impact of neoliberalism in public P–20 education. He lives in Kentucky with his wife and their three daughters. Let us give a round of applause to welcome our distinguished guests.

Critical Race Theory

Hope Smith Davis: Before we begin the panel discussion this evening, we thought it would be good to give a basic overview of Critical Race Theory, and so Dr. Lynn has put together a presentation.

Marvin Lynn: Thank you, Dean Davis. And thank you for inviting us here and being so nice to us. I think I can speak for my colleagues when I say this has been so professional and so warm. I feel very blessed that I can always come back to IU South Bend. So, thank you. So let me just say a few words about the question of "What is Critical Race Theory?" and then each of us is going to talk about that from our own perspective. I'll provide a general overview first.

Critical Race Theory is a critique of American jurisprudence. We ask the question "If the law is objective, then why does it appear to serve mainly the interests of White people in the U.S.?" So, if you go to law school, you are taught that the law is objective, that it is fair. Legal scholars of color have been raising this question for a long time, especially as they think about consequences—what happens in our court system. So, they've really got some questions about that.

It is also a theory used by legal scholars to examine the persistence of racism in American society. It is an explanation for why racism exists. We draw on Critical Race Theory as a framework to help us understand what's happening in a variety of settings, including schools.

It's also a method—it's a methodological approach using counter-stories, or counter-narratives as the way to help people understand the conditions facing racially-minoritized folks.

CRT has certain core principles. We believe certain things about the nature of race in the US: that it is socially-constructed, that it is not biological. There is no biological basis for race, so two Black people can be as biologically dissimilar as a Black person and a White person. There is no biological basis for racial difference. As W.E.B. DuBois said, 'It's a matter of skin and bone." That is a core principle of CRT.

But, we also believe that race does carry with it a form of psychological wage for whites. There's a piece by Cheryl Harris, a foundational piece that talks about "whiteness as property"(1993), and what she means by that is that White people possess whiteness, and that has value, and accrues even more value over time.

If you think that that's a questionable statement, think about what happens when you get ready to sell your house. If I get ready to sell my house and they know that I own it, it is less valuable in the eyes of many than if a White person is said to own it. There have been experiments done where a Black family will put photos of White people in their living

room, and the house, suddenly, has greater value. It's also assessed at a higher value; so whiteness has material value attached to it.

The idea of a psychological wage suggests that, even if you don't have more money, that whiteness by itself is valuable. This is what the plantation owners taught the White poor, because there were moments when poor White people recognized that they had things in common with the slaves. In order to keep those populations divided, you had to convince poor White people that they were superior to those whom they had actually quite a bit in common with. They were not actually enslaved, but they certainly did not own anything, and they had limited access to material wealth. What they were taught then, was that their whiteness made them superior to Black slaves.

This idea of psychological wage is really significant here because there have been studies done where researchers would ask White folks, "What would it take for you to trade places with Michael Jordan?" The researchers would say, "What if we offered you $50 Million?" The respondents were not rich people, yet they would answer, "You know what? I wouldn't do it for any amount of money."[2] People understand that, even with $50 Million, blackness brings with it a set of hardships they don't want to have to deal with as White folks, and that's what we're talking about and what Critical Race theorists believe.

Race also has economic, social, and political consequences. I just talked about what happens when you get ready to sell your house. That's just one of many, many examples. Critical Race theorists document those outcomes as they are associated with race and how race impacts our lives in these very, very real ways. We use that documentation as a basis for putting forth arguments about the nature of race and racism in America.

We also see racism and white supremacy as endemic. It is just part of the system. It is structural because of the way our society was designed. We began as a slave state. It is documented that 14 out of the first 16 Presidents had slaves. This was part of our cultural makeup as a system, and it is embedded very deeply within every facet of our society. Derrick Bell talks about racism as permanent because of the way our society is designed and structured. I just mentioned slavery. We could also talk about what happened to native, Indigenous people. When you build a nation that is based on the annihilation of another group, what does that do to the structure of society?

We also believe that racism is intersectional in nature. If you've heard the term intersectionality, people sometimes like to think of intersectionality as meaning that we have different identities, that we carry different identities. What Kimberlé Crenshaw really wants you to know is that it's not about identity at all. It is about the experience with discrimination.

Racism is a form of discrimination; so is sexism. Black women, or Latinx women, or Indigenous women experience sexism and racism at the same time. Feminists of Color refer to it as double-jeopardy. Crenshaw refers to it as intersectionality, because all of these things are happening and being experienced at the same time. Intersectionality is an important aspect of Critical Race Theory.

The other thing I wanted to mention is this discussion about narratives and counter-storytelling as really being central as well. Narratives and counter-storytelling are also about lifting up the stories and the experiences of People of Color and making them central. Critical Race Theory is by, for, and about People of Color.

This doesn't mean that white people can't do Critical Race Theory, but it is race-conscious and it is focused on sharing and helping people understand racism from the perspective of People of Color. That is very, very critical.

The other thing I'll say is that Critical Race Theory is about humanizing us because there are so many forces out there that dehumanize us. Critical Race theorists seek to lift racially-marginalized people up and to tell their stories to bring attention to our plight, but also to our assets.

Critical Race Theory in Education is an off-shoot of Critical Race Theory. While Critical Race Theory began in the law, Critical Race Theory in Education exists in the field of Education and it reflects a diverse set of intersectional traditions, including, as you'll hear about: Tribal Crit, Black Crit, Afro-pessimism, Asian Crit, Queer Crit, Black Masculinity, Black Feminism. It's very, very interdisciplinary. A lot of Critical Race Theory in Education also draws on ethnic studies, feminist studies, critical pedagogy and a whole range of different areas. We'll also see within Critical Race Theory in Education a focus on higher education as an institution.

In my work I talk about the K-12 classroom, and I use Critical Race Theory as a lens to look at what Black, male teachers are doing in their classrooms. You'll see other research in education that looks at issues of methodology: qualitative methodology or quantitative methodology. I should also mention that a lot of the work also focuses on policy analysis, mostly in higher education, but also K-12. There's a lot of discussion about *Brown vs. Board of Education*, and what that really meant for us and whether it had the impact that we had hoped that it would have.

Let's turn now from talking about what Critical Race Theory is to trying to understand the architecture of this current attack on CRT. There are some questions from the audience that I think get at this, and while I may answer some of those, I think that our panelists will have more to share about those things. First, I just want to give you a

sense of how this attack is being constructed, and why it's so attractive and broadly appealing.

The political rightwing has constructed a broad disinformation campaign that's designed to confuse the electorate and help blunt the progress of the CRT agenda toward increased understanding about the nature of inequality and the nature of racial inequality in particular. They argue that Critical Race Theory is the problem, not racism. They suggest that Critical Race Theory is the reason we have racism, or that we have the perception of racism in the first place, and it pits people against each other. We must speak up. They present a full set of strategies for how one can speak back to their state legislature and to their school board members.People are doing that, and there is legislation being proposed all across the country seeking to curtail teaching and use of CRT.

What's important to understand is that the political right has created a very accessible tool for using "Critical Race Theory" essentially as a moniker for everything that they don't like. Christopher Rufo is the architect of this movement against CRT. There's a June issue of the *New Yorker* that outlines his intentional strategy to confuse the public and to use CRT as a model for anything that's progressive. In a Tweet, he said, "We have successfully frozen their brand of Critical Race Theory to the public conversation and are steadily driving up negative perceptions. We will eventually turn it toxic as we put all of the various cultural insanities under that brand category." In other words, "I'm just attacking a whole bunch of stuff that has nothing to do with CRT to scare people." And then his next quote: "The goal is to have the public read something crazy in the newspaper and immediately think Critical Race Theory. We have decodified the term and will recodify it." Essentially, they are redefining CRT to annex all these ideas that comprise a "range of cultural constructions that are unpopular with Americans." Critical Race Theory in the eyes of the Right means everything, and nothing.

Here's an example of what I'm talking about. The political right is arming its base. The Center for Renewing America has provided its electorate with a set of tools they can use to combat the teaching of CRT in schools. It includes a list of books. My book is on the list and, along with many others, it is considered a dangerous book that you have to watch out for. I shared that on my Facebook page as a badge of honor. It reminds us, really, of Nazi Germany, before they fully began to implement the Final Solution. And I say that because I spent time in Poland, in Auschwitz, a couple of years ago, and we learned all about the history of the Nazi Regime. It's very similar. The Nazis were just attacking anything that was considered critical.

Here's a set of terms that the Center for Renewing America listed as being essentially the same thing as CRT: anti-racism, which has a

different genealogical history, anti-bias training, conscious and unconscious bias, and critical self reflection. There are other terms: cultural awareness, diversity. equity and inclusion. All of those are considered CRT now, so DEI is a dangerous concept in the minds of these folks. More terms: implicit bias, land acknowledgement, patriarchy, marxism, restorative justice -- socio-emotional learning is another one. As teachers we use socio-emotional learning as a way to connect with our students, right? But now, these people have been told that socio-emotional learning is CRT, so they're coming into school board meetings, to say "stop doing socio-emotional learning because that is CRT."

What you need to understand is that this campaign has led to anti-CRT legislation that has been passed or is under consideration in two dozen states. I think it has been passed in six or seven already. Talk to Darry Heller because he suspects that Indiana is going to be lining up to try to do this very soon.

There is Amy Donofrio, a teacher in Jacksonville, Florida, who was fired because her mostly black students asked her to put up a Black Lives Matter flag in her classroom. There was no policy at the time against this, but they fired her anyway. Fortunately, she did win a major settlement.

Then there is Matt Hawn. He was fired. He's a teacher in Tennessee. He was fired because he admitted that racism is part of the American fabric.

You should know that professors at the University of Florida and other Florida universities are also under attack for teaching "divisive concepts." They are also being asked to complete an interview, or a survey to denote what their political views are so that they can be,scrutinized more heavily by the powers-that-be. This is happening right now in Florida as a result of this attack I've talked about.

The last one that I'll mention is James Whitfield. James Whitfield, an African-American principal from Texas, was forced to resign recently because he said in writing that America has a problem with race.

This movement against CRT has very real consequences in the lives of people and educators, and I would say in the state of Indiana, get activated. Talk to your legislature now. Don't wait for the legislation to come. AAUP is very involved in fighting against this, so faculty, connect with AAUP. These laws are a limitation of academic freedom and a restriction of our free speech, and it is undemocratic. Thank you very much.

Panel Discussion

Monica Porter: Good evening. Thank you, Dr. Lynn. That was very enlightening. I'm going to ask each of the panelists to tell us a little bit about yourself and your research. We will start with you, Dr. Lynn.

Marvin Lynn: Yes, and I'll be brief. My research has been in two areas. I have been a scholarly activist in really trying to highlight CRT and what it can bring to the field of education. You'll find that a lot of my work is basically explaining what CRT is and how beneficial it can be. I've co-edited a number of special issues that brought scholars together to talk about this and the handbook that was first published in 2013 was an effort to do that. It was seeking to ask how can CRT be useful? How can it bring the leading scholars of education together to have a conversation about this? That's been a big part of my research. The other part has really been studying the work and lives of African-American teachers and, specifically, African-American male teachers who are very interested in the success of African-American students, and who are tied to their communities in invaluable ways.

Teresa Sosa: I will start with saying just a little bit about myself. I am a Latina scholar. I am a former high school teacher. I worked for Chicago Public Schools for eight fantastic years. I have supported mainly Mexican and Puerto Rican communities in Chicago, and so my work is in schools. I am not, and I do not consider myself a Critical Race Theorist. However, my work is rooted in the foundations of that work, Without understanding Critical Race Theory, the work that I do, which is centered on students, critical pedagogy, critical literacy, anti-racism, and social justice within urban contexts, would not have the meaning that it has.

My work is really dealing within an understanding of CRT and it's also moving within an understanding of the fact that if inequities did not exist, then we would not have to focus so much on Students of Color and those inequities. I write about literacy because that is my field. I write about urban education in high schools because that is where my heart is, and that is where I work, as I am also a teacher-educator. I work with undergraduate students at the elementary and secondary level, preparing them, not to just be teachers, but to be critical teachers. That's a really big difference from just becoming a teacher. I think we have to specially focus on the reality of that.

Bryan Brayboy: Thank you, everyone, and thank you all for having us. Thank you, Dean Davis for the invitation to IU South Bend. I'm really grateful, and thanks to my fellow panelists for allowing me to sit with you. I am an enrolled member of the Lumbee tribe and have two Indigenous boys, aged 18 and 20, and, like Theresa and Marvin, a former social studies teacher. In my academic life, I am trained as an educational anthropologist who entered academia interested in the experiences of Indigenous college students in elite institutions. My work has evolved since then. I'll say a little bit more about my engagement with CRT. In 2005, I published an article entitled "Toward a Tribal Critical Race

Theory" because I was really interested in ways in which this idea of Critical Race Theory might look like to Native Peoples. That work, and my thinking around it, continues to evolve.

My current research is deeply engaged with Indigenous Knowledge Systems, or the ways that Indigenous peoples engage the world and are, in fact, engaged by it; and the ways in which our experiences are mediated by these engagements.

Nicholas Hartlep: I'm a former elementary teacher and I come to this work using a lot of my personal experiences. I am a transracial adoptee; talk about a sociological experiment! I got to see whiteness full hand with my adoptive parents. My analyses and my research are on the model minority stereotype. I've really come to that work identifying the stereotype for what it is: it's racist love. It is a divide and conquer mechanism to pit BIPOC communities against one another and was designed to take our eye off the real problem, which is white supremacy. My research analyses often focus on issues of race, using Critical Race Theory, but I also draw on issues of class and inter- sectionality. If you haven't seen it there is a Netflix series called Colin in Black and White. It's a very powerful and well done series, and I encourage you to watch it if you haven't seen it. As a transracial adoptee, it contains a lot of triggers for me because Colin Kaepernick is a transracial adoptee.

Hope Smith Davis: Dr. Sosa, you talked a little bit about how CRT is connected to your work when you introduced yourself. Do you want to talk a little bit about where it may diverge from your work?

Teresa Sosa: I can definitely say that it doesn't. I don't want to call it diverging. I think it's central to my understanding of what I do, but I do not write about the theory. I do not use the theory in my research, but it is foundational to who I am, the interactions that I have with my students, and also directly related to the ways that I consider how I am in spaces with individuals, with the students that are in front of me, the pre-service teachers that are in my classes. It really has to do with the connections that I always draw from for this important work. The main connection is what we are talking about, that comes from an understanding that race always matters. Educators have to come up with some frameworks and pedagogies to think about how to address those things.

We started with general, important frameworks such as Ladson-Billings' Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. We have critical pedagogies. All of those frameworks and understandings really are what drives us to say how we would address understanding such inequities in education to prepare teachers to really resist and refuse those things. My work is always built on those understandings.

Monica Porter: Tensions from anti-CRT activists, and from parents and board members, versus the experts—the pedagogical strategists. Can you all talk about the tension that you all have experienced?

Bryan Brayboy: In his *New Yorker* article, entitled "How a Conservative Activist Invented the Conflict Over Critical Race Theory," Benjamin Wallace-Wells points to the ways that Christopher Rufo has done actually a remarkable job at suggesting that ideologically Critical Race Theory is somehow bad for children and it's showing up in schools. North Dakota recently passed a law banning the teaching of Critical Race Theory in elementary schools. That is like banning the teaching of medical procedures in elementary schools. The movement to demonize something called "Critical Race Theory" has been effective enough that people are profoundly concerned and worried about it, so I think that there are a couple of things here that show up for me. In mythologizing what CRT is, and arguing that we should not be talking about race or racism, it highlights precisely why an idea, and a tool, and a theory like Critical Race Theory should exist.

I want to make an important point here about what it means to create a myth. For me, in many ways, the initial telling of the myth, the initial telling of the lie, isn't the most concerning problem. It's each subsequent repetition of it, so that all of the sudden, it goes from being myth—or a li—to truth. The fact that it was a myth is washed away in the new status as truth. This is a problem and one we should be concerned about.

I think that just sort of gets repeated, so then you're hearing people say, I don't know what CRT is, as Professor Lynn said, I don't know what it is, but I know that I don't like it. There is something that is humorous in this: I don't know what it is, but I know I don't like it! But, there are aspects that are deadly serious because of the material and the social and the cultural consequences of what happens. In many ways, having to try to define what CRT is means we are way far-behind already. We should re-frame this to asking a set of questions in the face of the problematic definitional issues: What are our values? What do we care about in a school district, as a society? What kind of futures do we hope for all our children?

Forcing a conversation about values as a starting point allows us to move out of the sensationalized idea that schools are indoctrinating students or teaching them to hate themselves. Instead, let's move toward a serious engagement with civics, which means we should think seriously about history. We should think seriously about sociology, and seriously about philosophy, and start digging into the facts about what this country is and isn't. To think seriously about really saying, here are our shared goals for the future of this country, and for the future of our children, and

then start making some decisions based on that, rather than engaging in, essentially, what's been started here—a culture war.

How do you begin to move away from the culture war and say, fundamentally I care about the current state of society, and I care about the future of it by investing in children so that they have what they need in school to be successful, rich human beings, and great members of society who understand both their rights and their responsibilities?

Nicholas Hartlep: I'd like to say a few things. Bryan got me thinking. First, Critical Race Theory is not taught in PK–12. We know that. I wrote a piece during my doctoral studies, when I acquired the language and the tools and the vocabulary of CRT, which helped me become more human. When I was young, I saw and experienced racism in my adoptive family. I would think, what just happened there? It wasn't until I was mentored and femtored by folks like Christine Sleeter, Julie Kailin, Gloria Ladson-Billings, and Thandeka Chapman, women who are Crits, critical race theorists and critical multiculturalists, who have personal and professional wisdom, that I really started to notice that, hey, you know, I'm being gaslit. What I'm experiencing is really racism. When analyzing the present moment of race relations and sociopolitical relations it is important to recognize that the discourse is always evolving. It has always done this.

For example, we had moments of colorblindness and post-racialism when Barack Obama was elected the 44th President. We had a Black President, so the language that was used changed. And then Donald Trump ran on this idea of Make America Great Again (MAGA), which discursively, is slightly counter-intuitive, because many White people want the citizens to not look back at racism. "It happened," they say. "Move forward," they say. But why are Trump supporters reminiscing of a halcyon time of when America was great? At what point in history was America great??

And so, discursively, those two aren't compatible, right? The throughline to me is that Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a conflict theory, and to me it's based on phenomenology. It's based on real-life experiences that I've had. If a person of color brings up racism, they are accused of playing identity politics. When someone raises a concern about something happening in society, the far right side of the political spectrum wll say, "Stop being a snowflake." You have all these different coded terms and language that is used.. Well, those terms are important for society to unpack as time marches on.

I'm reading a book by the conservative John McWhorter on "Woke Racism." The book is very fascinating to me. It addresses how those who are anti-CRT argue their own positionality. For me, I identified with Harrison in 2012, who notes: "Part of the difficulty of interrogat-

ing racism is that so many people do not recognize it as a problem—as something that still exists and demands corrective action. After all, we are in the throes of an era of color-blindness and a post-racial moment marked by ideological and legal assaults against policies such as affirmative action." That's in my work as an Asian American—the model minority stereotype (racist love) and the honorary whiteness that people throw on you: "You're so good." You can see that it's racist, because they substitute race with culture. They say, "Oh, it must be your culture that values education. They just work hard." It is implied that Asian Americans are Tiger parents, right? Nothing could be further from the truth, and so that's what I was thinking about when Bryan spoke.

Teresa Sosa: Can I just say one thing about that? For me, I think one interesting thing is what's happening right now with CRT are the anti-CRT campaigns, which have a lot of money, and they are working to confuse understandings. One of the things that I've been thinking about is how schools are always seeking to hire for teacher diversity, yet they do not want them to talk about race. I think it speaks to what you were saying, Dr. Hartlep, that there's this confusion around understanding what do we want, and where does this anti-CRT movement come into play to make sure that we don't think one thing, but we do another.

I see that in the classrooms that I'm in. There's this mentor teacher that some of my students are working with, and he's a White, male teacher and he has a Black Lives Matter statement on his Canvas site, and yet his classroom is comprised of Black youth who are given worksheets to complete that don't support them with gaining new understanding, or center their insights, or their stories, or their experiences, or their incredible bright fascination in nature and ideas. Where do we come in and think about the ways that we work towards moving in a direction that's really important? I think it's really important for us to not get confused with those things that are happening right now with this big movement around anti-CRT.

Marvin Lynn: I'll say, too, that we have never really fully reckoned with race in America. I think when we watched that eight minutes and forty-six seconds of that horrible crime against humanity with George Floyd's life being snuffed out, I think that was probably one of the first times that we were really ready to get real about race, and there were some people threatened by that. Not just Christopher Rufo, but many others because I could watch CNN and have news anchors say things about the nature of racism that I actually agree with.

I've been doing this work for a long time, and so, I thought, what? Something has shifted in the ether. We were talking about race in a different way in 2020 when this all happened. And then we also had

the pandemic. We had a chance to sit and reflect at home. I think the confluence of those factors meant that we were on the precipice of having a very different kind of conversation about race, and particularly the role that our higher education institutions, K-12 schools, hospitals, and all of the institutions play in advancing White supremacy in our society. Institutional leaders were taking responsibility for not only recognizing and acknowledging that, but then doing something about it.

That's what professional development and all these other things that people were doing were about: How can we turn this around? I think we were in the middle of an ideological revolution in this country around race and racism. What we are seeing now is what has so far been a very successful effort to stop the progressive momentum, to turn it around, to make us fearful, and to have us stop talking to each other and to definitely stop talking about race.

I was thinking about this, should I say this? I will say it. I think that we've gotten this far because we have ignored it. Not only is Critical Race Theory not in the school books, our history is not in the school books. We don't know how to educate about it, and so for them to claim that there's something happening, that we know isn't happening, is absurd. But, again, it is a way to exclude. It is a way to halt progress and I think we were beginning to make and to continue this tradition of sleeping through the hard stuff, and smiling. But we don't really mean it, and you secretly hate your neighbor, because they're different from you. I mean, that's how we live, folks. That's America, right? And so, if we're going to change, we're going to have to fight through this craziness and understand what is really going on, that we really want to have a bright future together. We're going to have to work through race.

Monica Porter: You know, as you were talking about race, a lot of diverse people have heard the statement, "I don't see color." How does that change the process, when we don't see color? How does that impact the work that you all are doing from your lens?

Teresa Sosa: The idea of "we don't see color," comes from an understanding that in the United States we do not talk about race. It's a very big taboo. Just as Professor Lynn was talking about, there is this incredible discomfort about really addressing what is going on. When we say, or someone says, "I don't see color," we hear, "I treat everyone the same."

When you look it, as Dr. Hartlep was talking about, it is not the same. When we talk about expectations, it's not the same. When you talk about it in terms of punishment, it's not the same. This concept really falls apart when teachers say, "I treat everyone the same. I do not see the race. I do not see gender. I do not see anything." It falls apart when we see that students are being treated in particular ways, with

very serious, material consequences towards their actual being, towards their grades, towards everything.

If we do not see race, then how is it that we're experiencing those differences in educational procedures? These differences are real. We're creating a difference somewhere. We need to pinpoint where that is. We have to really face the fact that, if there is a difference, we're making it from somewhere.

As scholars, you start looking at the data. You start saying, so, all the Black boys are being treated a particular way. Why is that? All of the girls are being scolded about particular ways of acting with boys. What is the cause of that? The research has consistently shown us that we can say it's one thing when we definitely believe it's another. Yet it really isn't.

Bryan Brayboy: I'm always a bit concerned and amused when people say we don't care if you are White, Black, Orange, or Polka Dot, because there aren't orange or polka-dotted people. It always feels a bit disingenuous to me to suggest that. There's something really important when you think about larger, societal structures—whether it's education, or legal and justice, or health, or economi—that the empirical data overwhelmingly demonstrates that there are disparities among races, among genders.

We can talk about not seeing color--which is a substitute for race, in this instanc—but it does appear that systems and structures do. It does appear that, when you begin to look at it over time, that women are paid less than men. When you begin to look at what happens with heart health, stress-related diseases, and other kinds of health factors for Black men, there are clear disparities. When you look at future economic opportunities for people, when you think about the futures of boys of Color in particular, classroom and school data tells us all kinds of things that say there's a problem here.

To me that's less about an individual seeing color than it is about structures somehow being built to respond to them and creating the conditions where it's problematic.

Everyone should have an opportunity to live whatever their fullest life is, with as much well-being as humanly possible. I can see the focus on a singular individual is not the most productive way to engage this conversation. It needs to be about what our structures do to people, and then it reframes the conversation for us to say, what might we do to change structures, so that everyone has an opportunity to be able to be whatever it is, and create a future of their own making, rather than a structure that limits and hinders some, and increases opportunity for others?

Nicholas Hartlep: I think about young children, because I come from a background in elementary education. Young children ask brilliant ques-

tions. But over time the education system eliminates that creativity by the time they are twelfth graders. "Is it on the test?" is the only question that they're asking when they are seniors. How tragic.

At a young age I was asking questions and identifying patterns; and there were societal patterns that I noticed. In particular, I noticed racial patterns. Where did my family choose to live? What churches did we attend or not attend? It's almost as if race—how we talk about it and/or don't talk about it—really directs where our attention should go.

I would agree more with Dr. Brayboy in terms of the question of racism at the individual level. Certainly we study it, and we already know a lot about it; but we also need to study institutions and that's where higher education comes in.

Much of my CRT work is around counter-narratives, or experiences that I've had in the copy room, in the hallways of academia. To me, racism has at times been identified as proximity to premature death.

Racism actually leads to premature death. It kills you. Whether that death is the result of Racial Battle Fatigue, heart attack, cancer, or chronic stress. White folks have seen their life expectancy dropping, something that has been written about in terms of "deaths of despair." I really would like the general public to understand that economically-poor Whites have more in common with folks of Color, BIPOC folk, than the few, wealthy Whites (and mostly men) at the top of this pyramid scheme.

I would love for the panelists to talk about this tenant of interest convergence, and how policies do change, and if we win a policy change, why are we still losing the war? We want to keep fighting, but it seems like we're not making progress when it comes to White interest convergence. Two steps forward and five steps back. Thoughts, panelists, about White interest convergence and maybe it's application to your personal and professional lives?

Marvin Lynn: Well, you know, I was thinking about the work of Derrick Bok. He was president at Harvard University and he talked about the diversity rationale, and how diversity was a compelling interest. That argument was used as a way to support arguments for Affirmative Action, and that diverse institutions were more successful, more profitable. Diverse schools graduate more students. Diversity is good for us, so to speak. I think that's right.

I think we've known for a long time that the health consequences associated with racism for Black people has been dire. This is the reason why we see those negative health indicators for our Communities of Color, but it is also starting to impact White people. It is in our interests to converge. If we are able to talk about, talk through, and work through racism, and work together more collaboratively as fellow human beings, then we all will lead, I think, a more productive life.

I do think that there is a fear around addressing racism. Some of it has to do with the shame associated with it. If you study slavery, like I have had the opportunity to do in multiple settings—I've studied it as an undergraduate, and I studied it again at UCLA. There are so many things about the institution of slavery that we do not know in terms of how human beings were treated. It would make you sick to your stomach to learn some of the things that we experienced. A lot of things that you don't see in the movies, that you think are awful, it's worse than that.

We have to face those truths because that is what has served as a foundation for who we are today. We carry that pain in our bodies. We carry it physically with us, that pain of having our ancestors having been enslaved. I think that those whose ancestors were slave masters carry a different kind of pain in their bodies that is also harmful. If you have dealt with psychology or with any kind of mental health issue, you know that you have to work through and confront the pain in order to get rid of it and move on.

Monica Porter: I was just thinking about the college students who are in the room. I'm quite sure many of them are thinking, why are we even talking about this? This happened back in your time period. We're all okay. I've got friends from all types of nationalities and diversities. We're open and acceptable to differences, so why is this topic even critical at this juncture in time?

Marvin Lynn: We are racially illiterate, and I don't think we can move forward and be illiterate. We need to understand how to read race. In order to be able to read race, you need to understand your history. You know, our children are not going to be effective change agents if they aren't taught the whole truth about our society.

Teresa Sosa: The other important thing, I think, as Dr. Brayboy mentioned, is that it is not about individuals. It's not the fact that I go to my school of education, and I have wonderful Black colleagues. I can definitely say I see that diversity, but the policies and structures are not allowing us to actually move. They are allowing particular things in order to say there is progress. If you look at the old policies and structures, they are still all in place. I'm also thinking about how that is interest convergence.

We know for a fact that, for example, women of Color tend to take on more mentorship, more service. We spend more time devoted to preparing for our teaching and supporting our students of Color. There is definitely an invested interest by institutions when they are going after diversity initiatives. It isn't just for the interest of someone that looks like me. Of course, the university will ask certain people to play certain roles.

Bryan Brayboy: I don't know that I can speak to the 18-20 year-olds in Indiana and what their experiences are like; but I can speak to the 18-20 year-old experiences of my own childre—one of whom is in college, and one of them is currently in the process of applying to it. I think that they would say pretty similar things, which is that their generation gets this. When you start pressing on them a bit, about how they understand history, and how they understand the social and the health and the educational material consequences of structures, they are less able to talk about that. Their personal friendships, I think, are all there. I mean, my children are helping me to understand all kinds of things that I don't entirely get, whether it's about social media and the internet, or whether it's about certain trans issues, where I'm trying to make sense of what's going on with this. They're really great about being able to do that. At the same time, I think, what we don't have, necessarily, is a shared vocabulary about how to talk about this, both from an individual level and (I'm going to just keep pressing on this notion) structurally and institutionally. We have to get it.

Some might argue that there are singular cases who have disrupted the structure. That's true. One prominent example is Oprah Winfrey. She's disrupted these structures, but she's singular. There is often an individual example that tries to bump up against structural and mountains of data that tell us something different. I am in conversation with our sons and asking: how do you talk about things in a way that demonstrate that there's a literacy to understanding the historical and contemporaneous aspects of this?

Nicholas Hartlep: First off, I would agree with Dr. Lynn that our literacy about the race problem is poor. When we're talking about it, and then talking also about our Indigenous brothers and sisters who were colonized, from 1619 forward think of the timeline. We're a young country, and we're still living it because we have the New Jim Crow. Whether it was slavery, legalized chattel slavery, or because now we're throwing folks up prison, we've still really not outgrown slavery. Let's go back to White interest convergence for a moment.

In Tucson, Arizona, they had their ethnic studies debate. What they found was that the students scored higher when they were taught about the ugly and horrific history of oppression in the United States. Their achievement went through the roof, and that's when the institution shut it down. This is illogical because if learning outcomes are what drives the purpose of schooling, why did Tucson shut it down?

We know why they shut it down. We're asking the wrong questions. We're framing it poorly. White folks need to know about racism. It might be killing them prematurely, and also causing them issues because when

people are dehumanized, whether it's implicitly done or not, racists are not being human to themselves.

James Baldwin has written extensively on that, about the inhumanity that created the Negro. That's how I would respond. A lot of good and rich learning comes from studying real history, and when we don't teach that, we lose a generation. When that history is lost (permanently), and then it becomes revisionist history, it's the blind leading the blind. Books become banned. It's really a death of knowledge when we do this, and so the radical proposition would be, just tell the truth.

Marvin Lynn: I have taught in elementary classrooms, and I have sons, too, ages 13 and 16 and 19. It is very important to teach young men of Color about racism because otherwise they internalize everything that happens to them. I saw transformation in my young Black male and Latinx students when they understood that the way that teacher's looking at you, that is not about you. The fact that that person is crossing the street because they fear something that they don't even understand, that has nothing to do with you. All too often what happens is our young men, they take that in: "I'm scary. I'm dangerous. I'm a threat." And they play that up. And it can lead to some very disastrous things. When you understand that people's fear of you is not about you, that's liberating. I think also for White people, anti-racist White people get along better with other people of Color in the workplace and elsewhere, and there's just a lot less heartache. We have more productive classrooms, and we have more productive corporate spaces, and so on. I think this is good, but I think, again, we have to confront it, and confronting it is hard, but necessary.

Bryan Brayboy: There is some empirical evidence that suggests for students, regardless of what their race is or their diverse experiences, to have conversations, meaningful conversations about differences is crucial. The study focused on college students in particular, from a study by Walter Allen and others out of UCLA, and it found that their grade point average is higher, they score better on things like Graduate Record Exams, and they tend to go to graduate school at higher rates. They tend to have longer-term economic success. They tend to actually be more involved in civic activities. Both being able to talk about it, but also being able to engage with people who are different benefits everyone, whether it is students of Color or White students, in really important ways that actually strengthen society and not tear it apart.

These myths around the fact that this is divisive, actually, the evidence tells us it's the exact opposite of that. It is about realizing that we can be healthier by understanding the problem and the way in which a teacher is looking at us, and it's also true that there are these

really good, societal benefits for us to be able to have these meaningful conversations and to be able to engage across differences.

Teresa Sosa: I just want to say, also, that it's really important for us to consider our own training and understand that in our teacher education programs we are still preparing mainly White women to be teachers. When we help them and support them to be critical teachers, they are able to truly interpret what students—their students—are saying through their bodies, through their emotions, through their discourse.

One of the things that I support my preservice teachers in thinking about is, if your students are in any way resisting or refusing something, you need to look at what you are doing. Are you ignoring their incredible insights and understandings? Is your curriculum ignoring who they are as human beings? Do you really see them? Or are you really just an awful teacher? We really have to be clear about what we are doing for our students of Color, and whether we take ownership of our relationships with them. When teachers understand racism as a system, and they understand the structures, our teachers then do not react with an affront to what you are saying. They are asking instead, "Am I supporting the system, and how can I stop doing that?" That's really important.

Dr. Brayboy, I don't know if you brought it up right now, but we were talking earlier, and you and I are not interested so much in the person, it really is the system. With my teachers, I'm not talking about them as racists, I'm talking about how they constantly support the system—through our actions, our inactions, our language, our demands from our students, or our audiences, or our silence—your silence is really critical.

My teachers do not have an affront about what I point out, but instead claim, "I don't want to be a part of that system." Instead they are saying, "I want to do right, and I want to help and I want to improve stuff. I don't want to be part of that system."

That's a really important shift in conversation that is really necessary. That's the work that I constantly am trying to think about—how do I improve thinking through that and working through that with my pre-service teachers?

Marvin Lynn: I'm sorry we love this question so much. You know, I had an experience recently, like this, where I befriended a White person, and I have a lot of White friends. Hope Smith Davis is one of them I'd like to think. I'm not saying I don't have Black friends, but I made this friend, and this person was a Conservative. What became really clear to me is that in order to remain friends, there is a whole side of myself that I had to cover up.

They didn't want to hear about the microaggressions and the racist experiences. They didn't want to hear about the kinds of things that are

central to who I am, and that is, of itself, a microaggression. It's called micro-invalidation. It's when you are in communication with a Person of Color, and you refuse to see their experience of racism, and don't want to talk about it because it's too ugly. That does harm to that person.

I had to get out of that friendship because I was harming myself. As a mechanism of self-care, I said no more to that kind of relationship. Now I'm giving this person an opportunity to change. I've said, hey, if you want to change how you understand who I am and what I'm about, we can have another go at this.

I'll say this, too. I think that part of the reason that I stepped out of institutional leadership this year is because of the system that you're talking about. Sometimes those systems are so powerful and so strong, that even when you're a dean, you don't necessarily have the power to change it. People think you have a lot of power and you really don't. You are a manager.

I serve on a school board now. I serve on my homeowners association. I serve on a hospital board, and I am in community with people in my neighborhood, in the community, talking about these issues. The same presentation I gave you all, I have given to these community groups, and I've been asked to do it over and over again. I believe it is in the community where we need to be, and I think that's where the change is going to happen. IUSB is not going to change South Bend. We're going to have to be in South Bend, working with other people to change South Bend, and that's my approach and my strategy, but we can't work together if we are invalidating each other's experiences.

Bryan Brayboy: I love this question. This method of counter-storytelling. It's important because it disrupts particular kinds of narratives that are common, but often those counter-narratives are a part of the method of Critical Race Theory.

Quite frankly, the dominant narratives are often rooted in individual experiences, so what does it mean to invalidate someone's experience? What level of violence gets attached to that, unintentionally, often? This suggests what you just saw isn't what actually happened, and it's part of what Dr. Hartlep was talking about, in feeling gaslit.

I'm not saying I'm speaking for you [Dr. Hartlep], but my impression of this notion about what it feels like to be gaslit. There is an ontological question here about our being. What does it mean to be in a world, as an individual who is a part of a group, and has these structures that then kind of frame the lenses through which we get seen? I think it's really important that these stories get heard, listened to, and then heard again so that people can ask questions relating to curiosity. I wonder what this person might be feeling in this? I wonder what that must feel like? One of the ways you do this is by talking to other people.

Fundamentally, it seems to me, for us to be good human beings is to be in relation with other human beings, and with places in which we live, and so these stories are actually opportunities. Dr. Lynn's friend has an opportunity here to better get to know the real person. Imagine the need to suppress who you are to be in friendship and in a relationship with people. What kind of conditions are created to make that a thing and how might we begin to take seriously this notion about saying I'm going to sit with some of my discomfort because this challenges some of the narratives I have in my head about this and be curious about someone else's experiences? To try to make sense of it in that way, and it shifts things in remarkable ways when we begin to do that.

There's a general feeling among lots of people who say, "Oh, I never knew the need for maternity or paternity care, until I had a baby." Well, there's a whole bunch of people that have been saying it for a long period of time. Or a need for social safety nets in other ways, and I'm not suggesting that maternity or paternity is actually a social safety net issue, just to be clear, until someone has an experience. How might we begin to have relationships with people that when I hear your experience, I validate it. I think about what kinds of policies I might be able to build around it rather than waiting for you to have this experience. We'd be a lot further along if we engage the world through real curiosity and meaningful relationships.

Nicholas Hartlep: I one-hundred percent agree with you on all of that. With DEI work right now it's sexy to talk about DEI plus "belonging"; and I think it's true. Belonging is a key facet.

Faculty who are hired and join a PWI; do they feel like they belong? Do they see themselves in the cluster hiring? It also makes me think about when administrators are brought to campus to do certain things, or professors are brought to campus to teach certain courses, and then when they do that and do it well, they are chastised and they don't feel like they belong. It's like, "Wait a minute, you hired me to do this work. I'm doing it well." That's an institutional problem in my mind. It sets BIPOC folks up for failure. It's a death sentence. Then you start to think, "Oh, well, if I only did this better." And it's like, "No. You did it right." That's why it is important to share counterstories and learn from those stories. We need to prevent being gaslit.

Teresa Sosa: One of the things that we also have to be aware of is a backhand sort of storytelling. There are certain places where, when we are asked to tell our stories, it becomes a dominant White, very White supremacist idea. We are told when we're able to tell it, under certain parameters, such as, you're going up for a fellowship. Tell me your hardship; but if I want to tell my hardship in other spaces, the response is,

"we're not comfortable." They don't want to hear it. They will push you out of the university or whatever it is. There's this idea around storytelling that it's largely a strength, but only when demanded.

I went to part of the tour today at the South Bend Charles Black Center. These fantastic speakers were telling their story. They were truth-telling. When we do certain tours, are we demanding particular stories from particular individuals for particular purposes? When we are having our students apply for fellowships and awards, are we telling them to tell their particular painful story whether they are ready or want to, because if not they are not going to get funded?

There's this reality, and we have to be very careful about the idea of people as individuals. For me as a Latina woman, I tell my story when I want to tell my story. If I stand that ground, then we recognize the dominant standing of a system that says tell your story and that it is always constrained on their particular circumstance.

Marvin Lynn: I was thinking about the politics of comfort. That we are, in higher education, so deeply invested in that system.

Part of the problem with being a dean is that your job is to make people feel safe. Well, if you're going to do DEI right, people are not going to feel very comfortable, and a lot of people when they don't feel comfortable they don't feel safe. In fact, people equate comfort with safety, and there's a lot of confusion about that. When they hear an idea that disrupts something in their thinking, they feel unsafe; so to do this on a regular basis, and have it be an active part of the curriculum, you are going to have a lot of people complaining that they feel unsafe. What are you going to do about that, administrators?

There will be major complaints, legal complaints, about people feeling unsafe, and, yes, when the Latina and African American woman gets up to tell her story and they are invoking the pain of what it felt like to be treated in a particular way, and they're telling it with emotion, that makes people feel unsafe. They want to censure those voices and they want to silence them and tone-police them until they have nothing else to say. We have to really watch that trend within higher education because it is real and it is very divisive, and I think it has a lot to do with why higher education is so White.

Monica Porter: Thank you. Wow. I want to end with a magic wand. Three to five years from now, if you had that magic wand, we're talking about education, educational inclusion, what does it look like, three to five years from now? Magic wand. We have arrived. We have resolved. What would it look like?

Marvin Lynn: Well, since I talked about comfort, I hope we become comfortable being uncomfortable. You don't police anybody, you don't

write anybody up. Don't deny anybody tenure because they make people uncomfortable. That would be huge, in and of itself, and there's a lot of other stuff I think that might happen too.

Nicholas Hartlep: I would respond that the demographic imperative, or the democratic imperative—the mismatch between who teaches and who's taught—that needs to be addressed. The White teaching corps would mirror the kids that are being taught. That's at the PK-12 level. The same would be throughout the higher education level. I would say the professoriate would be much more diverse, and, lastly, I would say to the deans in the room, that there would be more deans of Color, and more provosts of Color, and more presidents of Color. The Chronicle of Higher Education just released its latest data, which shows that eighty percent of university presidents are White men, and then when you look at what Dr. Brayboy said about compensation, you know those male presidents are making much more than their female counterparts. We need many more female presidents who are paid commensurate with male presidents.

Teresa Sosa: For me personally, I would just say that we actually get to the point where we do admit that race does matter—and I think it will take a lot longer than five years.

Bryan Brayboy: I'm going to preface by saying that I am an optimist and I wake up singing in the morning. Truly I do. I roll out of bed and I start singing. I think this is a very achievable issue. It's not going to take five years.

Having said that, I think that in three to five years, working through that discomfort, I think it will be a good marker that you can actually have meaningful conversations and sit in some discomfort, but also have a level of understanding about what's next and what kinds of conditions you would create so that there are more administrators who look a particular way and/or a teacher corps who look a particular way, and a teaching corps that can actually meet the needs of the children and respond to them, because they are really interested in their success. I think there will be real markers of this.

I think that in three to five years, we will be able to talk about racism and be able to stick in the conversation long enough that it feels better. For anyone who has started an exercise routine, you know you wake up and you're energetic. Then you wake up a day later, you're like I can't move. I should stop. So the question is, can you keep going with this until the difficult things become easier? It doesn't mean there isn't soreness involved in that. What it means is you start to see the benefits of it. You're going to see some significant benefits from the work if you're willing to hang in there and do it. You have to have great leadership that

is willing to stick with you, including your chancellor and your provost, and then you've got to have some political acumen to be able to say, we are doing this because it benefits everyone and help people understand why that is, in fact, true.

Hope Smith Davis: I want to express profound gratitude to our experts, to this panel who have come here today to help us as we—as a campus and a community—wrestle with these conversations. I also want to thank our audience for coming and for participating in this conversation and Dr. Monica Porter, for her insightful questions today. Thank you to the Chancellor and the campus for their support of this event, as well as the Office of the Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs and the countless folks at IU Central who helped to develop the program.

Notes

[1] Readers can also view the actual video on YouTube, here: https://youtu.be/oR8vFo9eYCA?t=1

[2] See the work of George Lipsitz.

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Theorizing Black Women's Educational Leadership Through the Afrocentric Epistemological Lens

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Introduction

Black women currently enroll in graduate school programs and earn doctoral degrees at higher rates than all other demographic groups in the United States. Nonetheless, Black women remain noticeably underrepresented in educational leadership positions in public education. They lead a only small fraction of the nation's school districts, holding fewer than 5% of all superintendent positions in the United States (Olive-Cadet, 2018). In terms of leadership roles, Black women's involvement in school administration has historically been limited to the principalship, a role that takes demonstrably longer for Black women to reach compared to their White and male counterparts (Alston, 2000; Bailes & Guthery, 2020).

Research explorations of Black women who lead in public education primarily speak to the dynamics of the principalship, superintendency, and other top executive roles, including their multifaceted experiences at the intersection of race and gender (Alston, 2000, 2005; Dillard, 1995; Katz, 2004; Katz, 2012; Reed, 2012; Tillman & Cochran, 2000). A number of these studies are framed theoretically by various dimensions of the

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Black feminist/womanist framework, which connects Black women collectively, as a group, through a unique set of experiences in the context of oppression related to race, gender, and age (Alexander, 2010; Bass, 2012; Davis, 2016; Dillard, 1995; Grant, 2012; Horsford, 2012; Horsford & Tillman, 2012). In her work, Collins (1990) acknowledged a common glue binding Black women in what Horsford and Tillman (2012) call the "reinvention" of themselves, as well as their relentless opposition to oppression. Collins noted that despite the diverse lived experiences of Black women in the United States, these experiences accrue and stimulate a "distinctive consciousness" (Collins, 1990, p. "Why U.S. Black Feminist Thought?" para. 6).

Black feminism, considered a dialectical opponent to systematic oppression for Black women, has advanced in its evolution and application to the field of educational leadership over the past decade. Black women scholars in educational leadership have explored particular concepts within, and informed by, Black feminist theory. For example, Bass (2012) explored the ethic of caring as a Black feminist epistemological dimension among five Black women leaders in education, calling it a "changing force in school reform" (p. 82). Horsford (2012) discussed the intersectional identities and leadership of Black women within a democratic, community-situated bridge leadership approach. Reed (2012) applied Bloom and Erlandson's four assumptions of Black feminist epistemology to describe how the intersection of race and gender influences the practice of Black women principals.

The present study extends the work of these Black women scholars by responding to Collins' call (1990) to further explore theoretical interpretations of Black women's realities. We intend to contribute to the growing body of literature on Black women and educational leadership by exploring their leadership through an Afrocentric epistemological lens. We aim to place Black women and their leadership at the epistemological center, in order to discover new theoretical knowledge that speaks directly to and about them. Additionally, we offer a perspective regarding the ways in which we study, reflect upon, and judge educational leadership through an exploration of the cultural origins (and reinforcing manifestations) of leadership. At the deep structural level of culture, we extend Alston's work (2005) to unveil the deep inner workings of culture that inspire a leadership orientation among Black women as a cultural group (Myers, 1998). From a practical perspective, this research is intended to produce findings, implications, and suggestions for future research inquiries that support the active agency of Black women who lead. The voice and power of Black women leaders as a cultural group are illuminated through this research.

Background

Throughout herstory, Black women have persistently impacted public education. Mary McLeod Bethune, Fanny Jackson Coppin, Anna Julia Cooper, Nannie Helen Burroughs, and Septima Clark are among a host of Black women who, historically, have transformed educational systems (Alexander, 2010; Murtadha & Watts, 2005). Although the transformative power of Black women in shaping educational practice has been insufficiently recognized in public intellectual spaces, Black women have historically understood the significance of their own agency and its influence in their cultural communities. Anna Julia Cooper (2016) captured this sentiment in her seminal work, A Voice from the South, stating, "only the Black Woman can say 'when and where I enter, in the quiet, undisputed dignity of my womanhood, without violence and without suing or special patronage, then and there the whole Negro race enters with me'" (p. 31).

Understanding who they are and their relationship to others reflects a reality among Black women that is epistemologically rooted in an Afrocentric perspective. According to Asante (1987), Afrocentricity places African ideals at the center of analyses that involve African culture and behavior (p. 6). It calls for the study of Black people to originate from a Black frame of reference (Burgess & Agozino, 2011). As an epistemology, Afrocentricity seeks to describe what and how persons of African descent consider, construct, and validate knowledge. It is important to note that persons of African descent are not a monolith, and that there are a variety of attitudes, cultures, languages, and traditions found in the diaspora around the globe. However, we embrace indigenous universal values found within the continent that point to an ontological perspective regarding the nature of an African existence (McClendon, 1995). While there has been some debate about the tension between this universality and individuality, in this research we have embraced the principle of African universality in order to highlight an epistemology that is often ignored and devalued. Summed up by the phrase, "we are, therefore I exist" (Harris, 1998; McDougal III, 2014), Afrocentric epistemology contends that one's existence, and the expression of this existence, can only be experienced in relationship to others and a supreme being. The nature of reality, from the Afrocentric perspective, is simultaneously physical and metaphysical; spiritual and material; sensory and extrasensory (Asante, 1988; Harris, 1998; Karenga, 1993; McDougal III, 2014; Myers, 1998; Nobles, 1984). The Afrocentric epistemology, or Afrocentric knowing, therefore validates knowledge through both historical knowledge and intuition.

Two assumptions in Afrocentric knowing are particularly relevant to the present study. The first assumption, *the extended self*, focuses

on the way we think about relationships with the self, others, nature, and the supernatural (a supreme being). African knowing is primarily sociocentric, grounded in communalism and cooperation. One achieves a sense of knowing oneself, others, and the world through interaction with others. The highest value is placed on relational interdependence in the Afrocentric orientation, and knowing becomes a collective act (Bakari, 1997; McDougal III, 2014).

The idea of *cultural permanence*, the second assumption, predominates as the conceptual frame for this research study. According to Nobles (1984), culture provides a general design for living and patterns for interpreting a group of people's reality (para 2). As a total way of life of a people, the ubiquitous nature of culture provides an explanatory lens for all aspects of human life (Myers, 1998). According to Asante (1988), "Everything that you do, all that you are and will become is intricately wrapped in the Kente of culture" (p. 38).

Explorations of culture in African knowing consistently involve the idea of essentialness, or the permanent quality of culture. Afrocentric scholars emphasize the existence and continuity of a cultural thread, a force, that permeates the lives of its cultural members, namely diasporic Africans (Ani, 1994; Asante, 1987; Burgess & Agozino, 2011; Kershaw, 1998; Nobles, 1984). Ani (1994) represented cultural permanence as the *asili*, a Kiswahili term meaning source or origin, and described it as a culture's DNA, which gives meaning to cultural creativity, logic, and behavior (pp. 12-13). A blueprint for cultural expression, the asili organizes cultural members into an interest group and as an ideological unit (p. 16; McDougal III, 2014; Myers, 1998). The asili is not readily observable or visible to its cultural members, and therefore its meaning is often elusive. It encompasses those elements of culture that are *felt* through confrontation and observation. Nobles (1984) likewise described an African world view that has persisted despite European invasion of the African existence. He spoke to the preservation of cultural "residuals" among Black Americans, noting that the African world view lives at the base of the Black cultural sphere.

This study invokes Afrocentricity in its design of a culturally truthful exploration of Black women as persons of African descent, with the understanding that such explorations of Black women's lived experiences do not often take place (Pellerin, 2012; Tillman, 2002). In his discussion regarding epistemological problems in European-centered interpretations of Black reality, Nobles (1984) discussed "cultural transubstantiation," where beliefs within cultural systems are "translated" from one culture to another. The first culture superimposes its beliefs upon the second culture, yielding an interpretation of meaning often "lost in translation," that is, more reflective of the first culture's ethnocentric understanding

of the second culture than the second culture's epistemological reality. Therefore, explorations of Black women's leadership that use existing, predominantly White male-dominated theoretical leadership frames where Black women are not centered are fundamentally flawed; such pursuits lead to transubstantive errors resulting in untruthful findings. Collins (1990) likewise noted that the control of knowledge validation by elite White men—including theoretical paradigms and epistemologies—has rendered Black women's voices and experiences as insignificant and distorted (p. 1).

An Afrocentric exploration of Black women's leadership seeks to generate new, truthful knowledge by (a) resisting white dominant leadership theories asserting universal application; and (b) offering to the field culturally specific knowledge that may be used in both theory and practice (Tillman, 2002, p. 3). Conceptually and methodologically, we center the lived experiences of Black women leaders in culturally relevant ways through the amplification of their voices (Alexander, 2010; Dillard, 2016).

Method

This narrative qualitative study was designed to explore the cultural permanence of Black women's leadership within the field of education. Our research question—How do Black women reveal aspects of their leadership as cultural residuals? (Nobles, 1984)—was grounded in Afrocentric epistemology (i.e., an assumption of cultural permanence). The study's research question was refined through a simultaneous and cyclical process of data collection and analysis, consistent with a grounded theory methodological approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2012).

We chose narrative inquiry because this tradition of qualitative research treats the stories of participants as the primary source of data and aligns to the indigenous African tradition of storytelling as a way to transfer knowledge (van Wyk, 2014). In this work, we embrace and elevate the voices and stories of Black women as valuable and necessary for knowledge sharing and generation. Narrative inquiry can take many forms. Lieblich et al. (1998) make a very basic distinction between content and form, and between holistic versus categorical examination of narratives. Being interested in coherence, we focused mainly on the study of form and analyzed "life stories." Even when interested in specific parts, we found it necessary always to consider the whole of the narrative (holistic examination).

We closely aligned the study's epistemological stance with an Afrocentric methodology, which operationalizes African centeredness, is conceived from a Black perspective, and actively works toward the

liberation of the cultural community by finding solutions and generating emancipatory knowledge (Burgess & Agozino, 2011; Kershaw, 1998; Pellerin, 2012). Understanding that all research conducted by Black scholars about Black people is not Afrocentric, we attempted to remain honest to an Afrocentric methodology during the research process by asking ourselves and one another: "Is this research in the best interest of Black people according to Black people?" (Kershaw, 1998, p. 34). Decisions involving the sampling strategy, data collection and analysis methods, and trustworthiness were approached primarily from the Afrocentric methodological perspective. A secondary grounded theory approach complemented Afrocentricity, assisting in the creation of a methodological space for the emergence of new knowledge. We adopted a social-constructionist grounded theory approach which included reflexivity, researcher-participant-data interaction, and flexible data analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2012; Shank, 2002).

Participants

Participants included four Black women who currently lead in various roles in public schools or school districts in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Table 1 presents information regarding the individual participants, including professional roles at the time of the study and relevant details that illustrate the diversity of experiences, perceptions, and attitudes that each participant brought to the study. (All participants were given pseudonyms to protect their privacy.)

Utilizing purposive sampling (Wengraf, 2001), we recruited the participants through the various professional networks of the principal investigator, who sent filers to superintendents and leaders in local school districts and charter school networks, sorority members in local chapters, and members of professional associations. The principal investigator initially engaged with potential participants who expressed interest via email and through telephone conversations, making them aware of the study's goals. The principal investigator then held extensive conversations with ten potential participants who met the study's criteria. We wished to prepare them for potentially intimidating data collection activities (autobiographical storytelling) and prolonged engagement with researchers. Based on these conversations, we chose four participants based on their availability and willingness to engage.

We chose the sample size of four participants based on previous qualitative studies on Black women leaders in education that likewise used small samples. Use of small samples in these studies on Black women leaders allowed for multiple, in-depth opportunities to understand participants' lived experiences, as well as helped researchers to utilize themselves as instruments as they established interpersonal connections

with participants (Bass, 2012; Dillard, 1995; Grant, 2012; Peters, 2012). Likewise, use of autobiographical stories in the focus group required participants to share personal and intimate information about their lives and careers. Including only four participants provided a safe and affirming environment to accomplish this goal. Four participants was a large enough sample to uncover various opinions, yet small enough to develop deep and contextualized understandings that could potentially allow for transferability of findings.

Data Collection and Analysis

We initially interacted with the four participants through a two-hour focus group on the campus of a local university. Participants were

Table 1
Summary of Participants

Participant (Pseudonym)	*Background Information*
Maya	• Current charter school network executive • Raised in the Southwest part of the United States • A first-generation college graduate • Worked in under-resourced districts in CA and DC • High expectations for her success were established by family • Believes she experienced some degree of poverty in her upbringing • Believes system-level reform is needed on behalf of children
Robin	• Current Assistant Principal • Held previous positions of principal and central office leader • Born into a family of educators • Previously experienced a successful career in communication • Describes her leadership as "people-centered"
Felicia	• Current Assistant Principal • Held pervious positions of teacher, counselor, and pupil personnel worker • Interactions with parents and Black women educators during her childhood led to career in education • Serves as an adjunct professor at a small liberal arts college • Writes culturally responsive curricula
Joan	• Current Principal • Held previous positions as a teacher and instructional technology coach. • A graduate of the school district in which she currently leads • Feels that she has always had to prove she is "capable" • Describes her leadership as supportive, family-oriented, relationship-oriented, and rooting in coaching.

given 15 minutes to share their leadership stories orally with other focus group members (Sanders-Lawson et al., 2006). Prior to the focus group, researchers provided participants with sentence stems to help in the crafting of their stories. Stem examples included, "I chose to become an educational leader because" and "As a leader, I am inspired by." Sentence stems were crafted by the principal investigator based on use of leadership storytelling in the graduate-level educational leadership courses she teaches. Additional sentence stems shared with participants are shown in Table 2. Participants were advised to choose a storytelling approach that was most comfortable for them, and at best, reflective of their personalities and oratory styles.

We chose autobiographical storytelling as a methodological expression of Afrocentric epistemology, because as Myers (1998) noted, "autobiography…is so purely consistent with the Afrocentric epistemology of self-knowledge as the basis of all knowledge" (p. 11). As a culturally sustaining research method, autobiographical storytelling is rooted in the oral tradition of griots, and by extension the oral tradition which exists throughout the Black diaspora (Banks-Wallace, 2002, p. 423). Furthermore, autobiographical storytelling lies at the core of qualitative research as an authentic method (Fisher, 1985; Lewis, 2011) and gives participants the reflexive authority to construct their own stories in ways that make sense to them. It was chosen for its utility in granting agency through the centering of those who have been historically marginalized and silenced.

Table 2

Sentence Stems Provided to Participants for Leadership Stories

I chose to become an educational leader because….
I first thought about becoming a leader in education when….
This is what I believe about students….
I'd like to change education by….
As a leader, I am inspired by….
I would describe my leadership style as….
I believe that my job as a leader is to….
I'd like my professional/leadership legacy to be….
Each day, this is what motivates me to lead….
Leaders in education and other fields whom I admire include….
The experiences I had as a child and young adult that led me to leadership include….
The experiences I had as a child and young adult that have shaped my leadership include….
My cultural background influences my leadership in the following ways….

At the conclusion of the leadership stories, participants reacted to and discussed one another's stories. The entire focus group was audiotaped, including this interaction among participants.

Following the focus group, we transcribed the audiotape and began the initial analysis of the data, which subsequently informed the construction of questions we used in semi-structured follow-up interviews with participants. The principal investigator held one-hour audiotaped, semi-structured interviews with three participants in a location of their choice. (One participant chose not to participate in the study beyond the focus group for personal reasons). We also held follow-up conversations with participants as we crafted vignettes and engaged in member checks to evaluate the congruence between our findings and participants' realities (Shenton, 2004).

There are many ways to analyze narrative data. We chose a dual approach derived from Polkinghorne (1988): paradigmatic analysis of narratives, in which themes are derived from previous epistemological and theoretical work (Afrocentricity and Black feminist epistemology), and in which themes are also inductively derived from the data using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to integrate high-level emergent themes into a theoretical whole (Shank, 2002). We also maintained an open and flexible data analysis process by meaningfully questioning the data, encouraging new concepts to emerge.

The coding was conducted by the four authors, at first individually. We then came together as a discussion group in numerous meetings and compared analysis results to reach consensus. At that stage, two colleagues who had also assisted in the data collection offered useful comments.

Positionality

Nobles (1984) stated that membership in a particular cultural group gives one a "greater capacity to understand information relevant to that cultural group" (p. 402). We therefore situated ourselves in this research as insiders, using our access as Black women to (a) recruit participants through our professional connections with Black women, (b) develop prolonged connections with participants, (c) interpret findings using a participant voice, and (d) extend connections with participants beyond research settings into professional contexts, at participants' requests. We made use of the identity we shared with participants in our methodology, such as in capturing the deep meaning in Black idiomatic expressions (i.e., "I've got to do better, be better") and creating safe spaces for participants to be vulnerable when speaking of leadership failure. As researchers, we were reflexively aware of our investment in this re-

search regarding Black women. In this regard, we considered ourselves "advocatory agents" in this research (Boykin, 1978, p. 78). In light of our personal and philosophical investments in this work, we integrated several strategies towards rigor and trustworthiness. These included triangulation involving focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews, as well as member checking, collaborative debriefs among researchers, and researcher journaling (Grant, 2012; Shenton, 2004).

Limitations

When considering issues of transferability, there are a few limitations in this study related to sample. Use of only four participants in this study, intended to draw theoretical implications regarding often elusive understanding of the cultural origins of behavior, limits our ability to draw conclusions or suggest definitive implications for practice. Moreover, participants were all located within a specific geographic location, which may have influenced their epistemological beliefs and cultural understandings in all aspects of their lives. A more diverse geographical sample may have yielded different findings. Finally, losing one participant during the course of data collection may have limited our ability to respond to the study's research question with greater complexity.

Findings

Several themes emerged in this study. This article presents findings related to the primary theme of "*leadership as pouring into*." In the initial focus group, three of the four women used the phrase *pouring into* to emphasize both the importance of relationship building in their leadership and the extension of leadership to benefit others. Relationships were central to participants' leadership identities.

Pouring into resonated in a profound way for the participant we called Maya, who spoke of the ways in which she was poured into and how, in turn, she poured into others. Maya felt she was not poured into early in her career in ways "good enough to meet [her] standard." She regarded *pouring into* as a way to help others "grow exponentially" and "find joy in their work." She stated the following:

> I've developed a skill set around the ability to give and receive feedback. And so being thoughtful about, if I can understand what [Justine] needs, if I can understand really what [Justine's] strengths are, and if I can give her feedback around that, then [Justine] is probably going to grow exponentially under my leadership.

As Maya grew and became more focused on those who worked under her leadership, her focus on others became more individualized. This

lesson emanated from leadership failure, which caused her to think differently: "[Failure] forced me to say, 'Okay, everybody gets pie, but there is something that [Justine] is great at. My work is to figure out what she's great at and then give her the pie.'"

As self-described "achievement-oriented" women, each participant explored her journey to become a leader who poured into others. Through different experiences, they shared leadership focus shifts from evidence-based outcomes (i.e., final product deliverables, achievement scores, and other data sources that indicated educational improvement or progress) to the *actual people doing the work*. Each learned that the work is about the people they grow, support, and help to find joy in their work. Robin, for example, was given a charge by district leaders to turn around a failing school. Initially, she enacted an outcome-oriented approach, focusing on the technical aspects of the work:

> I go in and that's exactly what I do. We do backwards mapping, we have collaborative planning….our scores are like 98%, and they're like, "How did you do that?" And I broke down our data, we had our data wall. But my culture was a sinking ship, because sometimes…I was telling instead of modeling; in all transparency, I had males teary- eyed, and I was like, "This is the bus, this is where we're going. Stay on the bus or find a different bus."

Realizing that her school culture was suffering, Robin changed her leadership approach:

> But again, I didn't look at the people who had to do the work. They did it, it was great work, but I didn't look at them as people. So with my strengths of being a learner…being responsible, a strategic commander and achiever, all of those…You can make some strides, but none of that deals with connecting with people and building relationships…. Now, [I] look at it differently. So now my vision is very different in that it's about people. So now I'm not about just moving the needle and not only about students, but about the people that you work with and valuing them.

Maya likewise was outcome-focused in her leadership but observed a morale deficit among her team members. Her pouring into focus evolved from failure, which recognized her past as "…being a leader who initially in my career was so product- and outcome-focused that I did not think about the people and what they needed. What I cared about was the results." A mentor helped to refocus her leadership:

> I was talking to a mentor at the time and I said to her, "We just crossed that finish line and I don't understand why no one is happy besides me. This is a huge win. We're done, right?" And she said to me, "Maya, you are achievement-oriented and you relate through achievement…so what happens to your team and your staff when they aren't achieving? What does their relationship look like with you?" So I was like, "Oh,

> there is no relationship if we're not winning." Right? I relate through achievement….and so one of the things I had to learn in my leadership is people don't care if you crossed the line if they're bloodied and bruised. They just want the race to be over. They could care less about the win. I realized that my job wasn't to manage the work but to lead people. And so if I was going to lead people...I had to lean into my own discomfort about what that meant and being the complete introvert and not necessarily being interested in what your stuff is, but lean into it to say, if I can understand it and pull it out, then I could be the type of leader where I can believe in things that [Justine] can do and she doesn't even believe it in herself.

Another participant, Felicia, reflected on the notion of *pouring into* during both the focus group and interview. She accepted responsibility for pouring into others, despite not benefitting from it herself. She shared:

> I think there was a common theme [in the focus group] of people pouring into you, and...I remember sitting there wishing like, "Gosh, I wish I had somebody who took to me like that"… but I think in hearing that [I ask myself] "What can we do now so that we're doing this, we're pushing others up in this work?"

The significance of relationships saturated the data. Rather than viewing relationship- building as a skill to be acquired and honed, participants viewed relationships as central to their leadership identities. Participants saw themselves as reflections of those whom they touched as leaders. If they reflected their leadership in a mirror, they would see themselves as others experienced them. This is not to imply self-consciousness, but more an awareness that relationships act as tools in mutually edifying experiences (Ani, 1994; Grillo, 2019). Helping others to find joy, balance, and satisfaction reflected the purpose of relationships.

Felicia spoke to the centrality of relationships in her collaboration efforts with adult stakeholders:

> When I think of myself as a leader, I think the one thing that comes to mind that's very important for me is relationships. And I think my favorite quote by Dr. James Comer, who I absolutely love to quote, is, "No significant learning can occur without significant relationships," and that's important.

Felicia further explored her use of relationship "hats" to support others, build understanding, and reach consensus, particularly with stakeholders who were deemed difficult or challenging, such as parents:

> I think about the various hats that I've worn as an educator over 25 years, and how I bring all of those to the table when I sit down with a family. So if it is a mom, if I gotta put on my mom hat when I'm sitting down with a family, then I'm like, "Okay, this is not Miss Robinson to Miss [Jones], this is [Felicia] to [Marla] now. We're gonna have a

> conversation about raising our children and what that's like and how difficult it is."

Maya echoed the significance of relationships in leadership, reflecting on how a focus on others shapes one's leadership identity:

> Content is not enough for you to be successful here. It requires deep relationships, and it requires the ability and the commitment to understand that you are more than a teacher; you must provide nurturing and support.

The idea of *pouring into* others captured the nature of relationships between participants and others, including those in superior positions. Specifically, they viewed relational leadership acts as extensions of their energy for the enlightenment and growth of others (Harris, 1998; Myers, 1998).

Discussion and Implications

In her study on Black women in the superintendent role, Alston (2005) cautioned against simplifying the experiences of Black leaders. To understand their complex experiences, she offered the tempered radical/servant leader conceptual frame to understand the important and complex aspects of Black women's leadership (p. 683). The tempered radical/servant leader conceptual frame, in large part, stems from an Afrocentric conceptual system and includes elements such as the *Ma'at* (the relationship between the knower and the known); the *Sankofa* (the reclamation of the past to understand who we are and a prerequisite to forward movement); and the *Nguzo Saba* (Karenga, 1993; McDougal III, 2014). Peters (2012) likewise applied an Afrocentric feminist framework in her study of Black women engaged in school reform. We reviewed and considered this previous research in our exploration of Black leadership through the Afrocentric epistemological lens.

A major finding of the present study involved the ways in which participants regarded relationships when enacting their leadership. Use of the phrase *pouring into* reflected their views of their own leadership as an extension of their personal and spiritual selves, and more broadly, their views of leadership as a human-oriented endeavor involving giving to others.

Participants' relationships were integral to leadership identity development; they grew in their confidence and autonomy as they moved toward more harmonious connections with others in professional spaces. They viewed their work, their purpose, as pouring into others in edifying ways, even when they did not benefit reciprocally.

African sociocentrism, a critical element of Afrocentric epistemology,

is reflected in the ways participants collectively conceived their leadership (Asante, 1987; Asante, 1988; Harris, 1998; Schiele, 1998). This sense of pouring into, of extending themselves, reflected the dual nature of the African cultural reality—the material and the spiritual—and their leadership became a giving of themselves, both tangibly and intangibly. Notably, participants did not particularly view their leadership in this way at the beginning of their leadership journeys, but they found through challenges, opportunities, and failure that the focus on "we" rather than "I" or "it" (the work itself) was an authentic expression of their leadership identities. They each desired to see Black people, as a collective, thrive. As Black women they "embod[ied] the 'we-ness'" of themselves (Shockley & Holloway, 2019, p. 270), and each desired to see their staffs and students grow and thrive as well.

Relationships as *pouring into*, or reflections of the extended self, may be connected to findings in the educational leadership literature (and beyond) related to the mothering/other-mothing/caring nature of Black women leaders, as well as their mentoring experiences. The historical, self-sacrificing characterization of Black mothers "speaks to their self-sacrifice so that their children might be positioned to take advantage of opportunities that they themselves were not afforded" (Bass, 2012, p. 79; Panton, 2016). As a result, Black women educational leaders become caregivers in their leadership, providing for the multifaceted needs of the students, families, and other stakeholders whom they serve. Even when they choose not to emphasize the mothering/other mothering nature of their leadership, this other mothering appears to be linked to the legacy and spirit that has been a part of Black women's legacy and caring (Horsford & Tillman, 2012).

While participants discussed *pouring into* by supervisors, mentors, and others in higher professional positions on their behalf, they also expressed disappointment with the infrequency of these exchanges relative to White and/or male leaders. Few research studies have explored mentoring within underrepresented groups, including Black women (Grant, 2012). Mentoring has been generally examined within a patriarchal frame where there is an unequal distribution of power between the mentor and mentee, and the focus of the mentoring relationship is working within and maintaining the status quo. Given the dearth of mentoring experiences afforded to Black women as compared to white leaders (Grant, 2012), Tillman and Cochran's work (2000) on mentoring relationships for Black women leaders—discussing the need for mutual choice to enter into the mentoring relationship, as well as mutual opportunities to engage—is particularly meaningful.

Afrocentric knowing is promising in its proffer of a cultural lens through which we may see educational leadership with broader consid-

erations and greater fluidity. In understanding the complexity of Black women's leadership, however, we must confront troubling realities expressed by participants in this study. While aspects of their leadership may be seen as cultural residuals, the cultural truth of who they are, and how they are permitted to be who they are, is largely shaped by their practical existence in White spaces. Transnationally, all women of African descent may not consciously acknowledge the imposition of oppression upon their lived existence (Reed, 2012). Yet many do. The White genocidal compulsion toward the African being has made its impact globally upon women through various forms of oppression, including the daily interactions with racism, sexism, and ageism faced by Black women in the United States. When Black women speak on these experiences, it is important to provide frameworks that allow the complexity of their voices to be heard.

In the "Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought," Collins (1989) described Afrocentric feminist epistemology as a way to make sense of Black women's realities with greater lucidity, stating that "since Black women have access to both the Afrocentric and the feminist standpoints, an alternative epistemology used to rearticulate a Black woman's standpoint reflects elements of both traditions" (p. 756). Collins used Black women's experiences as a "point of contact" between Afrocentricity and Black feminism (p. 757).

The Afrocentric feminist epistemology, therefore, allows us to understand the complexity of Black leadership within the U.S. context. Although an exhaustive comparison of the two epistemologies is beyond the scope of this discussion, this exercise is noteworthy for future explorations. A layering of the Black feminist epistemology upon the Afrocentric epistemology, as an extension of Collins' 1989 work, not only provides us with a conceptual and lexical tool to explore and express Black women's multiple identities, but also enables us to interrogate patriarchal notions that may invade Afrocentric scholarship.

One example of how the Afrocentric feminist epistemology may illustrate Black women's leadership more precisely relates to the idea of *pouring into* through mothering/care. While they may be culturally predisposed to a relational-mothering leadership orientation, the glorification of motherhood for Black women within White contexts is problematic, in that Black women's emotional and psychological wellness is often sacrificed for the so-called greater good (Collins, 1990; Hill, 2002).

Another example involves the lack of support systems available to nurture participants' leadership. Participants counter-storied the assumption that they do not need support. The lack of culturally sustaining support available to Black women leaders mirrors the lack of support discussed in the literature for Black women teachers (Carver-Thomas &

Darling-Hammond, 2017; Dingus, 2008; Farinde-Wu, 2018). Afrocentric feminist epistemology allows us to deconstruct underlying reasons for the denial of access to these systems critical in leadership development and also to provide an understanding of how Black women use existing structures and systems to pour into one another.

Davis (2019) stated the importance of Black women supporting one another by creating a space of rest and respite as they work towards transformative change (p. 288). The interdependency of Black women is required for Black women leaders to be poured into. As Audre Lorde (1979) wrote, "interdependency between women is the way to a freedom which allows the I to be, not in order to be used, but in order to be creative. This is a difference between the passive be and the active being" (p. 112).

Further research on the leadership of Black women, approached through the Afrocentric feminist lens, is warranted in terms of (a) exploring findings more deeply with larger participant groups, and (b) looking at the ways in which Black women lead in other disciplines. As we explore the idea of leadership as a cultural residual with greater depth, we intend to look at transnational experiences of women leaders of African descent. The Afrocentric framework will aid in the understanding of cultural similarities, while the Black feminist framework may help us see how global oppression results in differences in women's ideas and approaches regarding their leadership.

Findings from this research may be used towards improving our understanding of leadership as a lever toward more equitable educational systems for students. As Black women increasingly seek leadership roles in education, it is critical that efforts to prepare, develop, and support them, as well as to evaluate their performance, consider the ways in which they lead as cultural markers and essential aspects of their leadership identity. Likewise, observing the specific ways in which Black women lead expands and deepens our current understanding of leadership as a collection of relational experiences between leaders and followers.

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Critical, Interconnected Approaches to Professional Engagements

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Abstract

Much of the literature on professional development offers disembodied, secular, detached and technical approaches to teaching and learning. Born of a collective need for healing, meaning and co-inquiry, I joined justice-oriented educators to explore our overlapping experiences as liberatory practitioners and spiritual seekers. We met for over a year in fluid, yet predictable ways, sharing, breathing, moving, writing, reflecting, meditating. Engaging critical ethnography (Madison, 2007; 2011) and a spiritual dialogic approach (Edwards, 2016), I documented critical, interconnected approaches to professional engagements. This a critical and decolonial approach that is distinct from traditional notions of professional learning, in that it centers collective healing, interconnectedness and sustenance alongside pedagogies of justice and liberation. Situated in the in-betweenness of decolonial and anti-colonial theories, this studydescribes the context of our gatherings and the collective experiences of educators, including : awareness, embodiment, and healing; shapeshifting and multiplicity; and practicing interconnectedness and relationality. I conclude with guidelines and possibilities for critical, interconnected approaches to professional engagements.

Introduction

As a K-12 educator and then as a preservice teacher educator and professor, I held in tension a commitment to justice on the one hand and a deep yearning for connection, awareness, and spirituality on the other hand. I could not make sense of the psychic violence I was experiencing

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in justice-oriented educational communities (Shah, 2019) and I also did not feel like I fully belonged in spiritually oriented educational communities that seemed to deny my lived experiences and disparage emotions such as anger and rage. Traditional professional learning opportunities were also disappointing as they seemed to center disconnected, technical aspects of the how of teaching and learning, with little to no focus on who we were as educators. This study, focused on critically oriented and interconnected approaches to professional learning, is more than a curiosity; it represents a longing for professional communities that attend to the complexities of human experience.

In part, these tensions and grapplings are personal; As a second-generation, South Asian woman living on Dish with One Spoon Territory, the stolen lands of Tkaronto,[1] Canada, I identify as a colonized settler. While my ancestral and diasporic histories include multiple expressions of colonization and coloniality, I continuously contend with my relations to these lands and my responsibility in advocating for Indigenous sovereignty, self-determination, land and life. These experiences as well as my experiences as a cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, English-speaking, middle-class person have shaped my commitment to pedagogies of justice and activism as an elementary school teacher, a professor in a faculty of education and a community activist. For the past 12 years, my practice of vipassana meditation has dramatically altered my view of self, purpose, and relation, as has my interest in learning about Indigenous ways of knowing and being to many lands. My growing spiritual connection has profoundly impacted my pedagogy, with greater focus on contemplative, relational and embodied practices, a more sustained commitment to structural change and justice-oriented pedagogies, and a willingness to stay in tensions and contradictions.

In time, I found colleagues and friends with whom I could explore these, and other wonderings, despite our varied spiritual and religious worldviews and diverse lived experiences. We would meet in my home on Saturday mornings as a group of educators with varying educational roles and responsibilities, guided by our common commitment to liberatory pedagogies and our parallel paths of spiritual seeking, what we referred to as critical spirituality. Through quiet reflection, dialogue, and embodied practices, nestled in laughter, tears and food, these encounters became sacred spaces for healing and imagining, unearthing new possibilities for justice in our lives and in our work. Despite differences in our spiritual orientations and enactments of justice-oriented pedagogies, we witnessed ourselves into deeper truths of common, yet distinct experiences of pain and joy, longing and hope. While we had all been a part of professional learning communities over the years, we had never before journeyed inward, together, blurring the lines between personal

and professional selves. Over time, there was a slow and natural undoing of conditioning and expectation of what it meant to be a "professional", of hiding ourselves to fit into preconceived notions of professional learning, and internalizing the ongoing reminders that we did not belong in our fullness. This type of personal journeying became possible in a community of practitioners in which we witnessed and were witnessed by one another. While not intentional, we found ourselves moving between anti-colonial conversations that challenge Christian and western hegemonic notions of self and other and the beingness and embodiment of spiritual knowing and justice.

As a colonized settler on these lands, I heed the wisdom of Tanya Rodriguez (2021), who, drawing on the work of Tuck and Yang (2012) suggests that decolonization is not for White people, Black people, and People of Colour to engage in on stolen land, while benefitting from systems of oppression. Rodriquez urges to people who are not Indigenous to these lands to consider the notion of *uncolonizing*, a "voluntarily distancing, detaching from colonial morays." While acknowledging this perspective, I also consider complexities and complicities that exist within historical and contemporary power asymmetries. For example, we do not all benefit from these systems of oppression in the same way and some of us are simultaneously harmed. Some of us were brought to these lands by force through political and economic atrocities such as the transatlantic slave trade. I attempt to honour these complications *and* a body of decolonizing scholarship that I have learned from and that informs this study. This qualitative, ethnographic study involving K-12 and preservice educators explores how our community of educators engaged in critical, justice-oriented explorations that center spirituality and interconnected approaches to professional development, what I refer to in this study as critical, interconnected professional engagements. As I/we work through these ideas, I draw on understandings, both complimentary and contradictory, of anti-colonial and un/decolonizing framings.

Anti-Colonial and Un/Decolonizing Framings

Molefi Asante (2006) defines colonialism as that which "seeks to impose the will of one people on another and to use the resources of the imposed people for the benefit of the imposer" (p. ix). In the colonial imagination, one's proximity to more/less desirable land and one's ability to own land established/s differential values of human life, serving as justification for a "natural" order (Wynter, 2003). These practices of domination and imposition have also given rise to the resistance and agency of anti-colonial theories and praxis that challenge both historic legacies of colonialism and the ongoing dispossession of lands and peoples.

While colonization is about land and space, Asante (2006) reminds us that colonizers "did not only seize land, but also minds" (p. ix). Coloniality, as related to but distinct from colonization, refers to the control and management of knowledge by "universals" of Western modernity, Eurocentrism and global capitalism (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Sylvia Wynter (1989) refers to this as epistemological nihilation, the erasure of knowledge systems resulting in the negation of particular beings to legitimize the existence and superiority of other beings. Of significance to this study is the intentional erasure and subjugation of Indigenous spirituality by colonial logics based on warped notions of a spiritual poverty among Indigenous people (Battiste and Henderson, 2000; Wane, 2006; Zine, 2004).

Decolonization has re-emerged in anti-colonial discourse (Dei, 2019) and "is a messy, dynamic, and contradictory process" (Sium et al., 2012, p. II). Sium et al. (2012) state:

> …despite our certainty that decolonization centers Indigenous methods, peoples, and lands, the future is a 'tangible unknown', a constant (re)negotiating of power, place, identity and sovereignty. In these contestations, decolonization and Indigeneity are not merely reactionary nor in a binary relationship with colonial power. Decolonization is indeed oppositional to colonial ways of thinking and acting but demands an Indigenous starting point and an articulation of what decolonization means for Indigenous peoples around the globe. (p. I)

Tuck & Yang (2012) assert that decolonization necessarily includes land repatriation given the historical and continued imposition, dispossession and displacement of Indigenous peoples and land on Turtle Island, and the refusal to acknowledge Indigenous sovereignty. Decoloniality, as related to but distinct from decolonization, gestures towards epistemic reconstitution and a re-emergence of a multiplicity of Indigenous ways of knowing (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018), that deterritorializes and destabilizes the fixity of knowledge (Paraskeva, 2011) and actively disrupts espitemicide (Sousa Santos, 2007). While Indigenous knowledges are widely diverse and (re)shaped by time and space, many of the teachings promote interconnectedness, relationality, reciprocity, community, and humility, and as such, reclaim and reimagine possibilities for justice, for education, for our world.

There are also important tensions inherent in anti-colonial and decolonial discourses. On the one hand, some anti-colonial theories may turn away from the spiritual, the embodied, the more than human, and the unknown or mystical. As participants in this group, we found ourselves moving between these various locations, imagining and feeling our way into possibilities. As such, I am drawn to Bhattacharya's (2009) de/colonizing perspective that both imagines a utopian decolonizing possibility and acknowledges that colonizing and decolonizing forces exist in all spaces, challenging notions of

purity and absolutism and acknowledging that colonizing and decolonizing forces exist in all spaces and in all people. The dash in de/colonizing connotes a shuttling between experiences (and embodiments) of colonization and decolonization (Bhattacharya, 2009). Wong (2018) explores this concept in her piece on mindfulness as a decolonial practice:

> I can see no fixed or solid identity that I can call "me": Chinese, woman, or person of colour. Nor can I draw a clean line between the colonized and colonizer, consumer, and capitalist, oppressed and oppressor, human and nonhuman, or good and bad, and simply place myself in the first group within each of these dualistic constructions. (p. 257)

Adefarakan (2018), an Indigenous African woman of Yoruba descent, grapples with what it means to be "an Indigenous African on land to which one is not Indigenous," arguing for more flexible imaginings of Indigeneity (p. 230). I am especially drawn to this theorizing because while participants in this study are Indigenous to multiple lands and worldsenses, we are all settled on Turtle Island; some came by choice, and some were brought by force through the transatlantic slave trade or indentured servitude.

On the other hand, decolonizing approaches may construct Indigenous ways of knowing as "an addition" to a system that is inherently designed to engage in theft of land and life, or as a mechanism of distraction and bypass to maintain settler innocence and absolve settler responsibility. Therefore, I am also drawn to anti-colonial and decolonial discourses that take seriously practices of resistance to disrupt historic and present material effects on the lives of colonized peoples (Howard, 2006), and imagine transformative, embodied, interconnected futurities. In their anti-colonial theory, Simmons and Dei (2012) explore: the coloniality of knowledge production; power relations established by dominance and subordination; local experience, knowledge systems and voice; spirituality and spiritual knowing; and a politics of resistance, accountability and responsibility. Anti-colonial discourses also encourage us to seek out and interrogate interlocking systems of power to gain more nuanced understandings of how dominance is reproduced and sustained (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001) and acknowledge the resistance and survival of spiritual ways of knowing and being despite neo/colonial and connected powers (Shahjahan, Wagner & Wane, 2009; Wane, 2006). As Dei (2019) asserts, "anti-colonial and decoloniality are intertwined logics… [where]… the anti-colonial becomes the path to a decolonial future" (p. viii). Colonial logics are designed for fragmentation, categorization, competition, power, and control (Dei 2000; Shahjahan 2004). I turn my attention to how we might consider professional development and learning from radically different approaches to challenge these colonial logics.

From Professional Development to Professional Engagements

Professional Development and Professional Learning

Sancar et al. (2021) note that defining professional development is difficult given its multidimensional nature that occurs over a teacher's professional life. In attempting to develop a working framework for optimal professional development, they reviewed 156 papers. They noted that the majority of articles defined *traditional approaches* to professional development, focused on "processes and activities arranged to improve teachers' professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enhance students' learning" (Guskey, 2003) (Sancar et al. 2021, p. 4). They distinguish professional development based on *new approaches* that are broader in their aims and account for a teacher's "individual, social, and occupational dimensions in a collaborative, inquisitive, and self-directed learning environment" (p. 4). Gore et al. (2017) note growing agreement among scholars that similarly broadens traditional approaches to professional development as involving teachers as both learners and teachers (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995), supporting teachers' emerging needs (Aelterman et al., 2013), integrating professional development into practice (Armour & Yelling, 2007) and therefore offering it within the school day (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001), aligning with school and system policies (Desimone, 2009), and promoting transformative change over calls for accountability (Kennedy, 2005). Kennedy (2016) found that inadequate attention has been paid to the relationships and power dynamics between professional development facilitators. She also found that teachers want concrete strategies that are clearly explained rather than prescriptive demands or general content knowledge in the absence of attention to application. Pulling this all together in a review of 156 articles on professional development, Sancar et al. (2021) put forth a framework from teacher education to retirement that acknowledges the role of reforms and policies, curriculum, supportive activities, collaboration, and school context in classroom practice (i.e., teacher characteristics, what to teach, how to teach, and student outcomes). Taking theses shifts into account, these frameworks largely ignore systems of power, identity, and constructions of difference. They also ignore the inner worlds of teachers and the importance of self-reflection and embodied awareness in professional development.

Professional development models have also been critiqued for their passive and intermittent nature, leading to professional learning models that are active and consistent, occur in the teaching environment, and are supported by teachers' colleagues (Stewart, 2014). Emerging out of research on school effectiveness and improvement, professional learning

communities (PLCs) are generally understood as a structure that supports teachers from the same school in having the autonomy to select their learning objectives and learn about collaboration in examining their practices to improve student learning (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006). In this framework, teachers share and critically reflect on their practice "in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, and inclusive way" (De Neve, Devos, & Tuytens, 2015, p. 32). While the PLC model mirrors elements of the gatherings of educators in this study, they do not center justice-oriented approaches to education, nor do they center the spirituality of the educator. I turn my attention to both of these exploraitons below.

Justice-Oriented Approaches to Professional Development

Critiques of professional development suggest that neutral, apolitical, and ahistorical approaches to content-area learning are inadequate and should support educators in developing the skills of identifying and disrupting systems of oppression, engaging local communities, and teaching through an interdisciplinary lens (Fernández, 2019; Kohli, Picower, Martinez, & Ortiz, 2015; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2015). Parkhouse et al. (2019) conducted a meta-ethnographic, systematic literature review of 40 studies focused on multicultural education–focused professional development programs. They found widely diverse approaches and components to professional development programs, with different theoretical approaches and conceptions of multicultural education, different notions of diversity, and different priority on the theory-practice spectrum. They found somewhat of an increased emphasis on models such as coaching, communities of practice, and action research, as well as critical self-evaluations of teaching, and immersion experiences (e.g., places of worship, community events, etc.).

Studies on anti-racist professional development are less evident. Kohli, Picower, Martinez, and Ortiz (2015) describe a model of critical professional development (CPD) "where teachers as engaged as politically-aware individuals who have a stake in teaching and transforming society" (p. 7). Other studies speak to hostile racial environments and the racial dehumanization that educators of colour experience (Kohli, 2019), including racial microaggressions (Endo, 2015; Kohli, 2016). As such, a growing number of justice-oriented teachers rely on critical professional development in preservice and in-service education (Kohli, 2019; Picower, 2015; Pour-Khorshid, 2016), which is intended to "provoke cooperative dialogue, build unity, provide shared leadership, and meet the critical needs of teachers" (Kohli et al., 2015, p. 11), and is a tool for racial literacy development and the retention of teachers

of colour (Kohli, 2019). Picower (2015) speaks to a critical professional development group called Inquiry to Action Group that created a sense of community, which benefitted participants emotionally (renewed energy and confidence), intellectually (content knowledge), and professionally (through resources and lesson plans), enhancing their practice inside and outside of the classroom.

One study spoke to the importance of healing in justice-oriented professional development. Pour-Khorshid (2016) describes the program H.E.L.L.A. Educators of Colour, a group that is part of the grassroots organization Teachers 4 Social Justice in the Bay Area of California. H.E.L.L.A. stands for Healing, Empowerment, Love, Liberation, and Action. It is described as a:

> …critical professional development space (Kohli, Picower, Martinez, & Ortiz, 2015) [that] incorporates critical dialogue, popular education (Friere, 1970), and radical healing (Ginwright, 2016) as professional support for teachers of color in the California Bay Area, who are interested in deepening their analyses of education and teaching through the lenses of Critical Race Theory and Community Cultural Wealth. (Yosso, 2005)

H.E.L.L.A., like our group in this study, is a professional development space that was formed because this type of space does not exist within the institution, challenging notions of professional/ism by encouraging educators to bring their whole selves into a space that attends to power asymmetries and the necessary healing to thrive in our bodies and in these roles.

I extend the critique by inviting us to consider how we might engage critical professional development that attends to different conceptions of knowing and being. How might onto-epistemologies that construct the Self as spiritual, interconnected, co-constituted and relational (Grande, 2018; Shahjahan 2010; Wagner & Shahjahan, 2015; Wane, Manyimo & Ritskes, 2011) inform possibilities for critical professional learning and being? For example, how might immersion experiences focus on knowledge of self in relation to other, instead of knowledge of other? While these approaches have yet to significantly influence the scholarship and practice of professional development and professional learning (what I refer to as professional engagements in this paper), we see it being explored in the literature on teaching and learning in K-12 classrooms and higher education.

Critical, Interconnected Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Interconnectedness is a concept that has existed for generations in many Indigenous and Eastern cosmologies[2] and challenges understandings of Self as individual and separate and instead presents Self as in-

terconnected and relational (Grande, 2018; Shahjahan 2010; Wagner & Shahjahan, 2015; Wane, Manyimo & Ritskes, 2011). I turn my attention to several critical, interconnected approaches to schooling that center and disrupt power asymmetries and invite inner knowing and healing.

Inspired by Paulo Freire and Thich Nhat Hanh, the late bell hooks (1994) defines engaged pedagogy as the sacred act of teaching in which teachers attend to the souls of their students by facilitating their intellectual and spiritual development. Nina Asher (2003) describes her approach to teaching as a self-reflexive pedagogy of interbeing, which is "transformative, enabling both students and teachers to 'see with the eyes of interbeing' (Hanh, 1991, p. 98) and heal from the wounds of oppression" (p. 235). Ryoo, Crawford, Moreno & McLaren (2009) offer a notion of critical spiritual pedagogy that is centered in spirituality, humanity, and power, and "acknowledges the way students and teachers are exploited, fragmented, and Othered in schools while advocating for curricular and educational practices that are based in love and integrity in an interdependent classroom community" (p. 132). Wane, Manyimo, and Ritskes (2011) offer a compelling compilation of chapters in their book *Spirituality, Education and Society,* exploring the challenges and importance of centering spirituality in educational spaces, and drawing out tensions between spirituality and justice as well as spirituality and religion. In higher education, several scholars speak to the connection between spirituality or contemplative practices and social justice in various contexts to foster greater self-awareness, compassion and accountability (Berila 2014; 2016; Shahjahan, 2010; Shahjahan, Wagner, and Wane, 2009; Tisdell, 2000; 2003; Wagner & Shahjahan; 2015).

Critical and decolonizing scholars offer important considerations for professional engagements. One consideration is the recognition of the importance and interdependence of cognition, emotion, and spirituality. Asher (2010) invites us to challenge dualities within "by acknowledging one's implicatedness and recognizing that one is 'at the interstices' that one can engage in both the intellectual and the psychic/emotional work of decolonization" (p. 398). Berila (2016) suggests that dissolving the mind-body-spirit distinctions allow an appreciation for the body as a site of healing, a site of stories, and a "site of knowledge" (p. 38). Ng's (2018) notion of integrative critical embodied pedagogy conceptualizes embodied learning as decolonizing pedagogy that supports a form of integration that frees us from sources of separation. Decolonizing spaces offer a place of healing to attend to the spiritual and emotional harm from "the spiritual, cultural and mental alienation of the self that creates a sense of hopelessness and despair" (Dei, 2010, p. 3). In part, this necessitates the need to "destabilize the dominant understanding of affect and emotion as individual and natural (and therefore indis-

putable) and resituate affective encounters as sociohistorical" (Nixon & MacDonald, 2018, p. 117). This process revives an inner life force (Ng, 2018) and restores a lost humanity (Dei, 2010). Gloria Anzaldúa's conception of spiritual activism figures here. Rooted in epistemologies of interconnectedness and relationality, spiritual activism promotes a spirituality that challenges systems of oppression (Keating, 2005). This is similar to Thich Nhat Hanh's concept of Socially Engaged Buddhism that merges mindfulness with social action.

How might such critical and interconnected approaches apply to professional learning and professional development for educators? What might it look like to dissolve dualities and fragmented constructions, center the body as a site of decolonization, and contextualize these understandings within political, economic, and sociohistoric contexts that mediate spiritualites, emotionalities, physicalities and materialities? In this next section, I explain how this group of educators came to know what we know about professional engagements through our practice and reflection.

Embodied Inquiries

This study aims to engage constructs of relationality as embodied inquiries through a blending of critical ethnography (Madison, 2007; 2011) and a spiritual dialogic approach (Edwards, 2016). Critical ethnography aims to critique hegemony, oppression, and asymmetrical power relations to foster social change (Palmer & Caldas, 2015) within a particular lived domain (Madison, 2011). Critical ethnography incorporates reflexive inquiry as researchers employing this methodology see themselves as subjects that are inextricably connected to participants (Madison, 2011). My experiences and conversations with participants in this study mirrors the dialogic performative in critical ethnography (Conquergood, 1985; Madison, 2007). As Madison (2007) explains, "The *dialogic performative* is charged by a desire for a generative and embodied reciprocity, sometimes with pleasure and sometimes with pain. It is a mutual creation of something different and something more from the meeting of bodies in their contexts" (p. 320). Madison's three key aspects of the dialogic performative are described below: paying attention, reflexivity, and the imaginary.

This study also employs a spiritual dialogic research approach (Edwards, 2016) that extends the notion of dialogue to include knowledges and experiences that transcend the five senses. The spiritual dialogic research approach views a spiritual community as a method of inquiry. This approach focuses on *attention* to spiritual matters that arise in group settings with an understanding that while there are multiple versions of spiritual truth, spiritual reality is unknowable. A focus on

attention invites the researcher to explore feelings, beliefs, and events, as well as traditions, rituals, wisdom, and intuition, realms of human existence that are often kept hidden or private. The spiritual dialogic approach also centers *intention* to genuinely understand the process of spiritual development. In part, this intention requires a deeper dive into self-reflexivity that invites an exploration of one's own spiritual ways of knowing and being as researchers, which are often so embedded in our ontologies and epistemologies. This approach focuses on dialogue as a process of spiritual knowing in which the researcher and participants work together to develop an intersubjective understanding of a topic. In this study, we explore critical, interconnected approaches to professional engagements that invite and honour the spiritual realm of educators.

Context

In 2018, my colleague and I invited a group of educators to gather in community for connection and rejuvenation. As a former K-12 educator, participants in this study were colleagues and friends who were engaged in anti-oppression and anti-racist work in various educational settings and who were also inclined towards contemplative practices and spiritual seeking. This critical ethnographic study with a focus on the spiritual dialogic component captures my analysis of observations in our group gatherings, intimate one-on-one conversations with group members, and their writing reflections. As a group, we represent diverse identities in terms of race and ethnicity, sexuality, gender, social class, and faith/creed/spiritual worldview. We are classroom teachers, school administrators and senior leaders, retired teachers, and preservice instructors. We met bi/monthly on Saturday mornings in my home for about one year where we began informally, catching up over treats and coffee before making our way into a circle in my living room. With some on the sofa and others on cushions on the floor, we would begin with an embodied, centering activity such as intentional breathing, visualization, or bodily awareness. This allowed for a kind of *attention* to our inner and embodied knowing beyond cognitive reflection that a spiritual dialogic approach supports. This was followed by a prompt in the form of a poem or quote and time in quiet reflection before we shared insights and experiences in the larger group. Madison (2007) explains that when we are truly paying attention to each other in a dialogic performative, when we are in body-to-body presence with others, we are co-creative and co-constitutive.

The group was fluid, in that new members would join over time, and we rarely had the same configuration of 10-15 people in the room. Yet, there was a predictable structure in which we would review and commit to practicing the eleven Touchstones of the Circle of Trust (Palmer,

2008)[3], norms that were familiar to some of us from different contexts. To be in circle in this way is to exercise a form of radical acceptance through witnessing, the experience of which is often described as transformative for both the speaker and the listener. Paradoxically, in listening to another person's story, while aware of our thoughts and emotions, we hear deeper into our own truths. As in dialogic relationships that involve co-witnessing between researcher and researched (Conquergood, 1985), we witnessed each other, again and again, without agenda or intention, and we were continually remade by the exchanges between us and the possibilities for imagining otherwise. In this space, we fostered the *intention* of understanding ourselves as spiritual beings engaging in justice-oriented work in educational spaces. This kind of inner work is slow and intentional, never hurried along in a particular direction. It wanders, (un)settles, disrupts, enlivens, connects, breaks apart, and is never finished.

Noblit et al. (2004) suggest that "Critical ethnographers must explicitly consider how their own acts of studying and representing people and situations are acts of domination even as critical ethnographers reveal the same in what they study" (p. 3). In studying a group to which I belonged and to which I was instrumental in forming, my commitment to group members and myself was to *work the hyphen* (Fine's, 1994), to continuously and critically reflect on how I was constituted by relation, acknowledging dynamics of personal friendships, power relations, and multiple, intersecting positionalities. Minh-ha (1988) explains the role of the insider-outsider as one that "stands in that undetermined threshold place where she constantly drifts in and out gesturing 'I am like you' while persisting in her difference… and 'I am different' while unsettling the very definition of otherness arrived at" (para. 12). While this has been my experience throughout the study, I offer that this was a collective experience of negotiating difference and inquiring about our experiences. Madison (2007) suggests that critical ethnographers nether hide their subjectivity nor make themselves the primary subject of their study and recognize the interconnections and effects of collective reflexivities. I would add collective embodiments.

As we became more curious about how these gatherings informed our educational practices, I invited group members to have one-on-one conversations with me and share their reflections through journal entries to capture their insights. 10 group members participated in the one-on-one conversation and 5 of them also shared journal entries. Our conversations explored understandings of spirituality and the connections to education for justice and liberation. As Madison (2007) explains, we used the dialogic performative to shake up our consciousnesses and imagine futures that did not yet exist. Many of these conversations occurred over food and drink in my home or other comfortable locations.

Conversations were recorded for transcription and notes were taken during the interviews to note relational dynamics, personal reflections, and insights. In each conversation, we were aiming to make sense of each other, ourselves, and ideas of criticality and interconnectedness. After a year of meeting in my home, many of us continued to meet more formally in Circles of Trust (Palmer, 2008) under the direction of Center for Courage and Renewal facilitators. In part, this allowed me to engage more fully as a participant, rather than a planner-participant. The structure of these gatherings was similar with time for personal reflections, deep sharing in triads, and large group reflections. I continued to observe patterns and mine insights that emerged from my conversations and interactions with educators in the group, recognizing the change in context; this group met more formally, under the direction of an established organization, and included non-educators. These and other meetings continue to occur. One group member held a circle for Black educators on the beach at sunrise.

I reviewed and analyzed the detailed notes that I took before and after each of the gatherings in my home as well as email exchanges between me and my colleague about the evolution of our gatherings. I reviewed the transcripts of my conversations with group members as well journal entries provided. I also reviewed observations notes of our gatherings with facilitators from the Center for Courage and Renewal and ongoing conversations with educators in this space. I was looking for the aspects of this type of engagement that allowed us to simply be and be in relation differently. What specifically about our time together allowed for a sense of deeper connection and rejuvenation in our work as justice-oriented advocates and spiritual seekers? The first round of coding examined the "effects" of these professional engagements on our professional and personal lives, which upheld colonial narratives of progress, closure, and finality. Then, I turned my attention to the process of this work. How were we being together? How were we becoming? I was looking for patterns in how we engaged, and how these embodied engagements influenced how we related to ourselves, one another, and our work in educational justice. I returned to the literature that speaks to the importance of healing, self-awareness, relationships, community, but spoke less to how communities of practice might foster these orientations. This study seeks to describe the how of critical, interconnected professional engagements.

As I noted themes in what was said and not said, I would drop into my body to identify energies that belonged to me and energies that belonged to others. This form of analysis goes far beyond cognitive approaches to coding and categorizing data. I shared emerging ideas and themes with group members for feedback and resonance checks. I was

interested in how the ideas resonated with them and how that resonance changed over time. The several iterations of this paper mirror changes in individual and collective thinking and being over the course of two years. It also captures the realms of possibility that we are dreaming of in relation to critical, interconnected professional engagements.

Critical, Interconnected Professional Engagements

This next section outlines important elements of and conditions for professional engagements with an intended purpose of fostering critical interconnectedness for un/being and un/becoming.

Awareness, Embodiment and Healing

As we attended to our thoughts and bodily sensations, as the attention drew inward and outward again and again, these meetings became spaces to witness and be witnessed into deeper parts of our personal and professional selves. In this space, we were able to access and work with the pain we experienced as educators. Some participants reflected on the pain they experience as educators at the hands of white supremacy and heteropatriarchy and some shared feelings of powerlessness and pain in witnessing violence and harm enacted on students daily. We shared our fears and insecurities, the ways in which our internal struggles for power and freedom played out in education and society, and the contradictions, tensions and complicities that lay deep in our bodies as we acknowledged harm that we were enacting on ourselves and our students. There were moments when we forgot to censor ourselves, moments of radical honesty, a laying bare of the burdens of having to perform, pretend, or deny our selfhood to align with expectations of "professionalism." On several occasions, stories, words, sounds, or tears would emerge for participants as though from a more unconscious place deep within the body.

Many participants referred to this group not only as a place where we could connect to our own pain, but where we could increase our capacity to bear witness to the pain of others, while recognizing the gift and responsibility of this bearing witness to undo and unlearn the parts of ourselves that are implicated in the suffering of others. A white woman that identifies as spiritual and not religious reflected on the importance of these spaces in helping to make sense of her inner terrain and releasing emotions that would otherwise be directed at her students or herself. Similarly, in speaking to the importance of a consistent, contemplative practice, a South Asian woman who identifies as Buddhist noted:

> …bearing witness... a witness to systemic barriers that are out there and consequently the tremendous suffering of many, many, many stu-

> dents in our system have also motivated me to practice more. I need to ground myself to hold all that pain. I have to respond to that suffering in a real way, with actons that are rooted in wisdom and compassion all the time.

The experience of bearing witness and being witnessed allows for experiences and energies of shame and dispossession to shift to creative energies of anger, restoration, and humanity, changing our abilities to stay with suffering and perhaps transmute it. Participants named having access to a broader range of human experience in our gatherings, enabling different constructions of self and other that included but were not limited to trauma narratives. As an East Asian woman who draws from multiple eastern spiritualities shared, "This incident caused such shame in me. But it is liberating to know that I'm not alone, that others have experienced similar things. And now I'm angry and want to do something about it!" In the act of bearing witness to our individual and collective pain, we began to depersonalize our emotions and situate them within larger sociohistorical and sociopolitical contexts. It also created possibilities for identifying internal complicities and contradictions as we softened dualities. As one South Asian, Muslim participant explains, "Because of the harm that Indigenous, Black, racialized, and marginalized people have had to endure, if we don't do the work of healing, we actually replicate and uphold colonial structures... the same structures that are harming us."

Participants also spoke to complexities of blurring spiritual practices and commitments to justice. In speaking to the ways that spirituality is often used to bypass materiality, one White woman notes:

> You have to do the inner work with your shadow, and you have to do the work with the shadow of the world. In the shadow of the world, it's racism, it's sexism, it's oppression. It's material in that way. It is not about spiritual bypassing. See that to me is not real spirituality, because real spirituality is to see and witness and be with the suffering. Not to say, "Oh, it's an illusion." That's a bypass.

One Black woman spoke to the ways in which school initiatives intended to support wellness and mental health are often individualized, offering little to no analysis of how systems of oppression harm children and are often used to "calm" particular children, especially Black boys, who are painted as "out of control" and "troublesome." Several participants also spoke to the detrimental effects of pursuing social, political, and economic justice that is separate from spiritual connection. Some spoke of being so involved in the immediate fight that they would forget the long-term vision, while others spoke about needing to feel the freedom and liberation they were fighting for deep in their bodies. Participants

explored what it might look like to blur the binary between political activism and spiritual activism (Anzaldua, 2002). At times, they described an activism that demands fierceness and boldness that engages more of our whole selves, and other times, they described the importance of silence, pause, and bearing witness without acting, inviting deep personal reflection that invites us to consider some form of relation, even through conflict and discontent.

This type of activism also constructs self-care and community-care as active forms of resistance. As one South Asian participant shared:

> So often what ends up happening is that we become toxic with each other. We police each other to death. We don't spend time on our own healing, or we hit rock-bottom, and we have to pull away from everything…Everywhere you look, colonization wins. If we fight, it wins because the law comes down on you. You fight and you become sick, the system wins. You choose not to fight, the system wins… So how do you do this work and maintain a whole sense of self? And I think that's where spirituality really helps you because you see it as a journey as opposed to a moment.

A white woman spoke to the importance of building in regular opportunities in her life to connect inward for rejuvenation and regeneration. A Black female participant shared the importance of "being with her people" so she could let her guard down and experience comfort and joy in her body. On many occasions participants shared their experience of this space as one that was inherently counter-cultural to other professional opportunities to connect with colleagues because it fostered communal care of our whole selves. This space understood the importance of ongoing healing in an inherently human profession and depersonalized our individual experiences of shame and guilt by both witnessing and being witnessed and situating these emotions in a larger socio-political context.

Multiplicities and Shapeshifting

As we explored our multiple, dynamic selves, we engaged in a practice of shapeshifting, playing with the edges of ideas, people, identities, living and non-living, past and present. Several of us spoke about our multiple, and at times contradictory selves. We used terms like shadow selves or wounded selves, as well our whole and real selves. There was a growing awareness and comfort with naming our shadows and wounds as parts of a larger whole, recognizing that they were not permanent fixtures in our constructs of self. We also explored how our multiple selves influence how and why we engage in justice-oriented pedagogies. As one White woman who identifies as spiritual explained:

> Some people can get inflated with a cause. They get inflated by the archetype of the warrior, or the saviour, or the liberator. People get inflated and that's dangerous. That's part of the shadow. I think another shadow is victimization in that people stay in victimization. Can't see beyond, can't see their own choices as well. I think another shadow is spiritual bypass... And power is always a shadow. Power and control... because it's harder to live with the reality that we're all very vulnerable and could break any moment.

An awareness of multiple and contradictory selves also breeds awareness of the partiality of our dynamic natures. One South Asian participant shared that when he can see the parts that are operating, knowing that they are simply part of a larger whole, he can engage that part with greater attention instead of feeling overwhelmed or all-consumed by it. One White male stated, "It's like looking through stained glass. We see partial."

This also prompted us to consider how our "larger wholes" or the containers that held our multiples selves were conditioned differently by systems of oppression. Several of us explored the need to reframe unacknowledged societal privilege as spiritual disconnection that limits our containers and a full range of human experience. As one South Asian participant explores:

> It has harmed our ability to have whole relationships and be expressive in relationship because we are taught that that's not what men do, right? So, you're benefiting from this privilege of just being a man. And then you cannot fully be who you are because society tells you that you are supposed to be these things and not these things... So truly working for social justice means me understanding how my privilege is wrapped up around constructions of masculinity and requires me to do some heavy work around the toxicity of the construction of that.

These explorations felt both scary and dangerous on the one hand and illuminating on the other hand. From this vantage point, white supremacy, patriarchy, toxic masculinity, colonization, imperialism, and other forms of oppression hurt us all, albeit differently. This includes White, Christian, male, able- bodied, cisgendered, heterosexual, middle/upper-class people. This does not mean that we recenter whiteness or maleness or settler-ness, nor does it mean that we turn our gaze away from those who experience violence and death because of colonization, white supremacy, cisheteropatriarchy, and other systems of oppression. It means that we challenge the binary between these two gazes. This perspective invites us to see and know each other for, and through, our positions, ideas, attitudes, and orientations, while attending to power asymmetries, contexts, and histories. It also invites recognition of the tremendous strength and spiritual wisdom that often accompanies struggle and suffering.

We also spoke about the ways in which the environment was shaping us as humans and educators. As we shared food and sat in a circle in my living room or in a cozy conference center, outside of institutions that were sources of stress and trauma, armour was falling, connection was strengthening, and possibilities were emerging. One Black woman commented on feeling a sense of freedom in being able to explore intersecting identities and simultaneously not being singularly defined by her identities. In a reflective journal entry, one participant wrote, "I'm not sure what happens here. I just know that those pillows hold parts of me that allow other parts to come out." In being formed and reformed, made and remade by relation, space and time, these gatherings invited a being and becoming, and an undoing of the effects of institutional oppression, where we might begin to blur the lines between self/other.

Practicing Relationality

These encounters prompted us to explore fundamental questions about what it means to not only be in relation, but to be made of relation. As one White participant noted, "That's part of the ultimate truth we work towards, but it's not even about my higher self and your higher self being friends. I think they're connected. They're extensions of each other." Several participants also named the interdependence and interbeing they experience with lands and waters, with animals and other creatures, and with ancestors, future generations, and the entire cosmos. In speaking to the necessity of these types of learning engagements, one Black participant wrote, "And not just communities of human beings, but community as connected to land, and connected to the environments, and connected to all living creation."

We questioned where one person or idea begins and ends as we played with the idea of relational identities and ideas. For example, we explored Kumashiro's (2000) profound statement, "I do not mean that we should see the Self in the Other or the Self as the Other, but that we should deconstruct the Self/Other binary" (p. 45). As such, we explored the notion that "our sense of normalcy needs, even as it negates, the Other" (p. 45). We explored how the need for moral righteousness, superiority, power, control, or the desire to enact activist identities, might need, even as they negate others, constructing them in partial and dehumanizing ways. We explored these ideas in relation to students and colleagues, questioning how the construction of o/Others is influenced by our individual archetypes, needs, fears and failures. One South Asian participant who identifies with eastern spiritualities asked, "How do I not become the hate that I see in the world? Has the hate in me always been there? Is it activated when I see hate in the

world? If so, how am I any different from those who more outwardly display hate?"

Our responsibilities, integrities and commitments to care required the practice of holding tensions in this space. For example, one White participant explains, "But I think you have to individuate to truly be in community. And when community subsumes your individual identity in different ways, I think that is a loss to the collective." Yet, critical, spiritual communities can also hold us to higher levels of responsibility as a South Asian participant explains:

> Your liberation and my liberation are bound together and if I don't actively work on myself to work on my own self liberation, in terms of understanding how I am complicit or harmed by these structures, I can't help anybody else. So, the conversations that we don't have is about how our ego plays into the work that we do.

A related tension was the desire for deep connection without erasing or dishonouring difference. As a group of justice-oriented practitioners, we often imagined the dangers and possibilities of these spaces in professional learning opportunities in which injustice is commonplace and difference is demonized. This group was formed in difference; the participants hold different positionalities, different roles in education, different emphases in their commitments to justice, and different spiritual beliefs. Difference necessitates encounters with the self in which experiences of undoing, unlearning, and unbeing are witnessed, into difference. Some participants also expressed a yearning to create additional spaces that spoke to particular lived experiences and positional realities, such as spaces for Black educators, queer educators, or educational leaders. We spoke about the dangers of White people unlearning white supremacy in the presence of Black, Indigenous, and racialized colleagues and the need for them to both engage in their own work of racial healing and accountability and engage in coalition-building and solidarity work with colleagues of colour to dismantle the system of white supremacy (Shah & Peek, 2020, Tanner, 2019).

Some participants shared that these spaces invited them to know parts of their collective selves that had long been invisibilized, whether areas of privilege that were designed to be invisible, or internalized oppression that was invisibilized through shame and fear. Others shared that they were coming to know parts of themselves that lay beneath experiences of socialization and racialization, parts that felt deeply interconnected with all life. As one White participant shares:

> We're all connected. We must honour that interconnection in order to live on this planet, to exist in this universe, and there is something fundamentally that makes me different. How do I hold those things that make us different in a way that honours you, honours me, and is responsible to the common project that we must work together to preser

In interviews and journals, several participants played with the idea of "I", inquiring about how our experiences, ideas, and pedagogies change when "I" is expanded to include all living beings.

Towards Critical Interconnected Approaches to Professional Engagements

Traditional approaches to professional development have prioritized developing teachers' discrete skills and knowledges to support narrow definitions of student learning (Sancar et al, 2021). More progressive notions of professional development account for system priorities, teachers' interests and needs, the application of theory to practice, transformation of practice over accountability, and power dynamics between educators and facilitators (Gore et al, 2017; Kennedy, 2016). This body of literature is largely void of an analysis of power, socio-political and historical contexts, and difference. While there have been calls to challenge apolitical and seemingly neutral approaches to professional development (Fernández, 2019; Kohli, Picower, Martinez, & Ortiz, 2015; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2015), studies that center power and difference differ greatly in their approach, theoretical framing, and outcomes (Parkhouse et al., 2019). We build on these studies to include approaches to professional learning that center different knowledge systems with a focus on interconnectedness, embodiment, self-reflexivity, and healing (Asher, 2003; 2010; Berila, 2014; 2016; Dei, 2010; hooks, 1994; Ryoo, Crawford, Moreno & McLaren, 2009; Wane, Manyimo & Ritskes, 2011). In this section, I draw on findings in this study to outline important considerations for critical, interconnected approaches to professional engagements for educators.

First, professional engagements must normalize the place of spirituality and religion in the lives of educators and students. I include religion here to caution against the creation of a potentially dangerous binary that positions religion as "bad" and spirituality as "good" (Shahjahan, 2010). Despite the many ways that educators come to experiences of humanization, healing and radical love, many of us in this study were hesitant to publicly name the influence of contemplative practices and spiritual or religious ways of knowing on our educational practices for fear of professional ridicule or ostracization. In their book *Spirituality, Education and Society*, Wane, Manyimo, and Ritskes (2011) speak to the ways in which spirituality is silenced in higher education (and I would add K-12 education and preservice education). They also remind us that centering spirituality is not simply an attempt to support individual teachers; centering spirituality transforms broken systems that serve to fragment us further and requires that we "look inward, ponder deeply, and witness the contents of our consciousness" (p. xix).

Second, professional engagements must challenge the binaries between our spiritual and justice-oriented selves and recognize their co-constitutive natures, so as not to deny schools as sites of struggle and resistance, nor reinforce Christian hegemony in our justice-oriented approaches. To dismiss embodied experiences of interconnectedness and wholeness, and inquiries into mystery and the unknown, also denies educators access to some of their greatest resources in living and educating for freedom. Instead, we might blur the binary between mind, body, and spirit, recognizing the mind as a necessary, but limited partner in educational liberation and freedom. The mind necessarily engages in inquiries such as how can educators foster communities of learning in environments intended to fragment knowledge and relation? Professional engagements allow us to challenge epistemic nihilation (Wynter, 1989) and honour cosmologies in which learning emerges in relation, from the body, from unexpected insights, through healing, in community, from our elders, ancestors and future generations, and from the land. This practice invites educators to learn from different and unexpected places.

Third, professional engagements must curate embodied encounters with the self, with a focus on developing self- and relational awareness, centering emotional wellness and healing from traumas past-present-future, and inviting opportunities to stay with tension, contradiction, and ambiguity. They can offer practices that invite us to reclaim our humanity and meet our complicities and complexities with compassion and kindness, without turning away from them or turning away from ourselves and each other in the process. This practice of staying-with engenders humility, critical reflexivity, and a recognition of our unfinishedness (Freire, 1998) that keeps us searching and committed to being and becoming. Critical, interconnected professional engagements invite us to consider what is made possible when we approach structural oppression and healing from this interconnected standpoint, in that we are not as stable, separate, or self-made as colonialism, white supremacy and capitalism would have us believe. As such, they increase our capacity to acknowledge the tremendous failure of schooling to produce humane communities of learning and being, and the tremendous success of schooling as processes of social reproduction.

Fourth, many of these types of professional engagements may not be captured in the literature, because, like H.E.L.L.A. (Pour-Khorshid, 2016), these groups emerged as grassroots collectives to fill needs that educational institutions have failed to provide. In many ways, professional engagements are examples of (un)professional (un)learning, in that they challenge notions of "professionalism" and "learning" that are steeped in the logics of white supremacy, settler colonialism, patriarchy, and capitalism. If we take seriously how these communities of practi-

tioners come to gather, on their own time and at their own expense, we must consider the importance of professional engagements that are invitational and fluid. We might invite different educators to take turns leading the gatherings, which can be held off school property to invite educators to bring more of their whole selves to the experience. Yet, there needs to be a structured container including agreed upon norms that hold us responsible to ourselves and each another so that we can deepen our reflexivity and embodied healing in a safe and predictable environment.

Fifth, this all takes time. I join critical, feminist, and decolonizing scholars that call for slow scholarship, which challenges neoliberal and colonizing metrics of "productivity" (Berg & Seeber, 2016; Mountz et al. 2015; O'Neill, 2014; Shahjahan, 2015). We might consider professional engagements that are slow, that engage different purposes, that relax attachments to goals and outcomes, and that allow us to imagine and experience otherwise. Critical, interconnected professional engagements disrupt colonial narratives of progress and productivity and instead ask what we might learn, and who we might be, if we rest in the unknown, the unanswered, the unfinished, the not yet.

Notes

[1] "Toronto" is derived from the Mohawk word Tkaronto, meaning "a gathering place."

[2] The notion of Ubuntu, "I am because we are" or "a person is a person through other persons" has roots in African philosophy and spirituality, generally referred to as African Humanism (Hailey, 2008). Similarly, All My Relations is a concept of interconnectedness and interdependence known to most Indigenous people in North America that includes ancestors, descendants, and those still to come (Battiste, 2013; Haig-Brown, 2008; King, 1990), as well as all animate and inanimate forms that can be seen or imagined (King, *All My Relations*). The Buddhist concept of interbeing, or Anatta in Pali, speaks to the notion of non-self or the substance-less of all animate and inanimate objects. Similarly, human beings do not have a separate self and can only inter-be in relation to everything else (Nhat Hanh, 2015).

[3] We held as central to each gathering the eleven Touchstones of the Circle of Trust (Palmer, 2008), which include: Give and receive welcome; Be present as fully as possible; What is offered in the circle is by invitation, not demand; Speak your truth in ways that respect other people's truth; No fixing, saving, advising or correcting; Learn to respond to others with open, honest questions; When the going gets rough, turn to wonder; Attend to your own inner teacher; Trust and learn from the silence; Observe confidentiality; and Know that it's possible to leave the circle with whatever it was you needed when you arrived.

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Teacher Don't Teach Me Nonsense[1]

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Decolonizing Cinco de Mayo and Sherpa Cultural Appropriations

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Abstract

The article critiques two cases of cultural appropriations and explores how educators can pedagogically counter practices that normalize cultural appropriations. By examining the visual representations of Cinco de Mayo and Sherpa communities, the article illustrates how cultural appropriation often takes place through marketplace and race-neutral ideologies. The article proposes how the use of decolonizing pedagogies can counter racial stereotypes and neo/colonial knowledge productions. By examining the stereotypes, it explores how marginalized communities, locally and globally, continue to be appropriated for mainstream white consumption within curriculums. Lastly, the article explores how appropriation and commodification harm, objectify and exploit people/communities that have historically been marginalized.

Introduction

Racial and cultural appropriations cannot be seen outside of global white supremacy economic/political formations. Cultural appropriations and commodifications uphold power structure that is inherently connected to local/global dimensions of settler colonialism, neo/colonialism and racial capitalism. Writing in the context Maori history, Smith (1999) explains

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how cultural appropriation has led to the pervasive commodification of Maori culture. For Smith, the appropriation and commodification of Indigenous knowledge and practices speak of the violence of racialized capitalism: a process Smith terms "trading the Other" (p. 88). As Smith argues, commodification adds exchange value and places Indigenous experiences within the marketplace economy where Maori knowledge and experiences are sold for profit. Smith writes: "Trading the Other deeply, intimately, defines Western thinking and identity. As a trade, it has no concern for the people who originally produced the ideas or images, or how and why they produced those ways of knowing" (p. 89). Smith explores how the historical and contemporary white consumption of the Other is connected to the larger history of racialized violence that makes cultural appropriation and commodification normal and innocent. The refusal to acknowledge the (local/global) racialized legacy of colonialism forecloses the willingness to recognize the violence associated with appropriation and commodification.

By exploring the relationship between predatory corporate culture and Black appropriations, hooks (1992) explains how "the commodification of Otherness has been successful because it is offered as a new delight, more intense, more satisfying than normal ways of doing and feeling" (p. 21). For hooks, within the racialized commodification of cultures, "ethnicity becomes spice, seasoning that can liven up the dull dish that is mainstream white culture" (p. 21). Black cultures and experiences continue to be commodified for white consumption and for the accumulation of white wealth (Brown & Kopana, 2014; Johnson, 2003; Rodriguez, 2006). Read only as properties to be traded (and profited from), the process of commodification de-contextualizes cultural practices (and their histories) from the ways it is has been culturally (historically) practiced in local, cultural contexts. Within the predatory culture, "the commodity becomes a fetish, a representation of values with no intrinsic relation to the object's use-value, production, and circulation" (Rodgers, 2006, p. 448).

Consider how museums in North America and Europe have historically acquired stolen properties and displayed the local and the global Other. The very idea of collecting objects that are acquired through violence or questionable means or sources is undoubtedly connected to western power/ideology: a history that Said (1979) documents in *Orientalism*. Such unauthorized displays and collections have given nation-states in the Global North a false sense of ownership of the displayed items: leading to dubious claims of their national or civilization progress (Appadurai, 1988). In recent years, there has been a growing call to recognize how museums can be a site of decolonization, including the need to repatriate the stolen or unauthorized displays and artifacts to the rightful keepers (Lonetree, 2012). Deloria (1998), writing on racialized American Indian

appropriations, argues how white appropriations not only seek to impose power on Native people but also operate in relation to "simultaneous drawing power from them" (p. 191). In other words, "Indianness may have existed primarily as a cultural artifact in American society, but it has helped create those other forms of power, which have then been turned back on native people" (p. 191).

Schools and the Language of Diversity

Visuals (artwork, photos, displays of artifacts, painting, etc.) often serve as a convenient way to "show" the value of institutionally sanctioned diversity events or "culture" in schools. These superficial practices of "showing" are meant to be tokens of appreciation (read: "we ought to tolerate them") where appreciation politics often leads to cultural appropriation. Not surprisingly, a de-politized and ahistorical concept of "culture" is often used to claim how schools are "including" knowledge about diverse communities. Needless to say, such de-racialized "inclusions" that take place through one-time (culture day, etc.) or one-month (Asian American month, etc.) approaches are superficial practices. Clearly, the teaching practice that emphasizes the value of cultural appreciation does not promote meaningful respect or recognition of cultural communities (Sensoy, 2010). Such practices are neither anti-racist nor justice focused and do not engage with structural racism within the schooling processes. Quite often, such learnings become "fun" practices and are performative: they are not taken seriously in classrooms and clearly lack critical ways of un/learning about oppressed communities locally and globally. This approach to "adding" multi-ethnic knowledge promotes stereotypical and racist scripts regarding the use of "culture" as an analytic category. Here, the culture of the Other is simply read as events dominant subjects can enjoy or even perform (and eventually claim as their own) (hooks, 1992). These unethical and racist diversity and inclusion efforts render local/global marginalized communities as embodying lesser cultural value/knowledge and as not worthy of being included as a legitimate intellectual theme for discussion. Such approaches privilege dominant Euro/American knowledge structure and its narrative of "inclusion," which further excludes people who are said to be included. In other words, these intentions to include only serve to objectify marginalized communities, and the practice benefits individuals, groups and institutions that are associated with (white) economic powerbrokers in society. The active, as well as the subliminal social sanctioning of cultural appropriation, speaks volumes about how white supremacy narratives play out in educational spaces and in the larger U.S and global society. McNair, Bensimon & Malcom-Piqueux

(2020) remind us that our critical work must involve interrogating the "racialization of institutional practices" and how equity efforts become diluted when educators fail to recognize the "influence and the historical power of whiteness on structural racism" (p. 7).

Cultural appropriations operate in paradoxical ways: appropriation makes cultural communities (hyper)visible yet it simultaneously renders them invisible. Within schools, institutional hyper-visibility provides unwanted attention to non-white experiences and "diversity" events are produced to represent communities in abrupt, sensational ways. Consider how Black history or Asian American history becomes hyper-visible during certain time periods during the school year. Thus, hyper-visibility has problematic features: its duration is short, is publicized without contexts, and often emphasizes depoliticized themes. Such events, often added to the formal curriculum as supplementary knowledge (and often as optional), have a chilling effect: they reinforce white supremacy ideology and benefit white students. Secondly, cultural appropriations also produce invisibility because its approach to inclusion often lacks meaning or contexts and is harmful for marginalized students. Students who are "included" in such seemingly inclusive curriculum find themselves disempowered and invisible and often become the object of racial ridicule from their white peers (Tatum, 1997).

Following Hall's (2013) call for the need to examine local/global racial dimensions of visual representations, this article engages with how local/global histories and experiences are appropriated for everyday consumption within and outside of schools. We cannot discount the ideological ways, including the visual imagery, regarding how Third World countries are represented in U.S. mainstream outlets (and in schools), and what the representations may say about those who produce such representations (McCarthy, 1999). The article discusses two cases of cultural appropriation/commodification and explains how educators can develop decolonizing pedagogical practices that can critique the normalization of cultural appropriations, both within local and global contexts. The cases include: the appropriation/commodification of (1) Cinco de Mayo and (2) Sherpa identity/experiences. By examining the representations of Cinco De Mayo and Sherpa identity, the article calls for the need to account for local-global histories and the situated experiences of marginalized communities within discussions of decolonization (Coloma, 2020). Both cases are analyzed to demonstrate the pedagogical need to address how historical and contemporary manifestations of racial capitalism shapes how marginalized communities become commodities in the local/global (educational) marketplace. In what follows, first, we discuss how decolonizing pedagogies can help educators recognize the harm induced by cultural appropriation and commodification.

Decolonizing Inquiry/Pedagogy for Visual Analysis:
The Normalization of Cultural Appropriation and Commodification

The term decolonization, and the theoretical underpinnings that guide decolonizing pedagogies, is meant to explore the practices that work against colonial or neo-colonial influences within education. Decolonizing approach to pedagogy is an intervention and a radical practice towards anti-racist, anti-oppressive and anti-capitalism liberation. We recognize, as Bhattacharya (2018) writes, decolonizing efforts are never complete, and it involves "the permanent sense of movement and entanglement between colonizing oppression and decolonizing desires. One shuttles between resistance/accommodation to colonizing forces and imagination of a utopian future devoid of such forces" (p. 522). As Smith (1999) writes, decolonization is unavoidable considering the continued violence of neo-colonialism that sanctions racist, patriarchal and capitalistic exploitations. Decolonizing pedagogies not only seek to reexamine the continued legacy of neo/colonialism within educational spaces but seek to reformulate how marginalized knowledge ought to be taught within classroom spaces (Mohanty, 2004; Subreenduth & Rhee, 2010). Decolonizing pedagogies demand that educators seek transformative ways of being/knowing and teach towards a decolonized world. In other words, the inquiry seeks to "imagine and enact pedagogical practices that engage directly both the concern of interrogating biases in curriculum that re-inscribe systems of domination (such as racism and sexism) while simultaneously providing new ways to teach diverse groups of students" (hooks, 1994, p. 10).

Decolonizing pedagogies, in relation to cultural appropriation, examine how cultural appropriations function within the workings of racialized capitalism. Racialized capitalism, according to Leong (2013), is a "process of deriving social and economic value from the racial identity of another person" (p. 2153). Racial capitalism seeks to exploit the identities and experiences of marginalized people to promote individual or institutional white norms and white supremacy economic/political structures. "In a society preoccupied with diversity, nonwhiteness is a valued commodity. And where that society is founded on capitalism, it is unsurprising that the commodity of non-whiteness is exploited for its market value" (p. 2154). Our approach outlines how the question of appropriation is connected to racism and market economy, and how appropriation sustains the racial/capitalist power structure.

We are also interested in examining the sites where appropriations are being produced/sanctioned so that educators can critically think through the relationship between power and space (see Gupta

and Ferguson, 1997). Thus, our pedagogical approach interrogates how, where and why cultural appropriations take place. In particular, we call for the need to examine how visuals, by further racializing the Other, reinscribe cultural appropriations. Visual representations are indeed political, connected to power and are shaped by how people see/show the world and what people desire the world to be (Driver, 1995; Parvez, 2011; Shohat, 1998). Sensoy (2010) argues that pedagogy that addresses visual representations need to critically examine how truths are claimed via representations and how intentionality shapes the production of representations, including the material consequences such representations have in society. Hall (2013) argues that public spectacles have historically served to reinscribe the (negative) "difference" that Black people have embodied, both physically and intellectually. It is through the appropriation of Black bodies that white spectacles of the Other is produced and maintained. Hall argues that white visual representations about Black people have historically served to essentialize, to naturalize and have functioned to create dichotomous (good/bad, etc.) reading of Black identities.

In schools, cultural appropriation becomes normalized when experiences, knowledge, heritage and artifacts are used in de-contextualized contexts thus misrepresenting and silencing the historical or contemporary experiences of marginalized people. Such misplaced practices normalize white supremacy knowledge structure and reinforce capitalistic and racialized hierarchies (see Leonardo, 2002). Clearly, race-neutral school policies and practices contribute to widespread racism and the devaluing of knowledge and experiences of students of color. Pewewardy (2004) explains how appropriations of Indigenous history/culture reproduce racial stereotypes in the schooling contexts. For instance, as Pewewardy writes, the use of American Indian themed mascots for white consumption reinforces dominant narratives since "American Indian symbols used by cheerleaders and cheering fans—war chants, peace pipes, eagle feathers, war bonnets, and dances—are highly revered or even sacred in many American Indian tribal communities" (p. 180).

Decolonizing pedagogies explores the theme of harm and how cultural appropriation/commodification harms marginalized people by devaluing their experiences and histories: as not being of intellectual value or not being worthy of being included within the formal school curriculum. As Fryberg and Stephens's (2008) study demonstrates, American Indian themed "mascots have harmful psychological consequences for the group that is caricaturized by the mascots" (p. 216). According to the authors, the prevalence of racist mascots within educational spaces triggers psychological harm such as low self-esteem, anxiety and the lack of personal and community sense of belonging for Indigenous youth. As

Fryberg & Stephens demonstrate, the normalization of cultural appropriation takes place through race-neutral ideologies: often by equating cultural knowledge of the marginalized community with commodity or mainstream recreational practices.

Cultural appropriations are also effects of dominant entitlement narratives that seek to claim ownership of experiences/identities and practices that one is not part of. The perceived entitlement fuels the "right' one has to own or to perform the Other. And, quite often, the "right" is fueled by one's unwillingness to recognize how racial and capitalist ideologies continue to shape social life. It is the refusal to ask: what violence is unleashed when white people insist on speaking for marginalized communities? What ethical responsibilities are warranted when we tell stories that we are not part of? Writing in the context of historical and contemporary manifestations of anti-Blackness, Dei (2018) writes how representations are always connected to power and questions regarding who speaks and how one speaks about marginalized communities always matter. For Dei, cultural appropriations are never separate from "coloniality of knowledge and knowledge production" (p. 135) that continues to undermine, misrepresent and silence Black voices. Thus, the harm that cultural appropriation generates must be contextualized "when people are insisting to tell their own stories, and in doing so, reclaim their voices" (p. 135). Dei writes how representations have material consequences since representations shape policies and perceptions of the Other, including how the Other is often exposed to racism and endures racial violence in everyday lives.

Clearly, narratives around who owns cultural properties (practices, symbols, artifacts, etc.) are shaped by questions of power and western/white legal interpretation of intellectual property discussions. Writing in the context of critical race theory, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) argue how "the ability to define, possess, and own property has been a central feature of power in America" (p. 53). Ladson-Billings & Tate explain how informal and formal curricula function within larger discourses of intellectual property rights that codify what counts as superior or inferior knowledge to be learned in schools. Treating Black bodies as property, dispossessing Indigenous land and engaging in global imperial violence has been a central feature of white/U.S. wealth accumulation practice. Coombe (2009) writes how First World monopoly on the legal concept of intellectual property offers limited or no protection for marginalized communities who seek to safeguard their cultural practices (and names) and knowledge. Clearly, as Coombe writes, questions of appropriation is connected to marketplace and capital accumulations (neo-liberalism, etc.) and how the concept of culture "is increasingly seen as a basis for capital accumulation" (p. 402). Too often, as Taylor (2000) argues, commodified books about Indigenous people, which are white racial/ethnic

fantasies of the Other, are quite often promoted as "classic" within school curriculum. Scholars argue for a broader need to decenter whitestream curriculum and to engage in decolonial pedagogical practices that can transform academia (Alexander, 2005; Grande, 2004).

Our approach to interrogating narratives of cultural appropriation examines how appropriations are effects of racial and neo-colonial capitalist practices. For us, focusing on cultural appropriations as being racially exploitive/harmful practice helps explain how appropriations are connected to racial capitalism and dehumanizing ideologies. Along with the cultural appropriations that take place in school and social settings, we explore physical as well as virtual spaces where cultural appropriations are prevalent. Everyday appropriations socialize students into conforming to dominant social norms, race-neutral ideologies, and capitalist consumptions.

In what follows, we address two cases of cultural appropriations and its pedagogical implications. Our investment in selecting the two themes is connected to our lived experiences and the investments we have in decolonizing dominant knowledge (Bhattacharya, 2021; Rhee, 2021). We recognize the politics regarding who can be recognized in academia and how one's experiences and positionalities shape how we may critique the harms produced and sanctioned by cultural appropriations. One of the authors identifies as being Nepali (but not of Sherpa ethnicity) and grew up learning about Sherpa communities in Nepal. The second author identifies as being Mexican in the United States and experienced the meaning of Cinco de Mayo in cultural contexts. We have realized overtime that our cultural knowledge of each case radically contrasted from how Cinco de Mayo and Sherpa communities are produced within U.S. mainstream contexts. Too often, when reading such representations, similar to Taylor (2000), we have "felt that too-familiar visceral reaction that is part disbelief, part anger, part sadness" (p. 371). Following Tajeda & Espinoza (2003), we explore how decolonizing pedagogies can serve radical purposes where "schools become sites for the development of a critical decolonizing consciousness and activity that work to ameliorate and ultimately end the mutually constitutive forms of violence that characterize our internal neocolonial condition" (p. 6).

Cinco de Mayo and "Playing Mexican"

Consider the image of piñata post that illustrates how the use of piñata has become popular in suburban parks or in public spaces in the United States. Similar to being socialized into "playing Indian" (Deloria, 1998), childhood in the U.S. now commonly involves performing Mexicaness. In the context of U.S. schools, this performance often includes

—photo source:authors

socializing students into learning the ritual of the piñata as part of a Cinco de Mayo activity, often as the end of year (fun) school activity. The (racialized) celebratory texture of performing Mexicaness trivializes Mexican and Mexican American identities in the name of cultural learning and reinforces age-old racial stereotypes about who the Mexican Other is. Seen as a recreational activity or "fun" event, learning about Cinco de Mayo and the piñata claims to expose learners to *the* Mexican culture and becomes a way of "learning about Other cultures" (Narayan, 1997, p. 84). In other words, in schools, teaching about cultures through stereotypical performing of festivals lacks any meaningful linkage to the deep historical and cultural knowledge of marginalized communities. Too often, the concept of "culture" is understood as unchanging practices, as being outside of politics/power dynamics, and as having a performative component (Abu-Lughod, 1991).

The Cinco de Mayo holiday traditionally celebrates the May 5, 1862, victory of a Mexican militia over the invading and highly trained French Army in the town of Puebla, Mexico (Burciaga, 1993). In the U.S., the celebration of the holiday has a long and evolving history with several manifestations throughout the years. In the late nineteenth century, Mexicans living in the southwestern U.S. began celebrating the holiday via community festivals to showcase their cultural pride and solidarity for Mexican independence. In the 1930s, Mexican Americans in California continued the festival style celebration to demonstrate their emerging political identity and activism (Alamillo, 2003). The holiday gained broader, national popularity in the 1950's and 1960s from the influences of the U.S government's Good Neighbor Policy and the Chicana/o movement. While the Good Neighbor Policy promoted positive portrayals of

Latin Americans in television and film (as part of strengthening favorable diplomatic relations with Latin American countries), the Chicana/o movement embraced the holiday as a way of building pride and political identity (Alamillo, 2003). In the Midwest, the Cinco de Mayo holiday became the focal point of many Chicana/o week or month-long festivities that celebrated Mexican heritage and Pan-ethnic Latina/o solidarity. Integral to the festivities were activities with explicit educational and political agendas that addressed social concerns and struggles of Mexican and Latino/a communities in the U.S (Valdes, 2000).

Rather than following decontextualized and stereotypical lessons on culture, a decolonized learning space can be crafted when learners question the (mis) information and (mis) representation of the holiday celebrations. The contemporary popularity of Cinco de Mayo and piñata in schools (often introduced as being culturally related) is largely fueled by the desire to include or celebrate diversity/culture within the framework of multiethnic curriculum (Massey, 2008). This type of additive inclusion often entails decontextualized celebrations or empty festiveness, which have little or no connections with actual historical events or political relevance. Consider how many Spanish language or language arts/social studies instructors incorporate the holiday and celebration within their lesson plans that can easily lead to stereotypical learning and uncritical foregrounding of food and clothing narratives that reinforce exoticism (see Nieto, 1996). For example, decolonized inquiry can take place when students un/learn from communities and conduct interviews with diverse members of the larger Mexican heritage community. The interviews can create space to document people's interpretation of the holiday, why it is popular in the U.S, the types of images currently found in celebrations, as well as personal stories of ethnic identity and resistance to mainstream celebrations of the event. Interviews can be conducted and presented in Spanish or conducted in English and presented in Spanish for the class. This flexibility enables possibilities to critique another commonly held belief: the perception that Spanish is the dominant language for all people of Mexican heritage in the US. The critical inquiry has the potential to tell counter-stories that are not part of the official curriculum of schools.

A more contextualized and critical Cinco de Mayo curriculum can be developed outside of Spanish class. Depending on the context, students can critically investigate the history of Cinco de Mayo, the relationship and significance of that victory to the U.S Civil War, historical reasons why it has become a celebrated holiday in the U.S. This approach can enable a critical recognition of how and why the holiday is commercialized in the United States, including who may financially benefit from the commodification of the holiday. Furthermore, dialogue around racial imagery, pseudo-symbols and the exploration of cultural appropriation

can enable students to recognize the prevalence of racial stereotyping that is associated with holidays.

The prevalence of Cinco de Mayo (as appropriation of Mexican American and Latino identities) is not exclusive to K-12 education in the United States since they also take place at institutions of higher learning and their surrounding contexts. University students, especially at predominantly white institutions, commonly engage in "cultural celebrations" when they take part in Halloween festivities or theme parties that may include students "dressing up as a Mexican." Socialized into race-neutral ideologies, dressing up as the Other is often read by whites as being innocent, without historical underpinnings, fun-oriented, and a politically neutral practice that is devoid of racial markings.

The practice of "dressing up as Mexican" has been more pervasive in recent years. In 2015, the University of Louisville's President, James Ramsey, published a photograph in which he and his staff were posing outside of the President's mansion wearing sombreros, fake mustaches, white 'señorita' veils, and zarapes. The president's wife reportedly handed out the accessories to staff and guests as they walked into the president's mansion for an official Halloween-themed luncheon (Kenning, 2015). As a result of the criticism (voiced largely on social media platforms), the chief of staff to the president released a statement stating that the university pledges to "continue to work together to promote an environment that values all people regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, immigration status, sexual orientation or gender identity." The statement concludes by vowing to "institute immediate training on diversity and racial equality issues." While not unique, this example clearly illustrates how colleges and universities have either historically excluded or appropriated the images or/and experiences of students of color to claim the diversity narrative of the institutions.

The "inclusion" has often taken place within the context of interest convergence where whites are willing to support diversity efforts if it has the potential to enhance or benefit white interests (see Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). The university's pledge frames racism as an individual act: an act that can easily be resolved through diversity training. What is also missing from the pledge is the reference to how ingrained white supremacy structure is within higher education. There is no reference to systemic racism and white supremacy culture that fuels such racist acts. Ahmed (2017) writes about higher education systems being made of "brick walls" (p. 96) that block any meaningful changes that can benefit marginalized people. Within higher education, as Ahmed argues, "diversity becomes about changing perceptions of whiteness rather than changing the whiteness of organization" (p. 105).

Not surprisingly, considering the increased commodification of the

—photo source: authors

holiday, business establishments close to university settings also use "culture" to commodify the Other: both in racialized and sexualized contexts. In U.S. higher education settings, sexualized images of people of color have always been visible in public events, often portraying them in degrading ways (Hoffman, 2005). Consider the image above of a commemorative Cinco de Mayo/Graduation shirt featured prominently in the storefront of a bookstore located across the street from a predominantly white university.

The shirt is designed for an end-of-the-academic year event "pub crawl" which invites students to tour local drinking establishments. The shirt is actively playing into the Cinco de Mayo theme by depicting the stick figure wearing a sombrero and holding maracas during the first of its three stages of celebration: tomfoolery (wearing a sombrero and holding maracas), crawling (from excessive drinking), then graduating (shedding the sombrero and maracas for a mortarboard). The writing on the back of the shirt notes how "you must crawl before you can walk, cinco de mayo senior crawl."

Along with its racial manifestations, the commercialization or the for-profit aspect of the holiday needs to be seen within the context of the increasing Latino population in the United States (Miles, 2006; Massey, 2008; Valdes, 2000). Although the commercialization of Cinco de Mayo has historically targeted Latina/o population, its current manifestations are more generic, particularly in relation to selling alcohol through promoting "culture." The involvement of alcohol industries (and their interest in promoting alcohol consumption in higher education settings) is not innocent since industries often provide substantial sponsorship for such events, which they see as a lucrative market in reaching out to the white and Latina/o population. The appropriation of the holiday is increasingly

being equated with alcohol consumption in spaces such as bookstores, restaurants, and bars that are within the higher education settings.

Clearly, the use of Mexican pseudo-symbols (i.e., sombreros, mustaches, maracas, etc.) sanctions the validity of performing the Other or "playing Mexican." The pseudo-symbols are the material objects that claim to represent a misunderstood aspect of Mexican culture (Massey, 2008, p. 301). The pseudo-symbols enable people of non-Mexican heritage to perform Mexicaness thus reinforcing stereotypes about the Other. The convergence of space, power, and culture in Cinco de Mayo celebrations illustrates how the racial script of the Mexican is produced and how higher education settings become complicit in normalizing the practice of cultural appropriation. Thus, it is through cultural appropriation that Cinco de Mayo is separated from its radical history and political contexts. Neither the sombrero (native to Mexican folklore) nor the maracas (not native to Mexico) were of any consequence in the May 5th, 1862, Battle of Puebla, in relation to how the holiday has been celebrated in Mexico, or by people of Mexican heritage in the United States. The appropriations normalize the idea that the Other (in this case people of Mexican heritage) can be objects of white consumption and that anyone can play (or drink to the point of being) "Mexican." The economic profit generated via the appropriation speaks of how communities are transformed into commodities.

Decolonizing pedagogies emphasize counter-narratives regarding the continued legacy of neo/colonialism and the radical ways marginalized people speak of their experiences (Patel, 2016). Alamillo's (2003) book *More than A Fiesta* can enable students to recognize the cultural meaning of Cinco de Mayo since the text frames Cinco de Mayo within historical contexts and traces the particular ways communities interpret the event. Another opportunity for students to un/learn is by examining social media sites such as *Flama* and *Pero Like* that are designed for bilingual, U.S born Latinx millennial audience. These platforms offer short video contents that address comedy, lifestyle, and documentaries related to cultural context of community experiences. One of Flama's most viewed video is *If Mexicans Celebrated the 4th Like Americans Celebrate Cinco De Mayo* in which the excessive drinking and stereotypical behavior that is common in Cinco de Mayo celebrations is acted out by Mexicans during the 4th of July. This parody reverses the racial roles, which serves to highlight the absurdity and condescending nature of practices/behaviors that have been normalized or associated with Cinco de Mayo in the United States.

Sherpa Identity in Global Market-place Culture

Students in U.S (and also globally) may be introduced to the term *Sherpa* in high school global history or geography courses. The introduction may come through superficial references to the "culture" in the Himalayan region or nomadic life in mountain regions of Central/South Asia. Sherpa is an ethnic community that has historically lived in the northern part of Nepal, often near mountainous regions. Within western colonial travel narratives, Sherpas are often portrayed as "traditional" people who live in remote areas, as people who attend livestock and are always represented as men. And, too often in school textbooks, Sherpas are written as people without much history and culture, and Sherpas often (exotically) stand alone to represent the entire region adjacent to the Himalayas.

In contemporary western media outlets, Sherpa(s) are portrayed as people who have a "natural" relationship with mountains and are written as people who have the "natural" inclination to climb mountains. These naturalized, neo-colonial representations include Sherpas as being loyal (to "foreigners"), fearless and as people who have the "natural" physical stamina to climb mountains. Furthermore, Sherpas are often foot-noted as: people who carry supplies, who serve as travel guides and as loyal servants who help and protect western climbers (mostly white men) in dangerous landscapes. Clearly, these seemingly "positive" portrayals (helpers, loyal people and always smiling) are problematic. Indeed, seemingly "positive" representations or visibility can be a trap for marginalized people who are often mis-represented (Ahmad, 2009). It is precisely the representation of Sherpas as docile subjects (or as people who help privileged people from the Global North achieve their dreams/goals) that is appropriated in the global marketplace where Sherpa identity, culture and history becomes a commodity. As Ortner (1999) writes, the unsettling reality of Sherpa labor in the mountains is often silenced within mainstream narratives considering that Sherpas often serve as "silent partners to the international mountaineering, carrying supplies, establishing routes, fixing ropes, cooking, setting up camps, sometimes saving the climbers' lives, and sometimes themselves dying in the process" (p. 4). As we argue, it is the appropriation of Sherpa identity as helpers and subservient guides that reinscribes Sherpa community as inferior and docile subjects who can be spoken for or used in global corporate marketplace culture without impunity. The case offers lessons for educators on how topics related to racism and capitalism is silenced within school curriculum and the urgent need to engage with themes on racial capitalism in classrooms. It similarly addresses the broader need to decolonize knowledge concerning global communities and rethink what constitutes becoming and working towards global citizenship education (Andreotti, 2014).

First, cultural appropriation takes place within the sphere of clothing/fashion industry where Sherpa theme is used to market products that is said to provide comfort, warmth and style. Thus, a recurring marketplace appropriation includes the production of Sherpa-themed products (and Sherpa layer) that are designed for outdoor use. Here, Sherpa becomes synonymous with outdoors and the outdoor market economy. Marketed as clothing (sweaters, hoodies and blankets) or accessories (sunglasses, etc.) to be worn in outdoor settings, the Sherpa layer is said to provide the warmth (and the fashion) needed in cold weather of the global North.[2] Thus, Sherpa becomes a symbol of durability and represented as an object (similar to the Sherpa-as-porter in the mountains) that can withstand cold weather and as durable products. Such representations position Sherpa identity in their "natural" places and Sherpa-themed products are said to provide (similarly to the mountains) comfort, protection and, ultimately, happiness. Thus, in the racialized capitalist economy, the meaning of Sherpa has a commercialized affective connotation. Here, the term Sherpa becomes synonymous with a feeling that Sherpa layers or texture embedded in fabrics are said to provide. One may ask in classrooms: what does it mean to market products as having "Sherpa backing" to claim its reliability? What might be the politics behind using ethnicity for stereotypical representations? The second form of appropriation frames Sherpa as embodying strength. A common association includes naming construction equipment with Sherpa designation. The equipment, which are often associated with outdoor use, is said to have Sherpa-like strength and durability and are noted as being efficient in transporting earth or raw materials.

In classroom contexts, we may ask what purpose does it serve to name technologies or machines as Sherpas? Within such seemingly "positive" representations, what does it mean to frame Sherpa identity as being brave, rugged, and reliable? The Sherpa-themed commodities are advertised as being capable of performing arduous tasks in diffi-

THE SHERPA COLLECTION

–source: Sherpamineloaders[3]

cult weather or rugged terrains. Similarly, it is common to find Sherpa themed portable power-packs (or external batteries/chargers) advertised in Amazon for lap-top or motor-cycle use, which are marketed as being durable and reliable. The products are often marketed as providing excellent re-charging capability or reliable "back-up" options for various technologies, perhaps similar to the back-up support that Sherpas are said to provide on the mountains. Similar to the earlier noted stereotypes of Sherpas as being reliable and durable in mountains, the commodities are advertised as having the capacity to withstand difficult challenges or being weather-proof. Overall, educators ought to raise questions in classrooms regarding the narrative of associating Sherpa with inanimate objects or with efficient machines. Or ask: what is the harm of using positive stereotypes? Students can examine how the representations speak of racialized/capitalistic objectification, a practice that dehumanizes community histories and experiences.

Another approach to appropriation includes using Sherpa identity within the context of recreational events. As noted earlier, the theme of "playing" the Other or rendering cultural knowledge or difficulty histories as "fun" experiences is a process of racialization where the non-white Other is essentialized as objects. Consider how the term Sherpa is used in advertising a snow-mobile:

> As a tribute to those legendary men we named our top-machine "Sherpa", a dual-track utility snowmobile designed and manufactured while keeping in mind the fundamental qualities that a real Sherpa must have: work hard, in the hardest conditions, at a low cost, in a reliable way

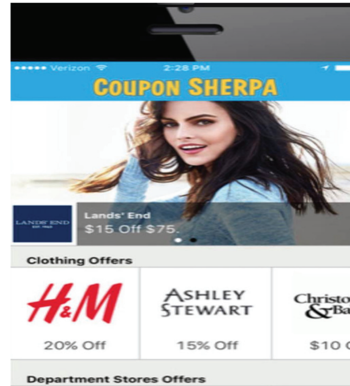
We must ask in classrooms: What harm is perpetuated when a corporate entity produces a machine that claims to perform Sherpa-like? Here, the name Sherpa is inserted into western capitalist economy to speak about hard-work ethic and the benefits of low-cost capitalism. In

—source: Alpina snowmobiles[4]

classrooms contexts, educators must raise questions on what tribute may mean and in what ways the meaning of tribute is demeaning and racist? Or how the idea of offering tribute is connected to capitalist economy that appropriates the Other to generate financial profit. The tribute discourse recycles old stereotypes about Sherpas being naturally fit for harsh conditions and how they can be exploited for low cost (the assumption is that they are unaware of their exploitation). Although terms such as legendary, reliable and the ethic of hard work may sound complimentary, it is precisely the use of these terms that romanticize and stereotype the experiences of Sherpa communities. The very notion of equating marginalized communities with objects is part of the racist discourse that has dehumanized people and silenced the "real" dimensions of people's culture and histories. The narrative of tribute similarly reinforces paternalistic discourse that frames marginalized community as if they need to be represented (Taylor, 2000).

Thirdly, Sherpa is also inserted in the global marketplace culture within the Sherpa-as-a-guide narrative: a facilitator who helps or delivers products to consumers in the Global North. This narrative claims how, similar to during mountain expeditions, Sherpas can serve as a guide in the virtual world and help consumers navigate the terrain of consumer deals. Here, the appropriation of Sherpa uses the discourse of reliability (since Sherpas have been reliable, etc.) where the Sherpa guide helps consumers understand bargains, products, etc. or serves in any/all circumstances

—source: authors



—source: coupon Sharpa[5]

since Sherpa is written as being capable of helping anyone and anywhere. Similarly, the cultural appropriation often takes place by representing Sherpa as a caricature and by using stereotypical images/vocabulary on how Sherpas can help customers meet their needs.

Decolonizing pedagogies raise questions on how and why marginalized cultures are marketed as corporate commodities (see Smith, 1999). It raises questions on who has the power and authority to represent silenced communities in the global marketplace. Similarly, it interrogates the role of caricatures and the function of racist stereotypes that dehumanize non-white people globally. Racialized caricatures are not innocent since they are developed to reinscribe the bodily differences, suggesting the non-normal features and exotic behaviors associated with the difference (Pewewardy, 2004). The (see visuals of coupons) representations of Sherpas carrying ropes and Sherpas having slanted eyes are caricatures that function as racial stereotypes. Within classrooms, educators need to interrogate the darkened face and the smile that are added within the facial feature. The happy face of Sherpa is part of the colonial stereotype that suggests that Sherpas always smile. Historically, the "happy" narrative assigned to marginalized communities seeks to represent specific communities as being content and obedient. Sherpa communities have historically been known to welcome strangers in their villages and homes and such generosities do not ask that the generosities be reciprocated (Sherpa, 2014) The darkened facial feature is a stereotypical image of a Sherpa who endures the brunt of the sun during mountain climbing expeditions. The "darkening" is part of the racialization process where darker skin tone/color has been historically associated with less civilized attributes or having negative personality or intellectual traits. The intentionally darkening of images has been a

common theme across local/global criminal justice systems where darker skin-tone is associated with menace or the proclivity to commit a crime (Monk, 2019).

A critical classroom practice can involve analyzing how experiences in mountain climbing are narrated by non-Sherpas or non-Nepali people and what the writing may say about representation of Sherpas and, in general, about Nepal. Who writes, who gets published, and what accounts become popular or academic knowledge speaks volumes about issues of power (Said, 1979). For the audience in the Global North, what is written about Sherpas is predominantly in the English language and those who write, not surprisingly, are white men. Consider the following example: Countless accounts of white ordeals, white tragedies, white disappearances, and deaths in the mountains have been written for the western audience. These are tragic accounts indeed. However, writings around the unaccounted white bodies in the mountains often receive visibility, often silencing Sherpas who have similarly disappeared in the mountains. Writing about her ethnographic work with Sherpa communities in Solo-Khumbu region, Ortner (1999) writes how, "it is fair to say that there is no Sherpa at all—man, woman, or child, climber or nonclimber, who does not personally know a fellow Sherpa who was killed in mountaineering" (p. 7). We may ask in classrooms: since Sherpas have often carried expeditions for non-native subjects, what might be the politics behind how Sherpas are spoken and not spoken about? Decolonizing pedagogies critique the white privilege associated with mountain narratives and interrogates how/why certain stories are privileged over others (see Tejeda, 2008). When educators examine the global context of anti-racist discussions, they can enable students to recognize how and why white deaths have often been prominent stories and why Sherpa deaths (and, most importantly, Sherpa livelihoods) are often not spoken about or un-mourned as if they were inevitable or insignificant to speak about.

A critical documentary titled *Daughters of Everest* (2004), directed by Sapana Shakya and Ramyata Limbu, can be used in classrooms to provide a counter narrative to dominant interpretation of what it means to embody Sherpa identity. The documentary narrates the relationship between gender and Sherpa identity, and it explores the complex social/economic reasons that propel Sherpa women to climb mountains. Sherpa women recount learning about the tragedies of family members being taken by the mountains. The women speak about how their work defied the stereotypes of Sherpa women being subservient and lacking strength to climbs mountains like men. Considering their subordinated status in society, the women speak about how climbing mountains provided ways to support their families (sending children to schools, opening a

small store, etc.). Another counter-narrative documentary useful for classroom discussion is *Sherpa: Trouble on Everest* (2015) that documents contemporary Sherpa experiences in mountain expeditions. Directed by Jennifer Peedom, the documentary examines the mass commercialization of climbing industry and how Sherpas occupy a subservient role within the climbing landscape. In particular, it examines the mistreatment of Sherpas during expeditions and sheds light on how white racism manifests itself within the global (mountaineering) contexts. Educators can utilize the documentary to help students recognize how marginalized people counter oppressive structures and how the relationship between Global South and Global North has always been inextricably connected to power and white supremacist discourses (see Smith, 1999).

Lakpa Futi Sherpa's (2014) autobiography *Forty Years in the Mountains,* written in Nepali, is critically useful text that describes how mountain-life has always been part of Sherpa identity. Sherpa traces her childhood experiences growing up in Lukla (the foothills of Sagarmatha/Mt. Everest) and observing early the white privilege associated with commercial mountain climbing. As Sherpa writes, the Sherpa community finds itself being exploited as porters and guides who carry the weight of the mountain expeditions. For Sherpa, the deep structural poverty (lack of schools, unemployment, etc.) forces Sherpa people to be part of the precarious labor that is the mountain climbing industry. The dangerous labor places burden on Sherpa bodies, particularly women, who join the tourist industry to be financially independent. Ortner (1999) writes on how Sherpa relationship to the land/mountain is deeply connected to spiritual beliefs that are geographically and culturally specific to Khumbu Buddhism. As Ortner documents, Sherpa women learn to negotiate their subordinated status within the Tourist-Sherpa hierarchies where white tourists gain fame and Sherpa people often become invisible. It is the double invisibility (as women and as Sherpa subjects), as Sherpa (2014) narrates, that drives Sherpa women to reclaim their relationship with land/mountains. Readers can unlearn from the Third World (Sherpa/Nepali) feminist conscious that Sherpa brings to the writing, and the text interrupts the ways in which Sherpa identity has been narrated and consumed in the First World.

Mohanty (2004) writes how decolonizing practices in classrooms can enable a critical examination of the historical and cultural-specific feminist narratives. In classrooms, students can examine the broader invisibility of ethnic and gender discourses within discussions of citizenship in a particular nation-state or a region. In Europe and North America, there are numerous registered trademarks regarding the term Sherpa. The corporatization of the Sherpa name has yet to benefit Sherpa communities in Nepal. Here, we can't discount the role of racial

capitalism and how institutions/companies exploit the imagery of Sherpa communities for share-holder profits. A topic of discussion in class needs to be on how a society that: "is founded on capitalism, it is unsurprising that the commodity of nonwhiteness is exploited for its market value" (Leong, 2013, p. 2154).

Cultural Appropriations, Harm and Decolonizing Pedagogies

Calling for the need to decolonize academic scholarship, Dei (2018) writes how "the insistence on the disciplinary canons; what constitutes theory; who is theoretical; who is assumed to have discursive authority over/on the subject; whose knowledge counts; how we should produce, interrogate, legitimize, and disseminate knowledge are fundamental questions for engagement" (p. 123). Within the context of abolitionist praxis, Love (2019) writes how theories matter since theoretical lenses enable spaces to critique (and to transform) the educational world that white supremacy has produced. Theories "work to explain to us how the world works, who the world denies, and how structures uphold oppression" (p. 146). For Love, "theory explains what we see; it can take the Whiteness glasses off our eyes" (p. 146). Within the classroom contexts, decolonizing pedagogies can enable spaces to reevaluate and to reformulate how "culture" has been theorized, and how culture (of the Other) has been taught as depoliticized concepts. Too often, the very idea on the need to value "culture" has been more about developing superficial theories (and teaching practices) that benefits white power interests. Historically, academic theories have been far removed from recognizing the daily realities of oppressed people and their right to exist on their own terms.

Considering that teaching about racism and social justice is consistently silenced in schools (Sensoy & Marshall, 2010), superficial efforts towards diversity and inclusion reinforce white supremacy knowledge structure. Our classroom practices must critique the politics of "appreciating" culture. Consider the following cases: mainstream people's appreciation of yoga or taking part in yoga learning does not translate into appreciating cultures from South Asia. Consuming ethnic food (Ethiopian, Chinese, etc.) does not lead one to respecting or valuing ethnic experiences or identities or the racial struggles people may face. Appreciating Black music (hip-hop, etc.) and Black athleticism does not lead people to valuing Black lives and Black experiences. International travel often does not necessarily lead a person to appreciate the cultural practices of the places visited and often does not lead one to be in solidarity with injustices faced by people globally.

Ironically, within classrooms, it is precisely when marginalized communities are included that they become more invisible. hooks (1994) ex-

plains how the very idea of including Toni Morrison's work in the syllabi yet not engaging with the question of race/ethnicity reinforces tokenism and the dominant narratives of inclusion. hooks explains: "What does it mean when a white female professor is eager to include a work by Toni Morrison on the syllabus of her course but then without ever teaches that work without ever making reference to race or ethnicity" (p. 38). Here, the claim to curricular diversity does not translate into meaningful teaching about social justice. Once again, it renders marginalized people invisible through the rhetoric of visibility and inclusion. The predatory inclusion superficially includes to, once again, support white supremacy knowledge structure.

Considering that schools socialize students into the norms around social class, gender, sexuality, race and disability, mainstream students learn to consume appropriation as being a non-political discourse. The socialization includes learning to be "good" yet to be race-neutral and (when transitioning into adulthood) not learning to be accountable to one's racist socializations. Kumashiro (2015) writes how common-sense interpretation of school curriculum socializes students into mainstream knowledge about the Other and reinforces comfortable learning practices that do not require interrogating power relations in society. "What is comfortable, at least at a subconscious level, is a repetition of familiar, doable, commonsensical practices, not disruption and change" (p. 9). It is this operationalization of common-sense knowledge that elides learning about racism, oppression and reinforces the acceptance of uncritical approaches to teaching/learning about "culture": a theme that is often read as being desirable and safe to teach in U.S schools. Mainstream practices to defining the culture of the Other include interpreting culture as being an apolitical concept (and acceptable to discuss in classrooms) and equating culture with exotic practices that one can consume guilt-free (Narayan, 1997).

For those students who are harmed by cultural appropriations, it registers visceral impact where the message of appropriation is internalized as a harmful speech. Research indicates that cultural appropriations empower those who are in power and disempowers those who become the recipients of the speech (Fryberg, Markus, & Oyserman, 2008). In particular, it can produce anxiety and stress for those who see their community being misrepresented through appropriations. Considering that marginalized communities are often seen as having less or no intellectual value, cultural appropriation of the Other is not questioned as being harmful or having racist/capitalist underpinnings. Thus, the reading of appropriation as being normal and innocent socializes mainstream students into believing that appropriations do not harm marginalized people.

Andreotti, Stein, Ahenakew, and Hunt (2015) maintain that "reform" oriented pedagogical practices have little impact if they continue to be

framed within capitalistic and non-disruptive futures. Thus, pedagogical practices must include engaging with the violence of modernity, including the "ontological and metaphysical enclosures that characterize institutions and forms of existence framed by participation in global capital exchange" (p. 34). Dotson (2011) writes how the claim of cultural appropriation as not being violent or harmful is an effect of: "a failure of an audience to communicatively reciprocate, either intentionally or unintentionally, in linguistic exchanges owning to pernicious ignorance" (p. 242). Pernicious ignorance, for Dotson, "causes or contributes to a harmful practice….a harmful practice of silencing." (p. 239). Thus, cultural appropriations become harmful speeches and develop oppressive and silencing functions. Too often, the focus within academia is relegated to "intellectual" discussions on what is and what is not cultural appropriations and neglects how appropriations have social or material effects. It is worth remembering that representations are always about power and "appropriation has concrete material effects for particular groups of people engaged in cultural practices" (Hladki, 1994, p. 112). Appropriations have historical roots and are deeply rooted in racialized, gendered, and capitalist practices. Too often, couched within the narrative of diversity, marginalized communities are displayed, paraded and exploited for the benefit of mainstream audiences. We have found scholarship within racial capitalism as a useful framework to analyze how both Cinco de Mayo and Sherpa identity are produced for white consumption. Economic profit or commodification drives much of the desire to appropriate the Other since it supports current racial capitalist systems (Leong, 2013). As we have argued, appropriations are never too far from white desire to claim its sense of supremacy, often claiming as their "right" to claim imagery, history, etc.

Caricatures about the Other serve to dehumanize and harm communities since the targeted people become objects of racism. Within classroom contexts, it is useful to explore how the racialized caricatures do not have much to do with the actual (historical or contemporary) life of Mexican Americans or Sherpa communities. The caricatures that reduce communities to consumer products are part of racialized and capitalistic economies that profit from the Other. Decolonizing pedagogies interrogate how various caricatures rely on tropes of masculinity: the discourse of ruggedness, the Other being "traditional" but exotic/brave, and how the Other ought to be "honored" is part of the age-old script of racism. The very notion of "performing" Mexican or Sherpa is invested in neo/colonial tropes of racial stereotyping that devalues marginalized communities locally and globally.

Shahjahan, Estera, Surla, and Edwards (2021) raise questions for educators to consider "how is decolonizing actualized?" (p. 14). The ques-

tion of actualization, as the authors argue, is not only about critiquing how certain knowledge is positioned as superior but it also includes developing curricular and pedagogical practices that can serve the broader purpose of social change and community renewal. Similarly, we have argued that decolonizing pedagogies can critique the appropriations that take place in classrooms and schools and can provide counter-narratives to dominant ways of narrating the cultural experiences of marginalized people. This practice similarly critiques the nature of history "included" to fit the narrative of white supremacy, and it interrogates the silencing of critical questions around neo/colonialism. Our classroom practices must raise uncomfortable questions regarding to what extent we are competent to evaluate knowledge that we are not familiar with or have not been part of.

Decolonizing pedagogies ask that we question dominant desire to "include" the Other within stories? (Sensoy & Marshall, 2010). For example, consider the case of teaching about local/global social justice struggles and why certain topic often may have more appeal to the white mainstream audience. Or consider how radical social justice struggles continue to be appropriated, particularly the radical messages on racial injustices and the struggle for human dignity and freedom (hooks, 1994). Too often, in schools, social justice topics are taught in race-neutral ways and for the purpose of not generating difficult conversations. Such approaches strip politics out of social justice topics and are taught to whitewash the history of racial violence and racial capitalism. As we have argued in the context of the representations of Cinco de Mayo and Sherpa ethnic community, cultural appropriations depoliticize and dehumanize the struggles faced by marginalized people and are complicit in racialized neo/colonial practices. We must recognize that educational spaces are equally complicit in reinforcing neo/colonial narratives about the Other. Schools have historically served as primary socializing sites for teaching about the benefits of appropriating the Other and the non-harmful effects of commodification.

Notes

[1] The title is inspired by Fela Kuti's album of the same name that speaks about teachers' role in society and potential for decolonization.

[2] Julbo Sherpa Glacier Glasses. REI Co-op. (n.d.). Retrieved February 10, 2022, from https://www.rei.com/product/826294/julbo-sherpa-glacier-glasses-mens

[3] http://www.sherpaminiloaders.com/eng/

[4] http://www.alpina-snowmobiles.com/php/eng/models/id_2_model_sherpa-4-stroke-1-4l.html

[5] http://www.couponsherpa.com

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Assessing Teachers' Cultural Competency

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Abstract

There is a tremendous need to enhance the cultural competency of teachers working in PK-12 schools. Research indicates that culturally competent teachers who utilize transformative and justice-oriented curriculum and pedagogy provide classroom spaces that are more welcoming and engaging, and that showcase diversity, inclusion, and democracy in societies at large. This article contributes to the scholarly and professional literature on cultural competency and education by examining two widely-used surveys used to assess teachers' cultural competency. Methodologically, it uses content analysis to delineate what factors these surveys are assessing. From this analysis, three main themes have emerged: recognizing culture; utilizing resources for teaching and learning; and creating a sense of community. The article then discusses the implications of these results and concludes with potential directions for future research.

Keywords: teachers, cultural competency, culturally relevant, culturally responsive, content analysis, culture, teaching and learning, community, multicultural education

Introduction

There is a tremendous need to develop and enhance the cultural competency of teachers working in PK-12 schools in the United States. Research has pointed out the persistent racial/ethnic demographic gap between teachers and their students. Teachers are over 80% White, while students of color already constitute the majority in our schools

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(Sleeter, Neal, & Kumashiro, 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). According to the latest data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2021), in 2018, 50.7 million students were enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools in the United States. Of this total student enrollment, 47% are White, 27% are Latinx, 15% are Black, 5% are Asian, and 4% are of two or more races. These figures are quite a shift from a decade prior when, in 2009, White students constituted 54% of all the students in US public schools, while students of color made up 46%. Although various initiatives have been launched to increase the number of teachers of color, the urgency for White teachers to strengthen their cultural competency, knowledge, skills, and dispositions needs to continue as a top priority.

Cultural competency, according to Vernita Mayfield (2020), is "the ability to use critical-thinking skills to interpret how cultural values and beliefs influence conscious and unconscious behavior; the understanding of how inequality can be and has been perpetuated through socialized behaviors; and the knowledge and determined disposition to disrupt inequitable practices to achieve greater personal and professional success for yourself and others" (p. l5). According to Moule (2012), cultural competence is the "ability to successfully teach students who come from cultures other than your own" (p. 5). What this means is "developing certain personal and interpersonal awareness and sensitivities, learning specific bodies of cultural knowledge, and mastering a set of skills that, taken together, underlie effective cross-cultural teaching" (ibid.). For Mayfield (2020), culture is composed of the "values, beliefs, and behaviors on which [we] operate daily" (p. 15), while competence "suggests that [we] are endeavoring to become fluent in a set of practices of skills that advance [our] professionality" (p. 16). Building upon Mayfield and Moule, we define "culture" as a complex way of living and understanding that shapes and guides one's beliefs, knowledge, actions, and practices. It is shared by a group of individuals, contextualized by temporal and spatial dimensions, and embedded within relations of power. It is observed, espoused, and intangible; it is fluid and never static; and it is transmitted across people and generations, often in implicit ways. We also define "competence" as one's capacity to think, plan, decide, and act, and to reflect individually or collectively in order to meet particular goals or outcomes.

Researchers, policymakers, and educators have ardently called for the development and enhancement of educators' cultural competency. The National Education Association, the largest labor union in the United States, has delineated a number of important reasons why educators should be culturally competent. In addition to the increasingly diverse student population in PK-12 schools, the other reasons are: culture plays

a critical role in learning; cultural competence leads to more effective teaching, helps address student achievement gaps, and helps educators meet accountability requirements; culturally competent educators are better equipped to reach out to students' families; and lastly, cultural competence reinforces American and democratic ideals (National Education Association, 2008). Consequently, school districts and professional education associations promote the ongoing development and enhancement of the cultural competency of school teachers, administrators, and staff by offering professional development sessions and training programs. For example, the National Education Association (2021) provides a Cultural Competence Training Program that aims to "deepen participants' own cultural self-awareness; increase their understanding of the link between cultural self-awareness and cultural competence; identify culturally responsive teaching practices; [and] share strategies for promoting culturally responsive instruction."

Moreover, various communities have called for more transformative and justice-oriented curriculum in schools in light of social movements, such as Black Lives Matter and Stop Asian Hate, that address racial inequities, discrimination, violence, and deaths (Coloma et al., 2021; Ransby, 2018). They contend that more culturally competent teachers that utilize more transformative and justice-oriented curriculum and pedagogy will be able to provide classroom spaces that are more engaging, supportive, and healing, that offer multiple and even competing perspectives, and that showcase the rich diversity and complexity of our society and democracy. For instance, in the edited book *Black Lives Matter at School*, Jesse Hagopian (2020) underscores how the "Black Lives Matter at School movement is the story of educators, students, parents, and community members defying the threats of violent white supremacists … and the story of an uprising to uproot the racist policies and curriculum that are bound up in the American system of schooling" (p. 1). Many advocates fighting against anti-Asian racism have pushed for the integration of Asian American curriculum and history in public schools to raise awareness and minimize hostility against Asian Americans in schools and society at large. In July 2021, Illinois became the first state in the country to require the teaching of Asian American history in public schools (Petrella, 2021). In March 2021, California officially adopted an Ethnic Studies model curriculum that is grounded in the four "foundational disciplines" of African American, Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x, Native American, and Asian American and Pacific Islander studies (California Department of Education, 2021).

This article aims to contribute to the scholarly and professional literature on cultural competency and education by analyzing two widely-used instruments used to assess teachers' cultural competency—Culturally

Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE) and Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey: Teacher Form (MAKSS-T). We examine CRTSE and MAKSS-T for the cultural competency factors that these instruments are assessing. We situate the instruments in relation to the scholarly literature, especially their initial development and how they have been used by other researchers and educators. We also explain how we scrutinized these instruments methodologically using content analysis, and focus on three main themes that we identified from the analysis—recognizing culture; utilizing resources for teaching and learning; and creating a sense of community. For each of these themes, we delineate the different scale or survey items from CRTSE and MAKSS-T that provide further examples and explanations. We pursue this inquiry in order to highlight the importance of utilizing culturally relevant teaching and how teachers becoming aware of their students' cultural background can bridge the racial gap between teachers and students, enhance campus and classroom climate, and develop a sense of community that will positively affect students' school engagement and academic progress.

Literature Review

There are different curriculum and pedagogical strands that enact multicultural classroom teaching, such as culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995), culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000), culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris & Alim, 2017), ethnic studies pedagogy (Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2015), culturally congruent instruction (Mohatt & Ericsson, 1981), culturally appropriate instruction (Au & Jordan, 1981), and culturally compatible instruction (Jordan, 1985; Vogt, Jordan, & Tharp, 1987). Although they offer varying definitions, goals, and approaches, there is a general agreement amongst them. They are approaches to teaching and learning that focus on students' cultural knowledge, experiences, prior knowledge, and different ways of knowing and learning in order to facilitate a more equitable and inclusive teaching and learning. They also emphasize a culturally compatible environment by including students' culture and using a variety of assessment techniques. They equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in larger business, commercial, and civic networks, and at the same time help them sustain their cultural identity, heritage language, and connection to their community. Paris (2012) proposes the term *culturally sustaining* to emphasize supporting the cultural and linguistic competence of students' communities while offering access to dominant culture competence.

One of the most commonly used scales in measuring teachers' cultural

competency is the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-efficacy Scale (CRTSE), developed by Kamau Oginga Siwatu in 2007. CRTSE drew from Bandura's (1997) definition of self-efficacy, which is the belief in one's ability to shape and execute the courses of action that are required to produce certain achievements. Bandura believed that the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and competence are not necessarily adequate predictors of future behavior or action (Pajares, 1996). Rather it is mediated by a person's belief in their abilities to put the acquired skills to use. Therefore, self-efficacy is the individual's belief in their capabilities to execute specific tasks.

The development of CRTSE was driven by three factors underlying culturally responsive teacher preparation and teacher efficacy research. First, many inquiries into teachers' efficacy beliefs focused on their perceived confidence to be instructionally effective (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), manage effective learning environments (Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990), and influence student learning (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Second, the rising theoretical concerns about existing measures of teachers' sense of efficacy fueled the need to create a theoretically grounded instrument. Siwatu (2007) believed that the best approach was revisit Bandura's theoretical guidelines for constructing self-efficacy scales (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 2001). Third, in light of increased efforts to prepare culturally responsive teachers, the development of the CRTSE provided administrators and teacher educators with a useful tool to assess the effectiveness of their programs. CRTSE includes 30 statements, divided into four competencies: curriculum and instruction, classroom management, student assessment, and cultural enrichment. Using the culturally responsive teaching competencies as a guide, the development of the CRTSE scales began by writing several self-efficacy items that mapped onto 27 competencies (Siwatu, 2007). The CRTSE scale contains teaching practices throughout the easy–difficult continuum. The "easy" side of the continuum reflects skills related to general teaching practices (e.g., "I am able to use a variety of teaching methods," "I am able to build a sense of trust in my students"). The "difficult" side of the continuum contains skills that reflect more culturally responsive teaching practices (e.g., "I am able to teach students about their cultures' contribution to science," "I am able to implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture") (Siwatu, 2007, p. 4).

Other users have utilized CRTSE for their studies. For example, Lastrapes and Negishi (2012) examined preservice teachers' cultural consciousness and self-efficacy while tutoring diverse students during an initial urban field experience. Frye and her colleagues (2010) described how history, literacy, and art were integrated in the college classroom

and then taught in elementary classrooms by teacher candidates as a step in becoming culturally responsive. At the end of the semester, the candidates re-evaluated themselves using the same survey, and then reflected on their experiences, the competencies they had gained and enhanced, and the skills and knowledge they still wanted to learn to become culturally responsive teachers.

Dickson, Chun, and Fernandez (2015) described the development and initial validation of a measure for middle school students' perspectives of culturally responsive teaching practices. They developed the Student Measure of Culturally Responsive Teaching (SMCRT) by modifying items on the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE). SMCRT measures students' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices in order to look into the impact of culturally responsive teaching on students' academic outcomes, and to guide teachers' training and the development of culturally relevant curricula.

The Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey: Teacher Form (MAKSS-T) was developed by Michael D'Andrea, Judy Daniels, and Mary Jo Noonan (D'Andrea, Daniels, & Noonan, 2003). The MAKSS-T drew from the Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey: Counselor Edition (MAKSS-CE) that was originally created by D'Andrea, Daniels, and Ronald Heck at the University of Hawai'i in 1991. Whereas the MAKSS-CE was developed to evaluate the effectiveness of counseling psychologists to work with patients who are culturally different from them, the MAKSS-T was designed to gauge the multicultural competence of teachers who work with students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The MAKSS-T consists of 60 statements that function as a self-assessment on three constructs of multicultural competence—awareness, knowledge, and skills. For the three constructs of multicultural competence, awareness means "openness to learning about differences associated with various cultures and being conscious of biases and assumptions we hold and the impact they have" (Gayles & Kelly, 2007, p. 194). For instance, one "awareness" survey question asks: "At this time in your life, how would you rate yourself in terms of understanding how your cultural background has influenced the way you think and act?" Another "awareness" question asks: "At the present time, how would you generally rate yourself in terms of being able to accurately compare your own cultural perspective with that of a person from another culture?" Knowledge highlights recognition of diverse cultures and groups and "an understanding of within group differences and the intersection of multiple identities" (Gayles & Kelly, 2007, p. 194). For example, one "knowledge" survey statement says: "Most of the immigrant and ethnic groups in Europe, Australia, and Canada face problems similar

to those experienced by ethnic groups in the United States." Another "knowledge" survey statement says: "In teaching, students from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds should be given the same treatment that White mainstream students receive." Lastly, skills "involve the capacity to work effectively with individuals from various cultural backgrounds by translating awareness and knowledge… into good practice" (Gayles & Kelly, 2007, p. 194). For instance, one "skills" survey question asks: "How would you rate your ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses of educational tests in terms of their use with persons from a different cultural/racial/ethnic background?" Another "skills" survey question asks: "In general, how would you rate your skill level in terms of being able to provide appropriate teaching services to culturally different students?" Overall, the MAKSS-T survey is structured in a way that foregrounds multicultural awareness in the first 20 statements, multicultural knowledge in the next 20 statements, and multicultural skills in the last 20 statements. Participants who complete the survey are provided two sets of Likert-type options in response to each item. They can answer using the options of either very limited, limited, good, or very good; or strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree.

Other researchers and educators have utilized the MAKSS-T for their studies. For instance, Warring (2005) employed the MAKSS-T "to assess the multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill levels of candidates in teacher preparation programs and to compare data across undergraduate and graduate level courses taught by different instructors to see if any significant differences or similarities occur" (p. 109). With a participant size of 112 students enrolled in required courses on human relations/multicultural education and social foundations of education, his research is based on a "premise that attitudes, knowledge, and skills can be assessed and a purpose of assessment should serve as a tool to improve teacher preparation" (p. 109). Vincent and Torres (2015) utilized the MAKSS-T "to describe the constructs of multicultural competence in school-based agriculture teachers and their relationship to the ethnic diversity of local FFA [Future Farmers of America] membership in selected high schools" and to analyze the "constructs of multicultural competence in school-based agriculture teachers, as perceived by their students" (p. 66). One important factor made by the Vincent and Torres (2015) study is the addition of students' perception of their teachers' multicultural competence. On the one hand, the "teacher questionnaire asked the teacher to rate their competence level among various statements and, on the other hand, "the student questionnaire asked the students to rate their teacher's competence level among various statements" (p. 67). With a participant size of 32 teachers and 21 students, Vincent and Torres found that teachers with diverse FFA

chapters reported a higher mean score for multicultural competence, and students in diverse FFA chapters "perceived their teacher to have a higher level of multicultural competence than students in non-diverse FFA chapters perceived their teacher" (p. 69). This study confirms that teaching and learning in diverse contexts benefit both the educators and their students. Moreover, doctoral students have utilized the MAKSS-T for their dissertation studies. Perkins (2012) used MAKSS-T for her mixed-method study of 36 prospective teachers in their final year of coursework at three universities. She found that, in their survey responses, prospective teachers felt they were being prepared to work with diverse students; yet, in their interviews, they did not feel as confident in their preparation to work with diverse populations. In a more recent study, Jones (2019) mobilized MAKSS-T as a complementary tool in a primarily qualitative case study of five teachers and their supervising administrators in two high schools. The survey was given to consenting teachers at the two schools, and the teachers selected for the research study scored the highest for multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills based on the MAKSS-T survey.

Methodology

For our examination of the CRTSE and MAKSS-T, we utilized qualitative content analysis, a systematic, rigorous approach to analyzing texts. It can be used either as a method by itself or in combination with other methods (White & Marsh, 2006). The objective in qualitative content analysis is to transform a large amount of text to an organized and concise summary (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017). It aims to organize and elicit meaning from the data and to draw realistic conclusions from it (Bengtsson, 2016). The initial step in content analysis is to read and re-read in order to get a general understanding of the whole. Then, texts are condensed into smaller meaningful units. The step after that is to code these condensed units. Codes can be thought of as labels that describe the meaningful units, normally one or two words. Then, these codes are organized into categories. Categories are formed by grouping together the codes which are related to each other, due to their similarities or differences. The final step is to create themes from the categories; a theme describes the meaning of two or more categories. The final themes that describe the underlying meaning of the content are drawn from the data (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017).

For this study we examined two instruments, the CRTSE scale and the MAKSS-T survey, and each researcher focused initially on one instrument and subsequently on both. We followed Erlingsson and Brysiewicz's (2017) steps to conduct the qualitative content analysis method. While following

the process of content analysis, some of the steps were done separately, others jointly. First, we read and reviewed our respective instruments, and created spreadsheet tables that included all items: 40 items for the CRTSE scale (numbered from C1 to C40) and 60 items for the MAKSS-T survey (numbered from M1 to M60). These items became the "meaning unit" as described by Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017) in their content analysis protocol. Then, we shortened the meaning units into "condensed meaning units" to highlight major concepts and terms. For example, an item or "meaning unit" in the CRTSE scale is "Develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds," which was shortened as a "condensed meaning unit" to "building a sense of community." After all the items or meaning units in the CRTSE and MAKSS-T were transformed into condensed meaning units, we generated "codes" (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017) to further abbreviate the units into key words for our own instrument and then for our co-author's instrument. In other words, we separately gave codes to the condensed unit for each instrument. For example, for the condensed meaning unit of "building a sense of community," Hamdan gave a code of "sense of community" while Coloma's code for the same condensed meaning is "student needs/preferences." There were various instances when we generated similar codes as well as codes that were different from one another. In generating a joint code, we discussed by reviewing the original items in the instruments as well as the process and thinking in the shortening to condensed meaning units and eventually to codes. For example, in the case of differing codes for "sense of community" and "student needs/preferences," we came up with the joint code of "community building." After that, our joint codes were grouped together and organized into "categories" (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017). We identified eight categories for the CRSTE scale and eight categories for the MAKSS-T survey. With a total of 16 categories, we discussed significant and converging ideas that reflect the goals and purposes of both instruments. These converging ideas became the "themes" which, according to Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017), are "higher levels of abstraction" that "reflect the interpreted, latent meaning of the text" (p. 94). Ultimately, the three themes that we developed together for the two scales were: (1) recognizing culture; (2) utilizing resources for teaching and learning; and (3) creating a sense of community. These three themes will be discussed further in the next section.

Before elaborating on the three themes, we take note of the limitations of using the CRTSE and MAKSS-T to identify, examine, and assess the cultural competency of teachers. The first limitation is the instruments' subjective nature due to teachers' self-assessment and self-disclosure. Teachers complete them based on their understanding and perception of themselves as well as how they select to represent themselves. Such

self-assessment does not claim to be objective or value-free; rather, it relies on the teachers' willingness to take stock of their knowledge, skills, and dispositions in relation to cultural competency and to share them through their responses to the scales. As Perkins' (2012) study points out, teachers rated themselves in surveys as prepared to work with diverse students; however, their follow-up interviews revealed they were not as prepared and confident as they had indicated. Hence, it is important for researchers and educators to not determine one's cultural competency exclusively based on self-assessment instruments. As measures that rely on self-assessment, these types of quantitative instruments are not necessarily invalid, faulty, or wrong. We ought to consider them as inherently limited, like all singular tools. What these instruments showcase, in fact, is how respondents view and think of themselves and how they would want others to perceive them. This statement still leads to a set of research findings. But what we cannot and should not conclude is that such findings from these instruments offer a fully accurate measure of teachers' cultural competency. For more robust and holistic assessments of cultural competency, these instruments can be complemented and triangulated with qualitative approaches, such as interviews and observations, and the two other limitations below also need to be addressed.

The second limitation is the scales' ability to track consistencies and changes in teachers' cultural competency over time. The existing scholarly literature on the use of these instruments reveals that they have been primarily employed in singular ways. In other words, the instruments are generally utilized as a one-time self-assessment of teachers. They have the potential to track changes over time, for instance, if they are used for pre- and post-assessments when they participate in professional development on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Lastly, the third limitation is the instruments are products of their particular temporal, geographical, and cultural contexts. The MAKSS-T and CRTSE were developed and released in 2003 and 2007, respectively, and represent concepts, terms, and understandings of cultural competency that were relevant and significant at the time. This is not to say that they are too dated and no longer useful now. Rather, they need to be understood and analyzed as being generated within specific temporal and spatial contexts. For instance, within the past 10 to 15 years, student and community demographic changes, social and political movements, as well as social media and technology have dramatically shifted a number of the terms and understandings related to cultural competency.

Findings and Discussion

The table (see Table 1) highlights the three themes that emerged from our qualitative content analysis of the CRTSE scale and MAKSS-T survey: (1) recognizing culture, (2) utilizing resources for teaching and learning, and (3) creating a sense of community. These three themes reveal the major cultural competencies that the two instruments are aiming to identify, develop, and/or promote among the teachers completing their self-assessment. Under each theme, we delineated the various categories derived from each instrument. For the first theme of recognizing culture, the categories drawn from the content analysis of the

Table 1

Contents Analysis Findings

Theme #1: Recognizing Culture	
CRTSE Categories	*MAKSS-T Categories*
student background (C2, 8, 13-14, 16, 21, 37-38)	key concepts (M21-32)
differences between school and home (C5-6, 15)	teaching diverse groups (M7, 13, 41-42, 51, 54-60)
different learning styles (C3-4, 34, 35, 39)	similarities across differences (M35-38)
	cultural awareness and knowledge (M1, 6, 8, 10, 45, 48)
	cultural impact (M2-4, 39-40)
Theme #2: Utilizing Resources for Teaching and Learning	
CRTSE Categories	*MAKSS-T Categories*
assessment (C7, 23, 33)	education, teaching, and culture (M9, 18-19, 44, 47, 49-50, 52)
instruction/pedagogy (C1, 11, 17, 27-30, 35-36, 40)	teaching foundation requirements (M5, 12-14, 17, 20, 33-34, 43, 46, 53)
Theme #3: Creating a Sense of Community	
CRTSE Categories	*MAKSS-T Category*
community building (C12, 19, 26, 32)	teaching and support (M11, 15-16)
student-teacher relationship (C9, 18, 20, 22, 38-40)	
home-school relationship (C10, 24-25, 31)	

CRTSE scale are student background, differences between school and home, and different learning styles. The term “learning styles” is used here as it’s historically salient and acceptable at the time the surveys were created.The categories from the MAKSS-T survey are key concepts, teaching diverse groups, similarities across differences, cultural awareness and knowledge, and cultural impact. For the second theme of utilizing resources for teaching and learning, the CRTSE categories are assessment and instruction/pedagogy, and the MAKSS-T categories are education, teaching, and culture as well as teaching foundation requirements. Lastly, for the third theme of creating a sense of community, the CRTSE categories are community building, home-school relationship, and student-teacher relationship, and the only MAKSS-T category is teaching and support.

Under each category in the table, we include the scale or survey statements that we used to generate that particular category through our content analysis. With the CRTSE scale of 40 statements, each statement was numbered from C1 to C40. With the MAKSS-T survey of 60 statements, each statement was numbered from M1 to M60. Hence, for instance, under the CRTSE category of student background, we listed statements C2, 8, 13-14, 16, 21, 37-38 based on our content analysis.

In this section, we will elaborate on and discuss our findings by highlighting certain scale or survey statements for various themes and categories not only to be transparent in our methodological process, but also to explicitly showcase knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are crucial for teachers’ cultural competency to foster equity, inclusion, and democracy in diverse classrooms and schools.

Theme #1: Recognizing Culture

In the CRTSE scale, the first theme of recognizing culture is evident in the three categories of student background, differences between school and home, and different learning styles. For student background, the scale inquires into the respondents’ ability to use students’ cultural background, prior knowledge, and interests to “help make learning meaningful” and “make sense of new information” (C13, C14, C38). For differences between school and home, respondents determine their ability to identify the differences between school culture and the students’ home culture (C5), and how to “minimize the effects of the mismatch” between the school and home cultures (C6). For different learning styles, the scale asks respondents to assess their ability to “use a learning preference inventory to gather data” on how students like to learn (C35).

In the MAKSS-T survey, the first theme of recognizing culture is evident in the five categories of key concepts, teaching diverse groups,

similarities across differences, cultural awareness and knowledge, and cultural impact. For the key concepts, the scale asks "at the present time, how would you rate your own understanding" of different terms or concepts, such as culture, ethnicity, racism, mainstreaming, prejudice (M21-32). For these items, educators can rate themselves as "very limited," "limited," "good," and "very good." For teaching diverse groups, the scale probes into their "ability to accurately assess the educational needs" of various identity groups, such as female and male students, gay and lesbian students, students with disabilities, and students from poor socioeconomic backgrounds (M54-60). For the category of similarities across differences, the scale asks the respondents' agreement or disagreement in regards to "close to parity" in the academic achievement of racial/ethnic minorities ("African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans") compared to "White mainstream students" (M35), or equal achievement of girls and boys in mathematics and science (M36). For cultural awareness and knowledge, the scale gauges the respondents' "level of awareness regarding different cultural institutions and systems" (M6) and their rating of "being able to accurately compare your own cultural perspective with that of a person from another culture" (M8). For cultural impact, respondents are asked about their "understanding of the impact of the way you think and act when interacting with persons of different cultural backgrounds" (M4).

In our analysis of the two instruments, the categories of "teaching diverse groups" and "student background" overlap as similar categories that urge teachers to get to know their diverse students and their backgrounds as crucial in developing and enhancing cultural competency. For the theme of recognizing culture, additional elements need to be considered, including taking into account cultural awareness, knowledge, and impact; examining differences between school and home as well as learning styles; and showcasing similarities across differences. These categories and elements are consistent with the ways theorists, researchers, and educators have conceptualized and enacted culturally relevant, responsive, and sustainable teaching (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Gay, 2018; Paris & Alim, 2017). As noted in our literature review section, these approaches have different definitions and nuances, yet have important general agreements. They foreground students' cultural knowledge, backgrounds, and experiences as assets and resources for teaching and learning. They cultivate culturally compatible settings in classrooms and schools so that students feel affirmed, safe, and cared for. They also support students to navigate what Lisa Delpit (2006) calls the "culture of power" as they are equipped with knowledge and skills to succeed in mainstream settings, while embracing and nurturing their home and heritage cultures. In acknowledging and affirming students'

cultural backgrounds, culturally competent teachers work intentionally to get to know their students in meaningful ways and continuously educate themselves on social, economic, and political issues that impact the wellbeing of their students and their families and comunities. In democratic schools and societies, recognizing diverse cultures is an important starting point when addressing stereotypes ad misconceptions about marginalized individuals and groups.

Theme #2: Utilizing Resources for Teaching and Learning

In the CRTSE scale, the second theme of utilizing resources for teaching and learning is evident in the two categories of assessment and instruction/pedagogy. For the assessment category, the survey asks teachers to rate their abilities in assessing students' learning using various types of assessments (C7), and identifying if standardized tests may be biased towards linguistically and culturally diverse students (C23, C33). For the instruction/pedagogy category, teachers are asked to rate themselves in regards to: adapting instruction to meet the needs of students (C1), revising instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups (C27), critically examining the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes (C28), using examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds (C35), and designing instructions that matches students' developmental needs (C40).

In the MAKSS-T survey, the second theme is evident in the two categories of education, teaching, and culture as well as teaching foundation requirements. For education, teaching, and culture, the survey asks teachers to rate their ability to deal with discrimination, prejudices, and biases (M9, M44), their ability to articulate students' problem from cultural group different from their own (M47), and their ability to consult with education professionals concerning students with different cultural backgrounds (M52). For teaching foundation requirements, educators indicate their agreement or disagreement to statements, such as "There are some basic teaching skills that are applicable to create successful outcomes regardless of the students' cultural background" (M53), "Promoting a student's sense of psychological independence is usually a safe goal to strive for in most teaching situations" (M14), and "Teachers without formal training and a license use similar techniques as those who are licensed" (M33).

Both instruments highlight teachers getting to know their diverse students, which is consistent with the scholarly literature as culturally relevant teaching demands teachers to utilize students' culture as a bridge to facilitate their learning process. Gay (2002) reinforced that

when academic knowledge and skills are related to the students' lived experiences, they are more personally meaningful and students learn more easily and thoroughly. Students' academic achievements will improve when they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Foster, 1995; Gay, 2000; Hollins, 1996; Kleinfeld, 1975). The instruments also emphasize developing teachers' critical consciousness, which is important for teachers not only to achieve cultural competence and professional efficacy, but also to critique social norms and values that maintain social inequities. For Ladson-Billings (1995), critical consciousness takes form in cultural critique whereby "teachers themselves recognize social inequities and their causes" and are "not reluctant to identify political underpinnings of the students' community and social world" (pp. 476-477). The instruments also stress that teachers should pay attention to the cultural contexts and experiences of their students as well as their specific academic and personal needs. Gay (2010) emphasizes teaching that builds on students' personal and cultural strengths as well as their intellectual capabilities and prior accomplishments (p. 26). Moreover, Ladson-Billings (1995) stresses that cultural competence requires reshaping curriculum by building on students' knowledge, as well as teachers establishing good relationships with students and their families. To achieve democratic education, curriculum materials and pedagogical approaches should reflect the diverse demographics of students, and teachers should look at local communities as funds of knowledge to make teaching and learning more culturally relevant. In light of current debates about the teaching of critical race theory in schools and the controversial banning of certain books in schools and libraries, culturally competent teachers will insist on curricular and instructional materials that showcase critical and multi-perspectival sources and understandings of US history, culture, and democracy (Coloma et al., in press).

Theme #3: Creating a Sense of Community

In the CRTSE survey, creating a sense of community is apparent in the categories of community building, home-school relationship, and student-teacher relationship. For community building, educators are prompted to assess how they develop a community of learners among students from diverse cultural backgrounds (C12), design a classroom environment that displays a variety of cultures (C19), help students develop positive relationship with classmates (C26), and help students feel like important members in their classrooms (C32). For student-teacher relationship, teachers are to rate themselves in regards to building a sense of trust with their students (C9) and developing a personal rela-

tionship with them (C20). For home-school relationship, the scale elicits information about how respondents are communicating with parents regarding their children's educational progress (C24) and structuring parent-teacher conferences so that the meeting is not intimidating for parents (C25). In the MAKSS-T survey, there is only one category, which is teaching and support, for this theme. The survey items in this category inquire into universal definitions of normality (C11), formal teaching services (C15), and educational services to support students under stressful situations (C16).

Gabelnick, MacGregor, Matthews, and Smith (1990) define learning community as a community that restructures curricular materials so that students have opportunities for deep understanding and engaging interactions with their teachers and classsmates as fellow participants in the learning process. In a learning environment that focuses on creating a sense of community, both students and teachers learn and work together in an environment that emphasizes cooperation rather than competition (Nieto & Valery, 2006). To create strong learning communities, culturally competent teachers acknowledge the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students and celebrate them in their classrooms. They support diverse learners to socialize together and build positive relationships. They also communicate with their students' families and allow them a space to actively participate in the learning process of their children as an intentional practice of democratic education. For some parents and guardians, school was not a positive and supportive space when they were students. In fact, their experiences in school and their interactions with peers, teachers, and/or administrators were toxic, alienating, hostile, and unbearable. Hence, culturally competent teachers intentionally and proactively foster caring relationships with parents and guardians that are built on mutual commitment to the students' academic and personal wellbeing, on genuine respect for one another, and on trust and communication. By forging such relationships with parents and guardians, teachers find true partners and collaborators at home, and also work to heal some of the trauma they had gone through in their schooling.

Conclusion

Culturally competent teachers are conscious about their own biases that could impact the way they understand and interact with students from different cultures. They think and reflect on how biases could affect what they expect from students. They understand how students' cultures, backgrounds, and experiences might affect their understanding and use them as assets in the learning process. They support students

to succeed in a pluralistic society while maintaining pride in their own culture. They develop trusting relationships with students and families and build a strong learning community, which will positively affect students' level of engagement. Culturally competent teachers role model respect for diversity and use the classroom as a safe and supportive space for students to have intercultural dialogue. They encourage students to think critically about controversial and real-world issues, and unpack unequal distributions of power. They utilize the classroom as a stage to empower students to use their voices to condemn inequality and advocate for social justice. Culturally competent teachers promote democratic principles and practices by addressing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in schools, which will impact society at large.

In analyzing the scholarly literature on assessing teachers' cultural competency and the two widely-used surveys, Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale and Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey: Teacher Form, we chart three critical directions for future research. First, since these surveys are completed by teachers as a form of self-assessment, what insights about and impact on the teachers' sense of self might be generated when a version of these surveys is completed by their students, especially those who come from marginalized backgrounds? Having students respond to surveys to assess their teachers' cultural competency offers an important yet largely missing perspective from the scholarly literature. Opportunities to compare and contrast teachers' and students' viewpoints on the teachers' cultural competency can reveal convergences and gaps that can be further examined. Second, these surveys are likely to be completed by those in dominant groups, for instance by White teachers to assess their cultural competency when working with diverse students. According to a 2016 US Department of Education report, White teachers made up over 80% of the public school teacher workforce, a figure that has not changed over the past 20 years. How might the results of such surveys be similar and/or different when completed by teachers who come from diverse and marginalized backgrounds, such as teachers of color, immigrant teachers, or LGBTQ teachers? What new ideas and understandings on cultural competency might emerge when we focus on the experiences and perspectives of teachers from diverse backgrounds? And how might the purpose, content, and focus of the surveys shift when the target audience is not those in dominant groups, but rather those from marginalized backgrounds? The strengths and areas for improvement in the cultural competency of diverse teachers are an under-explored topic of investigation in the area of assessing teachers' cultural competency. Lastly, there is a continuous need to develop and analyze surveys that emphasize intersectionality. Most surveys on assessing teachers' cultural competency highlight a

particular identity or cultural background, such as race, class, gender, or sexuality, in their questions or statements. The strength of such an approach is that researchers and educators can point to a specific area and determine strategic goals and plans to address it. However, teachers (as well as their students) have different and intersecting identities and backgrounds that shape their beliefs, values, perspectives, actions, and interactions. How might intersectionality generate different views and understandings on cultural competency? And how might surveys change when we put intersectionality at its fundamental core focus? Ultimately, we point to these three critical areas of foregrounding the perspectives of students, of teachers from diverse backgrounds, and of intersectionality as important and necessary directions in order to further advance the research and use of assessing teachers' cultural competency.

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Remembering Boris Badenov and Natasha Fatale

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Teaching the "Language of the Enemy" in U.S. Public Schools

Timothy Reagan

Abstract

While there are many difficulties faced by world language educators, both teachers and students of certain languages—languages commonly identified with countries and cultures deemed to be hostile to the United States—often find themselves in uniquely paradoxical situations. This article begins with a brief anecdotal description of the personal challenge of speaking a "language of the enemy," and then turns to a discussion of world language education in the United States, emphasizing the distinction between the commonly taught languages (CTLs) and the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs). Next, an overview of linguistic bias in the history of world language education, focusing on the cases of German and Russian, as well as both Farsi and Arabic, is provided, followed by a discussion of the uses of "soft power" in the promotion of a country's language and culture. After a brief analysis of the role of media in constructing images of different languages for public consumption, and the impact of such media efforts on the teaching of some of the LCTLs, the article concludes with a discussion of the fundamental dilemma that we face in teaching what are considered by many Americans to be the "languages of the enemy."

Keywords: world language education, less commonly taught languages (LCTLs), language attitudes

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Introduction

> Don't speak the enemy's language: The four freedoms are not in his vocabulary. Speak American! (World War II Propaganda Poster)

As a general rule, scholars in educational foundations quite appropriately focus our attention on matters in the fields of anthropology of education, comparative and international education, history of education, philosophy of education, and sociology of education, as well as in discussions and explorations of how each of these can assist us to better understand particular issues and topics related to specific topics in educational thought and practice. Further, scholars in educational foundations are also concerned with providing critical perspectives on schooling, both in the US and elsewhere, and our work is often informed by work in critical theory, critical pedagogy, critical race theory, feminist theory, queer theory, social justice, and other scholarship that can help us place schooling in its social, cultural, economic, political, and ideological contexts. Finally, we offer focused analyses of particular aspects of contemporary educational thought and practice in different content areas and related to various sorts of pedagogical practices.

In this article, I explore some challenges in the teaching of particular world languages in the U.S. context. While there are many difficulties faced by world language educators, both teachers and students of certain languages—languages commonly identified with countries and cultures deemed to be hostile to the United States—often find themselves in uniquely paradoxical situations. I begin this article with a brief anecdote from my childhood, then briefly discuss the status of world language education in the United States, emphasizing the distinction between the commonly taught languages (CTLs) and the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs). Next, I provide an overview of linguistic bias in the history of world language education, focusing on the cases of German and Russian, as well as both Farsi and Arabic, and then examine the contemporary uses of "soft power" in the promotion of a country's language and culture. After a brief analysis of the role of media in constructing images of different languages for public consumption, and the impact of such media efforts on the teaching of some of the LCTLs, the article concludes with a discussion of the fundamental dilemma that we face in teaching what are considered by many Americans to be the "languages of the enemy."

The Message of Rocky and Bullwinkle

When I was a child, many of the adults around me did not speak English as their first language. Most of them had come from Central and

Eastern Europe after the Second World War; a few, after the Hungarian Revolution in 1956. In addition to English, which they virtually all spoke fairly well, they also spoke a variety of other languages, including German, Hungarian, Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, and Yiddish. Our neighborhood was a polyglot one, fairly similar to the communities that many of them had left behind. People moved from language to language based on the person with whom they were speaking, what the topic was, and a host of other factors, and engaged frequently in code mixing and code switching.

It was not simply the fact of multilingualism that was an issue, though—it was also very much the particular languages that I was used to hearing. Russian in particular was a problem, as was English spoken with a Russian (or really, any sort of Slavic) accent. This was the midst of the Cold War, and the Soviet Union—which everyone I knew always called simply Russia—was the nemesis of the United States. Our country stood for democracy and freedom. We were on the side of right and truth and justice. The Soviet Union was a society in permanent opposition to all that we valued. They were fundamentally dishonest and untrustworthy, seeking to overthrow democracies around the world and replace them with totalitarian dictatorships aligned with Moscow. We led the world scientifically and technologically; the Soviet Union was backwards and underdeveloped. And yet, at the same time the USSR was extremely dangerous as well. In spite of its lack of scientific progress, it was competing with U.S. in the space race—and, somehow, often achieving extremely impressive accomplishments. Even more, there was the arms race—the Soviet Union had nuclear weapons, and was an existential threat to the United States. This was the era of nuclear fallout shelters and school drills to prepare us for the possibility of a Soviet attack, and also of a veritable army of Soviet spies attempting to infiltrate every part of American life. And the Soviets spoke Russian—the language that I heard around me every day.

Whatever ambiguities or confusions I might have felt about speaking Russian and the Soviet threat were intensified every Saturday morning, as I watched cartoons. From late 1959 to the mid-1960s, the children's television show *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle and Friends* was broadcast on the ABC and then the NBC networks. It was an extremely popular children's show; well-written, both children and their parents could enjoy parts of the show. Its two main characters were a flying squirrel named Rocky (Rocket J. Squirrel) and his somewhat dimwitted companion, Bullwinkle (Bullwinkle J. Moose), but also included in the show were a number of other supporting characters, including Dudley-Do-Right of the Canadian Mounties (who was constantly outwitting Snidely Whiplash, the villain, and saving Nell Fenwick, who was

more interested in Dudley's horse than in Dudley himself); a segment called "Peabody's Improbable History" (featuring a dog named Peabody and his boy Sherman, who engaged in time travel to retell and "correct" many historical stories), and "Fractured Fairy Tales," which involved new and humorous versions of well-known traditional fairy tales.

There was one additional feature of *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle and Friends*. The part of *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle and Friends* that was the cause for considerable puzzlement and concern for me, were the two major villains of the show, the spies Boris Badenov and Natasha Fatale. Boris and Natasha represented evil, writ large, and if they were funny, it was because they were so pathetically incompetent and inept. Indeed, they were inevitably so unsuccessful as to be a constant source of frustration to their foreign boss, the dictator called simply "Fearless Leader." Boris and Natasha both spoke with very heavy, and clearly identifiable, Russian accents.

Thus, on a weekly basis I was presented with two profoundly evil, anti-American characters who sounded all too similar to many of the adults I loved and respected. To be sure, the adults whom I knew were no fans of the Soviet Union or of communism, any more than those who spoke with German accents had been supporters of the Nazis. The people I knew had escaped, in one way or another, from the horrors of Nazi Germany, the pogroms, the camps and the Holocaust, the Stalinist purges, and the anti-Soviet and anti-Russian Hungarian Revolution. I knew and understood this, of course—but it was far from clear to me that other Americans were always as cognizant of it as they should have been. For most Americans, it seemed, Russians were Russians.

The State of the Field

Teachers of world languages in the United States face a number of challenges, many of them shared with other educators, but others that are unique. The reality of world language education is that only one in five K-12 students in U.S. public schools study a language other than English at all (American Councils for International Education, 2017, p. 7), and most do not begin the study of a second language until middle or high school and study the language for at most four years—a recipe for not succeeding in gaining competence in another language. The fundamental problem with world language education in the United States, though, is not merely that enough students do not study foreign languages, nor that they do not begin such study early enough, nor even that they do not continue the study of such languages long enough—although all of these are indeed serious problems. The real problem is that such study is not particularly effective for most students. In spite of significant

improvements in the teaching of foreign languages, Jacques Barzun's observation in the mid-1950s remains largely true:

> Boys and girls "take" French or Spanish or German … for three, four, or five years before entering college, only to discover there that they cannot read, speak or understand it. The word for this type of instruction is not "theoretical" but "hypothetical." Its principle is "*If* it were possible to learn a foreign language in the way I have been taught, I should now know the language." (1954, p. 119, my emphasis)

This point becomes especially clear when we consider the individuals in U.S. society who *do* in fact speak a language other than English. Of the total population in the United States, roughly 80% are native speakers of English, while 20% have some other native language. At the same time, only 10% of the total claim to have good language skills in a language other than English. Further,

> As of 2006 (the most recent year for which such data are available), the overwhelming majority of US adults who reported they could speak a non-English language acquired that language at home. Only a small percentage … acquired the language at school, reflecting the challenges faced by Americans of developing language proficiency after childhood. (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2017, p. 8)

This means that of the more than 230,000,000 native speakers of English in the United States, fewer than 2,000,000—less than 1%—are able to speak a language other than English well as a result of foreign language study in school (see Neuman, 2017).

Beyond the concerns with enrollments and issues related to the effectiveness of world language education, though, there is an even deeper challenge faced by world language educators in the United States. While specialists in all disciplines inevitably believe their fields to be unique (and uniquely important), there is nevertheless a general expectation that others outside of their discipline will at least acknowledge and recognize the value of the subjects that they teach. Thus, although many educators may have had negative personal experiences in studying mathematics, few would question the value of mathematics for students. On the other hand, the vast majority of teachers (and parents, politicians, and other adults) have had generally unsuccessful experiences learning foreign languages, and, even more, do not seem really to value such learning for students. To be sure, most people will give lip service to the idea that speaking a second language would be a good thing for students, but there is no clear commitment to taking steps to ensure that such a goal is accomplished in public education. Indeed, it is not even the case that English speakers merely find it difficult to learn other languages—as Richard Brecht, of the University of Maryland's Center

for Advanced Study of Language, has suggested, "It isn't that people don't think language education is important. *It's that they don't think it's possible.*" (quoted in Friedman, 2015, my emphasis).

Fewer than 10 million students in the US of the total student population were studying a foreign language during the 2014-2015 school year (see Table 1). Generally speaking, these students were enrolled in one of nine languages, which are those that are most typically offered in US public schools. These languages fall into two groups: the CTLs and the LCTLs. The CTLs – French, German, and Spanish – are each being studied by more than 250,000 students nationally, though only French and Spanish have enrollments in excess of 1 million students (American Councils for International Education, 2017, pp. 8-9). The remaining languages—Arabic, American Sign Language (ASL), Chinese, Japanese, Latin, and Russian—are the LCTLs, and of these, only ASL, Chinese and Latin are being studied by more than 100,000 students. In short, fewer than 20% of all US students were studying a foreign language, and of these, more than three-quarters were studying Spanish.

The Challenges of Teaching the Less Commonly Taught Languages

If foreign language educators in general face problems not typically addressed by other teachers, then teachers of the LCTLs are often in an even more difficult position. In spite of the significant challenges that teachers of Spanish, French, and German, must deal with, there are reasonable selections of excellent curricular materials (textbooks and ancilliary materials) available to them, there is some degree of both parental and student interest in them, there are powerful professional

Table 1
Total Enrollment of K-12 Students in Selected Foreign Languages, 2014-2015
(Based on American Councils for International Education, 2017, pp. 8-9)

Language	*Total Enrollment*
Arabic	26,045
ASL	130,411
Chinese	227,086
French	1,289,004
German	330,898
Japanese	67,909
Latin	210,306
Russian	14,876
Spanish	7,363,125
Total	9,659,660

organizations that advocate for the teaching and learning of the CTLs, often outstanding professional development and networking opportunities exist for these languages, and (especially in the case of Spanish) in recent decades approaches to teaching heritage language learners have been developed and widely implemented (see Bale, 2014; Kagan & Dillon, 2001; Wiley et al., 2014). In the cases of the LCTLs, none of these is necessarily true, though there is a large body of literature that addresses the teaching of the LCTLs (see, e.g., Brecht & Walton, 1994; Brown, 2009; Gor & Vatz, 2011; Walker, 1991; Walton, 1991; Wang, 2009).

It is worth noting here that while the teaching of many of the LCTLs does indeed face a number of powerful barriers in the United States—shortages of qualified teachers, poor quality and limited amounts of curricular materials, and a lack of interest and support among the general population among them—there are (at the present time) no explicit or legal restrictions at any level (federal, state, or local) that would, in either principle or practice, actually prevent the teaching of any language in a public school. This has not always been the case; as we shall see, there were indeed efforts to ban the teaching of German in public schools in many parts of the United States in the 20th century, and legislation and even constitutional ammendments were required to allow American Sign Language to be taught as a foreign language in many states (see Fonseca-Greber & Reagan, 2008; Reagan, 2011; Wilcox, 1988)—but no such barriers currently exist. Rather, the barriers that work against both student enrollments and program offerings in LCTLs are more practical in nature, and are often reinforced and strengthened by both direct and indirect messaging and narratives in the popular media (see Bell, 2008; Gershon, 2010; Hodges, 2015)—similar to those communicated by the case of Boris and Natasha, but also by messaging about such factors as the lack of concern with language learning in general, the difficulty (or impossibility) of learning particular languages, and the nexus of language and ideology more generally (see, e.g., Dodick, 2018; Dubskikh & Butova, 2020).

The Politics of Language

As many scholars have pointed out over the years, language is never neutral, and is always imbued in power relations (see, e.g., Bourdieu, 1982, 2001; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970, 1997; Fairclough, 2015; Mayr, 2008). These phenomena are reflected not only in issues relevant to foreign language education—they are also clearly present in the ways in which some language varieties are deemed legitimate and others nonlegitimate (see Reagan, 2016, 2019), in official language policies (as well as in political efforts such as the English Only Movement) (see Baron,

1990; Nunberg, 1989; Tatalovich, 1995), and in the many ways in which we can see raciolinguistic ideologies in different societies (see Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rose, 2016, 2019; Rosa & Flores, 2017). These political and ideological concerns are also present in the different ways in which bilingualism is conceptualized in US society. There is, for instance, a fundamental distinction in US society between popular attitudes toward élite bilingualism (represented, for example, in "Seal of Biliteracy" programs) (see Davin & Heineke, 2017; Davin, Heineke & Egnatz, 2018; Subtirelu, Borowczyk, Hernández & Venezi, 2019) and attitudes toward what has been termed folk bilingualism – a distinction that is often reinforced in educational settings in efforts toward addititive bilingualism in the former case and the more common commitment to subtractive bilingualism in the latter (see Pliiddemann, 1997; Roberts, 2010). With this contextualization of the political and ideological nature of language in mind, we turn now to a discussion of the politics of language and language education in their historical and contemporary contexts, with a focus on the role of linguistic bias in our society, followed by an analysis of the role of language and language promotion as a component of "soft power" in international relations.

Linguistic Bias in the United States

The history of linguistic diversity in the United States predates the establishment of the newly created United States in the late 18th century, just as does the ambivalence toward particular languages at different times in our history. Benjamin Franklin published the first documented foreign language newspaper in America in 1732; it was *Die Philadelphische Zeitung*, although it existed for less than a year (Moyer, 2015). In spite of this willingness to exploit the German language for commercial purposes, Franklin had a long-standing dislike for and distrust of German immigrants in Pennsylvania. As early as 1755, he wrote:

> As few of the English understand the German Language, and so cannot address them either from the Press or Pulpit, 'tis almost impossible to remove any prejudices they once entertain … They behave, however, submissively enough at present to the Civil Government which I wish they may continue to do: For I remember when they modestly declined intermeddling in our Elections, but now they come in droves, and carry all before them, except in one or two Counties; Few of their children in the Country learn English; they import many Books from Germany; and of the six printing houses in the Province, two are entirely German, two half German half English, and but two entirely English … the Signs in our Streets have inscriptions in both languages, and in some places only German … In short unless the stream of their importation could be turned from this to other colonies … they will soon out number us,

> that all the advantages we have will not in My Opinion be able to preserve our language, and even our Government will become precarious. (Quoted in McClarey & Zummo, 2012)

There is much in this extended passage that is informative not just about Franklin's time and society, but which is all too reminiscent of our own. Indeed, had the Atlantic Ocean not been an insurmountable barrier, one could almost imagine Franklin suggesting a huge wall to keep German immigrants out of the country.

In the decades following the end of the Civil War, there had been significant increases in the numbers of immigrants to the United States from a variety of European countries. The source of the immigrants over this period shifted as well, from mainly northern and western Europe to southern and eastern Europe. These "new immigrants" came increasingly from Greece, Italy, Poland, and Russia. Further, they were generally uneducated, tended to be from rural backgrounds coming to an increasingly urban and industrial American society, and (not unimportant at the time) were overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Jewish rather than Protestant, as was the norm for native-born Americans. The languages that these "new immigrants" spoke were seen as inferior to English, and an important (indeed, key) part of the Americanization process was for their children to transition to the English language as well as to Anglo-American cultural, economic, and political norms as quickly as possible. Although the matter was one of ethnicity, race, national origin, and religion as well as language—a clear example of intersectionality—having a native language other than English could all too often place an individual at substantial risk economically, socially, and even physically (see Kloss, 1998, pp. 32-33).

German, though, seems to have often been the exception that made the rule, so to speak. Prior to World War I, German immigrants and their descendants constituted by far the largest linguistic minority population in many parts of the United States, especially in the Midwest, and German speakers actively sought both to retain and to cultivate their language (see Kloss, 1998, pp.108-116). Institutionally, the two major places where such efforts were made to accomplish this were in the churches and the public schools. Although state education law typically either required instruction in English or made no mention of the expected medium of instruction (presumably because it was assumed that the medium of instruction was to be English), the reality in many parts of the country was quite different. In a *Report* of the State Supervisor for Public Education for the state of Missouri for the years 1887-1888, for instance, the situation with respect to German was described as follows:

> In a large number of districts of the State the German element of the population greatly preponderates and as a consequence the schools are mainly taught in the German language and sometimes entirely so. Hence, if an American family lives in such a district the children must either be deprived of school privileges or else be taught in the German language. In some districts the schools are taught in German for a certain number of months and then in English, while in others German is used part of the day and English the rest. (Quoted in Kloss, 1998, p. 110)

In fact, in some areas, such as both Baltimore and Cincinnati, there were actually official English-German bilingual education programs in the public schools (Fishman, 2014). In short, prior to the First World War, German was well-established and widely acknowledged, and even respected, in many parts of the United States. Further, in many schools German was introduced and taught as a subject (for students from both English and German-speaking backgrounds) beginning in the upper elementary school grades.

This completely changed with the entry of the United States into the First World War. Germany was an enemy power, and German-Americans very much targets of suspicion. Their language in particular marked them as suspect. The anti-German hysteria that emerged during both the First and Second World Wars was profound, and was manifested in a variety of ways both formally and informally, and in a number of different domains including legislatively and educationally (see Holian, 1998; Koning, 2009). As Kloss has argued,

> War with the homeland of the ethnic group, not racial aversion, gave rise to special laws pertaining to German-Americans in World War I … There were numerous cases in which German-speaking American citizens were attacked, beaten, injured, tarred and feathered, or deprived of their freedom, and where the cattle of farmers were driven away and private and community houses (including churches) of German-speaking people were damaged. The tarring and feathering, which occasionally resulted in death, became "a kind of popular open-air sport" in some states of the Far West. (1998, p. 54)

The National Council of Defense was established in 1916, and state and local versions of this body quickly formed around the country, with the primary goal of eliminating the use of the German language. As a 1918 notice form the Texas Victoria Country Council of Defense read, "The National and State Councils of Defense request that the use of the German language be proscribed among us …. We call upon all Americans to abandon the use of the German language, in public and private, as an utmost condemnation of the rule of the sword" (quoted in Kloss, 1998, p. 61). Laws were passed banning the use of German in public, over the

telephone, on the railroad, and in churches, and the largely language disappeared in schools. German newspapers in the United States ceased being published, and in some places there were public book-burnings of texts in German.

If a major war can result in the identification of a language as an "enemy language," and of its speakers as subject to suspicion and doubts about their patriotism and loyalty, it actually takes far less than a war to accomplish such an outcome. The Russian Revolution, followed in the aftermath of World War II by the Cold War, led to abiding suspicions of the Russian language and its speakers—in spite of the fact that the United States and the USSR had actually been allies and partners during the World War. The overthrown of the Shah of Iran and the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with its vehement and often polemic rejection of and attacks on the United States, also led to deep-seated concerns about Farsi. Radical Islam and calls for *jihad*—as well as specific terrorist events, most notably 9/11—reinforced existing xenophobic (and Islamophobic) suspicions about Arabic. The growing economic and military power of the People's Republic of China (PRC)—and, most recently, questions and doubts about the origins of COVID-19 and the way in which the virus was handled by the government of the PRC in its early days—and of course building on the Chinese Communist Revolution, all contributed to comparable concerns about the Chinese language.

Language Promotion and "Soft Power"

Joseph Nye first introduced the concept of soft power in 1990, and it has proven to be an extremely useful concept in political science and the study of diplomacy and foreign affairs (Nye, 1990a, 1990b). There is an extensive literature dedicated to analyzing the use of soft power in different settings (see, e.g., Gallarotti, 2011; Nye, 2013; Rothman, 2011; Wilson, 2008). In essence, "soft power is the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one wants through attraction rather than coercion or payment. A country's soft power rests on its resources of culture, values, and policies" (Nye, 2008, p. 94). Soft power is thus contrasted with "hard power"— that is, power based on "the use of coercion and payment" (Nye, 2009, p. 160). All countries employ combinations of soft and hard power in their relationships with other countries, though some do so far more successfully than others. Although the use of soft power by the United States has been the focus of a great deal of the scholarly literature in recent years, it is useful to see how it is used to accomplish national goals in other contexts. One fairly recent example of this has the Russian use of soft power through its promotion of the idea of the "Russian World" (*Russkij Mir*) in its efforts to justify Russian actions in

Crimea and now Ukraine (Novossiia; see Bohomolov & Lytvynenko, 2012; Flavier, 2015; Nikita, 2017; Sergunin & Karabeshkin, 2015; Tsygankov, 2006, 2013). As Valentina Feklyunina has explained this phenomenon, "in the late 2000s–early 2010s, Russia's dominant identity was increasingly associated with the idea of a 'Russian world—an imagined community based on the markers of the Russian language, the Russian culture and the common glorious past" (2016, p. 773). Further, as Ammon Cheskin has commented, "Russian soft power has been subject to extensive academic and governmental scrutiny, especially in relation to Russia's aims of increasing its non-military influence in the post-Soviet space. Numerous studies have examined the soft power strategies and resources employed by the Russian state to improve its image abroad, and to further its foreign policy interests" (2017, p. 277).

One important aspect of soft power for many countries have been efforts to promote their languages and cultures, often through formal institutional organizations and bodies. This is precisely what the British Council, the Alliance Française, the Goethe-Institut, the Instituto Cervantes, and of course the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are all intended to accomplish. In some cases, the political and ideological goals—as well as the links to the country's foreign policy—are clearly stated, while in others such ties are underplayed by organizations of this type, which typically stress their cultural and linguistic functions.

Beginning in 2004, the Chinese government, initially through its Ministry of Education and more recently through the Chinese International Education Foundation, has sponsored Confucius Institutes in partnership with colleges and university in a variety of different countries around the world, including Australia, Canada, Israel, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The Confucius Institutes provide teachers, textbooks, and operating funds to promote the teaching of Chinese language and culture and to facilitate cultural exchanges. They have become increasingly controversial, though, and have been accused of giving the Chinese government excessive influence and control of curricular matters and suppressing academic freedom. In addition, there have been claims that the Confucius Institutes may also support industrial and military espionage. In the United States, there were more than 100 Confucius Institutes in 2017; today, there are fewer than 50, and the number is declining rapidly. In essence, however, the Confucius Institutes are simply examples of Chinese soft power (see Garrison, 2005; Hunter, 2009; Kurlantzick, 2007; Mingjiang Li, 2008, 2009), just as are similar institutions sponsored by other countries.

Conclusion

The close ties between language and power are reflected in many different ways. One of these is the relationship between a particular language and its speakers, on the one hand, and perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about the country or countries most closely associated with it in the minds of Americans, on the other hand. When events erupt and tensions between the US and another country (or group of nations, ideological powers, religious communities, etc.) become strained, attitudes toward the language associated with that country are foregrounded (see Kramsch, 2005; Kubota, 2006). Generally speaking, this has two effects. First, there are almost inevitably security concerns related to the need to increase our ability to access information through the language involved, and hence sincere efforts to recruit speakers of the language and support educational programs to prepare more individuals capable of functioning in it. Second, and somewhat contradictory to the first effect, suspicions arise with respect to anyone who speaks the language—perhaps more suspicions about those who speak the language natively, but even doubts about those who make the effort to learn the language and (understandably) seek to understand its speakers.

Language is a central aspect of both our individual and group identities. It can also, to some extent, mark us as insiders or outsiders in society. Historically, as we have seen, language in the United States, in conjunction with concerns about the loyalty of particular ethnic groups, has led to bans on the teaching of certain languages other than English, to public burnings of foreign language books, and even to bans on gatherings of individuals speaking particular languages. All of this was true, for instance, in the era of the First World War, and once again in the Second World War, during which the primary language targeted was German (see Holian, 1998). It was once again true during the Cold War, as the US had a somewhat schizophrenic attitude toward Russian and speakers of Russian -- questioning the loyalty and patriotism of speakers of the Russian language, while at the same time seeking to increase the numbers of students of Russian for purposes of national security.

Today, the US government (and the FBI, CIA, and NSA in particular) remains the primary employer of university graduates fluent in many of the so-called “critical languages” (Koning, 2009; Ryding, 2006). For example, as Sara Nimis and Stephen Nimis have observed,

> Teachers of Arabic today are constantly reminded of the strategic importance of Arabic. Many students are drawn to Arabic to enhance their competitiveness in seeking a career in politics, diplomacy, security, or intelligence work. The United States government acknowledges the

> need for more expertise in Arabic language, and a better understanding of people who speak it. In 2006, the Bush administration launched the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), which included Arabic and Farsi among the languages critical to the nation's security and prosperity. (2009, p. 155)

At the same time, even as speakers of these languages are serving to further the US government's agenda (a controversial matter on its own) (Bale, 2014; Wiley, 2007), they continue to be viewed with suspicion, especially in the cases of languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Pashto, and Russian. Indeed, when Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman was presenting testimony related to the impeachment of President Donald Trump in 2019, his own loyalty and patriotism were repeatedly questioned—both because his family had immigrated to the US when he was a young child, and because of his ability to speak Ukrainian (a skill, it should be noted, that was essential to his job) (Bump, 2019). This suspicion (which I am tempted to label not merely xenophobia but paranoia) goes well beyond individual and idiosyncratic cases—it often permeates views of virtually all aspects of languages and those who study them:

> Critics of academics in Arabic language and related fields [and this applies to many of the other "critical languages" as well] have become increasingly active in working to control what they perceive as an unpatriotic sympathy among academics and students of Arabic toward the criticism of American foreign policy typically found in Arabic political discourse … (Nimis & Nimis, 2009, p. 156)

There is a fundamental paradox here that needs to be recognized. Merely speaking a language does not automatically lead one to be in sympathy and support for a particular national political or ideological régime, nor does it in any way threaten a person's loyalty and patriotism toward their own country. Nevertheless, "the dilemma *is* real: It is impossible to 'understand' in the sense of being able to decode words and actions without also learning to 'understand' in the sense of seeing a different worldview as human and containing its own logic" (Nimis & Nimis, 2009, p. 156, my emphasis).

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Emphatically Our Battle

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A Content Analysis of the African Free School of New York City Curriculum, 1787-1840

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Abstract

The African Free School of New York City, established in 1787 by the New York Manumission Society, aimed at providing an education of the children of freedmen and former enslaved people. Scholarship on the role of slavery, emancipation, and racial discrimination in the post-Revolutionary and antebellum periods in the North has grown over the years. However, few studies exist that specifically examine the curriculum of the African Free School, and how the Black community's involvement in the schools impacted the curriculum taught to the students. We conducted a content analysis of the curricular documents of the African Free School in order to ascertain whether these materials from over two centuries ago shows evidence of emancipatory curriculum that was, and can still be used, as pedagogical tools to challenge racial discrimination, and decolonize the curriculum today.

Keywords: Emancipatory Curriculum, Content Analysis, African American History, Curriculum Studies, African Free School, Antebellum Studies

Introduction

The battle against caste and Slavery is emphatically our Battle; no one else can fight it for us, and with God's help we must fight it ourselves.

—James McCune Smith (1855)

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For the first 89-years of the United States' existence, equality and freedom for African Americans were elusive, particularly in the North. According to Eric Foner (2000), popular histories of the United States have "glossed-over participation of the North in America's slave system." As a result, separate institutions were established to provide former enslaved African Americans and their children with resources to adapt to life in free, and white, society. Among the most consequential of these institutions were schools. Although substantial scholarship on the role of slavery, emancipation, and racial discrimination on African American education in broader contexts of the antebellum North exists (Berlin & Harris, 2005), few studies specifically examine the curriculum of free schools, particularly the New York African Free School (AFS). Such analyses could provide important insights into how these curricular sources can be analyzed as a means to "reach back into students' histories and deeply knowing them and their ancestries to teach in ways that raise, grow, and develop their existing genius" (Muhammad, 2020, p. 13).

Research Questions and Purpose of Study

Muhammad (2020) asserts that "in contemporary classrooms across the nation, teachers, school leaders, and teacher educators are still wrestling with ways to improve and elevate the literacy achievement of youth, especially Black children and other culturally and linguistically diverse populations" (p. 10). Such concerns are not unique to 21st-century American education, as Rury (1983) notes that African Americans "in early nineteenth century New York displayed an unusually keen sense of the political role of schooling" during a time when politics concerning emancipation and expansion of slavery were inextricable (p. 197). Given the persistence of issues concerning racial inequality and segregation in American schools (Tatum, 2017), particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and 2020 social justice protests, the questions that frame this study are as follows:

1. To what extent was the curriculum of the African Free School of New York City emancipatory or a vehicle of moral uplift and Black assimilation in white antebellum society?

2. Can analysis of the African Free School of New York City curriculum provide insights to how educators can address culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy in contemporary American education, particularly for students of color?

We analyzed 51 documents of the AFS from the New York Historical Society's digital archive titled "The New York-African Free School Records, 1817-1830" in order to demonstrate how analysis of curricular

materials from over two centuries ago pertaining to Black education can guide development and implementation of emancipatory curriculum in American schools today.

Literature Review: Existing Scholarship of the AFS

Contrary to claims that "the antebellum North shone like a beacon of liberty for free blacks" (Baumgartner, 2019, p. 5), research by historians such as Eric Foner (2015), Ira Berlin (2005), Leslie Alexander (2003), Mike Wallace and Edwin Burrows (1998), Leslie Harris (2001), Graham Hodges (1999), and David Gellman (2006) starkly highlight the role of slavery and the legacy of Jim Crow segregation in public facilities, particularly schools, in the antebellum north. Therefore, the following literature review outlines a historiography of the AFS in order to situate our content analysis of the available AFS documents for evidence of whether its curriculum was one of moral uplift or emancipation for Black students from 1787-1840.

Establishment of the AFS

The movement to establish schools for Black children in the North gained momentum after the Revolutionary War. Gellman (2006) asserts that the onset of the American Revolution "gave rise to rhetoric that highlighted slavery's injustice, and the chaos of war provided opportunities for slaves to intensify their resistance to their condition as human property" (p. 16). Once the war concluded, many African Americans lived a life of conditional freedom in Northern states where the prevailing attitudes by whites believed that freedmen needed special redemption from slavery; hence, the passage of gradual emancipation laws (Berlin & Harris, 2005). Despite these attitudes, Rael (2005) and Chernow (2004) note that white abolitionist groups such as the NYMS were established to allow slave owners to manumit their slaves and provide protection for Blacks from kidnappers who sold freedmen and runaway slaves into enslavement in the South. Among the prominent founders of the NYMS included Alexander Hamilton and John Jay. Although the Society established the AFS in 1787 in order to shield the capture of freedmen and their children into slavery, a major function of the school was to uphold stereotypical views of freedmen by teaching a curriculum that would "divert Black children from the slippery path of vice" (Rury, 1983, p. 187).

Eventually, the AFS became a model for other antislavery groups to establish schools. These spaces were important to the Black community as children were growing up in a world in which African Americans were still relegated by whites to "a permanent state of immaturity, forever unable to access the responsibilities of citizenship" (Duane, 2020, p. 5).

Consequently, Muhammad (2020) argues that the emergence of Black literary societies were important to promote African American schooling as "literacy was synonymous with education at that time, [which] was also how they framed their general learning" (p. 12).

Students, Pedagogy, and Curriculum of the AFS

Initially 47 students enrolled in the AFS, which operated in a one-room schoolhouse. The first schoolmaster was Cornelius Davis, a white school teacher from Philadelphia. According to the New York Historical Society (NYHS) (2020), the school was originally limited to boys; however, the inclusion of a girl's class increased enrollment to 100 students. By the 1830s, the AFS enrolled over 900 students (Hewitt, 1990; Perrotta & Bohan, 2013). Students who attended the AFS hailed from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. For instance, James McCune Smith was the son of a single mother who was a former enslaved woman. Henry Highland Garnet was a child when he, his parents, and siblings escaped the plantation where they were enslaved in Maryland and moved to New York City (Duane, 2020). Elizabeth Jennings, who was the daughter of Thomas L. Jennings, a prominent in the abolitionist community and entrepreneur, and Elizabeth Jennings, Sr., an integral figure in the Black literary societies of New York, attended the AFS with her siblings (Mikorenda, 2020; Baumgartner, 2020; Author & Bohan, 2013). Although some students came from more disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds than others, they attended school together and were taught the same academic curriculum, as well as held to the same morality standards as imposed by the NYMS.

The AFS curriculum was comprehensive. The students learned reading, writing, arithmetic, and received lessons in Scripture. Students explored the physical sciences, natural history, astronomy, and geography; among their texts were the "Scientific Class Book," "Scientific Dialogues," and "Comstock's Natural History" that explained the characteristics and habits of birds and quadrupeds (Peterson, 2011). Geography books such as *Travels at Home* and *Cook's Travels* emphasized virtues of European exploration and seamanship to South America, the South Sea Islands, Australia, and New Zealand (Peterson, 2011). Girls did not receive nautical skills instruction, but were taught sewing and needlepoint in addition to standard subjects such as grammar and geography (Author & Bohan, 2013). According to Duane (2020), the AFS' founding, purpose, and curriculum were "by all accounts, remarkable," as many students graduated to become prominent doctors, ministers, educators, and activists such as James McCune Smith, the first African American to earn an MD, and Henry Highland Garnet, who became a prominent abolitionist and activist (p. 15).

The Lancasterian system, or monitorial system, named for Anglican missionary Joseph Lancaster, was the pedagogical method that was implemented in the AFS in order to accommodate the growing student enrollments. Under this system, the oldest and brightest students to assisted with instructing younger students and maintaining discipline. This system was an efficient way to instruct large numbers of students of diverse backgrounds, and reduce costs by keeping low teachers' salaries. Throughout the school year, students received tickets for good behavior and excelling in their studies. At the Annual Public Days of Examination, where students recited oratories to white audiences to fundraise for the AFS, the best students received prizes of fifty cents (Duane, 2020; Harris, 2003).

Tensions at the AFS

Despite the elite education that children were receiving at the AFS, significant tensions mounted between the NYMS and the Black community. One of the major issues was the NYMS's demands of absolute submission of its students and their parents to the will of the trustees. The NYMS believed that the purpose of the AFS was not only to improve the intellect of Black children, but for school personnel to be the guardians of "the religious and moral instructions of Africans" (Shaw, 1992. p. 340). Although the trustees hired Samuel Cornish, an African American reporter for the Black newspaper *The Freedom Journal*, to interview Black families and advertise the AFS in his paper, *Freedom's Journal*, the NYMS continued to seek greater influence over the political, cultural, and social condition of Blacks, regardless of socio-economic status. Consequently, the NYMS's efforts in regulating the children and their families led to neglect of addressing major issues the free community faced including inadequate access to clothing, employment, and housing, despite the quality education the children were receiving (Harris, 2003).

Another example of the friction between the NYMS and the African American community involved the Society's views on colonization. According to Duane (2020), AFS administrators "embraced the ideas of the American Colonization Society (ACS)" by stressing to students that "they could easily exchange an American future in the United States for a colonial future in Africa and still participate in the machinery of uplift" (p. 17). For instance, upon his graduation from the AFS, James McCune Smith left for the University of Glasgow to receive his medical degree (Duane, 2020). When he returned, Smith faced extreme racial discrimination despite his academic and professional accomplishments at the AFS and in Europe. Although the AFS curriculum emphasized industry, sobriety, and redemption from slavery, Kerber (1967) contends

that the true motivation of colonization was to expel African Americans from free society. Consequently, the Black community was critical because their children faced significant obstacles in reaping the socio-economic and political benefits of receiving an elite education due to persistent racial discrimination in New York City (Duane, 2020; Kerber, 1967).

Moreover, conflicts arose between the Black community and the NYMS concerning the exercise of Black education as a political act when John Teasman was promoted to principal when his predecessor William Pirsson was dismissed over salary disputes (Duane, 2020; Duane, 2010; Dabel, 2012). Teasman was successful in increasing school attendance and lowering operational costs by implementing the Lancastrian system (Alexander, 2008). Despite these accomplishments, the NYMS disagreed with Teasman's community activism. Clashes between Teasman and the NYMS peaked in 1808 during an Independence Day parade held by the free New York Black community. A banner with a full-length portrait of one of its members, probably Teasman, emblazoned with motto, *AM I NOT A MAN AND A BROTHER?* was displayed (Shaw, 1992). The NYMS strenuously objected to the banner and immediately sent a committee to the parade to investigate the banner, which resulted in Teasman's termination (Shaw, 1992). Charles C. Andrews, a white Englishman, was hired to replace Teasman. Andrews (1830) believed that the mission of the AFS was to provide Black children and their parents "the benefits of an education… when they should become free men and citizens" (p. 7). Although Andrews' beliefs that education could be a vehicle for Black enfranchisement, the NYMS' views on the race was evident, as the Society not only removed a prominent African American as principal, but they paid Andrews twice Teasman's salary (Shaw, 1992).

In 1833, a serious controversy erupted that led to the free community's demands for Andrews' termination. A student named Sanders was asked to answer a knock at the classroom door. When asked who the visitor was, Sanders stated that a "colored gentleman" wished to speak with the principal (Jennings, 1890). After the man departed, Andrews severely caned Sanders for having addressed the visitor as a "gentleman" (Harris, 2003 p. 142). Caning may have been the result of Andrews' background with discipline in England. Although Duane (2020) notes that James McCune Smith remembered Andrews as "a passionate advocate for hist students, and sought to cultivate their individual aptitudes," Andrews' treatment of Sanders was reflective of an attitude held by many whites that Blacks could never be proper gentlemen or ladies (Harris, 2003). Ultimately, this incident further demonstrated "the discomfort many instructors and administrators felt about encountering Black children on the verge of a potentially empowered adulthood" (Duane, 2010, p. 465).

Shortly after the caning, the Black community called for Andrews' dismissal and boycotted the AFS until Andrews was fired and replaced by a Black teacher. Ovington (1911) contended "Negroes had begun to assert themselves regarding the method and place of instruction for their children. They clamored for colored teachers and succeeded in displacing Charles Andrews himself" (pp. 15). Furthermore, Elizabeth Jennings (1890), the former AFS student who became a teacher and civil rights activist, also recounted this incident, writing that "in consequence of punishment and insult meted to a pupil…a number of parents became indignant, and withdrew their children (p. 2). By 1833, "virtually all of the teachers in the African Free Schools were black" (Hewitt, 1990, p. 403). In succeeding in forcing Andrews' resignation, Black New Yorkers mobilized to influence the operations at the AFS to meet their community's goals and needs (Harris, 2003). Moreover, they asserted their decision-making power over their children, choosing to send them to school instead of work, which further supported their support of an emancipatory curriculum in the AFS (Dabel, 2012).

End of AFS Operations

After Andrews' termination, the NYMS began to scale back on its commitment to supporting the AFS. Factors that led to its withdrawal from school operations included the legal emancipation in New York State in 1827, the lack of operational funds from white philanthropists, and greater competition between other schools offering Black education. The NYMS to transferred its trusteeship of the AFS to other educational agencies that could better finance the school in 1834. The four agencies that took over operations included the Board of Education of the City and County of New York, the New York Colored Orphan Asylum, the New York Society for the Promotion of Education Among School Children, and the Public School Society (PSS) (Hewitt, 1990; Perrotta & Bohan, 2013). Trustees of these agencies, particularly the PSS, immediately made changes to the AFS schools, chief among them converting all the AFS institutions to primary schools, terminating all Black teachers, and eliminating the use of AFS curricular materials (Peterson, 2011). By the 1850s, the New York City Board of Education took control of the AFS and relegated them as segregated schools, effectively excluding the Black community from all decision-making processes for their children's education (Rury,1983; Peterson, 2011).

Existing scholarship of the AFS mainly focuses on the operations of the school and experiences of students in the larger context of Black education, emancipation, and racial discrimination during the late-18th and early 19th-centuries. What is evident in the literature is that despite

the fact "the elite white male leadership of the New York Manumission Society…did not view African Americans as active agents in their own emancipation" (Baumgartner, 2019, p. 654), Black parents expressed "tremendous enthusiasm for education," and engaged in agitation, boycotts, and activism to promote socio-and economic opportunities for their children while dispelling negative racial stereotypes that hindered their future prospects upon graduation (Dabel, 2012, p. 195). Although the ceasing of NYMS operations of the AFS led to its eventual closure, the school left a lasting legacy on Black education, as well as the Black Freedom Movement in United States history, particularly since several alumni became prominent Black professionals and abolitionists. As a result, we contend that a content analysis of the curricular documents of the AFS is warranted not only to analyze whether the curriculum was emancipatory for students, but if these curricular materials can inform 21st-century educators how to effectively develop and implement culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy, especially for students of color.

Theoretical Framework

Tyson's (2006) emancipatory research framework lays the theoretical basis of this study. According to Tyson (2006), examination of hierarchical relationships as presented in curricular materials, as well as research methodologies, must not go unchallenged by implementing emancipatory epistemologies that not only identify marginalization of groups, but also "are responsive to the issues of race, privilege, and power" (p. 47). We implemented Tyson's (2006) emancipatory research framework by examining each of the AFS curricular documents for evidence of the following:

1. Did the curricular materials reflect the AFS teachers' knowledge of the communities of the students they taught?

2. Did the curricular materials reflect the AFS teachers' understanding of academic achievement, cultural consciousness, and socio-political consciousness that could disrupt deficit approaches to educating children of color?

3. Did the curricular materials reflect the goals of social justice by providing a "working model for resolving the problems marginalized populations" face due to institutional, systemic, and cumulative racism (pp. 50-52)?

We acknowledge that we are using a contemporary framework to determine whether the AFS curriculum was implicitly or explicitly emancipatory. However, Tyson's framework echoes concerns dating back to the of

19th-century with regard to the purpose of Black education Specifically, AFS alumni Smith and Garnet debated over the "political question that shaped their generation: how to imagine and secure a Black child's liberation?" (Duane, 2020). Where Smith, who promoted abolition and education by acquiescing to the "pessimistic narrative that posed African exile [as] the only viable future for Black people," Garnet "urged Black resistance… lamenting a cycle of injustice endlessly repeating itself" (Duane, 2020, pp. 7-8). Such debates predate the scholarly debates among elite Black scholars such as Carter G. Woodson, W.E.B DuBois, Marcus Garvey, and Booker T. Washington during the latter half of the 19th century and early 20th century with regard to the purpose of education in promoting Black self-determination or acceptance of segregation.[1]

Overall, our application of Tyson's framework allows us to engage in the critical work of analyzing whether curricular documents of the AFS served as a means to promote Black emancipation and self-reliance, or moral uplift and assimilation in white society. Such findings may render important insights into how contemporary curriculum can be planned, designed, and taught to foster cultural relevance and sustainability, especially for children of color.

Methodology, Data Collection and Analysis

Content analysis methodology was implemented for this study. According to Krippendorf (2018), content analysis is "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (p. 24). Prior (2011) cautions that "content counts on their own are…limiting" when conducting content analysis methodology (p. 116). As a result, he advocates for discourse analysis where the researcher asks questions and seeks answers about how terms and concepts are organized in texts, and what terms and concepts reference in texts, in order to "attempt to get a picture of the ways in which the network of references interlock" (Prior, 2011, p. 122). We chose this methodology because we are interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating New York African Free School Records Volume 4: Penmanship and drawing studies, 1816-1826, which consisted of 51 documents in the digital archive of the NYHS. We chose to analyze Volume 4 because geography, mathematics, art, and compositions were included as curricular materials of the AFS. Volume 1 contained the AFS by-laws. Volume 2 included the log of visitors and their notes from their observations of the school. Volume 3 contained copies of students' oratories and copies of speeches from the school's public examinations. Volume 3 was not included in our coding due to the fact these were speeches given for white benefactors and donors, not part of the school curriculum.

We implemented several data collection and analysis procedures for this content analysis. The first step in the development of the initial coding frame was to preview the 51 documents in the NYHS digital archive. Descriptive Coding was employed for the first round of coding where we interpreted and discussed what we initially observed in the documents (Saldana, 2009). As we viewed each document, we created categories and placed each document in a new category or placed the document in a category previously created during our initial phase of coding. We completed this step separately, then collaborated to discuss our findings. Initially, we listed 17 categories. After finding that most of the documents fall into certain content areas, we decided the categories should align with those content areas. There were four categories that emerged: Mathematics & Economics, Literature & Penmanship, Character Traits, and Arts & Maps.

With categories established, three sub-categories emerged: assimilation, implicit emancipatory, and explicit emancipatory. Employing the emancipatory research framework, we sought to examine the documents for evidence of emancipation and assess the degree to which the curriculum documents challenged the institutional, systemic, and cumulative racism facing the student population. The initial document readings suggested some documents were visibly emancipatory while other documents could be considered emancipatory through a deeper consideration of the meaning of the document. Once the initial coding frame was complete, we were able to perform the initial coding of all the curriculum documents. Upon viewing the results of the coding, it was evident that the coding frame needed slight revisions. The number of documents that were coded either implicit emancipation or explicit emancipation did not warrant two separate sub-categories. Adversely, the number of documents that were coded for assimilation was large enough to constitute two separate categories: assimilation and moral uplift. The final coding frame was developed using these new sub-categories, as seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Subcategories

Name	*Description*
Assimilation	Assimilation is a code that applies to a document that encourages, highlights, or glorifies Eurocentric values.
Moral uplift	Moral uplift is a code that applies to a document that encourages moral uplift
Emancipatory	Emancipatory is a code that applies to a document that encourages emancipation and racial equity.

For the second round of Evaluation Coding, we used Dedoose 8.3.35 software to code the data. Evaluation Coding can be used to assign judgements about the merits of programs and appropriate for critical studies (Saldana, 2009). In this study, Evaluation Coding is used to asses if the AFS curriculum was emancipatory for African American students. We carefully considered how each document should be coded after finalizing the coding frame. During our first round of coding with the initial coding frame, we had time to address questions that arose while we were considering how to code the documents. For instance, the main question we considered was whether we would examine the individual parts of the document or examine the document holistically? Since the documents are relatively short and we were seeking to assess the meaning that students take from the curriculum, we decided to examine the documents holistically. Each document consisted of words and/or images, a description provided by the NYHS, and a transcript of the document. Many of the documents are difficult to read, so the transcript and descriptions provided by the NYHS significantly contributed to our decisions.

The next question we grappled with focused on what documents would be considered evidence of emancipatory curriculum? Undoubtedly, documents that directly addressed challenging racial injustice would be categorized as emancipatory, but we needed to decide what other forms of curriculum would encourage emancipation. We concluded that mathematics and economics curriculum materials would be coded as emancipatory because this content area material provided students with skills needed to become financially independent (Alexander, 2004). Although all documents that fall into the mathematics and economics category are coded as emancipatory, those documents can still receive an additional code of assimilation or uplift if the context of the document deems necessary. For instance, documents such as "The Rule of Three" could receive a secondary code of assimilation or uplift due to the fact that Black students would have to assimilate into the white middle class as a result of uplift in order to work in commodities and stock market ventures (NYHS, 2020). As a result, we took into consideration that economics and mathematics artifacts could be considered both assimilation or emancipation depending upon the context and perspective of whether a white teacher or a Black student or community member were to analyze these documents.

Upon recoding the documents to refine the categories (Saldana, 2009), there were some documents that did not strongly signify either emancipation, moral uplift or assimilation. These documents did not encourage, glorify, or highlight Eurocentric values or likeness, nor did these documents evidence resistance to racial injustice. Some of the documents were student materials and some of the documents were

teacher lesson plans. We reasoned that student materials would fall into the assimilation category because they did not challenge the status quo. The teacher lesson plans that focused on teaching graphic arts would constitute another category T-Teacher Materials that we would not further analyze for this study. Ultimately, our employment of content analysis methodology allowed us to deeply engage in the interpretation of diverse curricular materials of the AFS by closely reading, re-articulating, and interpretating documents while simultaneously analyzing how the historical contexts of the 18th and 19th century shaped these documents.

Researchers' Subjectivities

As researchers, we are the primary instrument in a qualitative content analysis, thus acknowledgement of our subjectivities is necessary. The first author is a white woman who is originally from an urban region of the Northeast with experience teaching middle school social studies, undergraduate survey courses on U.S. history, and graduate courses in teacher education methods and curriculum theory at public and private universities. The second author is a Black woman from a metropolitan area in the southeast. She has experience teaching middle and high school social studies, undergraduate and graduate social studies methods courses, supervising first-year teachers, and developing online social studies courses for a large school district. We acknowledge that our subjectivities impacted how we analyzed these documents for evidence of moral uplift, assimilation, or emancipatory education (Krippendorf, 2018). As a result, maintaining complete objectivity was not possible.

Findings

Upon applying Tyson's (2006) framework after we coded the documents, we found that the majority of AFS curriculum did not explicitly promote emancipatory education for its students. These findings are in alignment to the literature review and historiography, demonstrating that despite The NYMS' intent to prepare the children of former slaves and freedmen with an education, the majority of the curriculum was Eurocentric and did not adequately take into account the teachers' knowledge of the communities where the children lived. Moreover, the curricular materials were not developed to disrupt deficit approaches for educating Black children.

The following four tables show the documents coded by category. The first category displayed is Arts & Maps. Documents in this category focus on visual arts or maps. There are 15 documents in the category

Arts & Maps with 12 coded assimilation, one coded moral uplift and two coded emancipation. Two documents have a secondary code. "John Burns, Inspector General of Reading", has a secondary code of assimilation in the Character Traits category which is discussed in Table 3. The document titled "Ships" is coded assimilation and emancipation because there are two distinct parts of the document.

Table 3 shows the second category, Character Traits. Character Traits is a category that applies to a document that confers a characteristic, moral, value or emotion of a person. There are five documents in the Character Traits category. Four of the five documents are double coded. Emblems", which is coded moral uplift, is the only document in this category that does not have an assimilation code and it is also the only document that does not have a double code.

Table 4 features the third category, Literature and Penmanship. Literature & Penmanship is a category that applies to a document focused on literature or penmanship. Twelve documents are assigned to this category. Six of the documents are coded assimilation, six of the documents are coded assimilation, and two are coded emancipation. "Richard Fitch's Exemplary Penmanship" has a secondary code of emancipation in the category Mathematics and Economics that will be discussed in Table 5. "A Short Account of the Lion" and "Original Poem by William Seaman" are both double coded within the category of Literature & Penmanship.

Table 5 shows Mathematics and Economics, the fourth category. Mathematics & Economics is a category that applies to a document focused on mathematics or economics. Ten documents are assigned to this category. As previously noted, we presumed that mathematics and economics curriculum is inherently emancipatory because it provided students with skills that could help them become financially independent, thus all documents are coded emancipatory. Consequently, the document "working with fabric" received a secondary code assimilation because of the gendered aim of preparing girls for jobs in sewing.

Analysis of these documents evidenced assimilation and moral uplift due to the emphasis on Eurocentric standards of knowledge, behavior, and beauty. For instance, Andrew R. Smith's sketch of a white woman titled by the NYHS as "Standards of Beauty," and Thomas Lattin's sketch of a Roman man titled "Innocence" by the NYHS. Furthermore, James McCune Smith's sketches of Benjamin Franklin and Napoleon III are described by the NYHS (2020) as examples of figures in western history that AFS students could emulate by studying how they faced and overcame adversity. Although these sketches demonstrate the AFS students' artistic talents, the NYHS (2020) notes that "nowhere in this volume do we find a portrait of a black subject."

Table 2
Arts & Maps Coded Documents

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
John Burns, Inspector General of Reading	Student: John Burns Date: 1816 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28510 Page: 10	Emancipation	Assimilation	In this document, John Burns, a student who held a leadership position in the school, penned a flyer with great attention to penmanship announcing his titles (Inspector General and Librarian), the school's name, his age and years in school. This document is coded as emancipatory because the student appeared to take pride in his titles and had the job of teaching his peers.
Benjamin Franklin, Ambassador to France	Student: James McCune Smith Date: 1826* Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28529 Page: Unnumbered *Identified as 1820 in the NYHS Examination Days online exhibit	Moral Up;ift	N/A	James McCune Smith (student) created a copy of a famous painting of Benjamin Franklin's visit to France while he was an ambassador. The description provided for the document states, "Benjamin Franklin was a stellar figure in the early republic, often considered to embody much of the young nation's primary virtues—self-reliance, resilience,and ingenuity" and "Ben Franklin's story of success likely proved an inspiring example to these young students". This document is coded moral uplift as a result of the virtues that students were expected to take from the subject of the assignment.
Drawing of Napoleon Francois, Charles Joseph, by James McCune Smith	Student: James McCune Smith Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28537 Page: Unnumbered	Assimilation	N/A	James McCune Smith (student) drew a picture of Napoleon II. Although the archive's description suggests that young Black students might identify with the prince because he was exiled this document is coded as assimilation because students' history and arts studies were focused on European history.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Tools of a Trade	Student: Henry Hill Date: 1816 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28538 Page: Unnumbered	Emanci-patory	N/A	Henry Hill (student)drew a map of the seaports along the Atlantic shore. This document is coded emancipatory due to the number of Black men employed in seafaring occupations ar the time. This knowledge provided the students with an opportunity to move toward financial stability and possible financial freedom.
Rendering the Land	Student: John Burns, and Edward Haines Date: 1817 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28539 Page: Unnumbered	Assimi-tion	N/A	The top image of this document by John Burns is coded assimilation because the archive highlights how Chares C. Andrews used this hand drawn map of North America for examination days and for admiration by potential white donors. The bottom image displays Edward Haines' second attempt at a landscape painting which is described in the archive as "an out growth of the Romantic movement, was an important force in British art in the early eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries". This document is coded as assimilation because of the Eurocentric focus of the art.
Standards of Beauty	Student: Andrew R. Smith Date: 1822 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28540 Page: Unnumbered	Assimi-lation	N/A	Andrew R. Smith drew a portrait of a woman with "classically European features". The archive goes on to state "students' art lessons about beauty and grace were based on white European traditions and models. Nowhere in this volume do we find a portrait of a black subject". Therefore, this document is coded assimilation.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Pastoral Scene by Andrew R. Smith	Student: Andrew R. Smith Date: 1822 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28541 Page: Unnumbered	Assimi-lation	N/A	Andrew R. Smith drew a pastoral scene that resembles a European countryside. This document is coded assimilation because of the Eurocentric focus
Ships	Student: n/a Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28542 Page: Unnumbered	Assmi-lation	Emanci-pation	This document displays two drawings. The top drawing is a rural scene, and the bottom drawing is of a steamboat. The top drawing does not suggest an explicit or implicit theme of emancipation, so the document is coded assimilation. Since the bottom drawing was nautical art and "considered essential for people who were planning nautical careers," the document is also coded emancipation.
Rose Emblem	Student: n/a Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28543 Page: Unnumbered	Assimi-lation	N/A	This document is a drawing of a rose in thorns. The archive states, "[t]he rose nestled in thorns was a popular emblem found in many educational books." This document is coded assimilation because there is nothing explicitly or implicitly emancipatory about the lesson, although the archive describes the imagery of the rose and thorns as juxtaposing beauty and pain.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Camel	Student: n/a Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28544 Page: Unnumbered	Assimilation	N/A	This document is a drawing of a camel. The archive suggests, "[l]ike the lion, the camel represented exotic climes for New York students. Its prominence in biblical stories and iconography would have made it a strong candidate for inclusion in drawing lessons." This document is coded assimilation because there is nothing explicitly or implicitly emancipatory about the lesson, but connected to Judeo-Christian symbolism.
Drawing of a Hunting Scene	Student: n/a Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28545 Page: Unnumbered	Assimilation	N/A	This document is coded assimilation because of the Eurocentric imagery of a white man hunting with dogs. The archive also highlights that this image could have been potentially triggering due to the fact students such as Henry Highland Garnet was a child when he and his family ran away from slavery in Maryland, and later were subjected to a kidnapping attempt once in New York City. White slave catchers often used dogs when tracking down fugitive slaves or capturing freedmen.
Drawing of a Farm Scene	Student: n/a Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28546 Page: Unnumbered	Assimilation	N/A	For this document, the archive states, "Many of the drawing books of the era asked students to focus on pieces of larger images in order to master the details." This document is coded assimilation because it is not explicitly or implicitly emancipatory or encouraging moral uplift.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Drawing of a Farm Scene and American National Emblem	Student: n/a Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28547 Page: Unnumbered	Assimilation	Emancipation	The top image of a rural cottage was a shift in focus on stately mansions of the upper classes that students were often instructed to draw. Such a shift reflects an assimilation code due to the emphasis of freedmen living humble lives. The bottom image is the great seal of the United States. The archive informs, "[t]hroughout the War of 1812, and during the 1820s New York City's Blacks often highlighted their American character in an effort to counter the American Colonization Society's plans to send free people of color back to Africa," therefore this document is double coded as emancipation.
Innocence	Student: Thomas Lattin Date: 1826 Collection: NYAFS Records 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28548 Page: Unnumbered	Assimilation	N/A	This document is a drawing exercise which "asked students to create portraits that embodied certain emotions or states of mind". The archive also states, "[t]his portrait is clearly influenced by classical sources—the man is drawn with Roman features and dress," thus this document is coded assimilation.
Contempt	Student: M. Burns* Date: 1812 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28549 Page: Unnumbered	Assimilation	N/A	This document is a drawing done by M. Burns which emphasized the facial expressions of contempt. The subject of the portrait had European features, so this document is coded assimilation.

*John Read and John Burns are also noted as contributors to this document in the NYHS Digital Archive

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Two Drawings of Farm Houses	Student: John Read, John Burns* Date: 1817 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28550 Page: Unnumbered *John Read and John Burns are named as the contributors of the documents in the NYHS Examination Days online exhibit	Assimi-lation	N/A	The archive states that these images are most likely copies of "a copy of a rural cottage painting exemplified by European artists like Gainsborough," which led this document to be coded assimilation
Illustration of the African Free School	Student: John Burns Date: 1814 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28508 Page: 8	Moral Uplift	N/A	The archive states that this illustration by John Burns was a depiction of a new school building after the previous one burned down. School treasurer John Murray led fundraising efforts to rebuild the school. Burns writes "the New York African Free School Erected in the Year 1815 by the New York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and Protecting Such of Them That Have Been, Or May Be Liberated," and lists the trustees and teacher Charles C. Andrews. The identification of the school as being run by an organization whose aims are to manumit enslaved African Americans and to protect freedmen who were liberated, this document is coded moral uplift.

Table 3
Character Traits Coded Documents

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Emblems of Education	Student: Henry Hill Date: 1816 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28503 Page: 1	Moral Uplift	N/A	This document is a copy of the poem "Emblems". The archive states, "The use of emblems—visual images that inspired moral sentiments—were particularly popular," therefore, this document is coded moral uplift.
Henry Hill, Practice, Monitor General	Student: Henry Hill Date: 1816 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28505 Page: 3	Assimi-lation	Emanci-pation	This document displays math problems written by Henry Hill and signed with the title Monitor General in large letters suggesting he took pride in the title. The archive explains that the title of Monitor General "means that he would have had a great deal of responsibility over the rest of the class, often performing the same tasks as an adult teacher". Since Hill was given leadership responsibility, seemingly took pride in his title, and had the opportunity to help his peers learn, this document is coded emancipatory.
John Burns, Inspector General of Reading	Student: John Burns Date: 1816 Collection NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: n/a Page: 1	Assimi-lation	Emanci-patory	This document shows up for a second time in the Character Traits category. The archive describes John Burns as the General of Reading and explains that in this role he monitored behavior which led to the code assimilation for Character Traits.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Edward T. Haines, Star Student	Student: Edward Haines Date: 1819 Collection NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28513 Page: Unnumbered	Assimi-lation	Emanci-pation	This document received two codes in the Character Traits category. The archive states, “Edward T. Haines, clearly a star student, proudly displays his handwriting skill and his title as assistant monitor general, a position that carried significant responsibilities”. Because handwriting skills were necessary for successful integration in society, this document was coded assimilation. Since the student held a position with significant responsibilities, it was coded emancipation.
Original Composition, Valedictory Address of Andrew R. Smith	Student: Andrew R. Smith Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28524 and 28525 Page: Unnumbered	Assimi-lation	Moral Uplift	This document is the Valedictorian speech of Andrew R. Smith. In his speech, he states, “let me remind you my fellow Schoolmates, who are about to leave with me, that we are now entering into a wild field, and that we must be industrious and upright to make respectable members of society, and to be an honor to our parents; We must make such use of our learning as will prove a blessing to ourselves, and to the community with which Providence now calls us to mix.” Since Smith explicitly discussed assimilation as well as the morals the students should display, this document received both codes.

Table 4
Literature & Penmanship Coded Documents

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Richard Fitch's Exemplary Penmanship	Student: Richard Fitch Date: 1816 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28506 Page: 6	Assimi-lation	Emanci-pation	This document shows math practice problems done by Richard Fitch, but the emphasis is on the exemplary penmanship. Penmanship is a skill that would help free Blacks integrate in society, therefore this document is coded assimilation. The document has a second code of emancipation in the Mathematics and Economics category which will be discussed in the next table.
"Of Necessary Confidence"	Student: John Burns Date: n/d Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28507 Page: 7	Moral Uplift	N/A	This document is completed by John Burns and is a copy of a poem by John Huddlestone Wynne titled Choice Emblems. The archive explains, "[t]he poem focuses on the need for hope—a subject that would have likely resonated with many of the students in the school, who faced the formidable obstacles of poverty, racial prejudice, and the threat of kidnapping," thus this document was coded moral uplift. This was not coded emancipatory because the poem offers little beyond hope to support people of color overcoming racial discimrination.
Interest, Swan Flourish	Student: John Burns Date: 1816 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28509 Page: 9	Emanci-pation	N/A	This document was an example of swan's flourish which was a type of penmanship taught. The archive explains that mastery of this penmanship "made forged documents easier to detect". This skills is undoubtedly valuable to free Blacks, therefore this document is coded emancipation.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
"Unhappy Close of Life"	Student: Edward Haines Date: 1819 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28511 Page: Unnumbered	Moral Uplift	N/A	This document is "Edward Haines's finely penned copy of "Unhappy Close of Life," by the Scottish poet Robert Blair (1699–1746)" and the archive points out that one of the purposes of this poem was to instill the principles of piety and virtue. This document is coded moral uplift.
"On Liberty"	Student: Nicholas Bartow Date: 1820 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28514 Page: Unnumbered	Moral Uplift	N/A	This document, done by Nicholas Bartom, is a copy of "Liberty and Slavery Contrasted" by Joseph Addion. The archive states the selection "focuses solely on the happy prospect of liberty, a choice that anticipates the emphasis of many free blacks in the North on local civil rights rather than on abolition". This document is coded moral uplift
"A Short Account of the Lion"	Student: n/a Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28517 Page: Unnumbered	Assimi-lation	Emanci-pation	This document is a copy of "A Short Account of the Lion" was likely copied from Caleb Bingham's The American Preceptor", which was a schoolbook designed to teach the art of public speaking. Although the recitation of this poem was aimed at helping free Blacks integrate into society, the NYHS highlights how Frederick Douglass credited Bingham's poems for his development of his abolitionist oratory. As a result, this document is coded as emancipation.
"On the Lion," Original Poem by William Seaman	Student: William Seaman Date n/a Collection: NYAFS Records 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28518 Page: Unnumbered	Emanci-pation	Moral Uplift	This document is an original poem by William Seaman.The archive explains that in the poem "he builds upon the attributes of the lion to create a noble portrait of African identity" which led to a code of emancipation. The document is also coded moral uplift due to the inspiration or sense of pride it might instill in other students.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
"On the .Fair." and "Explanation" Original Poetry by Andrew R. Smith	Student: Andrew R. Smith* Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawin Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28519 & 28520 Page: Unnumbered *Originally credited to William Seaman on the NYHS Examination Days online exhibit	Assimi-lation	N/A	This document is an original poem created by William Seaman. The explanation of the poem, the student explains, "a specimen of his or her ingenuity in mechanics, needle work, drawing, Composition, either in prose or poetry &c. Many of us tried hard to gain the highest prize (50 School Tickets)." This document is coded assimilation.
"Lines," Original Poetry by Adeline Groves	Student: Adeline Groves Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28526	Assimi-lation	N/A	This document is an original poem by Adeline Groves "in which a Black servant laments the loss of a white child." The archive explains that this was a strategy "to create interracial networks of sympathy." This document is coded assimilation.
"Account of a Horse," Excerpt from Count de Buffon's Natural History	Student: Jacob Pattin Date: 1826 Collection: NYAFS Records 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28527	Assimi-lation	N/A	This document is a copy of an excerpt from Natural History, General and Particular by the Count de Buffon. Because de Buffon would become involved in the field of scientific racism and there is no explicit or implicit connection to emancipatory themes, this document is coded assimilation.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
James McCune's Address to General Lafayette	Student: James McCune Smith Date: 1824 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28550 Page: Unnumbered	Moral Up;ift	Emanci-patory	This document is an address made by James McCune Smith to General Lafayette where he expressed his gratitude for the general visiting the institution, his philanthropy and associations with the New York Manumission Society, and what he has done as a French ally during the American Revolution. This document is coded moral uplift. This document received a secondary code as emancipation because Lafayette later gained a reputation of being an abolitionist by Frederick Douglass.
Richard Fitch's Performance	Student: Richard Fitch Date: n/a Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28532 Page: Unnumbered	Moral Uplift	N/A	In this document, Richard Fitch copied "Of Applause" by John Huddleson Wynne which included a moral of warning of the danger of fame and fortune for people of color. This document is coded moral uplift.
Sampler, "Truth" by Rosena Disery	Student: Rosena Disery Date: 1820 Collection NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: n/a Page: Unnumbered	Moral Uplift	Emanci-patory	The poem stitched on this sampler is an excerpt from the French poem "Self-Love and Truth Incompatible." According to the NYHS, the stitched flowers, fruit, and urns were emblematic of the Quaker influence on the founding of the AFS. This document is coded moral uplift because samplers were often displayed on examination days by trustees, and female students treated these samplers like diplomas in their homes.This document has a secondary code as emancipatory because the samplers exemplified a woman's dexterity in needlepoint work and overall literacy abilities.

Table 4
Mathematics & Economics Coded Documents

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Rule of Three, with London Merchant	Student: Henry Hill Date: 1816 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28504 Page: 2	Emanci-pation	N/A	This document displays the Rule of Three. The archive states, "[t]o know the "rule of three" in the nineteenth century implied a certain basic competency in mathematics". This document is coded emancipation.
Richard Fitch's Practice, Exemplary Penmanship	Student: Richard Fitch Date: 1816 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28506 Page: 6	Emanci-pation	N/A	This document shows practice math problems done by Richard Fitch. This document is coded emancipation.
Ciphering to the Rule of Three	Student: n/a Date: 1816 Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28512 Page: Unnumbered	Emanci-pation	N/A	This document is an example of "ciphering to the rule of of three" where the student uses U.S dollars.
Fellowship	Student: Nicholas Bartow Date: n/d Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28515 Page: Unnumbered	Emanci-pation	N/A	The math problems displayed in this document have to do with stock ventures. The document is coded emancipation.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Fellowship Continued	Student: Nicholas Bartow Date: n/d Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28516 Page: Unnumbered	Emanci-pation	N/A	The math problems displayed in this document have to do with stock ventures. This document is coded emancipation.
Reduction of Vulgar Fractions	Student: Andrew R. Smith Date: n/d Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28521 Page: Unnumbered	Emanci-pation	N/A	In describing this document, the archive suggests, "Mathematical skill is highlighted by creative presentation and artful penmanship". This document is coded emancipation.
Single Rule of Three in Vulgar Fractions	Student: n/a Date: n/d Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28522 Page: Unnumbered	Emanci-pation	N/A	This document was a copy of the Single Rule of Three, and two word problems. This document is coded emancipation.
Single Rule of Three-Working with Fabric	Student: n/a Date: n/d Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28523 Page: Unnumbered	Emanci-pation	Assimi-lation	This document featured math examples that focused on buying and selling ribbon while using decimals. This document is coded emancipation. This document has a secondary code of assimilation because the archive suggests that the exercise is geared toward the female students who learned sewing.

Document Name	*Description (from archive)*	*Code*	*Secondary Code*	*Rationale*
Compound Fellowship	Student: n/a Date: n/d Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series Penmanshi and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 28528 Page: Unnumbered	Emanci-pation	N/A	This document discusses the rule of Compound Fellowship along with examples. The archive states, “Knowledge of stock trading was considered an essential part of basic education. It also places African Free School students at least in their imagination, as members of the prosperous merchant class who could build wealth through their own ventures, or by investing in the businesses of others.” This document is coded emancipation.
Square Root	Student: James McCune Smith Date:1826* Collection: NYAFS Records, 1817-1832 Series: Penmanship and Drawing Studies, 1816-1826 Identifier: 2853 Page: Unnumbered *Originally identified as 1820 in the NYHS Examination Days online exhibit	Emanci-pation	N/A	This document discussed the concept of square root with visual and mathematical examples. This document is coded emancipation.

Furthermore, some materials were obviously not intended to be emancipatory, but rather cautionary for Black students to express gratitude for the role of the school in the moral uplift, as well as to maintain AFS standards of behavior concerning sobriety and modesty. Henry Hill's drawing of a drooping tree served as an emblem or symbol used to demonstrate a lesson or moral for students. In this particular emblem titled "Emblem of Education," Hill writes (1816):

> Thus prudent care must rear the youthful mind,
> By love supported, and with toil refin'd
> 'Tis this alone the human plant can rise;
> Unprop'd, it droops, and unsupported dies.

Moreover, Richard Fitch's handwritten copy of John Huddlestone Wynne's "Of Applause," which warns students to avoid the temptation of fame and attention. These documents show that the majority of the available AFS curricular materials were aimed at promoting Black assimilation into mainstream white society in New York City.

Despite the fact that AFS documents did not obviously foster an emancipatory curriculum, students demonstrated evidence of implicit and explicit sentiments concerning matters of race, justice, and equality in their oratories and writings. Documents that implied emancipatory curriculum could also be interpreted as promoting assimilation with regard to the moral uplift aims of the NYMS and other white abolitionists during the 18th and 19th century. However, we also find that student work that highlighted themes such as hope could be intended to resist racial discrimination, hence being explicitly emancipatory. For instance, the handwritten copy of John Huddlestone Wynne's poem "Of Necessary Confidence, Hope is the First Great Blessing" by student John Burns highlights this hope. The NYHS (2020) transcribes Burns' poem by stating that this kind of assignment that focused on hope might have "likely resonated with many students in the school who faced the formidable obstacles of poverty, racial prejudice, and the threat of kidnapping." Moreover, the embroidered sampler stitched by Rosena Disery (1820), features an excerpted French poem "Self-Love and Truth Incompatible" that states:

> O Truth, whom millions
> Proudly slight,
> O Truth, my treasure
> and delight
> Accept this tribute for thy name,
> And their poor heart from
> Which it came.

Although much of the AFS curriculum was not directly reflective of teachers' understandings of the students' cultures and community assets, the mission of the NYMS was to provide education for students to

become industrious in their communities. These samplers, albeit used to demonstrate students' accomplishments for potential white donors and benefactors, also functioned as a diploma that graduates could display (NYHS, 2020). As a result, such displays of scholastic achievement could be interpreted as implicitly emancipatory, particularly for girls, because several AFS alumni such as Disery became fervent abolitionists by working with and marrying prominent members of the free community in New York City.

The most explicit examples of students expressing emancipatory sentiments in the AFS curriculum documents are evident in the original poetry written by students. For example, William Seaman's poem "On the Lion," emphasizes "the noble portrait of African identity" (NYHS, 2020). Seaman (n.d.) writes:

> On Afric's dark and sultry shore,
> This mighty beast is heard to roar,
> And oft on dry and barren grounds,
> He most majestically stands.

Despite the fact the emphasis on African nobility could be seen as one of assimilation, Seaman's poem can be considered an example of an emancipatory curricular material because of the student's cognizance of having an African identity that was strong and distinct from Europe. Furthermore, Andrew R. Smith's (n.d.) valedictory address, emblematic of the product of the curriculum he was taught at the AFS, could be emancipatory because of his advice to his classmates:

> Let me remind you my fellow Schoolmates, who are about to leave with me, that we are now entering into a wild field, and that we must be industrious and upright to make respectable members of society, and to be an honor to our parents; We must make such use of our learning as will prove a blessing to ourselves, and to the community with which Providence now calls us to mix.

Although Smith's address expresses the notions of assimilation and moral uplift in the AFS curriculum, the fact that he bluntly calls upon his classmates to be prepared for entering into uncertain times fraught with racial violence, colonization, and kidnapping, can be evidence of emancipatory curriculum because Smith calls upon his classmates to use their education and race consciousness as active members of the free community.

Discussion

Overall, the available AFS curricular materials were not intended to promote emancipatory curriculum. The documents do not indicate an

obvious influence of parents on the curriculum because the available materials were produced during Andrews' tenure as principal, but the aims of moral uplift for the children of freedmen, which Andrews (1830) states, "the colored part of this community, specifically, ought to know the names of those who came forward [from the NYMS] to vindicate the cause of their then oppression and enslaved fathers and brethren" (p.8). However, students, such as William, exercised some agency in expressing emancipatory views in the curricular documents as seen in original poems and oratories that highlighted racial pride despite the discriminatory prejudice they faced in white society. Andrews (1830) likely allowed students to express these views, as he acknowledged that despite students' achievements and praise by teachers and trustees at the AFS:

> He leaves school, with every avenue closed to him, which is open to the white boy, for honorable and respectable rank in society, doomed to encounter as much prejudice and contempt, as if he were not only destitute of that education which distinguishes the civilized from the savage, but as if he were incapable of receiving it. (p. 118)

As a result, this content analysis reveals that while Black children who attended the AFS faced insurmountable challenges due to systemic racism in the antebellum north, the education they received contributed to the abolition and emancipation movements before and after the Civil War that influenced future generations of Black scholars to promote racial equity, civil rights, and excellence for children of color in American schools and society.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

There were limitations to this study. Chief among them is content analysis methodology itself. Themes and patterns in the data may appear, but may not necessarily highlight cause and effect. Content analysis is limited to messages that have already been recorded (Berg, 2009). As a result, a text can have multiple meanings and understandings, which give way to subjective interpretation (Graneheim & Lundman, 2003). Moreover, our study lacked outside evaluation of our content analysis findings. Despite our efforts to remain objective, our subjectivities may cloud the categorization and analyses of these documents. The coding of these documents by independent evaluators who are experts in Black education and history may strengthen our findings and encourage further scrutiny into the curricular materials of other free schools in the antebellum north.

Furthermore, only 51 documents dating from 1816-1826 were available on the NYHS digital archive. Once Adobe Flash was discontinued, these documents were transferred into a larger online archive of AFS

materials dating from 1817-1832, inclusive of the school bylaws, observations of school visitors, and oratories given at examination day events. Due to the temporary unavailability of the documents due to the shift from Adobe Flash, as well as travel concerns posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, a visit to the NYHS archive at this time is not feasible. Without additional curricular materials, particularly teacher lesson plans and work samples by female students, we do not have a complete picture of how the AFS curriculum evolved, particularly once girls were admitted to the school and the influence of parents and the Black community after Andrews' dismissal in 1833.

Despite these limitations, our findings yield important implications for future research. First, we recommend that analysis into the curriculum of other free schools in northern states, as well as their alumni, be conducted. Recent scholarship by Duane (2020) highlights the abolitionist work of James McCune Smith and Henry Highland Garnet once they graduated from the AFS. Additionally, Mikorenda's (2020) biography about Elizabeth Jennings Graham and Baumgartner's (2019) book examining antebellum female literary societies address the role Black schools such as the AFS in civil rights activism in the north during the 19th century. Although Andrews (1830) mentions operations of free schools in Philadelphia, further research, particularly of the AFS bylaws, visitor observations, and examination oratories, would be integral into examining whether the NYMS operated under typical protocols and attitudes towards the Black community, or if their approach to educating the children of former enslaved parents was unique to New York City. These insights would provide educators, scholars, and stake holders greater understandings of the "historical excellence of Black education" when reframing the contemporary curriculum, especially for children of color, by examining how the goals of antebellum Black literacy encompassed not only the ability to read and write, but to engage in "acts of self-empowerment, self-determination, and self-liberation" (Muhammad, 2020, pp. 21-22).

Second, we contend that further scholarship is needed that focus on the representation of race, and challenging systemic racism, in the modern American curriculum. For instance, the proposal of a "patriotic education commission" and grant funding of a "pro-America curriculum" during the Trump Administration would push back against school districts that adopted curricular materials about enslavement and systemic racism from sources such as Hannah-Nicole Jones' *The New York Times Magazine's 1619 Project* (Wise, 2020). Although criticisms exist with regard to *The 1619 Project*'s lack of consultation with historians, Leslie Harris (2020), who did consult with Jones on the Project, argues, "It is easy to correct facts; it is much harder to correct

a worldview that consistently ignores and distorts the role of African Americans and race in our history." McBean and Feinberg (2020) assert that disregard of systemic racism and its social and economic consequences in the social studies curriculum adds to deficit thinking toward people of color. Therefore, we recommend that future research on the curriculum of free schools such as the AFS be conducted in order to examine how messages that are sent implicitly and explicitly in the formal, taught, and learned curricula can prepare students to recognize, challenge and overcome the systemic injustices that continue to endure, particularly in communities of color.

Third, we contend that studies in which contemporary frameworks that focus on culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy be applied not only when examining the curriculum of antebellum free schools, but also the modern-day curriculum. For example, Muhammad's Historically Responsive Literacy (HRL) Framework could be implemented to study the curricular goals of Black educational institutions such as the AFS. The HRL "responds to the limitations of traditional school curricula, urging us to recognize and embrace the exalted literacy legacy—established by the 19th century Black literary society—of our students of color" (Muhammad, 2020, p. 13). The HRL framework includes the goals of:

> 1. Identity development: making sense of who a student is through reading and writing
>
> 2. Skill development: developing literacy proficiencies in the content students are learning
>
> 3. Intellectual development: gaining new knowledge and concepts in the world
>
> 4. Criticality: developing the ability to read texts to understand power, authority and anti-oppression. (Muhammad, 2020, p. 12)

Although the curricular aims of the AFS was not to promote emancipatory education, some students of the school such as William Seaman exercised some agency in engaging in criticality as evidenced in his original poems and oratories. As a result, we recommend that future studies implement frameworks like the HRL to bridge the historical legacies of antebellum schools and literary societies in order to examine how the goals of the curriculum not only impacted the antebellum free community, but also to "shed light on recent educational issues with respect to race," such as debates over teaching Critical Race Theory in K-12 schools (Crawford & Bohan, 2019, p. 146; O'Kane, 2021).

Conclusion

Although emancipatory aims were not explicit in the AFS curriculum, evidence of students' expression of racial pride and resistance to racial discrimination exists in the documents. Furthermore, the Black community was involved in curricular and instructional matters of the school, especially when attitudes of the NYMS trustees towards colonization and obedience ran counter to the goals of Black activism in the free community. Consequently, the aim of this study is to demonstrate that examination of the curricular documents of free schools such as the AFS in may teach us modern-day lessons that while receiving an education can be a factor in children's academic and professional achievement, empowering children to apply a culturally relevant and sustaining education that celebrates their identities, achievements, and histories can and should be considered emancipatory.

Note

[1] See Carter G. Woodson's (1920) *The miseducation of the American Negro,* Booker T. Washington's (1895) *Atlanta compromise speech* via https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/civil-rights-act/multimedia/booker-t-washington.html, W.E.B Du-Bois' (1910) *The souls of Black folks*, and The selected writings and speeches of Marcus Garvey (2004).

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Book Review:

A Review of Bettina Love's *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*

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Reviewed by Kyle Chong

Like many of my colleagues across the United States, I teach a required course for all elementary and secondary teacher candidates in my university's teacher preparation program (TPP) that focuses on antiracist pedagogy and the social foundations of education. In this class, students encounter and confront the extent to which white supremacist ideology and logic are institutionalized in the American public education system. Due to the neoliberal tendencies of schools and systems of schooling, as others have noted (e.g., Love, 2019; Milner, 2012), courses like mine might be students' first time considering these topics while, for others, it may be the only time this topic is considered as a part of their journeys to become teachers. In addition to discussing [dis]ability, homophobia, transphobia, classism, and the intersections between them, this course invites students to consider how these forms of discrimination will impact their teaching practices, and American schooling writ large.

The preservice teachers who, upon completing their TPP coursework, typically work in what Milner (2012) defines as urban characteristic districts. These are districts that are typically suburban and "sometimes associated with urban context such as an increase in English language learners" (p. 560). As the American teaching force and many university TPPs remain predominantly white, serious attention must be paid to both the reproduction of the "white enterprise" (Matias, 2016a, p. 201)

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in TPP curricula, and the cultivation and retention of teachers of Color trained and working in predominantly white institutions (Villegas & Irvine, 2010). The fear, Duncan-Andrade (2007) notes, is teachers' regression to self-preserving and hollow virtue-signaling, despite good intentions.

One of the books I have used in this class is Bettina Love's (2019) *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*, which makes a strong case for a departure from the performative and punitive practices in American schooling that enshrines survival, rather than freedom. This book connects many hard-won theoretical advancements in educational foundations to the ground-level practices that teachers of all experience levels and contexts can, and should, reflect upon. Further, the book is written as a call to co-conspiracy. This call is grounded in critiquing the performative and white-centered calls for educational change, and seeks to bring future teachers, university faculty, and community members into conversation, highlighting the syncretism of insider and outsider-driven pursuits of educational freedom.

Love describes her work as a book about "mattering, surviving, resisting, thriving, healing, imagining, freedom, love, and joy" (p. 8) in schooling, and beyond, in hopes of advancing what she terms abolitionist teaching. Love describes abolitionist teaching throughout the book as both a framework of teaching and a way of life—a framework of combatting injustice concretely, rather than reciting generalized mantras of equality (Nishi, et al., 2015). Love defines abolitionist teaching as a pursuit of educational freedom through working "in solidarity with communities of Color" (p. 8) by enacting the "rebellious spirit and methods of abolitionists to demand and fight for an education system where all students are thriving, not simply surviving" (p. 13). The book seeks to activate co-conspirators (Garza, 2016), while also exposing passive complicity in the system of historic anti-Black racism in American schooling.

The book provides several overarching themes that stand out to me, each with multiple entry points throughout. These themes include clear descriptions of ways in which teachers can be inadvertently complicit in white supremacist ideology, the importance of de-centering whiteness in solidarity, and resisting the temptation of incrementalism in educational change. Love proceeds to offer a variety of ingresses toward these themes in the proceeding chapters. These topics are particularly useful when teaching this book to white students, white preservice teachers especially, for whom this book may be their first confrontations with their privileged identity markers.

Love's opening two chapters, "We Who Are Dark" and "Educational Survival," carefully lay out the ways in which intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1994) helps readers understand the complexities of our being, but

also lays out how Black girls, especially, are multiply marginalized in schools on the basis of race and gender by a predominantly white teaching force and white-normed schooling system (Carter Andrews, et al., 2019; Morris, 2016). In doing so, Love critiques educational policies like *No Child Left Behind*, which normalized high-stakes testing in schools and the perception that TPPs teach content absent interrogation of the sociocultural foundations of discrimination in schools. Love argues that high-stakes tests, and damage or grade-centered pedagogy, form a harmful sequence of educational policies and norms that train students in survival, rather than engaging their sociocultural funds (Moll et al., 1992) or cultural assets (Paris, 2012). She terms this system of repressing students of Color the educational survival complex to describe the racism of educational reform that leaves students of Color to be trained in schools "for a life of exhaustion" (p. 23). Love's work invites readers is to think more deeply about the role of exhaustion in education . For example, COVID-19 has rendered people across sociocultural and political contexts exhausted from everyday life. However, this book underscores the fact that such fatigue for people like myself, and many of my students, is a temporary disruption. Sadly, even after COVID-19, the crisis of institutionalized anti-Black racism will persist for Black people and communities deeply embedded in the school curriculum and education policies. Compounding this concern is the fatigue that educators, who are now considered essential workers in many places, will face. For Black educators, the combination of the stress from the pandemic as it intersects with everyday racisms should remain a concern for districts seeking to provide care for their teachers.

What resonated with me most in the book is Love's discussion of survival as more than physical and bodily, but spiritual in the chapters, "Mattering" and "Grit, Zest, and Racism (The Hunger Games)." While far from guaranteed, as shown by the brutal murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Daniel Prude, George Floyd, Walter Wallace, and others by police officers and white supremacists, Love attends to Black and Brown students' spiritual survival—considering what it might mean for student to thrive rather than simply survive. Love calls attention to the spiritual trauma of racism, termed spirit-murdering, and shows the impacts of white rage, fragility, guilt, and emotionality that center the emotional safety of teachers over the "protection, safety, nurturance, and acceptance" (p. 29) that students of Color have a right to experience. This point stands out to me because it highlights what survival should look like in schools for children of Color—a place that is generally wrought with exhaustion, dehumanization, and weathered existence. The idea of honoring the excellence of Black and Brown students propels me in

my own work to posit what Black joy as the purpose of schooling can look like.

To thrive, by contrast, requires white educators in particular to understand what counteracts the educational survival complex, and the racist logic implicit in the foundations of American schooling. In chapters five and six, "Abolitionist Teaching, Freedom Dreaming, and Black Joy" and "Theory Over Gimmicks: Finding Your North Star," Love discusses the many forms of abolitionist teaching, and the importance of sustaining the righteous anger of abolitionist teaching, as a form of political struggle, with joy. In these loving, comforting, and nurturing homeplaces, Darkness can function as sites of resistance to heal the spiritual injuries of white supremacy. Among these homeplaces are classrooms and other spaces that center healing through art and imaginations of paradigmatic change.

Love borrows from Kelley's (2002) framework of freedom dreaming to illustrate the liberatory work of abolitionist teaching as an act of co-conspiracy grounded in "authentic relationships of solidarity and mutuality" (p. 73) rather than centering whiteness and using Dark folx as a way to begin to examine their privilege. Towards this goal of freedom dreaming requires co-conspirators that have done "internal work" (p. 73) of "serous critique and reflection of one's sociocultural heritage" (p. 73). That is, white people need to have stake in co-conspiracy instead of simply performing allyship and de-center their whiteness from co-conspiring and centering Black joy and that nourishes and sustains the rage in order to abolish the educational survival complex.

In order to prepare teachers, especially white teachers, to be part of 'the work,' of abolitionist teaching, Love turns to TPPs, like the one in which I teach, arguing for the necessity of turning attention to positioning students relative to their privilege and their complicity in perpetuating Dark suffering in schools. By taking personal responsibility for enacting forms of abolitionist teaching is to not assume, Love writes, that educational institutions possess good intentions. Rather, resisting the systemic injustices of the educational survival complex necessitates a radical realignment of theory and practice by acknowledging and acting upon the everyday presence of racism in our daily teaching and educational practices. One way to do so, which resonated strongly with my students, was problematizing incrementalist impulses in future teachers to settle for performative demands for change and lean into the radicalism of abolition as a moral guidepost for educational freedom.

The call Love makes in her penultimate chapter lays out a case for something that many TPPs struggle to balance: the need for theory and practice. I recall many instances when undergraduates and preservice teachers ask me questions like "but how would I 'do' this in my future classroom?" Love's response begins by positioning educational criti-

cal race theory (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) and the adjacent Crits, like TribalCrit and AsianCrit, as tools or lenses through which future teachers can begin to recognize how racism is operationalized in schools, and the unique needs of individual historically or multiply marginalized communities (pp. 136-138). Love is careful to closely position race, class, and gender-centered analyses of racism in education as a way to dislodge colorblind and dysconscious racism as part of a broader neoliberal project of keeping oppressed communities in competition with each other, rather than in solidarity (p. 89). The key takeaway of this book becomes clearest in this penultimate chapters: that future teachers and community members need to work to expose the "barriers hiding in plain sight" (p. 90), and gain a "deep understanding of oppression and how it works structurally" (p. 90).

In the concluding chapter of this book, "We Gon' Be Alright, but That Ain't Alright," Love intimately recounts her own experiences of feeling exhausted "and living that exhaustion at the same time. I did not know how to thrive... and was terrified it all would be taken away from me just for being Black" (p. 94). She concludes by positioning the reader as part of an inter-generational and longitudinal project of resisting educational white supremacist ideology and the educational survival complex. She invites readers to take part in the process of healing that may be unrecognizable to white people, and that whiteness itself needs to be decentered from abolitionist teaching calling it an "addicted to centering itself" (p. 96). Instead, educators can center the joy of their students of Color that is informed by the intersecting identities that they bring to schools each day. Love's concluding charge is to disentangle survival from the idea of freedom by positioning freedom, educational freedom, as an experience of something more than survival. To thrive, Love concludes, is to humanize our professions and that it is not solely incumbents upon educators to seek justice for Dark folx. Instead, she concludes, it takes all of us working together but that education has a unique moral responsibility to use the time we spend with children and young adults to normalize the value of the identities they bring to school.

This book's implications for the field of educational foundations are manifold, serving as a guide to educators of all experience levels on when and, importantly, why their role matters in normalizing resistance to educational white supremacy and the educational survival complex. Love's work is both a caution for future teachers, and an invitation to make schools into homeplaces that center joy, Black joy, and the abolition of the dehumanization in schools. While the book accessibly lays out the theoretical groundings of the invitations Love makes to future teachers, the book makes an even more fundamental claim: that education cannot save us, but it is the actions of individuals working in collective

and abolitionist solidarity that will make meaningful strides in the paradigmatic change needed to make classrooms into homeplaces.

I found myself, at multiple points in the book, feeling profound admiration and gratitude for Dr. Love's work, but also for the future teachers who get to engage with this book at a formative time in their teaching careers. I was struck by how many entry points Love provides into the necessary work of abolishing educational white supremacy. She persuasively leaves readers and future teachers with a roadmap to demand more than students of Color's survival from schools.

Reviewed Book

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Book Review

A Review of Cristina Viviana Groeger's *The Education Trap: Schools and the Remaking of Inequality in Boston*

Reviewed by Neil Dhingra

In *The Education Trap: Schools and the Remaking of Inequality in Boston*, Christina Viviana Groeger (2021) brilliantly presents a detailed historical argument that education facilitates social mobility for some while closing doors on others. Groeger argues that, if policymakers envision investment in human capital as the means of shared prosperity, they must consider that education transfers power from some interest groups, like craftworkers, to others, such as low-wage operatives. Furthermore, Groeger notes the difficulty of disentangling cognitive and instrumental resources from propriety and sociability—for instance, the "right" English accent. Groeger concludes, "This book challenges us to reinterpret 'merit' as a culturally constructed set of knowledges, behaviors, and values that reflect historically specific personal preferences and prejudices, often used by elites to maintain their power" (p. 10). Groeger raises the important question, especially but not only for professors of educational foundations, of whether education can be distinguished from the institutionalization of privilege by occupational groups and the definitional power of elite gatekeepers (see Mijs, 2020).

Groeger first takes the reader to 19th century Boston, where occupations and educational credentials were loosely coupled. In this self-consciously networked world, low-wage workers depended on ethnic solidarity and only aspired to education. While craftworkers followed their fathers into craft union apprenticeships, they rarely accessed the hallways of public high schools past the age of 15 or 16, and proprietors

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preferred learning on the job to learning Latin. One could enter a learned profession like law without formal training but with those personal contacts necessary for the recommendation to get an apprenticeship with a practicing attorney. Colleges remained for Boston's Brahmin elite. In the hierarchical world, human capital was largely comprised of social capital, and African Americans remained unfairly disadvantaged by the racist boundaries of social networks. As the Black Boston doctor and lawyer John S. Rock (1862) wrote in *The Liberator*, "The more highly educated the colored man is, the more keenly he suffers." He would have no "field for his talent" (Foner & Lewis, 1978, p. 269).

Groeger then discusses how educators, intellectuals, and employers envisioned education as elevating the impoverished through self-improvement that would also raise the status of their work into "professions." Their most successful reform—there were unsuccessful reforms—was the public day school. However, Groeger notes that employers suggested public schools culturally form their students against not only "vicious and exciting amusements" (p. 89) (meaning sex) but also the apparent deficits of their immigrant families. As for African American students, the public schools remained unwelcoming. For example, in 1903, a student informed a newspaper that her textbook described African Americans as "slaves and n------" (p. 92). Further, no amount of education could persuade many employers to hire African American Bostonians.

Employers themselves self-interestedly turned to industrial education as an alternative to craft union control of apprenticeships. Groeger cites an article in the *Bulletin of the National Metal Trades Association* which argued that trade schools avoided the "poisonous" atmosphere of union rules to "teach a boy, not only the art of molding, but also good morals, and the art of the 'open shop'" (p. 109). During the 1919 Boston Police Strike, students at one private trade school, Wentworth Institute, joined Harvard students as strikebreakers. A Germanic system of standardized industrial education, which presupposed unions and employers discerning a common good, never took root in Boston. Eventually, public schools were tasked with not only academics but also inculcating safely acceptable politics for the future machine operators who increasingly took the place of craftworkers.

White collars workers turned not to unions but to professional associations that maintained barriers to entry and offered social and cultural benefits to members only. These workers often graduated from the deluge of new commercial and business schools—40 new institutions in Boston between 1890 and 1920. Groeger notes that these institutions not only taught typing but often "promoted a human capital understanding of education" and "an individualist notion of market success" (p. 157). Their varying quality spurred the development of public alternatives.

Still, from the public high school curriculum, students learned to write and speak and calculate—and "office etiquette" (p. 173). This "etiquette" affected would-be telephone operators, for whom foreign accents were disqualifying. So-called pink-collar education could also tighten existing networks. For example, the operators for the New England Telephone Company (NETC) were Irish Catholics, and the NETC abstained from ads that drew "foreigners, illiterate, and untidy" (p. 175). The NETC rejected Jewish applicants until the 1940s. Here, "talent" remained context-specific, bound up with ethnicity, and hardly neutral at all.

As for teachers, Boston's school superintendent from 1880 to 1904, Edwin Seaver, argued the public schools required the "best teachers" who were "outsiders" and likely female Protestant private college graduates (p. 186). Also, Seaver wanted a less feminized profession. Contrarily, Julia Harrington Duff, a teacher and graduate of the Boston Normal School, argued for "Boston schools for Boston girls," and, Groeger recounts, managed to get Seaver replaced. Duff also wanted the Boston Normal School to become a degree-granting institution; Harvard leaders (and others) wanted professional training for teachers under private university auspices. Unsuccessfully, Duff argued that her opponents were prejudiced against Irish women and reflected a perennial conflict between patricians and the plebeian women of the city. The Boston Normal School only belatedly gained the right to award bachelor's degrees in education in 1922.

The educational anxiety about gender existed beyond Boston's public schools. At Harvard, the dean of the Division of Education believed that the school's reputation was proportional to its male enrollment and converted the Division of Education to the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE), temporarily offering only graduate degrees and eliminating nearly all female students. The men of the HGSE trained male education administrators and experts who, armed with measurements and mental testing, led a mostly female teaching force. As one (female) normal school graduate satirically lamented, "Efficiency takes hold of me" (p. 203).

In law, Harvard Law School, with its "scientific" curriculum based on the case method and full-time professors, looked different from part-time evening law schools staffed by entrepreneurial practitioners and whose pedagogy could resemble the Baltimore Catechism (Rustad & Koenig, 1990). This may have reflected a reasonable differentiation in legal practice between future corporate attorneys and prospective court advocates, often with solo or joint partnerships. However, Harvard's graduates also tended to be White, male, Protestant, and upper-class. Further, Harvard, with Boston's other law schools, the local and state bar associations, and the state board of education, sought to prevent the prominent evening Suffolk Law School from gaining degree-granting power. Thus, any ad-

vancement via legal education could remain subject to institutionalized forms of social closure limiting entry to the profession.

Old hierarchies persisted in professional schools and undergraduate colleges, which became gateways to corporate hierarchies, which then became gateways to college administration posts in a revolving door of various forms of racial and gendered and familial privilege. "Merit" remained entangled with what Groeger calls "criteria beyond academics" (p. 233). Procter & Gamble had a job placement for a salesman of the "dominant type" with an "impressive appearance" (ibid.), and another that explicitly said, "Christians preferred" (p. 236). In 1941, a Harvard placement officer assured AT&T about a prospective statistician, "although Bernstone is Jewish, he is one of the most popular men in the department" (p. 237). College were places where men and women were sent on different tracks, except, of course, when they engaged in assortative mating, which then intergenerationally passed down capital (see Mijs, 2020).

Groeger concludes by suggesting that educational meritocracy cements the power of the elite and recommends industrial unions and "mass organizing of workers across skill level, gender, and race" (p. 256). But did industrial unions necessarily cross racial lines, as competition could exist within unions for promotions, seniority rights, and safer jobs, and foster racialized forms of privilege (see Hill, 1996)? A second question can be asked. Is "merit" only a "culturally constructed set of knowledges, behavior, and values" (p. 10), so that social construction rules out objectivity? Of course, "returns to education in the marketplace reflect not only skills but also power" (p. 7), but many of Groeger's subjects make arguments that depend on some observable objectivity in "merit," even if this went unrecognized by their opponents.

First, the article in the *Bulletin of the National Metal Trades Association* against union rules and for an "open shop" may be propagandistic but presents an argument that craft unions both fostered predatory economic practices against apprentices and constricted apprenticeships. The author appeals to evidence—"a student of sociology at Columbus University" confirms that boys unfairly denied apprenticeships became loafers in slums, and he claims, "I am telling what the lithographers tell me," about how work was "suffering" because of the apprentice shortage (Ketcham, 1904, p. 550). Further, the author describes an alternative model of solidarity: a boy gets a subsidized education at the Winona Technical Institute and then pays for another boy; the gift is self-consciously circulated. Thus, the author argues the current practices of craft unions lead to disastrous market failures and that education need not lead to an efficiency-equality tradeoff.

Second, Groeger describes Dorothy M. O'Brien's Normal School oration (1917) against expertise as "resentment" of the "power" (p. 203) of

administrative experts, but O'Brien also cleverly presents an argument. The conclusion of the experts' "love" for "graphs and figures" is that teachers will neither "heed the call of the 'fountain of youth' on Tremont Street" nor recognize a "real meal." Teachers will become machine-like, or, more likely, never last. "I am not long for this sphere," O'Brien says, half in jest, at the very least making a pointed argument about teacher satisfaction and retention. Implicitly, Groeger makes an argument that may be both deeply moral and intelligible within a human capital framework: these experts can neither develop nor retain talent.

Finally, the founder of Suffolk Law School, Gleason Archer, wrote *The Educational Octopus* (1915), which notes his initial fear of the testimony of Harvard's President Lowell against Suffolk—"what chance had my little school in the unequal contest"—and his realization that "[Lowell's] arguments were very weak; that he contradicted himself and seemed to be feeling his way along…" (p. 176). As Groeger recounts, Lowell had to acknowledge that if Suffolk could prove quality, it deserved degree-granting status. What Archer wants of legislators is "free unbiased judgment"; when he talks to the Governor, who ends up secretly betraying him just after Good Friday, Archer says, "Every objection that he raised I answered fully until he dismissed it as of no further concern to him" (p. 215, 243). To Archer, the "aristocrats" of Harvard feared fair competition—"self-made men with a native wit that surpasses any university education as an equipment for practice" (p. 278), and open debate that would expose both the institutionalization of privilege by occupational groups and the definitional power of elite gatekeepers to rational scrutiny.

These arguments may be incorrect. (Against Archer, one might cite Elihu Root's [1916] contemporaneous claim that badly trained lawyers were causing courts "double time and labor" with "worthless dispute," "useless evidence," "superfluous motions," and a general lack of public spirit [p. 189]). Nevertheless, they may describe the presence of craft union rules that damage work, expert-driven slogans like "efficiency" that damage teachers, and educational octopuses who secretively damage new and innovative law schools catering to marginalized populations. Hypothetically, if bad forms of privilege and definitional power, often supported by political and bureaucratic discretion, were to lose influence, something like trade school solidarity among new tradesmen, or renewable and recognizably human teachers, or even "self-made men [and women] with a native wit" might flourish in their absence.

This raises the question of whether, while recognizing that "merit" is always shaped, enabled, and thwarted by institutional forces (and must never be uncritically celebrated), we can ever evaluate its distortions. Education seems entangled with rent-seeking—the ability to secure economic benefits through policy, such as by limiting entry to professions

through licensure and other forms of occupational closure. Reason and persuasion may (or may not) have purchase here through identifying social loss resulting from the unproductive use of resources. If they do not, the solution may indeed be something like Groeger's call for the mass organizing of workers in large industrial unions which collectively eliminate contestability in a manner analogous to Hobbes' Leviathan by creating an economic authority beyond the possibility of influence (Hillman, 2010).

This thorny question reveals how Groeger's book is essential for education foundations courses. These courses are meant to create an important democratic space for critical, alternative views amidst a status quo increasingly marked by the individualist, free-market ideology of neoliberalism and neoconservative American exceptionalism (Atkinson, 2020). At the same time, the danger exists that these courses foster an antihegemonic hegemony, a supranormative position of political critique that never criticizes itself. Educational foundations classes should create "moments of doubt" about all our roles and responsibilities (Sarofian-Butin, 2020, p.4). For future teachers, Groeger's book creates valuable classroom "moments of doubt" about not only Procter & Gamble but also public schools, unions, schools of education, and Harvard itself.

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Book Review

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Family History in Black and White by Christine Sleeter

Reviewed by Simona Goldin

There are many scholars who aspire towards excellence in not only research and writing but also in their work as teachers and mentors. David K. Cohen, in the last years of his life, told me that he had always thought of himself as *a writer (first) who teaches (second)*. In fact, he was both. Christine Sleeter is, like Cohen, *both* a teacher who writes *and* a writer who teaches. Her newest novel is a rich text, a work of fiction that can teach all of its readers—including scholars and teacher practitioners—about the work of teaching and about race and racism.

Sleeter has recently turned to fiction, using this rich genre as another means to stretch and support her readers in expanding what we know and how we (might) understand each other. In her newest novel, *Family History in Black and White*, Sleeter invites readers into the worlds of two educators, one Black and one White. Through these worlds, she does some expert teaching, helping readers to build racial literacy and learn more about the work of instruction.

Many children and families of color have well developed racial literacies, possessing critical and sophisticated abilities to name when and in what ways race is enacted in our everyday lives. However, racial literacy is far less developed, as Sleeter shows, in White communities. The racial literacy gap—the gap between those who can speak about race and racism and name and examine Whiteness and those who struggle to do so—is one that dogs our society and that hinders, as Sleeter writes, abilities to understand how structural racism affects schooling, teaching, and students. Without strong racial literacy, Sleeter shows how her characters—educators and students—struggle to speak to each other across difference.

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In *Family History in Black and White*, Sleeter's characters speak in nuanced and clumsy ways about race, trying out and testing what they can do with each other when speaking about race and racism in our society. Sometimes they hear each other beautifully and speak to each other with great care, and other times they fumble, searching for and not finding ways to connect across racial and ethnic divides. In these moments there is great hurt, as Sleeter's characters reenact the erasure and the violence of our collective histories. One example is when Roxane, a Black mother and educator, is reading the same newspaper and listening to the same TV news as Ben, a White father and educator. Though the words they hear are the same, the messages they hear in those words are not the same. It is in these moments that Sleeter helps her readers to better understand the importance of voice, perspective, and frame, and how each of these is affected by structural racism.

Sleeter invites readers into Ben and Roxane's personal and professional relationships. Roxane's daughter, Imani, comes to her mother, frustrated with an assignment to do a research project on a "famous person who did something important during the Industrial Revolution" (p. 58). Imani had wanted to focus on Ida B. Wells, but her teacher would not approve of this choice. Asking Imani what she was thinking about Wells, and what questions she would bring to her project, Imani shared that the question she had crafted was, "How could she force herself to watch and write about lynchings? That seems too traumatic to imagine" (p. 59). Roxane, ever the teacher replied, "Can I suggest a slight reframing?... if you ask how she got started writing about lynchings and what made her persist, you'll be able to tie her work to economic development after the Civil War. You'll be able to show Mr. Miller that your research does address the history standard for the project" (p. 59). Here, and in many other moments in the novel, we see Roxane speaking explicitly with her daughter about racism, supporting her daughter's learning about race and racism in the United States. Roxane herself learns from her daughter and brings a version of her daughter's questions to her colleagues at school. Her daughter's wonderings about race teach her and guide how Roxane supports the teachers in her school to stretch their own practice. These portraits illustrate how parents and communities can develop children's racial literacy. Even more, they illustrate how racial literacy can inform and enrich our schools and the teaching that happens in classrooms. Readers might see themselves in Roxane and, in so doing, might share with others the skilled ways that they nurture and grow criticality in their homes. If readers see in Roxane's interactions around race with her daughter, mother, friends, and colleagues' work that outpaces their own abilities, they will be able to learn from studying her language, her inquiry, her engagement. And, they'll be able

to learn these things by doing the work themselves instead of depending on people of color to do this labor for them.

Ben tries as well to teach his sons about race and racism. He sets himself up as a 'good White' man, one who had very little cross-racial experiences until he was an adult. He begins to name his own racism, but he constructs this almost as a fait accompli, as if he has arrived at some promised land of racial understanding and his work is finished. It is not. It is not until the very end of the novel that he begins to think carefully about what is and is not included in the curriculum at his school, about whose voices are silenced or amplified in the school community, and what his role has been in these curricular and instructional decisions. What he perceives to be his wife's increasing racism only further helps him to see *himself* as "good." Until the end of the book, Ben's perspective is emblematic of White liberalism: he sees himself as "on the right side," his learning about racism complete. It is only in the conflicts—both internal and external—that Ben comes to challenge his anemic views and commits himself, for the first time, to being a learner about racism. White readers might learn from this what performative allyship looks like, and about the possibilities for growth. Some readers might see themselves in Ben and, in so doing, might understand what they need to do next to develop their own racial literacy so that they'll be better able to teach their students and lead schools in which teachers tangle with race and racism in productive ways (Goldin et. al 2020).

It is in these and other rich moments that the reader gains insight about how race is enacted in personal, professional, individual, and collective lives in the U.S. These vignettes can help readers to stretch themselves and provide rich fodder for expanding their racial literacies. For these reasons, the text would be excellent for use in undergraduate and graduate courses on teaching as well as classes in any of the healing professions—law, medicine, social work, nursing—that depend on generosity and criticality.

In addition to digging into the concept of racial literacy, in *Family History*, Sleeter also weaves in lessons about education and instruction. Sleeter's characters talk about teaching and learning, detailing the intricacies, nuances, and dilemmas of the work. At a time when the profession is under constant attack, when teachers are underpaid and under-appreciated, and when enrollments at our nation's teacher education programs have fallen precipitously, Sleeter's characters talk about the work of teaching in ways that highlight the *professional*, *ethical*, and *intellectual* components of the work. Their considerations expose the rigors and challenges of teaching and the work of teaching in the United States in this particular historical moment.

Sleeter's rich and nuanced portrayal of the work of teaching and

learning stands in stark contrast to the ways that teaching, schooling, and education are traditionally portrayed in the U.S. media. This is not a story of afternoons and summers off, of punitive and didactic instruction, or of unmotivated youth. Ben, a principal, brings great skill at working with businesses to incentivize the building of affordable housing. Most Americans wouldn't think that this is the province of school administrators, but so it is in an educational "system" that is so deeply unsupported and in a nation that looks to schools as its key lever for social welfare. Roxane thinks in rich ways about the cultural knowledge that children and their families bring to school and supports her teachers in leveraging that knowledge in the service of learning. This, too, cuts against the poisonous backlash against Critical Race Theory that is occurring at the doorsteps of every school in our nation right now (see, for example, Ladson-Billings, 2013; Crenshaw, 2010).

Calls to "professionalize" teaching have echoed across many generations. Educators have demanded that legislators and elected officials reward and support teachers as they rightfully deserve. In schools of education, scholars have designed and taught courses about schooling that reach students across majors in hope of educating the next generation about the largest public institution in the U.S. These are worthy and necessary pursuits. Sleeter, in *Family History*, adds importantly to expanding the national dialog about schooling and teaching. As such, the novel is an important, exemplar text. It is a model for how the public writ large can and should talk about teaching—about the ways educators should share the intellectual problems and dilemmas of the work so that others can come to appreciate its challenges and hopefully support it in more systematic and useful ways.

Teacher educators regularly tell teacher candidates to "change the narrative about teaching." Practically speaking, what does this mean, and what does it look like? Sleeter's book provides a rich road map to do just that. Thus, this book would be useful in teacher education courses as a means to open up the many aspects of teaching and leading in schools. It would also be useful in courses on educational policy. In policy courses it could be used to consider questions such as: What are the types of knowledge needed for liberatory teaching? What is needed for visionary school administration, especially for school leadership that challenges the violence and trauma that is so often produced in our nation's schools? And, given students' answers to these questions, educational policy students could then consider what answers to these questions mean when enacting policy that might actually do good for children and youth. As such, the text can be used to support policymaking that centers ambitious teaching and leverages resources and supports attuned to the improvement of *actual* practice. The book relates and adds

to the field of educational foundations, taking up, with great criticality, many of the core sociological, foundational, and political questions that animate educational foundations. Utilizing the genre of fiction, it does so in ways that are accessible to a wide audience.

There is little more wonderful than curling up with a good book, losing oneself in the lives of others. Good literature is a gift, and good storytelling opens up the world for readers. Good scholarship, meanwhile, tests ways of being, knowing, and doing, adding new, often usable knowledge. It is rare, indeed, to find oneself lost in a piece of excellent literature that is scholarly and accessible, and that builds on research (in this instance, research on teaching and learning, and research on race and racism). *Family History* is such a text. David K. Cohen often remarked that the cost of having good ideas is more work. We are so lucky that Christine Sleeter has had the good idea to bring her considerable scholarly expertise to the writing of fiction, and that she has constructed this gift of a novel.

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Book Review

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A Review of *Critical Geographies of Education: Space, Place, and Curriculum Inquiry* by Robert Helfenbein

Reviewed by Daniel S. Szokoly

In an era of neoliberal pressures on society, and more specifically schools, Dr. Robert Helfenbein uses *Critical Geographies of Education: Space, Place, and Curriculum Inquiry* to demonstrate how students and communities carve out spaces to create their own entangled identities, cultures, and ways of navigating boundaries. In doing this he emphasizes the importance of taking the concepts of space and place seriously and raises the question: "What might it mean to theorize curriculum as a spatial text" (Helfenbein, 2021, p. 3)? As in much of his previous work, Helfenbein (2017) encourages us to move "toward the concrete" (p. 5), and connect our critical theorizing to the spaces that learners inhabit. In this book, Helfenbein continues to articulate his critical ideas of theorizing spaces and places through a series of personal vignettes that introduce each chapter. These relatable stories tie in his theorizing with the created spaces that he encountered in Raleigh, Indianapolis, Baltimore, Macedonia, and numerous other locales.

Within this review article, I will first address who this book would be useful for and examine how the application of Critical Geography and Cultural Studies is used to set the stage for Helfenbein's research. Then, the review will detail Helfenbein's use of case study at the William Edenton Learning Lab (WELL) and will describe why this was a particularly useful methodology. Next, it will expand upon the author's focus on Critical Geography, and elaborate on some of the terminology

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used within the book for those who might not be as familiar with this field of study. The body of this review then examines Helfenbein's various case studies around the United States. His first, and arguably most important, body of research centers on the above-mentioned WELL, which encapsulates his core arguments for the book as a whole. The subsequent case studies detailed in the article analyze his work in Indianapolis, Baltimore, and a general meta-analysis of urbanizing cities. Finally, after addressing these varied locales, I refocus on the author's methodologies and use of Critical Geography with a personal narrative that I believe models how Helfenbein wants us to view space.

Helfenbein's application of critical geography, cultural studies, neo-Marxist, and critical feminist lenses would be very useful to pre-service teachers who are craving a connection between theory and practice. Doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, especially in the fields of critical geography and cultural studies, could use this text as a way of analyzing the dual-nature of how people affect the places they inhabit and inversely how those places affect them, or as Helfenbein (2021) frames it, "spaces that speak," "spaces that leak," and "spaces of possibility" (pp. 83-84). Finally, the above-mentioned contextual lenses are used as a point of reference when looking at how youth carve out an identity in the spaces provided to them and, given the liberty, can make these into places of resilience and resistance. In my opinion, this concept can be best seen in Chapters Two and Three, which focus on student place-making at the William Edenton Learning Lab (WELL) and would be a valuable case-study for any practicing educator to examine.

In examining *Critical Geographies of Education*'s relation to educational foundations it might be helpful to look at how the book relates to Schwab's (1973) four curriculum commonplaces: the teacher, subject matter, learner, and milieu. Helfenbein's (2021) work, in this instance, focuses mainly on the learners and their milieu and how we examine "reflections as they mark how we bring ourselves into spaces, ourselves in process and in contradiction" (pp. 36-37). His use of case studies in this book allows for a foundational look at how students use space to "get what they need," and develop that space into something new (Helfenbein, 2021, p. 19). Inversely, it spotlights how the manipulation of that space by teachers, administrators, and policy makers can affect those outcomes as well. Helfenbein's focus on students and their unique learning environments is refreshing in a time when policy makers' emphasis on the standardization of subject matter, teachers, and learners has painted students' milieu as a burden rather than an asset.

Helfenbein's artful weaving of case studies throughout this text is central to the development of his argument that Critical Geography can be used as a tool to acknowledge and reduce spatial bias in qualitative

research. Specifically, Helfenbein (2021) emphasizes his own geographical bias in positing that "the position of the cartographer has much to do with the nature of the map" (p. 21). The map in this case being his account of the students at the William Edenton Learning Lab (WELL) and how they negotiate space. Helfenbein mitigates this bias in the interviews with students by giving them the agency to take the conversation to places of their own choosing and by member checking with them to make sure their statements accurately portray their feelings. By listening more than talking, Helfenbein demonstrates how spaces of possibility, like those found at the WELL, affect student agency in their own education. As is often the case in qualitative research, there were times Helfenbein's participants were either hesitant to respond or tried to give answers that aligned with narratives they felt he wanted to hear. The interviews that derailed, or when the interviewees got off topic, were the ones that were the most substantive. Finally, Helfenbein (2021) argues the need to use Critical Geography to explore "new avenues for research in curriculum theory and cultural studies," and I would argue for educational foundations in general (Helfenbein, p. 3). His argument for taking space seriously asks the reader to consider a more critical approach to the examination of learning spaces by focusing on how current educational theory "tends to consider classrooms and schools as bounded spaces; tightly constrained" (Helfenbein, 2021, p. 3). He goes on to state that educators must think about space with a greater level of complexity in order to form a more nuanced understanding of students' needs.

Regarding the structure of the book, the first chapter is framed as an introduction that is critical in both setting the theoretical foundation upon which Helfenbein's arguments will be built while providing descriptions of the terminology and context that will be used. Leaning on the work of Doreen Massey, Edward Soja, and critical geographers of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural studies, Helfenbein (2021) argues that "maps have authors, biases, and political goals" (p. 1). The influence of these theorists has led to Helfenbein's unique style of Critical Geography in which he balances their critical perspectives with his own desire to return to a concreteness of material spaces and how they are viewed. For those not already enmeshed in the world of Critical Geography, it is important to pay attention to his usage of terms like *material geography* and, later, *spacio-curricular* as they set the stage for how he attempts to distinguish this book from previous Critical Geography work. These terms are particularly useful when examining his case study of students at the WELL and the ways "they navigate the spaces imposed on them and begin to make *places*" (Helfenbein, 2021, p. 20), as well as how those boundaries were eventually transgressed and renegotiated by the students.

In Chapters Two and Three of *Critical Geographies of Education*, Helfenbein explores critical ethnography work at an afterschool research center, the WELL in Raleigh, North Carolina. Here he examines how students from the adjacent high school utilize the space in ways that fit their needs and how they balance identity-work within that space. His second case study, beginning in Chapter Four, centers on school reform in Indianapolis and what he considers a segregation that "felt different than Southern racial dynamics," and holds a "deeply felt spatial distinction, materially racialized spaces as opposed to different roles within those spaces" (Helfenbein, 2021, p. 54). Here the reader can see Helfenbein's (2021) use of a scalar approach in research, which he describes using the analogy of a camera lens, that "pulls in and out in terms of focus, moving from the local to the global and back again in the hopes of seeing things in relation" (p. 3). In this chapter, we see this transition as the book goes from the entanglements of individual students and the ways they negotiated their identities at the WELL to a large-scale meta-analysis of the effects of redlining, reterritorialization through gentrification, and neoliberal educational reforms. In Chapter Five, we reach the widest point of Helfenbein's (2021) lens as it "takes youth in the globalized city as its object of analysis," and addresses how "spaces materially change, change over time, and impact the lived, embodied world" (pp. 64-65), which furthers his analysis of how spaces "speak" and how they "leak."

The final case study, in Chapter Six, represents the closing of the camera lens, as Helfenbein refocuses on the consequences of not taking space and place seriously. This chapter centers on the Baltimore Uprising that occurred after the killing of Freddie Gray and the government's failure to understand the "city as curriculum" (Helfenbein, 2021, p. 74). By this, Helfenbein means how the city's history of segregation, modern-day zoning ordinances, and what he calls "spaces of possibility," which can be either liberatory or oppressive in nature, affect the people that live there. His argument is that, as opposed to allowing certain neighborhoods, such as Freddie Gray's Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood, to become spaces of possibility in Baltimore, the government has forced them to become spaces of exception. In these spaces the residents are "literally outside the bounds of neoliberal restructuring and identity forms neoliberalism both needs and creates" (Helfenbein, 2021, p. 74). In other words, they are left behind as the rest of the city is developed. Helfenbein points to this structural racism as one factor leading to the "Black Butterfly," which refers to the visual made of overlapping maps of race, unemployment statistics, and wealth over the city of Baltimore. He goes on to argue that understanding how the manipulation of space can lead to large scale inequalities can help policy makers and educators

rethink how they establish spaces and boundaries and the consequences those actions have on students.

Chapters Seven and Eight wrap up the book by explaining Helfenbein's methodologies in the study and reaffirming his arguments that spaces speak, leak, and hold possibilities that can be liberating or socially reproductive. Here, researchers interested in educational foundations might pay "close attention to the *materiality* of education policy–the lived experience of school" (Helfenbein, 2021, p. 90), and furthermore how students rebel, resist, and reshape the boundaries created for them. Examining the boundaries of a classroom, school, or even school-district could help educators and policy makers consider what kind of places they want to create within that space.

Circling back to Helfenbein's use of the term *spacio-curricular*, the final two chapters ask the reader to consider how a students' education might be influenced by their milieus and what educators are doing to either limit or expand their possibilities. The author takes a qualitative approach to his research, which he refers to specifically as post-critical ethnography. This contextual lens centers on the role of the author and the biases and influences of the one creating the narrative. However, I would argue that most of the book, with the exception of the introduction and conclusion, follows a vein of critical ethnography due to the primary focus being on the critique of the ethnographic case studies rather than the researcher himself. Helfenbein, unlike many authors, begins his book by airing much of his own dirty laundry and making many of his own stances clear. However, as the book progresses into the specific case studies the author gives himself more of a background role, whereas, I would argue, post-critical ethnography would bring him to the foreground. That being said, my interpretation of critical ethnography versus post-critical ethnography is not meant to take away from the validity, thoroughness, or importance of Helfenbein's work. Toward the end of the chapter on his methodologies, Helfenbein (2021) mentions that he "embraced the notion of including the participants themselves in the analysis of the qualitative data collected" (p. 93). I feel that inclusion of this feedback would have made for a very interesting addition to the book itself, and at the very least would make for very compelling follow-up research

The beauty of *Critical Geographies of Education* relates to Helfenbein's (2021) suggestion that "place matters, taking space seriously matters, and that curriculum matters" (p. xi). While the places mentioned in the book obviously matter to the author, so too do the places that the reader likely has in mind while reading this book, in which the same principles could be applied. For example, early in the book Helfenbein laments the murder of black bodies in the name of white property, specifically Ahmaud Arbery. Coincidentally, I went to the same high school as Ahmaud; I was two

years ahead of him. When he was murdered in the streets of the community in which I also now teach, I was put in a position where I had to answer questions about why he was murdered in cold blood by three white men. Unfortunately, many of my students saw what I saw: a black man jogging through a neighborhood in which others assumed he didn't belong. The reality: he lived one neighborhood over. As a white male, there is nowhere in my town that I would feel uncomfortable jogging, which might indicate that while he and I may have occupied the same spaces, the identity, opportunities, and ways of navigating boundaries that we were able to forge, largely due to our skin color, were drastically different. Herein lies one of Helfenbein's (2021) core arguments, that examining the "conditions and trajectories of power and its effects on lived society are not only academic pursuits, but also an organizing core of the moral obligation of all social scientists and geographers" (p. 6). Anyone interested in social justice and how it affects and is affected by space and place should consider utilizing this text.

While parts of Dr. Robert Helfenbein's theorizing may be dense, the personal vignettes and the use of ethnography bring it back down to earth in a way that is very accessible. It is certainly worth the read for those interested in learning more about how space and place affect communities and individuals. Particularly, pre-service teachers, teacher-training coordinators, and any educator interested in educational foundations or school climate could use this text as a tool to reexamine how they organize their classroom, school, or program. Helfenbein (2021) argues that "'taking space seriously' involves challenging determined, basic conceptions of space and place and putting them into interaction with larger, complex forces of power and identity/assemblage" (p. 71), and that if educators want to take the difficult steps towards building a more just and equitable world then they must be prepared to move counter to a neoliberal system that is working towards opposite ends. Perhaps the most valuable lesson for educators to draw from this text is the way students traverse, negotiate, and rebel against the boundaries imposed upon them, and in their own ways create places that work for them. If educators are aiming to combat neoliberal systems, they must likely be prepared to do the same.

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