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Taharee A. Jackson Date

The White Papers
Mapping the Journeys of Antiracist White Educators

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Doctor of Philosophy

Educational Studies

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The White Papers
Mapping the Journeys of Antiracist White Educators

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An abstract of

a dissertation study submitted to the faculty of the Division of Educational Studies

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

The White Papers:
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We must dedicate our best efforts in teacher education to prepare a ninety percent majority of white educators to meet the needs of diverse students. As we simultaneously work toward a more representative teaching force, fundamental to this task is examining how antiracist white educators come to exist. The aim of this two-part research study was to examine the racial conceptualizations, teaching practices, and life experiences of white teachers, teacher educators, and scholar-activists who are committed to antiracism, culturally relevant pedagogy, and social justice. Critical race theory, critical white studies, and theories of culturally relevant pedagogy undergirded both studies. The first portion of this research followed a nominated sample of twelve white urban elementary school teachers. Those data uncovered that some dominant ideologies regarding whiteness, cultural deficit theory, and decontextualized racism can coexist even in the psyche of white teachers who strongly espouse and genuinely demonstrate commitments to antiracism and culturally relevant pedagogy. The second study examined the racial understandings of well-known white teacher educators and scholar-activists who are farther along in their trajectories toward antiracism. The findings indicated that antiracist white educators: (a) understand racism as foundational, institutional, and intersectional; (b) maintain that whites are mis-educated via Eurocentric curricula; and (c) firmly believe that whiteness serves only to dehumanize both people of color and whites. This cadre of scholar-activists cited duping and dissonance, racial devastation and separation, exemplars and efficacy, and subordinate-status relationships as origins of their antiracism. Participants also used conscientious co-optation, white proxyhood, and a keen understanding of "privilege within privilege" in their pedagogies with primarily white educators. These antiracist educators also revealed possibilities for transnational and global antiracist movements, that we might make significant headway in the selection, preparation, and professional learning of a majority white teaching force in education, and in the wider struggle for social justice writ large.

The White Papers
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**I wish to thank the peer-reviewed* Race, Ethnicity, and Education *journal for permission to reprint* "Which *Interests are Served by the Principle of Interest Convergence: Whiteness, Collective Trauma, and the Case for Antiracism," which was accepted without revision and will appear in a forthcoming issue.*

Preface

I am a multiracial woman who *always* teaches the "diversity" courses at various universities. I was introduced to multicultural education by the able work of James Banks (1991) who has defined it as "a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups" (Banks & Banks, 2004, p. xi). I was initially attracted to multicultural teaching for its goal of holding our nation accountable to its democratic ideals by focusing on "equity, justice, and cultural democracy," and maximizing the common good (p. xi; see also Darder, 1991). I continue to be a proponent of collective uplift, not individual interest. I take seriously the notion and activist stance of social justice, or the everyday practice of focusing my "inquiry on how institutionalized theories, norms, and practices in schools and society lead to social, political, economic, and educational inequities" (Dantley & Tillman, 2006, p. 17; Tillman, 2002). Education is the most important mechanism for inspiring citizens who are open to diverse worldviews, welcoming of multiple peoples, and as committed to the humanity of their neighbors as they are to their own (Spring, 2009; Tyack, 1984).

As much as I have enjoyed being "thrown" into multicultural education as a field, I continue to be struck that I have so often been selected as the naturally appropriate faculty member to teach such courses despite my stronger academic training in early childhood education, human development, psychology, and Spanish. Based on the complexity of my identity, I always wonder if my minority statuses automatically qualify me to teach about diversity. Is it easier for me to understand racial hierarchy based on my minority status(es)? Do my critical understandings of multiple forms of oppression stem from my upbringing as a multi-marginalized person? Such questions have always given me pause and caused me to wonder if

particular life experiences enable me to more readily embrace progressive, multicultural worldviews. They prompt me to consider whether my lifelong memberships in various cultural groups, or specific events—or a combination of both—have better molded me into a critically conscious teacher, or one with some awareness that social hierarchies exist (Freire, 1970/2006).

Asking these questions of myself led to a deep desire to ask them of others—particularly antiracist whites who have become multicultural educators despite their racial and cultural differences from myself. Antiracists are "people who have committed themselves, in thought, action and practice, to dismantling racism" (O'Brien, 2001, p. 4). Given that we are bombarded by images of white normativity (and superiority) in everything from literary canons to global beauty aesthetics, I am interested in whites who have somehow managed to "resist becoming reinvested" in the white mainstream dominance that surrounds us each day (hooks, 1995, pp. 157-158). This work is an opportunity to better understand antiracist whites who seem to struggle against the realities of white power.

My curiosity about antiracist white educators is coupled with constant wonder about the effectiveness my multicultural coursework with mostly white teachers in teacher education. Each year, my students are overwhelmingly white, and I face the most passionate resistance from them (Sleeter, 2001). By resistance I mean that from year to year, white students doggedly refute the existence of racism, the pervasiveness of multiple systems of oppression, and the illusory nature of meritocracy in our society. Many white students flatly dismiss these ideas, request more "facts," and demand that I substantiate their claims that racism is dead. While I acknowledge resistance from a few students of color during my teaching, their resistance to critical understandings of race, power, and privilege is never as extreme as that of whites. Internalized oppression, or notions of reduced self-worth based on the real effects of deeply

embedded racism, can account for the resistance from people of color, women, and the other minority groups I have taught (Middleton, 2002; Tatum, 1997). Their resistance, however, is qualitatively different than that of my mostly white students.

In my years of working with "overwhelming" numbers of white pre and inservice teachers—consistently 95 to 99 percent in multicultural courses and professional learning sessions—an alarming number of them refuse to hear the message (Sleeter, 2001, 2004). In light of this, I have begun to focus on whites who embrace more progressive, multicultural, antiracist views because their stories are, sadly, so few (Bonilla-Silva, 2003). If a handful of whites can absorb information about endemic racism, oppression along multiple axes, and deeply embedded white normativity, what, exactly, makes them ripe for the hearing? What are the sources of their understandings of racism and oppression *prior to* taking my classes? And what are the roles of teacher education programs in general, if any, in furthering those understandings? I enjoyed seeking these answers in the research detailed here.

Since I entered the field of teacher education, I have been pleasantly surprised—but surprised nonetheless—by the number of white educators engaged in the same type of work as me: countering racial hierarchy, unveiling oppression in multiple forms, and preparing teachers to be responsive to the needs of *all* students (Banks, 2004; Spring, 2009). I always ask of my fellow white comrades questions such as: How did Christine Sleeter (1994) come to name and disclaim white racial bonding and white racism with such fervor? What are the elements of Paul Gorski's (in process; 1998) upbringing that prompted him to deeply examine not only his white male privilege but also the complex intersections of race, class, and gender? What in Tim Wise's (2008a, 2008b, 2009) background led him to become one of the most vocal and publicly outspoken antiracist activists of our time? How did Julie Landsman (2001), who experienced

severe trauma with a Black man, not only recover from assault, but reject the "Black-man-as-dangerous" stereotype so widely espoused? How is it that Joe Feagin (2010), a white man who was raised in the Deep South and attended primarily white institutions until graduate school, came to understand racism so deeply? And in a society filled with uninterrogated white dominance, which of Peggy McIntosh's (1988/2001) life experiences help to explain her groundbreaking work on naming privilege and renouncing it? My fascination with why these or any whites would strive to overturn their own privilege in a white-dominated society was at the forefront of my mind when I designed this research. Studies like these acknowledge and pause to celebrate what is good and possible in the struggle for social justice while never losing sight of what is necessary and yet unaccomplished.

The purpose of this research was threefold. First, I sought to answer questions about how white educators who were nominated as either effective and dedicated to children of color or demonstrated a commitment to antiracism in their teaching, activism, and scholarship viewed race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Second, I hoped to describe and document the exemplary classroom practices of these educators, from whom others can learn. Finally, I wished to "work backwards" to determine the life experiences that informed the racial conceptualizations of burgeoning and more advanced white educators who exemplify, to varying degrees, antiracist views, progressive teaching practices, and socially just ideals. In essence, I studied how antiracist white educators develop over time and "come to be." By examining their lives and determining "how they got here," we might have more luck in leading other white educators down similar antiracist "paths" (O'Brien, 2001). Such trajectories represent a lifetime of praxis, or constant reflection and action—always ongoing, and forever unfinished (Freire, 1970/2000).

This work details a two-part research study involving a group of white elementary school teachers and a smaller sample of well-known, antiracist white educators who are on various journeys toward antiracism. It also includes chapters that situate the research within the larger social landscape. The piece concludes with practical recommendations for leading more whites to abandon hegemonic whiteness—or that which willfully ignores and upholds racism—for healthier, more productive antiracist stances (Lewis, 2004). Writ large, this work is conceptualized as a collection of "white papers," which has multiple meanings. The educators featured in these research studies self-identify as white, therefore the participants themselves are explicit in naming their identities as well as the significance of race in their own work (Weedon, 2004). Secondly, each chapter stands as its own "white paper," advancing its own thesis, possibility, or consideration for future work. In what follows, I offer a guide to the organization of this collection.

Chapter 1. In this introductory chapter, I argue that while we must take measures to hire more teachers of color, we must also attend to the unignorable 90 percent majority of whites who do most of the teaching (Landsman & Lewis, 2006). If we concentrate on the development of teachers as antiracist whites who understand racial injustice, we might make significant headway in struggles against cultural devaluation, minority underachievement, and the mis-education of both students of color and whites (Nieto & Bode, 2008; Woodson, 1933/2000). Theoretical frameworks for culturally relevant pedagogy and critical race theory, both of which undergird the research, are also laid bare in the opening chapter.

Chapter 2. This chapter outlines the first portion of the research, which followed twelve white elementary school teachers. These educators were nominated by African American female principals as effective white teachers who were explicitly dedicated to teaching students of color

in under-resourced schools. These teachers presented an array of pedagogical styles but ultimately adhered to many tenets of Ladson-Billings' (1994) culturally relevant pedagogy. This mindset and method of teaching is rooted in how teachers critically examine social contexts, cultural influences, hidden and overt curricula, and the goals of education (Ladson-Billings, 2006b). Teachers also embodied various forms of whiteness, including both progressive and retrogressive strands. The chapter presents findings from interviewing the teachers and observing their classroom practices. The teachers in this sample had embarked on paths to antiracism but also exemplified the complicated, longitudinal nature of the journey. This cadre of white teachers espoused complex and often competing views of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy, which is indicative of the racism, colorblindness, and majoritarian narratives that permeate even the ideologies of whites who are deemed "liberal," or racially aware (Kailin, 1999). These teachers also lent insight into the array of life experiences that can account for more nuanced understandings of racism.

Chapter 3: The third chapter presents the "allied counterstories" of antiracist white educators and scholar-activists. The life experiences of Marilyn Cochran-Smith, Jane Elliott, Joe Feagin, Paul Gorski, Julie Landsman, Peggy McIntosh, Christine Sleeter, and Tim Wise are profiled. From their journeys we learn about key experiences that helped shape their antiracist views and commitments to activism. Their own biographical and scholarly writings, along with findings from in-depth interviews with each of them, reveal much about the telling trajectories they followed to become some of the staunchest and most well-known antiracist educators today.

Chapter 4: As teacher educators, we can learn a great deal from antiracist white educators whose lives can be instructive for other whites. By garnering valuable information about the life experiences that inform the views, pedagogies, and activist commitments of whites

who are just beginning, or are far along the path to antiracism, we can better select and prepare more white educators with antiracist dispositions while simultaneously working to recruit larger numbers of teachers of color into the profession (Allen & Hermann-Wilmarth, 2004; Futrell, 1999). Hence, this chapter explores a "pedagogy for the oppressor" based on what these classroom teachers and renowned scholars reveal about antiracism-inducing life experiences, and details practical strategies for better preparing white educators (see also Freire, 1970/2006).

Chapter 5. This chapter provides greater context for the questions I sought answers to regarding white educators' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and pedagogy. For instance, a primary principle of critical race theory is "interest convergence," or the notion that racial equality is only advanced when it converges with the interests of whites (Bell, 1995). Examining the lives of antiracist white educators allows us to deconstruct the motives and multiple interests of whites in order to determine the complex balance of incentives and disincentives for dismantling racial injustice. Studying whites who have begun to renounce retrogressive white identities in favor of antiracist white identities provides possibility for answers to the question: Using what we learn from antiracist white educators, how might we educate other whites about the benefits of divesting of racism and committing to antiracism?

I posit that the concept "interest" in critical race theory must be rendered more complex in order to truly understand the pernicious effects of racism on people of color and whites in particular. In this chapter I complicate the meaning of "interest" to demonstrate that while whites benefit in real and tangible ways from white dominance, the costs of racism far outweigh its limited benefits.

Chapter 6: The research presented here is housed within the larger realm of critical whiteness studies. By attempting to highlight all that we might glean from antiracist whites,

however, at times I inadvertently reinscribed hegemonic whiteness and further marginalized minorities. I focused on "star" teachers and "exemplary" whites without adequately appreciating the unintended consequences. In the first portion of the research, some teachers of color felt overlooked, excluded, and ultimately devalued. Here I discuss the unintended consequences of conducting research with dominant groups and advance considerations for critical race research methodologies that not only address my own shortsightedness, but help to minimize the re-marginalization of oppressed groups.

The antiracist white educators I studied have started down paths that demonstrate promising elements of how other whites might come to embrace more complex understandings of their stake in ending racial inequality. As we move forward, it is crucial that we purposefully use *all* that we glean from these participants and from conducting critical white research studies to nurture and foment more antiracist educators, teacher educators, and citizens.

Chapter 1

Why White Teachers? The "Critical" Role of Whites in Education

An overwhelming and increasing number of white, middle-class, monolingual women serve as teachers in the United States (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Hollins & Torres-Guzman, 2005; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2001). A National Education Association (NEA) survey found that nearly 90 percent of teachers and 81 percent of preservice teachers are white, with no influx of minority teacher candidates in sight (Kelly, 2006). In fact, the number of teachers of color is declining as the number of white teachers is rising (Gay, Dingus, & Jackson, 2003; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Quiocho & Rios, 2000). This "overwhelming presence of whiteness" (Sleeter, 2001) in the nation's teaching force is also unfolding alongside increasing racial diversity among students. According to the most recent survey, 44.2% of the 49 million elementary and secondary school-goers in the United States are children of color—21.2% Latina/o, 17% African American, 4.8% Asian, and 1.2% Native American (United States Department of Education, 2011). Longitudinally, people of color are projected to comprise 50% of the general population and 57% of the student population in the year 2050 (Banks, 2008; United States Census Bureau, 2007; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Simultaneous trends of increasing numbers of white teachers and non-white students have far-reaching implications for teacher education, schooling, and society (Apple, 2000; King, 2005).

In nine out of ten settings, students of color are taught by white teachers who often do not share their cultural backgrounds and understandings (Cooper, 2003; NEA, 2003). The presence of a teacher of color does not guarantee "cultural synchronization," or the congruence of beliefs, norms, and worldviews between students and teachers. But in many instances of cross-racial

teaching, as is increasingly the case, opportunities for a *lack* of cultural synchronization between white teachers and "Brown" students are more probable and academically detrimental (Harding, 2005; Irvine, 1990). The consequences of cultural disparities between white teachers and racially diverse students can include: academic underachievement, increased retention rates, disproportionate disciplinary reprimands, higher referral rates to special education, tracking into vocational programs, lack of access to college preparatory curricula, and inflated "push out" or dropout rates for minority students (Dance, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2007; Fine, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 2006a; National Center for Education Statistics, 2006; Oakes, 1985, 1992). Given that these persistent, negative outcomes disproportionately affect students of color, the white teacher/racially diverse student relationship is a key issue in education. The preponderance of white teachers as "the racial group who does most of the educating" should be a central concern when considering how to improve both student outcomes and teacher education (Landsman & Lewis, 2006, pp. 1-2).

Historicization: How Teaching Became White

A foundational tenet of critical race theory—the lens through which we name and struggle against pervasive racism and other forms of systemic dominance—calls for historicization, or properly situating social conditions in due context (Bell, 1992; Delgado & Stefancic, 2005; Lynn & Parker, 2006). To adequately contextualize the current state of a mostly white teaching force, we must first recognize the historical and sociopolitical forces that have colluded to produce such an imbalance. In both her account of an African American "good" school during segregation and her tandem retelling of the life and leadership of a Black principal in Jim Crow Georgia, Walker (1996, 2009) describes the struggle and resistance of Black educators, professionals, and community members to maintain their influential places in public

education. In the latter work, Walker (2009) chronicles the advocacy and community support of Black school principals who were revered and often referred to as "professors." She notes that with school integration came the dissolution of the Black "professorship" (administration) and the demise of many Black teachers. Black principals were often fired. Black faculty assigned to teach at white schools were selected scarcely and "race-consciously" based on their complexion. Black educators who did not retire or face demotion also met the harsh fate of being "sent to school buildings that contained no students" (p. 234). Walker (2009) goes on to lament that the razing of the Black "professorship" by way of dismissing massive numbers of African American educators during desegregation meant that "with their departure was dismantled the system of education on which black communities depended for their uplift" (p. 234). Walker makes clear the cultural devastation and educational demise that resulted from the *Brown v. Board of Education* public school desegregation decision. Both Podair (2002) and Fisher (2009) have discussed the seriousness with which Black communities confronted the influx of white teachers and acted on their concerns about the subsequent and culturally irrelevant curricula in New York and elsewhere beyond the South.

In a thoughtful account of the "price we paid for *Brown*," Ladson-Billings (2004) denotes the desegregation of schools as the single-most crippling event for Black teachers and administrators (see also Fairclough, 2004). She includes figures that describe the massive loss of African American teachers from the nearly 82,000 practicing professionals in 1954. One figure estimates that between 1954 and 1965 alone, more than 38,000 Black teachers lost their jobs in 17 states. What's more, this estimate does not capture the sweeping demotions, reprehensible assignments to empty schools (Walker, 2009), or widespread retirement by "choice" or intimidation (see, for example, Haney, 1978). Ladson-Billings (2004) not only discusses the

contextualized gains *and* losses associated with *Brown,* but also poses key questions about the lingering effects of such a great loss in Black teachers. She asserts that the post-*Brown* diminishing of the African American teacher presence continues to wreak social havoc in at least two areas: the current and problematic state of a mostly white teaching force, and the continued difficulty recruiting Black teachers and other teachers of color. The latter concern led her to consider the "cumulative effects of discrimination" (p. 7), whereby African Americans have difficulty conceptualizing the teaching profession as a viable option for them because—since *Brown*—they see so few of them.

In a contemporary account of history's repeats, Buras, Randals, Salaam, and Students at the Center (2010) present the "counternarrative" to the master narrative that is the new New Orleans (Delgado & Stefancic, 1995). With promises of "starting from scratch" in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, racism and the disenfranchisement of Blacks once again feature prominently in this remaking of the city (Buras, 2007). This "rebirth" of schools has included fewer African American teachers. Buras et al. (2010) tell the critical story of how legions of highly experienced, community-rooted, veteran Black teachers have been dismissed and literally displaced by younger, generally less experienced, mostly white teachers. As a result of neoliberalism, or the aggressive approach to school reforms aimed at privatizing and "opening the market" of public education, African American educators who were teaching in their communities for years have now been supplanted by an influx of novice, less expensive white teachers, primarily from Teach for America (TFA). This program recruits and provides just a few weeks of teacher preparation to graduates of top-tier universities, many of whom quickly exit the profession. Darling-Hammond (1994) has forwarded strong arguments against TFA and other such alternative certification programs that provide little preparation and many short-term

teachers who do not disrupt the current demographic of a mostly white, middle class, monolingual teaching force (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). As we learn from Buras et al.'s (2010) work on the race-based dispossession of teaching positions, school admission slots, housing options, and continued attempts to deny native Black New Orleanians their place in the "history and cultural legacy of the urban landscape" (p. 6), this calculated replacement of *mostly* African American teachers with *mostly* white teachers in New Orleans is but one example of the power of whiteness and its history of removing Black teachers.

Critically Teaching the Teachers We Have

All teachers—minority and white—are themselves enveloped by a multifarious system of economic, social, and political forces that also influence student outcomes. Inequitable school funding structures, sub par working conditions, and the stresses of overwork, for instance, each contribute the complex ecology of teaching. Kennedy (2010) admonishes us to avoid committing a fundamental attribution error, or "overestimating the influence of personal characteristics on behavior and underestimating the influence of the situation itself" (p. 591). Still, given what we also know about the importance of teacher quality in affecting student achievement, teacher educators must pursue their locus of control and focus due attention on the fomenting of able educators (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005). One way to combat the persistent denial of quality education to students of color is to prepare white teachers to implement culturally relevant pedagogy. This approach is both a mindset and method of teaching rooted in how teachers critically examine social contexts, cultural influences, hidden and overt curricula, and the goals of education (Ladson-Billings, 2006b). Three key tenets of culturally relevant pedagogy are that teachers: (a) hold high expectations for all students, (b) provide opportunities for students to express their own cultural traditions while gaining a critical

understanding of mainstream norms, and (c) educate students to challenge inequitable conditions. By adhering to these or similar tenets, teachers take responsibility for students' academic success *as well as* their aspirations to reconstruct an unjust social order (Grant & Sleeter, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995). Under this frame, white teachers must be prepared for their role as advocates of social justice and fomenters of change.

Culturally relevant white teachers recognize the indelible connections among cultural representation, academic success, and self-actualization as they relate to students of color. Darder (1991) notes that white teachers of diverse students must first understand that "the ability of individuals from different cultural groups to express their cultural truths is clearly related to the power that certain groups are able to wield in the social order" (p. 28). She employs the concept of "cultural democracy" to link the valuation of students' culture in schools to the self-determination they can exercise as products of their education. Fraser (1997) underscores the point by linking cultural recognition in the educational sphere to social equality in the economic sphere. Both highlight the association between the cultural recognition (Apple & Buras, 2006) of "others" in schools and their subsequent ability to self-actualize, or to realize their possibilities in the larger society. However, when cultural "others" are viewed as inherently lazy, genetically unintelligent, or stereotypically inept (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Moynihan, 1965/1997; Wilson, 1985/1997)—as is common—equality of opportunity is severely diminished (Buras, 2008; Irvine, 1990).

Consequently, white teachers must be conscious of their role in reconstructing society as one in which cultural groups are valued equally—where those outside the mainstream culture are in no way hindered based on the degree to which they differ from it. Preparing white teachers for culturally relevant pedagogy will directly address how cultural devaluation translates into

minority underachievement, and may help to stem the tide of disproportionate, negative outcomes for students of color. Most importantly, these teachers will contribute to the broader goal of creating a cultural democracy where differences do not automatically translate into deficiencies, and all students have equal opportunities to succeed in school and in life (Bellamy & Goodlad, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Dewey, 1916; Fraser, 1997; Giroux, 1995).

It is crucial to also note that *white* students suffer when they are kept unaware of the full human record—which includes more than the "contributions" of people of color—and when they are not educated to interrupt unjust social conditions (Banks, 1991; Freire, 1970/2006). When teachers fail to employ culturally relevant pedagogy with white students, the effects of assimilationist, Eurocentric practices are devastating (Bode & Nieto, 2008; Goodman, 2001; Howard, 2006; Michie, 1999; Wise, 2008a). Such students may not develop a critical consciousness, or pursue social justice in schools or the wider society. Racism, classism, sexism, and all forms of oppression affect whites as well as minorities, albeit in different manners and with different results[1]. Without education that offers a more complete understanding of how these oppressive systems affect the entire human condition, white students are also denied a quality education and in turn, their own full humanity (Freire, 1970/2006). Without culturally relevant pedagogy, both whites and minorities suffer mis-education (Woodson, 1933/2000).

The consequences for students of color, however, are far graver (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Irvine, 1990, 2003; Lipman, 1998, 2004). Racial inequality and lack of cultural recognition in schools leads to disproportionately devastating outcomes for minorities (Apple & Buras, 2006; Fraser, 1997). The prevailing, majoritarian discourse largely denies the role of race

[1] Although multiple forms of oppression *affect* whites, one must note that whites are not *oppressed* by racism. All, however, are dehumanized by it (Freire, 1970/2006). It is crucial to more fully explicate how people of color and whites suffer from racism in nuanced and fiercely different ways, which I include in forthcoming iterations of this work.

and white dominance in reproducing such outcomes (see, for example, Dixson & Rousseau, 2006; Gillborn, 2005; Gotanda, 1995; Peller, 1995). This "colorblind" approach to pedagogy and education only fuels the urgency to produce culturally relevant teachers as contributors to a larger social project whereby both white students *and* students of color have educational experiences that not only prepare them to successfully participate in society but also to reorder its unjust foundations (Delpit, 1995; Giroux, 1995; Kincheloe, 2005).

Teacher educators must actively addresses the need for more teachers of color (Allen & Hermann-Wilmarth, 2004; Futrell, 1999; Sleeter, 2004). As we pursue that end, however, we should consider how white teachers can successfully educate increasing numbers of minority students. Irvine (2003) advocates for the preparation of teachers as antiracist educators because "racism is particularly difficult for White teachers to address" (p. 78). Hence, if teacher educators emphasize antiracism, or the active engagement in dismantling systems of racial inequity (O'Brien, 2001). —and culturally relevant pedagogy, white teachers might better understand racism, white dominance, and teaching as social transformation. We can either leave masses of white teachers to reinforce existing structures of social inequality, or we can educate them to overturn those structures by disrupting the status quo and inspiring their students to do the same (Harding, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1992).

A burgeoning body of literature has focused on white teachers who practice culturally relevant pedagogy with students of color (Cooper, 2003; Hyland, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Landsman & Lewis, 2006; Powell, 1997; Reed, 1998). Studies have also explored the effectiveness of culturally relevant pedagogy by linking it to increased achievement, self-esteem, motivation, and academic engagement for minority students (Howard, 2001; Sheets, 1995). Additional studies have focused on how teachers and teacher educators of all racial backgrounds

have developed commitments to their multicultural work (Gay, 2003; Kenway & Fahey, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2005b; Torres, 1998) while others have specifically addressed the development of antiracist whites in various professions (Feagin, 2003; O'Brien, 2001; Thompson, 2001). Despite this research, studies in the field of teacher education generally have not focused on *how* white educators come to adopt antiracist views or culturally relevant pedagogy, nor how they reach the understandings of race and whiteness that underlie their practices. Such was the task of this research, which examined how white educators with varying levels of antiracist beliefs and practices come to exist.

Theoretical Frameworks

Theories of culturally relevant pedagogy and critical race theory (CRT) undergirded this research. Both highlight the significance of race and whiteness in the United States, their effect on education, and their influence on the whole of society (Leonardo, 2009; McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993; Omi & Winant, 1994; Tatum, 1997, 2007; West, 1993).

Culturally relevant pedagogy. Theories of cultural relevance, or how best to educate minority students while simultaneously honoring their distinct cultural backgrounds, have origins in the work of many. Woodson's (1933/2000) notion of mis-education for negroes, Freire's (1970/2000) concept of liberatory education for the oppressed, Podair's account of minority resistance to Eurocentric schooling (2002), and Walker's historical retelling of care ethics in segregated Black schools (1996) are examples of how scholars have conceptualized emancipatory pedagogies. Similarly, culturally "responsive," "synchronized," "congruent," "proficient," "appropriate," and "compatible" all comprise a non-exhaustive list of terms used to describe the task of "more closely matching school culture with student culture to promote academic success," and the broader goal of countering oppressive conditions (Giroux, 1995;

Ladson-Billings, 1992, p. 313). This research was grounded in the theory of culturally relevant pedagogy put forth by Ladson-Billings (1994). Extending the aforementioned theories, she has defined culturally relevant pedagogy as not merely seeking to "fit" school culture to students' culture, but fundamentally recognizing the worth of minority cultures as valuable strengths upon which education should be strategically fashioned. In this way, culturally relevant pedagogy is rendered a "pedagogy of opposition" that is distinctively unlike more commonly employed assimilationist pedagogies which "accommodate" students' culture but prepare them for the existing social order nonetheless (Ladson-Billings, 1992, 1994).

In her landmark study, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children,* Ladson-Billings (1994) delineated the key tenets of culturally relevant pedagogy as a theory of education. Although her work is based on African American students, culturally relevant pedagogy has valuable implications for all students of color (Delgado Bernal, 2006; Martinez, 2006; Yosso, 2006). This framework guided my analysis of white educators' conceptualizations of race and whiteness, their educational practices, and most importantly, their underlying rationales for adhering to each.

The basic tenets of culturally relevant pedagogy are promoting academic success, developing a relevant cultural personality, and educating students for transformation of the social status quo (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2006b). Academic success requires that teachers expand the knowledge and skills of their students and "demand… reinforce… and produce…academic excellence" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160). Culturally relevant teachers also foster students' cultural integrity, competence, and pride in their own identities by incorporating students' cultures into their practices. Teachers encourage their students to develop a "relevant cultural personality" that allows them to operate within their home cultures yet move easily between their

own norms and traditions and those of the so-called mainstream. Ladson-Billings (1995) explains: "Culturally relevant teachers utilize students' culture as a vehicle for learning," and nurture students' cultural wholeness (p. 161). Using this approach, high academic achievement is important, but so too is the fomenting of students' cultural selves.

The final tenet of culturally relevant pedagogy is cultivating students' critical consciousness, or aptitude for contributing to collective, social reconstruction (see also Grant & Sleeter, 1998). Education becomes emancipatory because those who are underserved, marginalized, and oppressed learn to critically identify their unjust position as subordinates in a culturally and racially hegemonic society. Students' newfound "conscientization" moves them to disrupt injustice in their own lives and wherever it thrives (Freire, 1970/2006).

Culturally relevant pedagogy served as one of two theoretical frameworks guiding this research. This framework is heavily influenced by critical race theory (CRT), which provided an additional underpinning for its focus on race, whiteness, and the central role of white teachers in education (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2006).

Critical race theory. Critical race theory (CRT) guided this study based on its recognition of the deeply embedded nature of race in the United States. Critical race theory originated in the legal field with the scholarship of Derrick Bell, Richard Delgado, and Alan Freeman (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), but was later introduced to education via Ladson-Billings and Tate (2006). This theory was initially borne from a need to rectify the pervasive but unacknowledged influence of race in the institution of law. Its fundamental goal of challenging the dominant discourse on race, however, provided an apt frame for examining education with an oft-avoided race-conscious lens (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Critical race theory is particularly useful in teacher education based on its refusal to acquiesce to the "colorblind" or "I don't see color, I just see children" discourse that dominates the ideology of many white teachers, including those studied in Chapter 2 (Gordon, 2005; Landsman & Lewis, 2006; Sleeter, 2004). Whenever confronted with race or the privilege affiliated with whiteness, white teachers tend to claim colorblindness, or the extraordinary inability to see color while paradoxically acknowledging the negative connotations of non-whiteness (Bennett, 2007; Leonardo, 2004a, 2004b, 2009). Irvine (2003) adds that,

> Far too many pre- and inservice teachers appear to be not only colorblind but also "color-deaf" and "color-mute" when it come to issues of race—that is, unable or unwilling to see, hear, or speak about instances of individual or institutional racism in their personal and professional lives (p. 78).

Such discourses convince whites that to recognize race is automatically racist and simultaneously efface racial significance for whites and non-whites, for whom race is often *the* most important aspect of their selfhood (Daniel-Tatum, 1997, 2007; Howard, 2006; Pollack, 2004).

The colorblind discourse emanates from a long tradition of "post-racial" politics designed to recalibrate the nation after the civil rights movement (Crenshaw, 1995). The mantra "Race *shouldn't* matter" was transfigured into "Race *doesn't* matter" when post-civil rights era politicians spurred a retrenchment consisting of staunchly meritocratic ideals (Peller, 1995; Lawrence, 1995; Schmidt, 2005). Political leaders and purveyors of the dominant discourse not only declared that the goals of the civil rights struggle had been reached, but that programs designed to achieve those goals actually went too far. The political climate circa the Reagan administration forward has been rife with "post racial" spin fueled by cultural conservatives and neoconservatives who have cried foul (Buras, 2008). The rhetoric of equal opportunity has taken a hegemonic bent, and has come to include expanding opportunity for racial minorities *and*

restricting legislation that prevents whites from "fairly" competing in a purported, now race-neutral meritocracy.

Colorblindness has only been re-elevated by the election of Barack Obama, a half Black, half white man whose presidency seems to "prove" that racism could not possibly co-exist with his success (Jackson, 2009). According to claims of post-raciality, which Obama has seemingly "confirmed," it is both impolite and uncouth to resurrect racism by "seeing" someone's race or viewing minority racial identity as anything but a bygone liability (Feagin & Harvey, 2009). The insistence on colorblindness as itself a remedy for racism has unfortunately seeped into the "common sense" of the national dialogue, the prevailing ideology of whites, and most importantly, the paradigms and pedagogies of many white teachers (Apple, 2000; Buras, 2008; Gotanda, 1995; 1995; Gramsci, 1947/1995). Applying a critical race theory lens to education aids in dismantling the colorblind discourse.

Yosso (2006) defined critical race theory as "a theoretical and analytical framework that challenges the ways that race and racism affect educational structures, practices, and discourses" and "a social justice project that works toward the liberatory potential of schooling" (p. 172). Although the tenets and "conceptual tools" (Gillborn, 2006) of critical race theory are many, the most pertinent elements of CRT that informed this research were:

1. Highlighting the endemic nature of racism as opposed to its purported "aberrant" or "post-racial" status
2. Exposing the pervasive dominance of whiteness in the prevailing racial hierarchy as put forth in critical white studies
3. Challenging the "master narrative" or the dominant ideology that claims neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy.

Racism as endemic, whiteness as dominant. The significance of whiteness and the unearned privilege it affords those who can identify as white feature prominently in examining the life experiences and racial conceptualizations of the white educators selected for this

research. Because whiteness functions as both an individual form of identity and as an embedded, institutional structure of dominance, whiteness is regarded as a form of "property" that renders its owners the recipients of psychic and material benefits (Harris, 1995). I employed the notion of whiteness as conceptualized in the critical white studies tradition, which falls under the auspices of critical race theory.

David Roediger (1991) and Noel Ignatiev (1995), for example, are critical white scholars who have written extensively about white privilege and the historical formation of whiteness as a malleable identity—particularly for the Irish and Jewish, who have not always been considered white (see also Omi & Winant, 1994). A host of scholars writing from within and outside the critical white studies and CRT traditions have also documented the pervasiveness of white racial dominance both nationally and globally (Nakayama & Martin, 1999; Schwartz & Disch, 1970; Wellman, 1977; West, 1993). The origins of white supremacy lie in the genesis of race as a largely social construct manufactured by dominant whites in history (Gould, 1981; Kincheloe, Steinberg, & Gresson, 1996; Mukhopadhyay, Henze, & Moses, 2007). From Sir Francis Galton's cranial capacity research, to the Eugenics movement of the early 1920s, to reincarnated social Darwinist theories put forth by Herrnstein and Murray (1996), scientists have kept pace with the dominant discourse. Joyce King (1997) has referred to such arguments as "hoodoo social science" using a West African term to describe a "science of deception." Such "science" supports a master narrative that ever attempts to prove the inferiority of those who are not white and to somehow justify their "natural," subordinate social position (Gould, 1981). The coordinating, dominant position of whites and the unearned set of advantages only accessible through possessing a white phenotype—and therefore "owning" whiteness—are collectively known as white privilege (McIntosh, 1988/2001).

In this research, race is understood not as a fixed set of genetic determinants but as a historicized, ongoing "project" whereby individuals are granted significance according to hegemony, or "the way in which society is organized and ruled" hierarchically (Omi & Winant, 1994, p. 56). Race, therefore, is not considered a static concept that merely places human bodies into rigid categories where white is "good" and dark is "bad." Rather, race is contextualized and considered as much an evolving social process that assigns power and cultural worth as it is an arbitrary system for categorizing phenotypes (Gould, 1981; Leonardo, 2009). Thusly conceptualized, race largely accounts for the contemporary social hierarchy which all but ensures the preservation of property, privilege, and power for those who can phenotypically "pass" for white (DeCuir-Gunby, 2006; Harris, 1995).

Drawing on critical race theory and critical white studies, I posit that race and racism have featured prominently in the disenfranchisement of students of color historically and contemporarily. From the standpoint of both CRT and critical white studies, white teachers can be educated to renounce hegemonic whiteness, which consciously ignores, blindly accepts, and staunchly upholds normalized white dominance (Leonardo, 2004a, 2004b, 2009). Anti-hegemonic whites consciously counter white supremacy in themselves, in schools, and in society (Howard, 2006). Raible and Irizarry (2007) have also referred to "transracialized," post-white identities, which offer hope and direction for whites who can both acknowledge their whiteness and white dominance while simultaneously working toward racial equity and justice. One aim of this research was to uncover the life experiences that might help to facilitate white educators' adoption of such anti-hegemonic, critical white identities.

Challenge to dominant ideologies of "neutrality." Another tenet of critical race theory that provided a foundational analytical tool in this research is the challenge to dominant claims

of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy, all of which are correlates of hegemonic whiteness (Leonardo, 2004a, 2004b; Sleeter, 2004). Educational equity has been elusive for students of color due in part to prevailing myths of meritocracy and equal opportunity. One reason for the pressing need for antiracist, culturally relevant teachers is the acknowledgement and reversal of an education system that favors a white male perspective, the affirmation of white identities, and systemically superior outcomes for white students. The culture, canon, and hidden curriculum of schools (e.g. policies, dress codes, expectations of students) are professed as neutral, objective, and illustrative of a "common American culture" (Ellington & Eaton, 2003; Hirsch, 1992; Kristol, 1995; Schlesinger, 1998). But school curricula, when viewed through the lens of CRT, commonly perpetuate the dominant ideology that white males are the only historic figures whose social standards, cultural mores, and "discoveries" are worth lauding (Nieto & Bode, 2008). Schools that follow a simple "contributions" approach to multicultural curriculum may sprinkle in a short story or poem by an African American or a woman (Banks & Banks, 2004), but leave the curriculum largely untouched. What students learn is ultimately reduced to "the classics" or a collection of Eurocentric works. The work of whites is tacitly reinsribed as "core" knowledge while the contributions of people of color, women, and other marginalized minorities are deemed "peripheral" (Apple, 2000; see also Buras, 2008; Hirsch, 1992). This selective tradition wrongly promulgates the notion that the white perspective is universal, and in so doing, systemically promotes the success of white students (Asher, 2007).

The well-documented and persistent disparities in achievement between students of color and their white counterparts indicate that schooling could not be farther from objective, meritocratic, or with equal distribution of opportunity (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Dixson &

Rousseau, 2006). The existence of an accumulated achievement gap—or more aptly, the accumulated "education debt"—rife with markers of structured and persistent minority underachievement, provides strong evidence to the contrary (Bell, 1995; Kozol, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 2006a).

My research is based on the assertion that educators can contribute to the success of white students over students of color—knowingly or unknowingly, consciously or dysconsciously— by being complicit in an unjust educational system in a wholly racialized society (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006; King, 1991; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2006). Teachers and teacher educators alike can either passively assist in upholding the status quo by delivering a monocultural curriculum centered on the validation of Eurocentric norms, or they can actively engage in disrupting the status quo by teaching for social justice. The latter challenges the neutral, colorblind pretenses of schooling and employs a critical pedagogy to dismantle claims of apolitical, aracial education for all. We need antiracist, culturally relevant white educators who can successfully bring race, whiteness, and social justice to the fore in order to meet this challenge. Using critical race theory, this research helps to determine how such critical teachers might be "made."

Chapter 2

"Whites have been given every opportunity to succeed"

White Teachers on the Path to Antiracism

Developing a commitment to antiracism is lifelong, never ending, and always incomplete. Freire's (1970/2006) notion of "unfinishedness" lends itself beautifully to the courageous but riddled journeys of the twelve white classroom teachers whose views on race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy I examine here. In an attempt to study their development as antiracists, I posed three questions that guided my time with them:

1. How do white teachers conceptualize race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy?
2. How are white teachers' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy manifested in their classroom teaching practices?
3. What are the life experiences that inform white teachers' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and their commitment to culturally relevant pedagogy?

Interviewing, observing, and following these teachers over the course of a semester revealed a moving snapshot of their life trajectories. These teachers exemplified glimmering moments in which the reasons they were nominated for this study by African American female principals as culturally relevant teachers became obvious. There were other less progressive moments that revealed the endemic nature of racism, the pervasiveness of cultural deficit theories, and the outright difficulty of rendering whiteness visible (Marx, 2006; Sue, 2004). Nonetheless, these teachers provided invaluable insight about the racial conceptualizations, culturally relevant teaching strategies, and life experiences that might help to inspire other white teachers. Although these twelve teachers were at various points on their paths toward antiracism, their stories are still both powerful and promising.

Although much research is dedicated to exploring white preservice teachers' beliefs about race and diversity (Cochran-Smith, 2001, 2004; Zeichner, Melnick, & Louise-Gomez, 1996), only a small body of literature has addressed white inservice teachers' beliefs. Before discussing the racial and pedagogical beliefs of the teachers studied, I first wish to provide context for the terrain on which this research is situated. The literature reveals that white teachers often hold problematic views of race and difference that thwart their ability to serve students of color in optimal ways. Many of the research studies detailed here highlight both the challenges and promises of such teachers.

White Teachers' Beliefs about Race and Whiteness: What We Know

At least three empirical studies from the existing research base on white inservice teachers' beliefs about race and whiteness informed my research. Bell's (2002) study provided a "baseline" for understanding how widely white educators minimize race and adamantly profess colorblindness. Mazzei (1997) highlighted the difficulty that practicing white teachers have in discussing racial issues that affect them in urban schools. Kailin (1999) uncovered white teachers' perceptions of racism in purportedly "liberal" schools where even those teachers were blinded by whiteness. On the whole, white teachers seemed not to understand—or flatly denied— the racialized context of education, whereas race is quite real in their students' lives. With so few white teachers who fully grasp the endemic nature of race, racism, and white dominance, this research will hopefully increase the number of critical white teachers by illuminating how their racial conceptualizations develop, change, and are embodied in their practice.

A substantial body of literature is aimed at discovering the role of multicultural courses, fieldwork, and cross-cultural immersion experiences in changing white *preservice* teachers'

beliefs about race, racism, and teaching diverse students. However, literature addressing the effects of professional development on *inservice* white teachers' beliefs is just emerging.

Studies by Makkawi (1999) and Lawrence and Tatum (1997) offer some assurance that movement in teachers' white identities can be positively influenced by professional development. Lawrence and Tatum (1997) also provide encouragement that the thoughts *and* actions of white teachers can improve as a result of quality preparation and ongoing training. My research addressed, in part, the "teachability" of antiracist white identities by attempting to uncover the factors that most influence white teachers' movement along such a continuum and suggesting how those elements might be incorporated in teacher education.

A fair amount of research in the field of teacher education has addressed the culturally relevant classroom practices of teachers of color (Foster, 1997; Irvine, 2002; Lipman, 1994; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Walker, 1993, 1996). Fewer empirical studies, however, investigate those of white teachers (Chapman, 2005; Cooper, 2003; Harding, 2005; Hyland, 2005; Powell, 1997; Reed, 1998). These studies are bolstered by powerful narrative research from culturally relevant white teachers, which also informs what we know about this exemplary group (Kohl, 1967; Michie, 1999; Paley, 1979; Pearce, 2005; Landsman, 2001; Landsman & Lewis; 2006; Schultz, 2007, 2008).

Studies examining white teachers' effective practices with students of color have provided valuable insight about the multiple forms that culturally relevant pedagogy can assume. Reed (1998) has highlighted the common and problematic "missionary paradigm" that many white teachers espouse while working in minority schools. Hyland (2005) also uncovered that white teachers who self-identify as "good teachers of Black children" demonstrate a range of ideological stances and often enact culturally relevant pedagogy, but ultimately perpetuate

racism via their inability to acknowledge white privilege. Importantly, Cooper (2003) found that white teachers can be identified as effective teachers of Black children by a Black community and still struggle with naming race (see also Powell, 1997). Collectively, these studies call for the examination of teachers' fundamental beliefs, life experiences, and personal biographies in determining how antiracist, culturally relevant white teachers come to be. My own research has helped to address that very challenge.

Notably, the empirical research base exploring factors that motivate teachers to enact culturally relevant pedagogy is nearly nonexistent. The few studies I encountered attempted to uncover these factors (Ford, 1999; Johnson, 2002; Paccione, 2000), but did not examine their role in the exclusive development of *white* teachers.

Ford (1999), Johnson (2002), and Paccione (2000) have contributed much needed research on the factors that shape the development of teachers. Ford's (1999) study revealed the relatively small impact of professional development on increasing teachers' cultural knowledge while Johnson (2002) explored the life experiences occurring outside the bounds of formal teacher education that had a significant impact on white teachers' practice. Paccione (2000) found that some but not all of the important experiences that shape educators' commitment to multiculturalism could be replicated in teacher education, but did not incorporate classroom observations to substantiate their professed level of commitment. In contrast, I used both interviews and observations to enrich our understanding of how culturally relevant teachers develop. Indeed, I not only sought to determine how white teachers conceptualize and enact race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy, but how they *arrive* at the paradigms that guide their views and teaching practices.

Methodology

From the sample selection process, to interviews, to classroom observations, my goal was to study the culturally relevant teaching strategies and underlying racial conceptualizations of white teachers who are committed to teaching culturally diverse students. The ultimate aim was to examine the life experiences that lead teachers to view race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy in progressive ways in order to replicate those experiences, if possible, in teacher education.

I used the perspective of African American administrators to arrive at a nominated sample of white teachers who, they believed, demonstrated cultural relevance with students. A series of three semi-structured interviews allowed white teachers to then explain their teaching philosophies, guiding beliefs, and classroom practices from their own point of view. Finally, a classroom observation and time at their schools provided important opportunities to observe how white teachers' conceptualizations of race and culturally relevant pedagogy were manifested in their practice. These methods yielded a nuanced understanding of *what* culturally relevant pedagogy "looked like," *how* white teachers enacted it, and most importantly, *why* they espoused it.

The first portion of this study was conducted in a public school system in a major southeastern city. Concentrating the research in one district reduced the effects of confounding variables based on differences in administration, school policies, and district-specific regulations (Moore & Notz, 2006). The school district was situated in one of the most culturally diverse counties in the country and served over 100,000 students who were roughly 75% African American, 10% White, 8% Hispanic, 3% Asian, and 2% differently identified. The district was also geographically and demographically bifurcated. As is typical, the county experienced

racialized residential segregation and the effects of historical "white flight." One portion of the county served mostly white and Asian students in high performing, sought-after schools whereas the other primarily served African American and other minority students in under-resourced, lower performing schools. Because I sought to study white teachers of racially marginalized students, this research was conducted in four elementary schools in the portion of the district that served mostly students of color.

To reach a sample of twelve white elementary school teachers, I used a modified community nomination method (Foster, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Principals and vice-principals at each elementary school—all African American females—were solicited for nominations of white teachers who demonstrated exemplary, culturally relevant teaching methods. I wanted to understand what constitutes culturally relevant pedagogy not just in my view, but in the eyes of Black principals in the community. Thus, I trusted the judgment, or "emic" perspective of these African American women in identifying the multiple forms this pedagogy may have taken (Cooper, 2003; Merriam, 1998).

In explaining her nominations, one principal spoke about a teacher being the first to enter the building each day, running an informal homework helpline from his home, and sponsoring a program designed to mentor young men at the school. Another principal told of how a teacher shared her phone number with each of her students and welcomed calls from parents or family members at any time. A vice principal spoke supportively of a white teacher who ignored the professional dress code but "closed her door and taught like nobody's business." She clarified that that particular teacher had little tolerance for mandates and school rules, and only cared about the progress of her students.

White teachers who were nominated by their principals and vice-principals were then invited to participate in this research. Regarding the racial classification of teachers and the precaution I wished to exercise in avoiding the "essentialization" of whiteness, only teachers who *self-identifed* as white were included in the study (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006; Lewis, 2004). Their formal teaching experience ranged from 2 to 30 years, and the final sample consisted of ten women and two men. The identities of these teachers are protected by using pseudonyms for names and altering conspicuous information (see Appendix A for participant profiles).

Teacher participation in this study consisted of being interviewed three times, spaced one to two weeks apart. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Teachers were observed in classrooms for at least one lesson or class period of their choosing, during which I took pen and paper field notes that were also typed.

At the conclusion of interviews and classroom observations I also penned analytic memoranda as part of a researcher's journal. These memos were expanded "notes that represent[ed] some level of inference or analysis" (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002, p. 153; Merriam, 1998). The memos served as record of a personal dialogue with myself regarding "hunches" about findings and possible interpretations. Throughout the study, the analytic memos allowed me to "stay self aware" (Miles & Huberman, 2002, p. 397), draw out my researcher's perspective, and remind myself of its possible effects on interpretation and data analysis (see Appendix B).

The findings of this research, which constitutes the first portion of a two-part study (see Chapter 3 for the second portion), reveal that burgeoning antiracist white teachers are complex and multilayered individuals who ascribe to a variety of ideologies, including competing ones. Within their racial paradigms, there are progressive moments that give rise to antiracism as well

as more difficult moments that resemble the colorblind ideologies often espoused by whites. Like many others, the white teachers in this sample ascribed to both progressive ideas about race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy, as well as to those that belie a non-critical, majoritarian narrative (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). These findings unearthed the intricacies of white teachers' racial and pedagogical ideas, and the pervasiveness of racism and cultural deficit theories (see Hirsch, 1992; Moynihan, 1965/1997; Wilson, 1985/1997). Even among "exemplary" white teachers who were nominated by African American administrators, and whose observed teaching practices were among the most promising I had witnessed, racial biases and decontextualized social understandings were still evident. Their stories uncover the complexity of racial thought, the "blind spots" whites often have concerning race, and possible pedagogical directions we might take in teacher education to address these less favorable expressions of racial dominance (Gere, Beuhler, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009; Wise, 2008b; 2009). These results also offer promise, however, that white teachers are capable of grasping nuanced ideas about race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy even if those notions simultaneously coexist alongside problematic others.

Data collection for this study spanned three months and served as a "snapshot" of the racial understandings and multicultural commitments of white teachers. Thus, one must remember Ladson-Billings' (2006) admonishment that culturally relevant pedagogy is much less about "doing" than "being," and that one comes to "be" a more culturally relevant, social justice educator over time. Teachers in this study were interviewed and observed during just one window in a lifelong process. When we recognize that it is only through constant praxis and transformation that anyone is reshaped, these data provide much promise for how we might move more teachers along an ongoing learning trajectory.

In what follows I discuss the findings based on thematic categories that emerged from my coding of the data (see Appendix C). Many themes, organized by each of three research questions guiding the study, illustrate both the progressive *and* retrogressive tendencies of the white teachers studied. It is the aim of this research, however, to focus on what is good, right, and working in the struggle for social justice while at the same time maintaining a necessary critical stance toward the progress that must still be made (Chapman, 2007). Thus, I contend that even as these teachers demonstrate some of the problematic ideologies that typify the state of white racism, they also stand out in their more progressive moments of burgeoning antiracism.

How do White Teachers Conceptualize Race, Whiteness, and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy?

In an attempt to determine how white teachers either confirmed or departed from the research base on white teachers' often retrogressive racial understandings, I posed the following question: *How do white teachers conceptualize race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy?* Several themes emerged, which support the conclusion that white teachers espouse many of the same problematic, deficit-rooted ideologies as those commonly found in pre- and inservice white teachers. They also, however, simultaneously adhere to deeper, more "qualified" understandings of those concepts.

Qualified colorblindness. Colorblindness is a worldview that is directly challenged in critical race theory (Leonardo, 2004a, 2004b; Sleeter, 2004). Whites' refusal to "see" color placates their sensibilities about noticing race as the equivalent of racism (Omi & Winant, 1994). In multicultural education and teacher education, the eradication of colorblindness is key because it negates one of the most important aspects of identity for people of color and for whites, even if not explicitly recognized. Mr. Royal, a veteran teacher of 30 years, expressed his preference for

racial colorblindness with, “I’m probably race neutral.” Ms. Applegate, a fourth-grade teacher of just two years, spoke of her proudly colorblind childhood home by saying, “I don’t think about race,” and “My parents weren’t racist, obviously at all. They didn’t see color.” Most notably, Ms. Applegate mentioned that she didn’t consider her Black nanny as Black: “To me she wasn’t black. I mean, her name was _____ and that was it.” When Mr. Bentley, a deeply student-centered teacher, was asked how he thought about race, he simply replied, “I don’t. I don’t because when you look at your kids you’re not looking at whether they’re–they’re Muslim or Christian, or Jewish, or White, or Black, or Hispanic. You’re looking at them as a kid.”

In each of their verbalizations, teachers overwhelmingly expressed their desire to not focus on race but to look past it in order to find something more important to affirm than their students’ racial identities. Causey, Thomas, and Armento (2000) have referred to such a desire as *absolute democracy,* or the notion that “kids are kids regardless of their cultural background” (pp. 33-34). It was certainly the case here that teachers greatly preferred to prioritize another, more individual feature of their students over their racial identity. This colorblindness unfortunately negates the importance of race in the lives of the students and becomes a missed opportunity to use their cultural identities to enhance learning and student success (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Tatum, 1997; Irvine, 2003). Additionally, statements such as, “To me she wasn’t Black,” serve the dual function of indicating the speaker’s desire to not see Blackness as the social handicap it often is, in favor of seeing just the individual, irrespective of the societal conditions that make being Black a true liability. This statement on the receiving end—in this case, for Ms. Applegate’s family nanny—also becomes an unnecessarily painful reminder that Blackness is somehow an identity to be overlooked, worked through “in spite of,” or altogether eschewed. Many a person of color has suffered as a result of hearing such statements (Howard,

2006; Wise, 2008a; 2008b; 2009), and Ms. Applegate's students could also have been at risk for such damage given her preference for colorblindness.

An interesting caveat that many teachers affirmed was that, while it was preferable to not see the color of their students, it was even *better,* and an actual compliment that students did not see them as white. Mr. Royal expressed pride that for the parents of his students, "They don't see that it's a white man fussing at my child. It's Mr. Royal." Even better, Mr. Royal enjoyed the idea that for his students:

> I think that most of the children—I believe—have been taught to be colorblind, and all they see in me is Mr. – I'm just Mr. Royal. I feel like, and I've told parents this before: I appreciate your child because I don't think your child sees me as maybe like they see other white people. But I don't think they make the connection that Mr. Royal is white also. I just don't think they see that.

Ms. Applegate seconded Mr. Royal's sentiment with, "I'm not white in this building. I'm really not. For Christmas, I told you, they all gave me a little Black angel." And Ms. Applegate was most proud of the idea that her students had not only politely ignored her whiteness, they simultaneously designated her as an honorary Black: "Like they don't, my students all think I'm Black. They just think I'm a light-skinned Black person." Ms. Fielder, a fifth grade teacher, shared that even when she decided to have the children compare and contrast her with a student of color for a class graphing activity— where she "just knew" the first thing the children would notice was her race—they didn't. She was surprised, yet content with the unacknowledgement.

In these instances, teachers not only expressed preference to not see, think about, or concentrate on their student's race, but also their delight in not being identified as white. What helped to ameliorate such seeming colorblindness, however, is that each of these teachers also recognized that "other" whites had, in the past or at present, contributed to negative connotations of white racial identification by actually propagating racism. Tatum (1997) has argued that both

passive and active racism are equally insidious. Here, teachers were aware of injustices at the hands of overtly racist whites, and despite their own passive colorblindness (Marx, 2006), they could readily identify how other whites had made it harder for them to *want* to be identified as hegemonically white[2]. Mr. Royal noted that, although he enjoyed not being thought of as white, there were other whites whom students or families might very well have had racist interactions with: "Somebody at the mall, somebody at the store, maybe somebody that's been rude…they may have made an off-hand remark that had racial overtones to it." Similarly, Ms. Applegate spoke candidly about the prevalence of the Ku Klux Klan in a nearby area and acknowledged, in tongue and cheek manner, that "Originally, when our city was built, the people who had the highest opinions about other people lived in _____. You'd often see them dressed up at night… going from house to house." Ms. Jordan, a second-career teacher of nine years, acknowledged that she did not have to look past her own family to identify overtly racist whites, whom she knew existed. She spoke of her sister: "She's married to one of the most racist people on the planet. When I filled out my mother's write-in ballot, she said, 'Now please, please, no matter what you do, don't ever tell him I voted for Barack Obama." Finally, Mr. Bentley discussed how his African American history classes helped him to realize that if a parent thought he was being racist toward their child, he could understand because he represented "a lot" of white men who had been racist in the past.

In addition to having "qualified" understandings of why students and families of color might separate them from hegemonic whiteness, these teachers also adhered to a type of "qualified colorblindness" that did not necessarily benefit people of color in result, but revealed

[2] Hegemonic whiteness consciously ignores, blindly accepts, and staunchly upholds normalized white dominance (Leonardo, 2004a, 2004b, 2009). In contrast, anti-hegemonic whiteness is a form of white identity that allows whites to critically acknowledge their race and recognize its dominance in society. Anti-hegemonic whites actively counter white supremacy in themselves, in schools, and in society (Howard, 2006; Lewis, 2004; Raible & Irizarry, 2007).

much about themselves as whites in terms of *intent.* Here, their intention for being colorblind is actually rooted in a strong desire to operate in a post-racial society. These teachers espouse traditional notions of colorblindness as the only way they know how to be polite, as well as slightly more complex views about what matters most in interacting with fellow human beings. The teachers indeed do damage by eschewing race, but they succeed in wanting to bypass race for the purpose of focusing on students' humanity. Whereas others have looked to colorblindness as a way to repeal policies designed to account for racial injustice such as affirmative action and race-conscious admissions (Crenshaw, 1995; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Omi & Winant, 1994), these teachers desire to place less emphasis on race as a hindrance for students who "deserve the very best."

Ms. Darling, a second-career teacher of four years, described her ability to see differences but to focus on the more pressing needs of students:

> You have children that are children first and foremost, and they need you. And it really doesn't matter the color of your skin. They need you. They're children. Yes, there's [*sic*] differences, of course, 'cause we're humans, and we do have differences. Just – I don't care who you are. I think it just – it's – it's humanity. A human is a human.

Ms. Applegate also noted that humanity above all else was priority with, "I don't think about race. We're all human beings. I don't care." Similarly, Ms. Jordan noted, "I can see kids for who they are, not just what they can do. You have to look at their soul, their spirit, you know, who they are."

Interestingly, their statements simultaneously imply the negative effect of being recognized as a person of color. Additionally, teachers' whiteness is rendered invisible here by assuming that, like whites, people of color are *capable* of being considered as individuals who represent only themselves as opposed to automatic members of racial groups who bear the

burden of representing their races at all times (Marx, 2006; McIntosh, 2001). The assumption that people of color can enjoy such individuality and humanity, which comes with their own whiteness, is a racial blind spot (Wise, 2009b).

In my attempt to analyze the data more objectively, I frequently referred to my researcher's journal and perspective (see Appendix B) to make sure I was not unduly complicating "colorblindness," which is retrogressive, into "qualified colorblindness" simply because I came to like these teachers a great deal and wanted quite desperately to deny the highly damaging, hegemonic nature of colorblindness in the absolute. What I realized, however, is that they would like to not have to deal with race (nor have their students deal with race) as an *inhibitor* to connecting with people, being educated well, or receiving fair and equal treatment in larger society. Ms. Springfield, a "tough love" third grade teacher adequately captured the complexity of qualified colorblindness with:

> I don't look at it [race]. They're my babies. It's there. I mean it's there. I mean, obviously it's there. You know, I mean so it's – they're kids. They're not a color. They're not a race. They're not an ethnicity, although we celebrate all of those. They're kids and I think you have to – I love my babies as kids before I even look at what they are. Does that make sense?

What "makes sense" about the ideas of Ms. Springfield and a host of other teachers in the study are two things, albeit conflicting. First, to ignore a child's race or cultural identity is often devastating for the child and a missed educational opportunity for all. Teachers must first learn to affirm children's relevant cultural personalities (Ladson-Billings, 1994) and acknowledge race as an asset and not a deficit before academic or racial progress can occur (Gay, 2000; Irvine, 2003). In this way, many of the white teachers in this sample are just embarking on paths toward antiracism because antiracism requires, foremostly, that one *see* and acknowledge race so as to work against racism (O'Brien, 2001). Second, however, as I think about the goals of

multicultural education, social justice, and post-raciality, it is impossible to ignore that we should, in fact, be striving toward a society in which race doesn't matter in a negative, oppressive way (Schmidt, 2005).

The problem is that the only way we will actually achieve such a cultural democracy is if we first learn to recognize the damaging effects of ignoring race, which thereby ignores the very real ways in which race works against those who are not white (Darder, 1991). Leonardo (2009) has advocated a critical qualified colorblindness, if you will, which actually takes up the notion that we might one day reach a state where all cultural identities are affirmed, but the language and constructs that indicate race are literally rendered useless. A racial realist critique of Leonardo's vision is that those days are either far ahead or altogether elusive (Delgado & Stefancic, 2005). I continued, however, to hear strands of his vision in the words of the teachers studied here. Unlike Leonardo, they were unable to recognize the crucial step of first affirming racial identities. But the teachers were still motivated by the eventual goal of teaching children who were not treated poorly or educated inadequately based on their race alone.

These teachers were attempting to use colorblindness to operate in a society that is not yet post-racial. They warrant, I believe, some degree of recognition for the intentionality behind their treatment of students as simple human beings who rightly deserved to be focused on as students in need of a quality education despite their race. It is, however, the "despite their race" element that makes these teachers very similar to less progressive educators who simply wish to ignore students' race, the real impact that non-white racial identities actually have on them, and legitimate claims of racism in school and society. These teachers are capable of acknowledging racism and the significance of not being white like themselves, even as they inadvertently contribute to racism itself by also attempting to bypass race. Still, however, I maintain that

progressive moments exist when teachers like these understand that race alone *is* currently, but never *should* be a hindrance in education or in life.

Deficit theories are "true," but the "true" deficits are... One finding that represents the duality of how teachers used concepts of race and whiteness in their views of the mostly minority children they taught was their simultaneous espousal of cultural deficit theories as well as nuanced understandings of broader social inequity. White teachers in this study adhered to theories about minority children rooted in their presumed dysfunction and the lack of educational aspiration (Hirsch, 1992; Moynihan, 1965/1997; Wilson, 1985/1997). They also, however, demonstrated broader understandings of other types of deficits, which were systemic and had nothing to do with minorities' deficits. That is, in addition to adhering to retrogressive views of minority culture and students of color, these teachers also saw deficits of resources and endemic social conditions that hinder minorities from enjoying full equality.

Ms. Darling, a second-career teacher of four years, spoke about when her own children attended mostly minority schools. She was surprised by the assumptions of many white parents that there would be "drugs" and "weapons" at their school: "Inner city high school is where we had some issues, [but] we didn't have drugs in the school. We didn't have weapons." Although she was delighted with the upset of this stereotype, she later expressed her assumed mandate for tighter discipline in her current mostly minority school: "And also the fact that these children, many of them – not all of them – but many of them don't have structure, the discipline, the concern" and "You know you're needed 'cause you know once they leave your classroom at the end of the day, they probably don't have anyone at home that can give them the attention they need." Hence, her more progressive incredulity of the stereotypical assumptions coexisted

alongside her own assumptions about the level of structure and discipline required for the minority students she taught.

Ms. Applegate, who on the day of our observation had just "lectured" the children about their behavior, said there were no holds barred when she told her 100 percent African American class:

> You can walk around with your britches around your knees and you can watch Jerry Springer all day and you can join your families that haven't graduated, or you can work hard and be the first in your family to graduate and be successful. If you wanna stay home and pop out a hundred kids and be on welfare, that's your choice, but some of you are going to be successful.

Ms. Applegate later expressed that she was admittedly too harsh when she scolded the children this way and thought of even worse things to say, but was decidedly heavy-handed with the children because they seemed not to care about their education. She later added that school-wide, children were uninterested in their personal presentation and appearance: "Belts and shirts are a battle. The norm. Their priorities are out of whack." She also shared a frustrated opinion about hygiene and the children wearing dirty clothes with, "If we don't tell them to wash their clothes, it's not like anyone at home is going to do it." Mr. Bentley also expressed his rationale for being careful to provide structure in the form of rules in his class because "these kids, they don't understand what rules are." Finally, Ms. Reardon, a no-nonsense third-grade teacher spoke of her anxiety about her children who listen to music by "utter criminals" and her disappointment that they would aspire to be musicians themselves.

While naming or alluding to deficits in respect, discipline, values and priorities for children of color, teachers often simultaneously juxtaposed whiteness with color and implied that whiteness itself embodied opposite traits. Mr. Bentley equated suburban and private schools as places where parents were more able and *willing* to do more for their children "because you have

really smart kids that have what they need, and their parents are willing to give out, or shell out money, to get extra stuff outside of the classroom." In this statement, he also included his thoughts on increased "intelligence" in white schools with "you have really smart kids."

Ms. Jordan simultaneously expressed her frustration with the incompetence of minority schools and the lack of quality leadership under Blacks while juxtaposing the higher quality administration of a white school. She spoke of hallways signs at her current Black school that contained misspellings and poor grammar usage such as, "Animals that lives in Africa." She noted, "So there's – unfortunately there's a lot of incompetence. Now I don't think you'd see that in a suburban school…if you have administrators that don't pick up on those things…that can't use English." When asked, "Do you think there's a qualitative difference in the administration based on if it were a white suburban school and if it were a Title I school?" her response was, "Absolutely. Absolutely."

What complicates the way these teachers think about deficits, however, is their coexisting ability to locate what they believe are deficits in minority culture *as well as* in the racist culture of schooling. Even as these teachers unduly associated non-whiteness with lack of sophistication and undisciplined lethargy, they also grasped larger concepts of how students of color and their schools were systemically and institutionally disenfranchised. Mr. Royal spoke eloquently of the lack of quality teachers in schools for minorities as well as his 30-year, career-long observation that white teachers tend to "pay their dues" in minority schools, then transfer to whites schools as quickly as possible:

> If given qualified, good teachers, the children can perform as well as anywhere. 'Cause a lot of times you know the schools in the _____ part of the county, you got new teachers because that's where all the openings were. That's the schools where, 'As soon as I get enough years to transfer, I'm transferring out of here.'

Ms. Darling concurred with Mr. Royal's observation with, "Why can't they be given an equal opportunity to *me*? They need phenomenal teachers." Ms. Jordan also agreed that quality teachers often sought white schools by adding, "There are plenty of teachers to teach in those kinds of schools. So I made a conscious decision to come here." Mr. Bentley spoke eloquently about how the presence of more resources does not even indicate a higher quality teacher. Rather, it simply spoke to the school resources and parental funding available: "You could be a great teacher and work at a school that has, in a sense, rich kids that have every single resource available to them. It doesn't mean you're a good teacher. It means those kids have the money to get what they need to have."

Both Mr. Royal and Ms. Applegate spoke about many minorities' inability to opt out of public education given limited access to money. Ms. Applegate specifically explained the undervaluation of Blacks in schools, which compounds their already run-down facilities. These realizations are progressive moments in that it is quite difficult to convince whites that racism functions as policy and is embedded in structures and systems (Gillborn, 2005; Gollnick & Chinn, 2009). Many whites cling to notions of racism as individual acts of meanness. In reality, racism is individual, institutional, cultural, and can be active or passive (Bennett, 2007; McIntosh, 1988/2001; Tatum, 1997). That these white teachers could broaden racism to more than the acts of the "other" racist individuals they had identified earlier is a step in the right direction.

Both Ms. Jordan and Ms. Prescott (a foreign-born fifth grade teacher) directly addressed assumptions that minority parents do not care about children or education. Ms. Jordan noted problems with language barriers by saying, "As long as they understand it and know they're supposed to do that, then they do it. But again, if you're sending home everything in English

and they don't read English, how do you know the kid's supposed to sit down and read the book? That's the way I look at it with all my parents." Ms. Prescott noted the difficulty parents sometimes have showing their concern by working disproportionately long hours, by being physically unable to visit the school, or even by their own denial of a quality education: "But the parents don't have time to work with the children. Not that they don't want to, or else they don't have the education themselves, so they expect more from the school."

One of the more progressive revelations of systemic injustice in education came in an interview with Ms. Underwood, a third-year teacher. In her treatise on education in the United States, she not only indicted the fundamentally undemocratic ways in which children are educated, but spoke of "elites" as the direct beneficiaries of these injustices:

> And like with American history, schools were founded to teach the elite. That's what schools were at first. Only very affluent children went to school. And I think because we've kept that sort of same structure, we're still just teaching the elite. Everybody goes to school, but the elite's children are being educated in the best way. American education needs a complete like start over, overhaul. Because that's all we're still doing.

Even though Ms. Underwood did not explicitly name the educated "elite" as traditionally white, landed-gentry males (Johnson, 2002)—which eventually came to encompass whites in general—Ms. Underwood could still quite nimbly point out the fundamental injustice of how education functions in the U. S. By pointing out generational legacies of opportunity and relating quality education to affluence and class, Ms. Underwood succeeds in focusing on at least some of the deficits of this *country* and its failure to provide truly equal schooling opportunities as opposed to just the assumed deficits of families themselves. She did, however, later point to such deficits with, "They're still, we can't change where we are, and we can't change the parental involvement, things like that, and their opinion about education…" In this oration, Ms. Underwood simultaneously expressed that minority families must value education more

fervently than they do, and perhaps that even if equal educational opportunity existed, the parents of her 99% African American class still might not pursue it as avidly as others would. Thus, Ms. Underwood's sentiments are a prime example of how white teachers in this study ascribed to cultural deficit theories somewhat, but also demonstrated broader understandings of other types of deficits, which were systemic. What provides glimmers of hope for these teachers is that they did not fully subscribe to the essentializing idea that *all* families of color fit this general mold, nor the idea that people of color themselves were wholly responsible for the lack of educational opportunities they faced.

Racism is real, but decontextualized understandings prevail. Among the more telling findings was that white teachers could indeed identify racism, but largely (although not entirely) conceptualized it as propagated by individuals and not institutions or larger societal structures. Teachers disclosed instances of racism in their own families and in other individuals, but less often viewed racism as a system. Teachers also considered racism as bidirectional and all-encompassing, as in often perpetuated by Blacks and minorities themselves. Ideas like these, unfortunately, revealed deficits in teachers' ability to successfully contextualize how racism came to be, how it functions pervasively in society, and how a specific outgrowth of racism is not just historical, but contemporary white dominance. Thus, although teachers were able to name and recognize racism in various forms, they had, on the whole, decontextualized understandings of race and whiteness.

Ms. Jordan admitted that her friends, and whites in general, had a generally incredulous, negative outlook on her work with minority students: "Most of my white friends cannot imagine why I teach here. So it is – there's definitely a dividing, you know a division of the races in terms of what they think about working in an urban lower income school." Ms. Searle recalled

open racism in her own family by describing an incident in which her brother was not allowed to bring a Black friend to her parents' house: "And I remember that my brother had a…friend who was a girl, she was African American. They wouldn't let her in the house, and to me that was very, that's not how I feel."

Both Ms. Underwood and Ms. Fielder expressed outrage that their friends refused to accept the possibility of a Black president. Additionally, Ms. Reardon spoke of her mother-in-law, "a huge conservative," who refused to watch news broadcasts if President Obama speaking. Although she did not outwardly name racism as the underlying cause for her mother-in-law's refusal, she certainly implied that her mother-in-law may have been using her Republicanism to justify her disapproval of him as a Democrat as opposed to her veiled disdain for him as a Black man.

Not only did teachers tend to locate racism in individuals or other whites, they also conceptualized racism as something that had primarily occurred long ago. Ms. Jordon noted that, "Yes, there was a lot of persecution of Black people. Yes, there was oppression. Yes, slavery was wrong. Yes, there were horrible things done." Both Ms. Fielder and Prescott generally taught about racism as historical events. Ms. Fielder used Black History month to make a poster of how things used to be, and Ms. Prescott spoke to her children about how whites are no longer against Blacks. Ms. Reardon even went so far as to downplay the significance of Barack Obama's Blackness as a characteristic to be proud of, and she even offered some misguided revisionist history to her students regarding how we might reconceptualize African-slavery:

> African-Americans are not the only ones who have ever been slaves before. Greeks have been slaves and, you know, just all different people. And besides, there are people in Africa that are white. It's more that the reason why they brought the African-American people over and, you know, convinced them to

> come to the United States was because, you know, things weren't so great in Africa.

In these instances, Ms. Reardon was attempting to educate her children about issues that other teachers may consider taboo. In doing so, however, she reveals that she also lacks a contextualized understanding of *racialized* slavery and the pervasive injustice attached to Black skin.

Even more unfortunate than any of the teachers' decontextualized understandings of racism as a largely historical event were Mr. Royal and Ms. Jordan's strong assertions that racism is bi-directional and equally perpetuated by minorities, and that residential and educational segregation is voluntary and self-imposed by Blacks. For example:

> Mr. Royal: I don't ever recall any racial tensions at school other than what children do about taunting back and forth, both ways.
>
> Ms. Jordan: Black teachers are prejudiced against white teachers, and they don't want white teachers in their school. It's a two-way street.
>
> Ms. Jordan: We have to end all this voluntary segregation. The vast majority of our schools are segregated because people segregate themselves geographically. So I don't know why we don't mix.

In these statements, what comes forth is a regrettable reality about missing context. The verbalizations of Mr. Royal, Ms. Jordan, and many teachers in this study indicate a strong deficit in teachers' own ability to contextualize racism as systemically propagated and not individually imposed, and as contemporarily relevant and not historically dead. The white teachers in this study identified certain types of racism and acknowledged its existence in basic ways. However, their decontextualized understandings of how forms of white racism and institutional racism, for instance, evolved, progressed, or came to infiltrate the many spheres in which they operate ultimately prevailed. Moreover, their critique of racism is that it is bi-directional and equally propagated by both privileged and marginalized racial groups. The goal of antiracism, however,

is to first understand racism as firmly rooted in white privilege, which eluded many of these well-meaning teachers (O'Brien, 2001).

How are White Teachers' Racial Conceptualizations Manifested in their Practice?

To understand how white teachers' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy manifested in their teaching practices, I posed a second question: *How are white teachers' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy manifested in their classroom teaching practices?* The data revealed that teachers adhere to many tenets of the culturally relevant pedagogy set forth by Ladson-Billings (1994), even as they struggle to name whiteness and take up the concept of racism. Teachers also, however, embodied culturally relevant pedagogy in slightly nuanced and varied ways as well. All twelve teachers in this study, when observed, confirmed the rationale for their nominations by Black administrators. Each teacher seemed highly effective, and—regardless of any retrogressive tendencies in their racial ideologies—employed progressive, student-centered teaching strategies. Skilled as they were, however, it was also apparent that richer understandings of race, whiteness, and especially the social justice goals of education would only have enhanced their teaching.

Teachers are unrelenting "warm demanders." Teachers in this study held incredibly high expectations of students, families, and themselves, and were disappointed when they were not met. Ms. Darling remarked: "They understand there's high expectations of them, and now I know that that's what they're expecting from me, too. And boy, they got pushed. Boy did they get pushed." She also confirmed that her expectations were "High. Very high. Not just for them, but for me." Ms. Darling actually surveyed her students at various times of the year to solicit their expectations of her from the students. During the preparation period for their state-mandated test, she asked each student to write down and submit each of their expectations for

what Ms. Darling needed to do in order for them to pass their tests. Many students, she reported, wrote, "Push me!"

Ms. Applegate spoke of her expectations as universal: "Everybody should have high expectations for their students." Ms. Jordan used her empathy as a mother to express that in school and in life, "you want them to fulfill the expectations that you would have for your own children." In his treatise on academic and behavioral expectations, Mr. Bentley actually used the word "expectation" no fewer than 13 times to make that point that "It's expectations and holding them accountable to them." Ms. Jordan even extended her high expectations to parents, some of whom had violated the equal partnership she likes to establish with them. She lamented that several parents did not follow through with coming to the school to address behavior problems, so she sought grandmothers for help. Just because parents did not always offer the support she needed, she did not stop there in her expectations for classroom achievement characterized by parent or group partnerships.

Irvine (2003) has emphasized the concept of "warm demanders," or teachers who pursue their classroom demands with an equal dose of care. Ware (2006) has even explored warm demander pedagogy as part of culturally relevant teaching. Each teacher in this study embodied what I term "unrelenting warm demander" pedagogy. That is, teachers *relentlessly* demanded things from students, whether it was homework, straight lines, manners, raised hands, lowered voices, or an orderly fire drill. Despite the appearance of seeming arbitrarily militaristic, the demands I saw the teachers exacting on students had more to do with the fulfillment of expectations than with the exertion of mere control. Ms. Applegate, for instance, delayed a scheduled physical education class by 23 minutes because students were not using manners when she brought in cupcakes for her own birthday, and they were lining up rambunctiously even

though they were capable of being more orderly. Ms. Searle had one child repeat a grammatically correct phrase several times during one class period because she wanted to make sure he could at least access and practice more mainstream forms of English. In this instance, her insistence on his knowing these forms can be likened to Ladson-Billings' (1994) notion of simultaneously understanding the rules of the culturally dominant group even as you work to maintain your own cultural personality. This is also akin to Delpit's (1995) insistence that minority children learn about "the culture of power" as they also learn to undermine it.

An interesting similarity amongst almost all the teachers was their demand for full participation from all students. Most teachers called on students to answer questions who did not even have their hands raised. Mr. Bentley, who allowed children to get up and mill around if they became restless, still expected students to participate: "You get up, you go back there, you better be listening, because you will still be called on to answer questions while you're going." Both Mr. Bentley and Ms. Applegate were sticklers for students completing their homework *at home*. In Mr. Bentley's case, he explained that he would always speak to students to determine the home conditions that prevented them for completing work there. If home life was difficult or in any way chaotic, he would work with students. In this instance Mr. Bentley exemplified cultural relevance by taking into account the circumstances under which his students might not be able to complete homework based on factors related to the challenges of life at home. Ms. Applegate did not mention the rationale behind her insistence on homework being done in the home, other than her demand that students prioritize their schoolwork in particular, and their education in general. She expressed, "I'm going to get what I want one way or the other. I don't accept less than their best." To Ms. Applegate, student's "best" consisted of completing

homework at home and not at school. Arriving at school without having done their homework was less than her students' best, and for her, unacceptable.

Both Ms. Prescott and Ms. Jordan expressed their disappointment in students who had no interested in learning or parents who had less interest in insisting that their children learn. Ms. Prescott told one student to "Just stay home" if she were not going to work hard, and Ms. Jordan voiced a similar admonishment for parents: "If you want to raise somebody who doesn't know how to write, that's fine. Take him out of my class, cause I'm gonna make him write. He's gonna write his name." These admonishments did not sound harsh in context because both teachers were expressing their refusal to accept low self-expectations from students and a presumed lack of insistence on their students' high performance.

Instance after instance, these teachers spent any amount of time demanding manners, homework assignments, answers after long wait times, or mainstream grammatical forms. The ordinary danger of hearing about such white teachers is that they are often guided by expectations based on white culture, or normative white behaviors. In these instances, however, instructional time never seemed to be compromised for trivial matters that ultimately did not contribute to the students' learning of the curriculum and elements of good citizenship, or the structured orchestration of class time. On the whole, I understood the consistent strategy of all twelve teachers to provide structure for their students by doling out the same punishments for unmet demands time and time again. These teachers were indeed warm and demanding, but the white teachers studied here need additional qualification as *unrelenting* warm demanders. Their strict demands, tolerance for off-schedules, and unrelenting disregard for anything other than their having their highest expectations fulfilled were simultaneously awe-inspiring and effective.

Teachers universally held the highest academic, behavioral, and career expectations for students, and strongly embodied the first major tenet of culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994). These teachers also extended high expectations to parents and families, as well as themselves. Although teachers frequently expressed frustrations with parents or families not living up to their expectations for partnership, behavioral reinforcement, or even the valuation of their child's education, they nonetheless maintained that if they continued to demand the help of parents, they would make headway with students. This duality of "family as culturally deprived" yet "family as crucial to the teaching enterprise" was not the prevailing ideology of all teachers in the study. Even those who held problematic beliefs and seemingly "low" expectations for families still clung to hopes that parents would build partnerships with them and work together for the good of the students. Both Ms. Underwood and Mr. Royal mentioned that part of their strategies for partnership building was making positive contacts with parents in the opening weeks of school and throughout the year. Ms. Jordan, Ms. Brighton, and Ms. Applegate all mentioned their insistence that parents and families have and use their phone numbers. All teachers in the study evidenced strong desires to know and work with parents and families more, and the close relationships they had built with them were evident in their interactions. Overall, each teacher was exemplary in how they actually taught, regardless of the less favorable underlying beliefs they sometimes expressed. Observing and recording their practices was quite informative and will be extremely useful for sharing with preservice teachers. Ladson-Billings (1994) has called for more observation of teachers who employ culturally relevant pedagogy, and all twelve of the teachers in this study can most certainly be observed and learned from.

Teachers tell students "the truth." Teachers in this study were candid with students about a variety of issues, including race, politics, and the subversive function of their curricula.

Although largely unable to name whiteness and often partaking in colorblind ideologies, teachers still managed to be candid about a variety of topics without hesitation. Much like Cooper's (2003) findings that, despite being culturally relevant teachers of Black children, white teachers still find race difficult to mention or openly discuss in their classrooms, these teachers were willing to discuss race on limited terms. Unlike those findings, these data support the notion that culturally relevant teachers not only discuss race in their classrooms if students or current events bring it to the fore, but actually include race and culture as part of their curricula at times. That these teachers often espouse problematic and still hegemonic views of race is unfortunate, but their willingness to address race and culture in their classes is still worth noting. In the case of Ms. Reardon—who herself could not fully contextualize racialized enslavement—she was still willing to openly grapple with her racial "truths" with students.

As a teacher of many international children, Ms. Fielder began her year by having students make personal collages so she and their classmates could learn about their cultural identities. She also used herself and her children's phenotypical characteristics for counting, graphing and other math activities in which she hoped children would notice differences in skin tone, gender, and origin. She especially looked forward to learning about new countries. Ms. Reardon expressed that during country reports, she looked forward to the constant challenge of knowing relatively little about foreign cultures and genuinely learning from her international students. Although Ms. Reardon did not express sentiments similar to Michie (2001), who ardently sought information about the cultural backgrounds of his students, she specifically asked if my university could help her with a scholarship to observe the culturally relevant teaching practices of a nationally renowned educator who ran a school nearby.

Mr. Royal kept race and culture at the forefront of his mind as a Spanish speaker and world traveler. During my observation, he used a lesson on equivalent fractions to introduce the issue of social equality with: "If I tell you we should treat people the same, what does that mean? What does it mean to treat people the same? That's right. Do for one the exact same thing you do to the other. It's called equality. So what does that mean for these fractions? You multiply one fraction by the exact same thing to make them equal." Both Mr. Royal and Ms. Searle used holidays such as Cinco de Mayo to normalize the recognition of holidays and celebrations in other cultures. Although this is eerily similar to the "heroes and holidays" approach to multicultural education (Banks, 1991), the normalization of cultural holidays is a step in the right direction. Ms. Prescott, who hailed from another country, prefaced many of her statements with, "In the U. S., we …" to keep children ever aware that other countries and cultures, including her own, followed different norms altogether. On one of the days I observed her teaching, she reminded students that some countries use the metric system for measurement and temperature, whereas the United States tended not to. She made her students aware that other countries use alternative conventions that are different, but equally viable.

The most revealing instance of the "truth" telling these teachers engaged in was in Ms. Prescott's lesson to her young class using a nursery rhyme. The rhyme involved kings, queens, and commoners, and she seized the opportunity to talk about social class as well as the subversive nature of seemingly neutral, innocent nursery rhymes. She said to her young learners: "Many people think nursery rhymes were just silly songs. Actually they were not. They were political comments. They were *politics*" (emphasis hers). Ms. Prescott also stated plainly that she tells students the truth. She noted that she "didn't grow up on Disney." And just as she told her own daughter the true story of the Little Mermaid, at the end of which she died, Ms. Prescott

was committed to telling her own students the truth at every turn because "Disney's made everything to work out fine. It doesn't work that way. So, I wanted to show the kids, like that – you know, like, they need to know – have the proper tools to grow up with." Ms. Prescott emphasized that unabashed, yet developmentally appropriate truth telling was far more valuable than sugarcoating or even lying to children. Her students needed to know the reality of everything in order to be properly equipped adults who can handle sad endings and life's realities. Although it would have been best if Ms. Prescott explicitly stated that her goal was to have children transform the very same unjust social conditions they discovered, thus embodying Ladson-Billings' (1994) ultimate tenet of culturally relevant pedagogy, I did not inquire about her expressed purpose in preparing children for less than perfect endings. Ms. Prescott did note that she had reared her own children by always telling them the truth and she was determined to do the same for her students. Rather than denying these "ugly truths," she wished to at least demonstrate concern for acknowledging societal problems and their often intractable existence.

It was evident throughout the study that, even if teachers had misguided beliefs surrounding race or whiteness, none of them wholly shied away from the opportunity to be honest with students or to candidly entertain questions and issues of culture and race. In these instances, teachers believed that addressing culture, race, and differences head-on would benefit children in ways that avoiding race and difficult realities would not.

Teachers view schooling as social reconstruction. As in many other areas, teachers often held self-conflicting, yet ultimately progressive views about the function of education and their roles as teachers. Many teachers indeed used "white knight" or savior paradigms to describe their work as helping to rescue children from supposedly deficit-tinged cultures (McIntyre, 1997; Sleeter, 2004). Some were motivated to save children from an impending life

of underachievement and welfare, yet they deeply understood the crucial, social reconstructionist function of education—albeit with mixed, sometimes misguided explanations of racist inequalities in mind. One could argue that hegemonic *and* antiracist whites, and all people for that matter, are out to reconstruct society in some way. Thus, teachers who wish to put an end to supposed minority welfare-leeching are in the same category as hegemonic social reconstructionists. While some teachers' goals for teaching did hinge on some degree of social reconstruction to reduce the number of their students who they presumed would end up on welfare as well as Freirian (2006) notions of "false charity," I later propose that in a pedagogy of such white teachers, having them understand the power of education to reconstruct society at all is a key starting point. Solidarity, or standing in antiracist coalition with those who are oppressed, is far different from the false charity or "giving back" intentions that some teachers espoused. The goal of antiracist, culturally relevant teachers is ultimately to stand beside their children in joint struggles for equality as opposed to standing above and giving them a proverbial hand up in *their* struggles. Regardless of their intentions or falsely charitable efforts, however, these teachers subscribed to the idea that their teaching was capable of changing social conditions to something better. In moving more white teachers toward antiracism, it is my hope that their conceptualization of "better" has less to do with mediating the "culture of power" and more with the establishment of racial equity.

Teachers employed practices that transformed their classrooms into democratic sites of debate, critical questioning, and equal voice. The teachers in this study demanded fairness and justice in their own spheres and strove to prepare students as "citizens" of whichever type of world they imagined. Each of these white teachers were acutely aware of their role within a larger social system and they were committed to doing the most good and having the most

significant impact as long as they were teaching. Thus, even if the white teachers in this study espoused more traditional ideas about saving minority children, there is much to be said about their appreciation for how teaching low-income minority students was, in their view, the single best grounds for social reconstruction.

Ladson-Billings (1994) delineated transformational teaching as one major tenet of culturally relevant pedagogy. Here, teachers agreed with the notion that education is essential in reshaping society regardless of their cultural deficit-tinged motivations for doing so, and they taught with the betterment of society as the ultimate goal. Most importantly, even for teachers who chose to de-emphasize the immediate payoffs associated with teaching (focusing on future generational impact, for instance), they still recognized the importance of using education to invest in underserved children's lives and, in so doing, improving societal conditions for all. Ms. Underwood had the following to say regarding her motivations for teaching in a culturally relevant manner: "I think that you just have to understand that you're making a long-term gift. You know, that is you're not reaping any benefits really from it. How can you deny that that's not making a difference, you know?" Rather than using the term "gift" to describe something she was giving of herself and reaping little to no rewards for, Ms. Darling instead conceptualized her ultimate goal in teaching as an "investment":

> They are our future, and I don't know if people realize this. And whatever difference I can make…because rewards work both ways. If you prepare them for the future and break their cycle…[you] give them the opportunity to not just make a better life for themselves, but for me (because I'm getting on as a senior) and for their future generation. I want to see them prosper and succeed to pass down to the next generation. So it – the rewards work both ways. It's seeing the big picture.

Ms. Darling was one of few teachers who recognized that racial injustice was still alive and well, as her own experiences included de facto segregation. She spoke of Blacks being

unable to attend her all-white school, to drink in her water fountains, or to dine at the restaurants that she and her family enjoyed based solely on their whiteness. Her references to victimhood most likely referred to her students suffering the legacy of endemic racism, which she identified more adeptly than most other teachers. Empowerment in her mind meant self-determination, as she spoke about the athletic and musical dreams of her students, which she respected. But in the event that those didn't materialize, she wanted them to have a "plan B, plan C, etc."

Ms. Jordan spoke of the importance of shaping "citizens" from the youngest age possible: "My mother always used to tell me that when I was – when they're babies, you decide what you want them to be like when they're 15." Ms. Jordan also added that she wanted to equip students for a modern, ideal world: "I hope that it will make them stronger and more versatile and more able to handle the 21st century." Similarly, Mr. Bentley noted the urgency of shaping students early for success in later grades and in life: "So what is it that I'm doing in the third grade that can help them out with that?"

Interestingly, both Mr. Bentley and Ms. Applegate spoke about the goals of their current investment in children. Ms. Applegate offered: "Because if these children aren't successful, then really, we're the ones that are gonna have to pay for it, so why wouldn't we do what we can to help them in order for them to be independent and successful?" I took her statement to mean that her investment was worth more as a teacher because it is indeed more expensive to see a return on the dollars spent for prisons, juvenile delinquency systems, and law enforcement—all related to academic underachievement—than the return on educational investment (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Mr. Bentley, on the other hand, saw picking up the slack for undereducated children in a different, more majoritarian fashion:

> I don't want my kids to grow up being on welfare. I don't want my kids growing up depending on the government, and then claiming that they didn't get the

> chance to get a good education, which is ridiculous. So long as they come from my classroom, as long as I'm their teacher, they're gonna get a quality education; which will hopefully prepare them to deal with getting a good job, and being able to support themselves…and being able to understand that you have to work hard to get where you wanna be. So there are people that are working hard that are supporting those that aren't working hard, and it's just not fair. So, all my kids understand that you have to work hard to get what you want. It's not just given to you. So, that plays a big role in the way I teach.

There are multiple troublesome strands running through Mr. Bentley's oration. First, he has a decontextualized understanding of racial and educational inequity. Cultural racism and institutional racism in education are entire systems of oppression that negatively impact minority student's ability to compete equally in society and self-actualize. Mr. Bentley is convinced, however, that he alone is capable of reversing those deep, endemic systems simply by teaching one group of children at a time. He hopes to thereby strip young students of color of any "excuse" for not faring well as productive citizens. The notion of the "White knight" comes to mind, and these strands were also prevalent in the espoused ideologies of others. Additionally, Mr. Bentley hopes to reshape society in such a way as to eliminate the number of his students who are potential welfare recipients and those who may inadvertently end up on welfare if they are not remediated from their assumed "I care not to work hard" mentalities. Mr. Bentley is looking to reshape society, but based on fears that his minority and impoverished students will one day become a financial burden on him.

Other teachers shared similar sentiments about being saviors to children in need of salvation. Ms. Darling and Ms. Searle immediately likened teaching to "God's work" or charity work associated with being Catholic. Also Ms. Jordan spoke of hailing from a long lineage of people who "gave back," as she had a grandfather who ran a soup kitchen. Ms. Applegate described her parents as inviting racial others to dinner, which she referred to as "strays" or "underdogs." Having a father who coached interracial sports as a child, even Mr. Bentley

conceptualized his teaching as both social transformation and charity: "You can offer something. Charity. There is always someone who needs your help."

Despite interesting and often self-conflicting notions of how best to achieve social justice and precisely what that "justice" looked like, the white teachers in this study modeled democracy as best they could at this juncture in their antiracist journeys. Cultural deficit theories and assumptions of welfare dependence notwithstanding, each of these teachers actually understood the social reconstructionist function of education. Perhaps the role of teacher education is to encourage white teachers to reconstruct society based on contextualized understandings of the multitude of deficits embedded in a racist, inequitable society. Then, rather than seeking to change culturally deprived families and students, teachers can embark on the task of reversing the institutional and societal conditions that dictate, in large part, why families and students face race-based challenges to begin with.

What are the Life Experiences that Lead Whites down Antiracist Paths?

In addition to determining how culturally relevant white teachers conceptualize race and whiteness, and how those conceptualizations manifest in their teaching, this study also sought to determine the life factors that most influenced teachers' racial and pedagogical ideas. Hence, I posed a third research question: *What are the life experiences that inform white teachers' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and their commitment to culturally relevant pedagogy?* Interestingly, teachers hailed from a variety of backgrounds—some littered with overtly racist experiences, and some whose racial encounters were more subtle—but all offered strong common strands which help to account for their development as culturally relevant white teachers-in-the-making. Each teacher in the study had some type of exposure to another culture

via friendship or partnership with a minority, or through their teaching experiences. With exposure to a different life experience often came a sudden or gradual recognition of injustice.

Exposure to a different life experience. All twelve of the white teachers in this study, offered a litany of information about how they gained access to perspectives and ways of living that differed from their own. As part of her recommendations for inspiring more culturally relevant teachers, Ladson-Billings (1994) suggested that new teachers spend time gaining insider perspectives on Black cultures, different cultures, or the surrounding communities they serve. The teachers here gained exposure and often developed empathy for cultural and racial others in their travels, friendships, mandatory teacher education field experiences, and personal lives.

Ms. Underwood, Mr. Royal, and Ms. Jordan mentioned the impact of their travels to foreign countries as key experiences that enabled them to broaden their white, U. S. perspectives. Ms. Underwood noted that traveling infused within her, at a very early age, that there were alternate, equally viable ways of living. According to Bennett (2007), Ms. Underwood's ethnocentricity, or the false and uninformed belief that one's own culture is superior, was most likely reduced as she realized the multiple ways of doing things and conducting lives. Mr. Royal and Ms. Jordan both speak Spanish. Mr. Royal picked up the language on over 40 trips to Spanish-speaking countries. His first visit came at the request of a friend who was from the Dominican Republic. Ms. Jordan, a formal international aide, also served as her school's official Spanish language interpreter. Seeing how policies affected the destitute in other countries helped her to appreciate both the flaws and strengths of the United States.

Mr. Royal was one of many teachers who spoke of conducting his field experiences and mandatory student teaching in an extremely impoverished, all-Black school. He would talk to his co-teacher—a Black ex-military man and leader in the Southern Christian Leadership

Conference (SCLC)—about his experiences in segregated schools versus Mr. Royal's in a "token" integrated school in another state. Mr. Royal recalled: "Of course, we went to different schools, 'cause the schools were segregated. He said, 'We got yall's old lockers. So hearin' things like that that I was never aware of, it had an effect on me." Ms. Darling noted that she had grown up in "suburbia, all white school, no Hispanics, 1500 solid white high school" that was very "Leave it to Beaver," but experienced the "tougher" side of life as one of only a few women in a male-dominated industry: "There were NO women. I was in a man's world. It was dog eat dog. I was a minority." Both Ms. Applegate and Ms. Jordan identified the lack of exposure to words and the world, which constituted a major difference between them and their students (Freire, 1970/2006). Ms. Applegate offered, "They've never seen the ocean. They don't know what sand looks like. They don't know anything besides this neighborhood, and it makes me sad." Ms. Jordan, former international worker, also noted life experiences she may have taken for granted had she not realized their non-universality: "So you know these are kids that have never been to the beach. You know they have never been in a diverse environment. I've spent my life trying to better the lives of kids from different kinds of situations." It is also worth noting that Ms. Darling, Ms. Brighton, Ms. Fielder, and Mr. Bentley all discussed mandatory field experiences in minority schools as part of their teacher education programs. While some scholars argue that requiring white, monocultural teachers to experience these schools might either reinforce negative racial stereotypes or cause them to regress at a later point (Causey et al., 2000), it is important to note that several teachers cited these required experiences as their first meaningful, in depth, memorable encounters with those who experienced life differently.

Recognition of injustice. Teachers not only overwhelmingly cited the importance of exposure to different life experiences as seminal in their development, but also the effect of

learning about injustice as a result. Mr. Royal, for instance, learned about inequitable school funding by accepting a job in an all-Black school situated near a private academy for whites just down the street. Through overheard conversations of an all-Black faculty in the lounge each day, he eventually realized the injustice that, "The whites in that town had their own private school, so they didn't support the public school at all. So it was an eye-opening experience and it probably did more to shape the main" ideas he had about race. Ms. Darling shared a powerful awakening to inequitable school funding that occurred during her student teaching: "I came from white suburbia and didn't have exposure to Black children or minority children. What I saw when I was going to teach these children were desks that were broken, not enough desks, not enough books, holes in the ceilings where the tiles were missing, and I'm like not in this country. Why is this happening in this country?" Ms. Darling went on to offer one of the most well-conceived reflections on how her observations affected her ability to recognize racial injustice and white dominance:

> So this opportunity that these minority children have never experienced or never had, it's way beyond time that this country changes because I still have difficulty. It's just been – what – 40, 50 years ago that the Black race was not allowed to drink at the same water fountain that I drank, to sit in the same restaurant without going into the back or at a counter. I mean, that's so hard to comprehend that this stuff was going around when I was growing up.

Ms. Darling was even able to extend her recognition of injustice and disenfranchisement of minorities to the corresponding enfranchisement, privilege, and dominance of whites: "Whites – we've been given every opportunity to – we've had everything for the most part. No excuse for it, really no excuse for it cause *whites have been given every opportunity to succeed*."

Ms. Jordan offered a personal anecdote about a time when a dear friend was treated poorly according to her Blackness: "And one time, ____ needed a ride somewhere…and we asked that [white] lady, and she said no. She would not give a Black kid a ride to wherever it

was we were going. So those kinds of experiences really impacted me in terms of – I'm all for fairness." And finally, Ms. Applegate used her own marginalized status as a Jew, coupled with what she had learned at her Hebrew school, to discuss racism in an endemic way, as well as the systemic denial of opportunity for Blacks based solely on their skin color and their inability to claim whiteness as Jews could: "So I guess it would be the same with the Civil War. African-Americans were mistreated, same kinda thing. Except for I think that the Jews blended better into society than the African-Americans as if they were slaves because they stick out a lot more than the Jewish people do."

In each of these instances and many others like them, each white teacher in the study could pinpoint a time in their lives in which they not only learned of a new perspective, but recognized the racial injustice belying those new vantage points. This finding has implications for multicultural coursework and how we might broaden or at least expand it in teacher education so as to offer white teachers more opportunities to recognize different life experiences and to possibly learn of the injustices that often characterize those of minorities.

Spiritual tenets guide understandings of race, whiteness, and pedagogy. One of the most fascinating findings of this study was the notion that many teachers ultimately attributed their commitment to racially diverse children to some form of spirituality. Mr. Bentley considered teaching a calling. Ms. Springfield likened teaching to the priesthood and was very clear that it either was or wasn't for certain individuals depending on their educational predestination, so to speak. Ms. Searle plainly noted, "God wants me here," and planned to stay at her Title I school until she heard otherwise. Ms. Darling used her Catholicism and "God's work" philosophy to fully dedicate to children. Ms. Jordan and Ms. Underwood noted that all

major religions shared similar tenets, and the most important among them was to love your fellow man despite his vessel. Ms. Underwood put it best when she said:

> The Bible says people are a soul. Your body is just what houses your soul. So if your body is just a vehicle to house what's bigger and better, then how can you say if two men fall in love or if a white woman and a Black man – if we're such beyond that, then it doesn't even make sense, that argument…So that's sort of the standpoint I take.

Ms. Prescott likewise explained the ease with which she was dedicated to her multiracial students:

> The basic thing, which is probably the root of what I do, is when I was about 12, or a bit younger, I always questioned why I am on earth. My family is religious, but religion is not it either. Religion is just something you do. That's not why we're on earth. So my question was why?
>
> Eventually, I had to get the answer, but that probably affected my thinking because if God accepts us, they why do we have some of these barriers? So as far as God's purpose goes, there's two kinds of people on earth.
>
> The only ones He's interested in is either Jews or Gentiles. So a Gentile is everybody who is not a Jew. It's very simple, isn't it? So it doesn't matter what kind of Gentile you are. You're a Gentile as far as God's point of view. So that, to me, is very simple. It's very clear. So I'm not bothered by people being different 'cause God's not bothered. So why should I be bothered?

When we consider the implications of spiritual tenets guiding a good number of teachers' understandings of race, whiteness, and pedagogy, we enter into an interesting realm of considering how best to recruit and train future, culturally relevant white teachers. Feagin and Vera (1995) have written about the importance of focusing on and explicitly teaching about common humanity if racism is ever to be overcome:

> Multicultural training is not enough, for all Americans must come to see themselves as brothers and sisters. Every human being is in fact related to every other human being; each person is at least a fiftieth cousin of any other person on the globe. One major step forward in the antiracist cause is to integrate into all US educational systems new courses on the oneness of all humankind. (p. 184)

These white teachers seemed to grasp a larger, more universal identity that does and should transcend the limits of categorization based on race (Leonardo, 2008, 2009). A helpful

function of teacher education might be to use multicultural education and globalization curricula to further the humane understandings of those who do not subscribe to spiritual tenets as a way to recognize the need to value everyone, regardless of the socially constructed racial constraints placed on them (Banks, 2004; Omi & Winant, 1994).

Implications for Teacher Education

We know from the demographic imperative that adequately preparing legions of mostly white teachers for increasing numbers of diverse students is a pressing and growing mandate. These data reveal both the challenging and promising aspects of achieving that goal. First, all twelve teachers in this study were "exemplary" educators in a variety of ways, albeit imperfect. This study is, in many ways, both critical and "possibilitarian" because it begins with the idea that culturally relevant, antiracist white teachers can and do exist. Conversely, this study also reveals the challenges of combating the prevalence of majoritarian narratives and racist ideologies even in the psyches of committed teachers.

These data indicate a need for teacher education that is centered on revealing the endemic nature of racism and white dominance, and one that includes strategies for empowering students in culturally relevant, affirming ways. Even these teachers struggled with notions of cultural superiority and had many racial "blind spots" (Gere et al., 2009; Wise, 2009) despite their development as burgeoning antiracist whites. Hence, the study helps to uncover a complex set of implications for teacher education, which I discuss in Chapter 4. There I offer concretized, programmatic, empirically based strategies to further the work of fellow teacher educators who are also charged with preparing a majority white teaching force.

The twelve white teachers in this study have embarked on journeys toward antiracism in ways that can inspire other white educators to do the same. Gaining insight into how they

conceptualize race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy has allowed us to consider the holes, gaps, and necessary reforms in teacher education. Most importantly, examining their trajectories toward more progressive, multicultural stances—however nascent they may be—has also given rise to concrete directions which other teacher educators might follow. One teacher quite adeptly proclaimed that in education and society, "whites have been given every opportunity to succeed." This teacher's proclamation and profound understanding of this country's continued legacy of white racial dominance empowers her to teach her minority students to transform that status quo. Using these recommendations and additional research on antiracist white educators with even deeper racial understandings, as I do in the next chapter, we might encourage others to embark on their own paths toward antiracism.

Chapter 3

The Making of Antiracists:

Understanding White Educators who "Understand" Whiteness in Education

As we move forward in our nation with increasing numbers of students of color and white educators, we should consciously address new and longstanding issues of educational equity (Noel, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2001). The majority of P-12 teachers are white, and so too are most teacher educators (Zeichner, Melnick, & Louise-Gomez, 1996; Stenhouse, 2009). In both these crucial spheres, whites continue to serve as "the racial group who does most of the educating" (Landsman & Lewis, 2006, pp. 1-2). We should, therefore, dedicate our best efforts to determine how to educate white classroom teachers *as well as* the mostly white teacher educators charged with preparing them to meet the needs of diverse students. Fundamental to this task is examining how antiracist, culturally relevant white educators come to exist.

The study presented here constitutes the second installment of a larger research project aimed at increasing the number of white educators—teachers *and* teacher educators—who are committed to antiracism, culturally relevant pedagogy, and social justice. This research extends an earlier study that examined the racial conceptualizations, classroom practices, and life experiences of a nominated sample of twelve white teachers (see Chapter 2). Participants in the first study revealed the complexity of thought that is characteristic of white teachers who have begun to embark on journeys toward antiracism. Those data uncovered that dominant white ideologies about cultural deficits and decontextualized racism can coexist even in the psyche of white teachers who simultaneously express commitments to antiracism and culturally relevant teaching (see King, 1991 for a discussion of "dysconscious" racism). This study documents the racial conceptualizations of a sample of well-known, publicly vocal white educators who are

farther along in their trajectories toward antiracism. The scholar-activists— those who intentionally use scholarship as a form of social activism—featured in this portion of the research project move us closer to understanding how whites can develop more advanced antiracist sentiments, which surpass those of the first sample. Together, both studies lay out the terrain of white educator ideologies and help to inform how the selection, preparation, and professional learning of a majority white teaching force could be improved.

The Case for Critical White Educators

Providing an equitable, culturally relevant education to all students is a persistent problem, yet powerful promise. Ladson-Billings (2006) has referred to the ongoing, systemic denial of quality education to children of color as the "education debt." In stark contrast to notions of the achievement gap, which describes disparities in standardized test scores, school performance, grade promotion, graduation rates, and college entry, Ladson-Billings boldly renames this "gap" with a term that more aptly describes the historicized, cumulative effect of grossly underserving children who are economically disadvantaged and primarily non-white.

As we consider the state of education for children who are disproportionately Black and Brown, we must also consider the racial background of the largely monolithic group at the helm of education, both in classrooms and in schools of education. Even as we make fervent efforts to recruit sorely needed teachers of color, we should also strive to optimize the preparation and professional learning of the current white teacher majority (Allen & Hermann-Wilmarth, 2004; Futrell, 1999; Irvine, 2003). In fact, specifically attending to the development of critically conscious, antiracist, culturally relevant white teachers can be an effective strategy for closing the achievement "gap" and reducing the education debt long owed to students of color.

It is important to establish, semantically, the specific type of critical white educator I seek to examine in my research and inspire in teacher education. Critical consciousness emanates from the work of Paulo Freire (1970/2006), who wrote extensively about effective pedagogies for oppressed people. His work emphasizes the need for teachers of the oppressed—those who experience subordinate positions in hierarchical, unjustly ordered societies—to reach conscientization, or an understanding that hegemony exists (Gramsci, 1945/1995). Hegemony, in its own complexity, requires a keen awareness that social control and hierarchical domination are not achieved by brute force, as in some fascist governance models, but by consensus, consent, and what Kumashiro (2008) has termed "the seduction of common sense." Thus, when conscientization occurs, one recognizes and struggles against both the overt and subtle sociopolitical forces that systemically thwart self-determination and optimal human flourishing.

In the first installment of this research project, white teachers who worked in severely underfunded, mostly minority schools observed that students contended with lower quality teachers, fewer resources, a fundamentally classist education system, and cultural prejudice from surrounding white communities. To varying degrees, teachers understood the challenges their students faced as having less to do with their own purported cultural deficits and more with external factors beyond their control (see, for example, Irvine, 1990; Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Moynihan, 1965/1997; Wilson, 1985/1997). These teachers had some awareness—or critical consciousness—of inequitable school funding, the prevailing white ideologies of their contemporaries, and the unjust social conditions [3]that made it difficult for their students to thrive.

[3] Some will posit that antiracist whites who have developed critical race consciousness should be regarded as *ordinary*, and therefore not constitute a laudable group that is considered *extraordinary*. In future work, I will more full advance my own views regarding the necessity to recognize and draw hope (Freire, 1970/2006) from white antiracist efforts even as we simultaneously identify them as necessary and minimal in the struggle for racial justice.

Similarly, some whites have developed a critical *race* consciousness and have moved toward a more antiracist stance as a result. For the purpose of this research, antiracists are "people who have committed themselves, in thought, action and practice, to dismantling racism" (O'Brien, 2001, p. 4). As populations shift worldwide and transnational borders become less rigid, teaching will continue to become an increasingly cross-racial enterprise in the United States and elsewhere (Harding, 2005; Obidah & Teel, 2000; Spring, 2009). As such, I examine the conceptualizations, practices, and life experiences of white educators who not only understand race as being at the forefront of US education, culture, and life (Bell, 1992), but actively work against it in their teaching and daily lives. I am made hopeful by antiracist white educators who resist the possessive *re*investment in whiteness, or the temptation to "remain true to an identity that provides them with resources, power and opportunity" (Lipsitz, 1998, p. vii). In Chapter 2, I interviewed a nominated sample of white elementary school teachers who illuminated their teaching philosophies, motivating life experiences, and culturally relevant practices. In the study presented here, I examined the racial conceptualizations, reported pedagogical practices, and formative life experiences of a smaller, well-known group of white scholar-activists who adhered to more advanced antiracist ideologies.

We must take a proactive stance in preparing white educators who understand the deeply embedded nature of racism, the importance of education in combating racism, and their role in ending racism. This study, which examines the antiracist paradigms and pedagogies of white scholar-activists who already embrace these challenges, allows us to embark—and hopefully draws us closer—to fulfilling such a mission. To learn more about this group of antiracist white educators, I posed the following research questions:

1. How do antiracist white educators conceptualize race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy?

2. What are the life experiences that inform antiracist white educators' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and their commitments to antiracism?
3. How are antiracist white educators' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy manifested in their reported teaching practices and scholarship?

Examining the life experiences that motivate antiracist white educators to reach higher levels of critical consciousness helps to inform practices that can be emphasized in teacher education. This type of inquiry can improve the recruitment, selection, and preparation of white preservice teachers who constitute an increasing majority in schools of education, Teach for America corps, and many alternative certification programs (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). It is my hope that by addressing these questions within a tradition of "expertise research," or focusing on leaders in a given field to learn more, we will advance teacher education by uncovering important elements to include in the preparation of teacher candidates *as well as* the professional learning of inservice teachers, all of whom are primarily white. By providing a firm knowledge base about how best to cultivate antiracist white educators who enact culturally relevant pedagogy, this study and others like it can ultimately improve educational outcomes for white teachers and their P-12 students.

The Small World of White Antiracist Educators

Providing detailed, "thick, rich descriptions" of the beliefs, practices, and critical conscience-shaping life experiences of antiracist white educators is crucial to the field of teacher education (Geertz, 1973; see also Merriam, 1998). My studies are situated within a larger research tradition aimed at unearthing what we know about the type of educator we need in a culturally diverse nation (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). Importantly, I am augmenting a small collection of literature that documents the antiracist beliefs and practices of educators in P-12 classrooms, as well as those of educators who operate in colleges, universities, teacher

education programs, and public intellectual spaces. In this portion of my research, I broadened the term "educator" to include scholar-activists who not only play significant roles in influencing students and teachers in traditional settings, but whose "classrooms" and "students" include an array of public listeners.

Ladson-Billings (2005b) has contributed a great deal to what we know about African American teacher educators—who, similar to teachers of color in literature and film, are seldom recognized (Bruckheimer & Smith, 1995; DeVito & LaGravenese; Giroux, 2007; Haines, 2006). She conducted interviews with several renowned "teachers of teachers" whose stories inform our understanding of the life experiences that motivate commitments to multicultural, antiracist, and more anti-oppressive forms of education (Kumashiro, 2000). Ladson-Billings (2005b) highlighted the salient influences in the lives of her all-Black sample. In many of her participants' views, their own racial marginalization and the whiteness of their students and academic institutions were significant in their trajectories (see also Aragon & Akintunde, 2006). Race and whiteness were key considerations for preparing teachers for diverse students, which Ladson-Billings and her participants (2005b) considered "important multicultural, antiracist, feminist, democratic work" (p. 141). She provided foundational information about the journeys of antiracist, multicultural educators of color who understood the endemic nature of racism and were committed to preparing a mostly white teaching force for racial and social justice.

Similarly, Gay (2003) explored a crucial aspect of Nieto and Bode's (2008) admonition that in order to become a multicultural educator, one must first become a multicultural *person* (see also Paccione, 2000). She examined the lives of a multiracial group of educators to solicit their best insights for improving teacher education and to document their "personal journeys toward professional agency." In her "storied research" (p. 4) Gay offered a collection of

narratives that inform how multicultural educators take varied, lifelong journeys *toward* advanced understandings of race and emphasized the longitudinal nature of reaching critical consciousness. Gay (2003) considered the trajectories of multicultural educators as "paths" with some degree of lifelong "unfinishedness" (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Freire, 1970/2006; O'Brien, 2001). She also provided broader perspective on how a group of native, foreign-born, linguistically diverse, racially varied individuals navigated their vastly different cultural contexts to arrive at similar commitments to racial equity.

Torres (1998) expanded the literature on renowned critical educators and their paths toward Freire's (1970/2006) notion of conscientization by using personal biographies and dialogue to illuminate their trajectories. He presented their stories in the form of *ongoing* dialogues to describe how his sample had incorporated their personal experiences into their work on deconstructing education as a crucial site for social transformation. Torres' contribution also detailed the life experiences of a racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse group of scholars to highlight their motivations for selecting critical research agendas and teaching against a hegemonic status quo. The author's decision to choose a sample of critical thinkers that included mostly white scholars was deliberate and illustrative of two points. First, like Torres (1998), I am inspired by prominent white scholars who advocate for racial and social justice in the field of multicultural education, which is generally considered "minority work." Their presence provides hope for what is possible in overturning white supremacy from within white communities (Harvey, Case, & Gorsline, 2004). Second, his work with a larger, but not exclusive representation of critically conscious whites moves us closer to parsing how such antiracist white scholars come to exist, and most importantly, how we might nurture more of them to build cross-racial coalitions and community (hooks, 2003).

Thompson and Tyagi (1995) also used autobiography to profile the antiracist progression of a multiracial, multinational, multi-sexually oriented group. In seeking "the stories behind their antiracist politics," these scholars purposely included racial minorities and whites "in order to counter the notion that people of color have a race while white people do not" (p. x). In so doing, they documented a range of historical events, cultural "border-crossings," and experiences of "internal outsiders" (those with transnational identities in "foreign" lands), as fundamental in shaping the antiracist trajectories of these varied participants. Their work moves us beyond more traditional notions of antiracist activism as stance only, as opposed to a personal identity.

Kenway and Fahey (2009) even further extended what we know of critically conscious scholars beyond the national context. They presented a collection of interviews with six researchers—half of whom were white women—who had not only adopted multicultural stances toward US issues, but also global perspectives on research, education, and antiracism. From their work, we can better understand how some scholars, including a fair representation of white female scholars, come to identify and deeply understand the multiple axes of oppression in their own contexts *as well as* the hegemonic forces affecting the global terrain.

Feminist scholars are integral to the literature on how white women have come to see themselves as racial beings and develop commitments to the hegemonic function of their white identities. In her interviews with 30 white women, Frankenberg (1993) described the construction of whiteness, white identities, and the mechanisms by which her interviewees came to acknowledge the importance of whiteness in their lives. Many women cited elements such as: "a history of dramatically unequal Black-white relations…resistance to racism during the civil rights movement…[an] all-white neighborhood, the possibility of a Black family moving into it, and white neighbors' hostility when they did so" (p. 238). Stalvey's (1970) autobiography

detailing her trajectory toward antiracism as a white woman provided a similar account of the vitriolic hatred whites routinely unleashed on new Black residents of white neighborhoods and the lasting impact it made on her. Her work also lent significant insight into the overlapping structures of racism, sexism, and anti-Semitism in the development of white women's racial identities, which many of Frankenberg's (1993) interviewees acknowledged as well.

In my earlier work, I extended the description of white teachers' culturally relevant practices and experiences in multiracial schools to answer calls from both Sleeter (2001) and Ladson-Billings (1994) to fully document "what works" with racially diverse students. I also addressed Cooper's (2003) admonishment to more fully explore how "good white teachers" come to adopt more multicultural beliefs. My focus, therefore, on the *origins* of the racial conceptualizations, educational philosophies, and effective classroom practices of white teachers augments the work of these authors and the extant literature on practicing white educators in ways it has not been expanded before. This research with white teacher educators and scholar-activists also adds to a rich research tradition of whites documenting their own journeys toward more progressive, multicultural, antiracist understandings (Griffin, 1977; King, 1971; Wise, 2008a). Additionally, my work deepens the existing literature on white classroom teachers who have used autobiography, memoir, and "autocritique" to document their growth and increasing race-consciousness (Landsman, 2001; Landsman & Lewis, 2006; Marx, 2006; Michie, 1999; Paley, 1979; Schultz, 2007). Teachers, teacher educators, academics, and public intellectuals who significantly influence the education of teachers have also used personal narrative to present their trajectories toward antiracism (Gorski, 1998; Howard, 2006; Landsman, 2008; Sleeter, 2007, 2008; McIntosh, 1990, 2001; Wise, 2008a). These autobiographical accounts provide significant insight into the antiracist progression of whites as individuals. They do not purport,

however, to offer insight into the common experiences and possible shared experiences *across* the trajectories of multiple white antiracists. Thus, the extant literature base leaves ample room for the study of commonality among the experiences of white antiracists in general, and white antiracist educators in particular. Addressing this critical gap was the intent of my own inquiry.

The scholarly contributions that came closest to the aims of my research were studies of white antiracists that sought commonality, and in some ways, *causality* for whites' antiracist commitments. Feagin and Vera (1995), for instance, used focus groups to interview several whites who had participated in at least one antiracist protest event, including marches against the KKK or demonstrations against apartheid. These sociologists found that many of the participants who had "taken a public stand against racism" (p. 182) attributed their antiracist action to significant events in their lives ranging from their own marginalized status or close relationships with dominated groups. In both Feagin and O'Brien's (2003) *White Men on Race* and Thompson, Schaefer, and Brod's (2003) *White Men Challenging Racism,* their samples of white antiracists were specifically limited to men. In both pieces, the scholars cited the generally intractable and less common phenomenon of white males working for racial justice. For example, Feagin and O'Brien (2003) conducted interviews with over 100 of such "elite white men" whose understandings of race were more progressive and nuanced and offered valuable insights into the experiences and identifications that helped to dismantle the subtle and overt racist ideologies characteristic of their group.

The work of Thompson (2001), O'Brien (2001), and Warren (2010) also offered invaluable insight into the antiracist commitments of white *activists,* or whites who not only expressed more advanced understandings of racism but were explicitly devoted to combating it. Thompson (2001) interviewed nearly forty whites who had in some way participated in popular

or everyday struggles against racial injustice. Her sample included a variety of whites from a range of professions and was not limited to those affiliated with education. Likewise, O'Brien (2001) interviewed over thirty white antiracists from two major antiracist organizations. Her work, although again not limited to educators, provided significant insight into the lives of antiracist whites and their life-long, sometimes arduous "paths to action" (see also Middleton, 2002). As in my own research with white classroom teachers, O'Brien (2001) was careful to describe the process of unlearning racism as intricate, ongoing, and never-ending.

In his work with fifty white activists nationwide, Warren (2010) emphasized the importance of fighting "for" racial justice versus fighting "against" racial injustice as a chief motivating factor for antiracist whites. He also offered several "seminal activist experiences" that help to explain why some whites, who are not victims of racism in traditionally conceptualized ways, come to act on behalf of racial justice. Warren noted that relationships with people of color, moral visions for "purposeful" lives, multiracial collaborations, and impetuses to build new identities in multiracial communities, all deeply contributed to white activists' ability to "embrace racial justice" as opposed to "resist racial injustice."

These contributions most closely mirror the research I present here, which deepens the dialogue about white antiracism. My research, however, specifically relates to the origins and antecedents of antiracism for white scholar-activists in the powerful sphere of *education*—not just white activists writ large. Although whites occupy an overwhelmingly large space in education, the world of white antiracist educators and what we know about them is relatively, and unfortunately, quite small.

Methodology

The goal of this research was to understand the racial conceptualizations, culturally relevant teaching strategies, and life experiences that most significantly influence antiracist white educators, that we might inspire more of them. The first aim of the study was to use autobiographical literature and academic scholarship to arrive at a sample of white antiracist scholar-activists who embody the type of exemplary white educator so desperately needed in a multiracial society. Next, semi-structured interviews allowed these well-known antiracist educators to explain their racial paradigms, guiding beliefs, and formative life experiences from their own points of view. These two data sources—phenomenological interviews (Seidman, 2006) and the participants' own body of autobiographical literature and academic scholarship—help to illuminate the antiracist trajectories of eight white educators.

Another goal of this research was to develop "allied counterstories" to describe each educator's path to antiracist activism (Chapman, 2007; Delgado, 2000; Dixson & Rousseau, 2006; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Ordinarily, counterstories are the untold stories of marginalized people, which interrupt the racist status quo by countering majoritarian narratives of colorblindness, meritocracy, and post-raciality (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). According to Delgado and Stefancic (2001), counterstories generally serve to illuminate what life is like for those who are systemically marginalized. Hence, counterstories are about both substance *and* storyteller. In considering, therefore, whether whites can tell counterstories, the answer is a simultaneous yes and no. The stories of antiracist white educators who have developed a critical consciousness for issues of race and actively pursue the overturning of racism do indeed confront traditionally hegemonic white paradigms, which is a crucial function of counterstories (Delgado,

2000; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). We must bear in mind, however, that whites are not *racially* marginalized, and can therefore only tell "allied counterstories."

"White allies" are those who stand in solidarity with people of color in challenging the racial status quo (Tatum, 1994; Sleeter, 2007). The counterstories of white allies who have developed a critical race consciousness illuminate how other whites might embark on the lifelong journey of assuming counterhegemonic white identities, or those that reject normalized white supremacy (Leonardo, 2009). The allied counterstories of the antiracist white educators in this study, therefore, serve as a "tool for analyzing and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege," which these educators actively interrogate or reject altogether (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32). In this way, their allied counterstories are powerful and necessary in the struggle against largely unquestioned white dominance and persistent racial inequity.

Participants. The participants in this study include eight white antiracist educators: Marilyn Cochran-Smith, Jane Elliott, Joe Feagin, Paul Gorski, Julie Landsman, Peggy McIntosh, Christine Sleeter, and Tim Wise. These participants were selected based on their notoriety as antiracist whites, their extensive antiracist scholarship, and the degree to which they exemplified antiracism in their writing, teaching, and life's work. These white educators have significant stature in the fields of multicultural education and teacher education, and as eminent, publicly antiracist intellectuals. To arrive at the identified sample, I was also guided by the following selection criteria:

1. Explicit stance and scholarship in the field
2. Self-identity as educators
3. Introspection

These eight white scholar-activists were chosen based on the degree to which they had formerly expressed their views on race, whiteness, and antiracism. Additionally, what

distinguishes this research from previous studies of white antiracists is its explicit focus on whites who deeply influence education in general and teacher education in particular. Therefore, it was crucial that each of the participants selected for this study identify themselves as teachers, teacher educators, or *educators* in some capacity. Finally, these participants were constantly engaged in introspective processes of naming and unambiguously describing the significance of race and whiteness in their own lives. In their academic scholarship, personal autobiographical accounts, ongoing engagements, and research trajectories, the white educators in this sample had made, and continue to make public their evolving, ever-deepening reflections on race. In what follows, I briefly introduce each participant and include an accompanying photograph of each.

Marilyn Cochran-Smith is an endowed professor and renowned teacher educator at Boston College. This highly respected, outspoken advocate of social justice-oriented reforms in education and *teacher* education has written widely about the "good and just teaching" she wishes to see in a current and problematic white teaching force, as well as her own practice as a white teacher educator who daily and admittedly struggles with being a member of multiple privileged groups (Cochran-Smith, 1995a; 2005; Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009). In her piece entitled "Uncertain Allies: Understanding the Boundaries of Race and Teaching" (1995b), and in her single authored book, *Walking the Road: Race, Diversity, and Social Justice in Teacher Education* (2004) Cochran-Smith has described not only

the arduous task of preparing a majority white teaching force for understanding racial equity issues in schooling and society, but has also lent substantial insight into the long and ongoing process of confronting race in her own life. Cochran-Smith is also co-editor of *Studying Teacher Education: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education* (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005), one of the most comprehensive reports advocating teacher education reforms that will prepare *all* teachers to challenge the racial and social conditions that render schooling unjust for students of color, English language learners, and other marginalized groups.

Jane Elliott is a fiery, no nonsense, fiercely outspoken antiracist speaker, diversity trainer, and educator. A former classroom teacher, she is best known for her groundbreaking Brown Eyes/Blue Eyes experiment, which she conducted with an all-white group of elementary school students in Riceville, Iowa on the heels of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Her goal was to highlight the ways in which racism functions in order to inspire her children to struggle against it. Her videos depicting the antiracist exercise with various groups are widely popular and requested from around the globe. Elliott is a recipient of the National Mental Health Association Award for Excellence in Education based on her filled-to-capacity, internationally-requested diversity trainings (Elliott, 2011). A staunch antiracist advocate, she has appeared several times on television but once refused an appearance on Oprah based on the "watered

down" nature of the racial dialogue they requested. She has also been featured as an antiracist advocate with a keen understanding of race as a destructive social construct in Guy Harrison's (2009) *Race and Reality: What Everyone Should Know about our Biological Diversity.* Jane Elliott is a rapid fire, quick-witted, articulate speaker who, now in her 70s, continues to battle antiracism in her daily life and work.

Joe Feagin is a Pulitzer-prize nominated sociologist and endowed professor at Texas A&M University who quite literally wrote the book on white racism. His collaboration with Hernan Vera, *White Racism: The Basics* (1995) is a renowned and heavily cited work in multicultural and teacher education (see, for example, Bell, 2002). His scholarly contributions are squarely centered on debunking what he has called "the white racial frame," or the white racial narrative in all of its deep complexities (Feagin, 2010). His pieces, *The Many Costs of Racism* (Feagin & McKinney, 2003) and *The Agony of Education: Black Students at a White University* (Feagin, Vera, & Imani, 1996), are just two of his many works that highlight the racial paradigms of whites as well as counterframing strategies used by people of color that best exemplify how white dominance can and *should be* abated. Feagin is also a veteran academic who claims his role as an educator as his most important identity: "Teaching students is what I enjoy most in life." Over the span of more than 45 years, he has taught courses in sociology,

cultural diversity, and race and ethic relations (Feagin, 2011). Notably, he teaches a "Racism and Anti-Racism" course at his current university. His teachings and scholarly contributions to the fields of sociology and multicultural education are heavily cited, widely renowned, and well respected in multiple fields.

Paul Gorski describes himself as an educator, artist, and activist. He is well known for his public rebuttals to racism and classism in Ruby Payne's *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (1996), which is wildly popular among white teachers in public schools. Gorski is also the founder of EdChange and the Multicultural Pavilion, both dedicated to sharing materials that contribute to "equity, diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice." He is also a long-standing board member and past president-elect of the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME). Many use his publications about multicultural teacher education—often aimed at raising critical consciousness among white students—including "A Narrative on Whiteness and Multicultural Education" (2000). Gorski's own dissertation, entitled "Racial and Gender Identity in White Male Multicultural Educators and Facilitators: Toward Individual Processes of Self-development" (1998), also provides invaluable insight into the antiracist, anti-sexist development of white males, including himself. Gorski is also a longstanding ally for multiple marginalized groups. His affiliation with the Association for Gender Equity Leadership in Education and the National Organization of Men Against Sexism illustrate his proclivity to take up causes that

other men would not. Gorski is well-known for his antiracist work and preeminence in the field of multicultural education and teacher education, as well as for his personal, public exemplar of how members of dominant groups can successfully reject racial, gender, and class identities that thwart social justice.

Julie Landsman is highly regarded for advocating the necessity of white teachers critically reflecting on their own whiteness in order to provide the education that all children deserve. Her influential book, *A White Teacher Talks about Race* (2001), spurred my initial questions about how whites become inspired to renounce racism despite a lifetime of socialization in racial supremacy. As a classroom teacher, Landsman was dedicated to teaching "at promise" students in her area. She continued to teach despite being physically violated by a Black man as a young civil rights-activist and college student (2001). Landsman exemplifies not only the incredible *resiliency* it takes to heal from violence, but also to continue resisting racial stereotypes and dedicate her life's work to antiracism. Julie Landsman has also edited one an insightful volume describing the complex relationship between white teachers and culturally diverse students in *White Teachers, Diverse Classrooms: A Guide to Building Inclusive Schools, Promoting High Expectations, and Eliminating Racism* (Landsman & Lewis, 2006). She has written books about her own whiteness—*Growing up White: A Veteran Teacher Reflects on Racism* (2008)—and has collaborated with other well-known multicultural scholars to produce

an instructional video for other white educators. She continues to serve primarily as an educational consultant for P-12 teachers, always directly addressing, and attempting to dismantle racism among white teachers.

Peggy McIntosh is perhaps one of the most well-known antiracist feminists of our time. She is best known for her list of 46 white privileges, which she and other whites often enjoy based solely on whiteness (1988/2001). Her seminal pieces, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" (1989a) and "White Privilege and Male Privilege: Coming to see Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies" (1988/2001) are some of the most widely cited sources in teacher education and multiple academic disciplines in which issues of race and whiteness are discussed (Gorski, 2010). Her working paper on white privilege is also the highest grossing publication from copyright sales at Wellesley University. A three-time Harvard graduate, McIntosh is the former Director of American Studies at the University of Denver and the current Associate Director of the Wellesley College Centers for Research on Women. She is also the founder and co-director of the Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (S.E.E.D) Project, assisting educators at multiple levels in making their pedagogy, curricula, and school climates more inclusive. Peggy McIntosh is often the first-named authority on white privilege. Her scholarly contributions are frequently referred to by her peers in the field, and each of the

participants in this study specifically cited her work as being influential in some capacity. She has also been described by Michael Eric Dyson (2007), another prominent academic and expert on race, as "a pioneering thinker" in naming and exploring white privilege (p. 115).

Christine Sleeter is one of the most respected "antiracist, multicultural teacher educators" in the field (Sleeter, 2005). She is very well-known for the preponderance of highly regarded and widely cited literature she has produced on whiteness and white teachers in education. Her pieces, "How White Teachers Construct Race" (2004), "White Racism" (1994), and "Preparing Teachers for Culturally Diverse Schools: Research and the Overwhelming Presence of Whiteness" (2001), for instance, have featured prominently in my own teaching and permeate widely in multicultural education courses. Her scholarship is popular and oft-cited, and her advocacy for the effective and targeted preparation of white teachers is seminal in multiple fields. Her books, which include *Critical Multiculturalism: Theory and Praxis* (2010) and *Multicultural Education as Social Activism* (1996), along with her collaborations with co-authors such as *Making Choices for Multicultural Education: Five Approaches to Race, Class, and Gender* (Sleeter & Grant, 2007) and *Developing Multicultural Teacher Education Curricula* (Larkin & Sleeter, 1995), all foreground race and whiteness in P-12 classrooms and in teacher education. Additionally, many of the more than ninety published articles she has written on whiteness, white teachers, and antiracist teaching are also considered pioneering. At time of

writing, Sleeter is also the president of the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME), which is "the largest professional organization focusing on educational equity and multicultural education" (Gorski, 2010).

Tim Wise is perhaps the most recognizable antiracist public intellectual and scholar-activist today. He self-identifies as an "antiracist writer and educator" (Wise, 2011) and contributes almost daily to his high-traffic website: www.timwise.org. As a member of the SpeakOut bureau, Wise is one of the most sought-after antiracist presenters. With nearly 18,000 "fans" on Facebook, he is highly visible as a public presence and is popular among multicultural educators, teacher educators, and general audiences alike. Wise is also a frequenter of the annual White Privilege Conference and the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity, at which scholars reiterate their stances on racism and the need for antiracist action. Wise is especially prolific, publishing numerous books including *Speaking Treason Fluently: Anti-Racist Reflections from an Angry White Male* (2008b) and his well-respected memoir, *White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son* (2008a). When not featured in "viral videos" of his numerous public appearances in which he denounces white racism and calls for social justice, he can also be seen in a video widely-used among educators, entitled *Colorblind: The Rise of Post-Racial Politics and the Retreat from Racial Equity* (2010b; see also his book with the same title,

2010a). Wise also makes frequent appearances as a national television program guest and can often be seen on CNN, for instance, discussing "racial incidents[4]" and his own antiracist views.

Whether male or female, in their 30s or 70s, or from economically privileged or working class backgrounds, all participants in this study were white. I did, however, wish to exercise caution by avoiding any "essentialization" of their whiteness. As in Part I of my research, only white educators who *self-identified* as white were included in this study (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006; Lewis, 2004). In their autobiographical accounts or scholarly publications, each of these participants had written extensively about their identification with whiteness as an acknowledged identity and enjoyed set of structured advantage. In addition to being prominent antiracist scholar-activists who are widely known in the fields of multicultural education and teacher education, it was their own emphasis on their whiteness that greatly contributed to their selection for this sample. Moreover, while it is true that authors can construct particular narratives in print, yet present themselves in ways that are contradictory to their true character, these scholars were also chosen for their self-reported fallibility, imperfection, and self-identified need for growth. Therefore, one measure of their authenticity as white antiracist scholar-activists was their willingness to openly declare or even to *highlight* their own blind spots, retrogressive tendencies, and personal deficits regarding race (Gere et al., 2009; Wise, 2009). Their candid and critical self-acknowledgements increase confidence in their authenticity as people, antiracists, and advocates for racial justice. The antiracist white educators in this study, both in their writing and in their interviews, expressed hesitation about having been identified as whites who "understood" or had racism "all figured out." Thus, in seeking to understand antiracist white educators who "understand" whiteness in education, it is crucial to remember that it is their

[4] "Racial incidents" appears in quotes because Wise himself would argue that racism is not located in aberrant, situational, "every once in a while," discrete events. Rather, racism is rooted in laws, norms, and institutional practices that involve far more than a single perpetrator or a lone "racist" actor (see also Bell, 1995).

own apprehension about their presumed "arrival" as antiracist whites that speaks not only to the title of this piece, but also to their own notions of "unfinishedness" as human beings (Freire, 1970/2006).

Participation in this study required being interviewed once during a one to two-hour, in-person meeting. Each interview was audio-recorded, transcribed, and returned to the interviewee with follow-up questions. Prior to their interviews, I had already identified works in which participants offer detailed examples, personal background information, or descriptions of the specific formative events they found salient in their developing commitments to antiracism. The pieces in which they discussed such instances were used to formulate questions that were uniquely tailored to each interviewee. The inclusion of their own literature also helped to clarify answers given *during* the interviews and enriched the interpretation of their words. A table with select examples of literature-based questions that specifically related to the afore-written experiences of each participant appears in Appendix D, as do further details about the methodology.

In what follows, I report conclusions that emerged from the data in hopes of presenting findings that are useful in understanding the antiracist trajectories of a sorely needed group of white educators. Findings are disaggregated by research question, with categories subsumed under each section. The findings were robust and dense, and each category was bolstered by numerous examples from multiple participants. Within the confines of the current work, however, spatial limitations will only allow the inclusion of select, poignant examples.

Race in the Eyes of Antiracists

In my quest to understand how antiracist white educators come to exist, the first question posed was: *How do antiracist white educators conceptualize race, whiteness, and culturally*

relevant pedagogy? In a previous research study with twelve white classroom teachers, the data revealed that burgeoning antiracists often cling to notions of colorblindness while simultaneously working toward a veritable state of post-raciality. They also attributed some failures of minority students and their families to subtlely acknowledged cultural deficits, but could also identify "true cultural deficits" in systemic racism, which they located in school structures, institutional practices, and the white psyche itself. White teachers understood the existence of racism but still often conceptualized it in highly decontextualized terms and "individual acts of meanness" (McIntosh, 1988/2001).

In keeping with the tenets of critical race theory, what distinguishes the more advanced antiracist white educators in this study (when juxtaposed with those in the first), is the fundamental manner in which they conceptualize race, whiteness, and pedagogies that undermine deeply-rooted racism in US culture and life—*especially* in education (Bell, 1992; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2006). These antiracists expressed thoughts about race and whiteness in education that both echoed and extended the more progressive ideas espoused by the burgeoning antiracist teachers in previous research. An in-depth discussion of each major finding follows.

"Niceness has nothing to do with it": Racism is foundational, institutional, and intersectional. One of the most salient findings from the antiracist white educators featured here is their understanding of racism as foundational in the historical formation and contemporary function of the U. S. In his response to queries about his thoughts on race, Joe Feagin offered a reply that best typified the racial paradigms of many of the antiracist white educators. Feagin begins by explaining "the white racial frame," his own construction describing the all-encompassing social framework that deepens our understanding of the majoritarian racial narrative. Feagin (2010) argues that stereotypes and isolated images of Blacks and people of

color alone do not capture the totality of emotional valences, visceral connotations, imagined features, or embedded roots of racism conjured up by the thought or mere mention of Americans of color. Similarly, Wallace-Sanders' (2008) work on the concept of Mammy—the "creative combination of extreme behavior and exaggerated features" (p. 5) of African American and Afro Caribbean caregivers in collective American memory and the white imagination—illuminates what Feagin aims to capture with the "white racial frame" by explaining the inadequacy of examining images or objects in isolation in attempting to capture the total essence of a specific type of Black stereotype—that of the archetypal mammy:

> …both the historic and the contemporary interpretations of the mammy too often isolate the image within narrow categories: as a literary stereotype, or as a historic reality, or as an advertising trademark, or as a visual subject. These approaches reduce the complexity of the mammy's powerful presence in American consciousness. (p. 3)

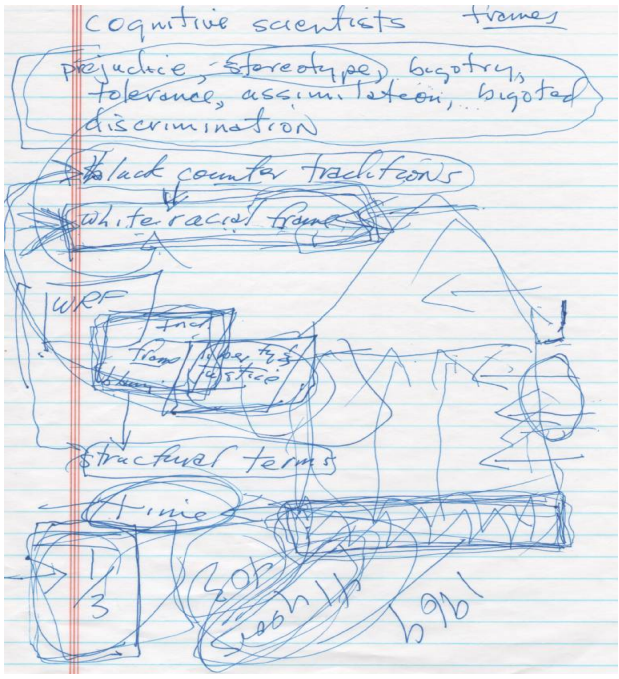
Both Feagin (2010) and Wallace-Sanders (2008) stress the importance of moving beyond singular images, stereotypes, or lone concepts such as prejudice in describing the degree to which negative images of people of color are subconsciously and almost ubiquitously embedded in the white psyche. Both scholars complicate the misguided beliefs and deeply rooted pathologies that dominate the white imagination and collective, historical white memory.

Feagin conceptualizes racism as a foundational and structural underpinning of the U. S. He notes that viewing racial oppression as aberrant or outside the purview of an otherwise normal functioning society is not only historically incorrect and conceptually naive, but inherently countervailing in his quest to see this country live up to its democratic ideals.

> You can watch the white frame from 1700 to today, and there's more similarity than differences. The same concepts that Thomas Jefferson lays out in his famous racist treatise section of Notes on the State of Virginia…there's a section 14 where he goes through all the racist, anti-Black concepts, and they're still echoed by whites today. So the white frame is very persistent and lasting.

> This is the kind of racial thing I've been studying since I did my dissertation. My racial analysis is getting ever deeper, and I am trying to figure out how the analytical concepts I was taught at Harvard are not adequate. Prejudice and stereotyping as concepts, they're a start but they're not adequate for making sense out of a racial system that's systemic. These traditional concepts tend to look at racism and racial discrimination as tacked on to the side of an otherwise healthy society.
>
> The cancer metaphor is useful but it's inadequate. I figured out that the best metaphor is the house metaphor. [Draws a diagram. See Figure 1.] The US racial system is foundationally racist, and the US "house" was built on that foundation of racism. It's not like it's just a problem in our house. It's the foundation. So you need more profound—you need concepts that go deeper into the reality than just prejudice and stereotypes.

A fundamental tenet of critical race theory is that racism is deeply woven into the fabric of the U. S. (Bell, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). What Feagin reveals in his own analysis is the full historical ontology of racism as an indelible and foundational building block. He argues that racism is not a cancerous illness or external problem that is merely "tacked on" to the edifice of this country. Rather, a system of structured racism was present at its inception and continues to ground everyday life and limit this nation. In his own diagram, he illustrates his thought.



←Feagin illustrates that racism is the *foundation* of the United States "house." Racial reforms come and go throughout history, but the nation's legacy of foundational racism is never seriously addressed.

Figure 1: Feagin's Foundational Racism

Akin to Feagin's view, renowned teacher educator Christine Sleeter refers to racism as both institutional and *institutionalized.* Her assessment is that racism permeates every aspect of US culture, particularly education. In addition to the multiple levels on which it functions, she notes that racism has been institutionalized in codified structures, fixed mindsets, and even the physical divisions of space here and elsewhere. Describing her own conceptualizations of race, as well as the task before her as she educates white teachers and white people, she notes:

> [W]hen I'm teaching multicultural education I do start off with race and racism. I'll start with trying to pack institutional racism both in the broader society and how it's reflected in the way schools are structured and organized and the impact on kids and communities.
>
> [A]nother way of understanding the institutionalization of racism is…in 1995 I spent three weeks in South Africa. I had heard about apartheid but actually seeing the physical division of space with completely unequal land and resources, just seeing like the Black townships…then this big no man's land between the Black townships and the white areas. And then with this cloud of charcoal smoke hanging over the Black townships because they didn't have access to electricity. It's that visual image of the institutionalization of racism. It's powerful.

In each of these, and quite dissimilar to the burgeoning antiracist teachers studied heretofore, Sleeter moves beyond the more topical notions of racism as an individual problem suffered occasionally by people of color to a more advanced understanding of it as institutional, institutionalized over time, and structured throughout society. Similar to Feagin's white racial frame—which he developed in response to the inadequacy of the isolated concepts he had learned—Sleeter also lamented the shortfall of viewing racism in individual, psychological terms. Writing about her own work with white teachers and how they frequently construct race in primarily individualistic terms, she explained:

> To 'solve' racism by educating whites is to locate racism mainly in biased individual actions, which in turn are assumed to stem from ideas and assumptions in people's head: prejudiced attitudes, stereotype, and lack of information about people of color. A psychological view of racism assumes that if we can change and develop what is in the heads of white people, they in turn will create significant changes in institutions. (2004, p. 164)

Sleeter would prefer that white teachers construct race in ways that locate oppression in systems that continue to reproduce racial inequities. She also partakes in a more structural analysis of race, which "focuses on distribution of power and wealth across groups and on how those of European ancestry attempt to retain supremacy while groups of color try to challenge it" (p. 164). Both Feagin and Sleeter conceptualize racism in drastically different terms than the white teachers I previously studied, and the many white teachers both Sleeter and I encounter in teacher education programs (Sleeter, 1995). What separates these antiracist white educators' paradigms from those of white teachers who construct race in largely individual terms is their fundamental comprehension of racism as deeply embedded in the historical and contemporary institutions that govern society and maintain legacies of white power.

Another teacher educator, Marilyn Cochran-Smith, describes her own conceptualizations of racism in terms of "a bigger, institutional, structural view that is ever deepening and becoming more nuanced. Most importantly, she mentions her "apartheid schooling" (Gollnick & Chinn, 2009; Kozol, 2005; Orfield & Lee, 2004) experiences, where white students in her high school were clearly and disproportionately tracked into an advanced college-preparatory curriculum at the expense of Black students, who were just as if not *more* talented and deserving (see also Oakes, 1984, 1992). Cochran-Smith spoke about her post-high school realizations in these words:

> [T]hat built on what I had seen in my own high school and in my own experience…a way to make sense of what I was seeing as something systemic and something structural and something institutional and historical. Not just about what's fair, what's not fair, who's nice, who's prejudiced, who's not prejudiced. But this whole bigger understanding of the racialized society in which we live and the whole socioeconomic history of racism.

In these terms, Cochran-Smith explains her own views of racism not in individual terms or based primarily on the "niceness" of people or the "fairness" of situations, but in terms of the structural, socioeconomic, and historical forces that have colluded to produced a wholly "racialized society." Further, in her own work with mostly white student teachers who were learning to teach for social justice, she concludes that bringing her own students—and most importantly, their P-12 students—to similar conclusions about structural racism is imperative to her purpose as a teacher educator:

> [P]art of learning to teach for social justice is struggling to make visible and explicit…the inequities of society and the institutional structures in which they are embedded. To do so, student teachers encourage critical thinking about information, texts, and events; openly discuss race and racism, equity and inequity, oppression and advantage; and work against the social, organizational, and structural arrangements of schooling and society that perpetuate inequity. (2004, pp. 78-79)

Here, Cochran-Smith describes her own structural view of racism and her intent to teach *her* students, and correspondingly, *their* students about racism in similar institutional terms.

Peggy McIntosh also expounds on racism not just as a singular hegemonic force, but one that is located in "power systems," and deeply interactive with other forms of oppression. In her interview, and in what is perhaps the most famous tome on white privilege—"White Privilege and Male Privilege: Coming to see Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies" (1988/2001)—Peggy McIntosh explains her own understanding of the "correspondence" between racism and sexism. In a retelling of her time with male faculty members with whom she was working to render university curricula more inclusive of women, McIntosh describes her revelation that individual actions and personal "niceness" has absolutely nothing to do with racism, sexism, or any system of power. She recounts her experiences with these "nice men" alongside her own experience of working through accusations from scholars of color that white

women are oppressive to work with. Her words reveal the early assemblage of her now famously well-developed conceptualizations of how racism, sexism, and multiple axes of power function at levels that far exceed the limits of individual "niceness."

> I had in my mind: *Are these nice men or are they oppressive men?* Because I knew they were nice. But I also felt it was oppressive when they said [women] were extras. I didn't know how to judge these men. Are they *nice* men?
>
> But they say those oppressive things. And I thought I had to choose. At that time, my consciousness was such that I thought I had to choose: either they are nice men or they are oppressive men. Either/or. And then I suddenly remembered I had read two essays by African American women who said, "White women are oppressive to work with."
>
> At first I was quite offended to read those essays. I think we're nice. And then I especially think we're nice if we work with *them*, (slant). And I thought, "Oh, that's not very nice, is it?" Maybe niceness has nothing to do with it.
>
> I've got these two things confused. These men who said, "[W]omen…are not foundational to the discipline"—these are nice men. They don't realize what they're saying. And it's not their fault, and niceness has *nothing* to do with it.

In these indelibly linked recollections, Peggy McIntosh describes the temptation of many whites to locate racism in "individual acts of meanness" (which are her words; 1988/2000) and contrastingly, in individual "niceness." Such was the common tendency of some of the white classroom teachers I studied earlier. For McIntosh, racism and sexism manifest themselves in deeply imbued power systems that permeate everything from epistemological assumptions, to curricular canons, to progressive social movements themselves (see, for example, Delaney, 2010 for a discussion of sexism *within* the civil rights Movement). In her own introspective accounts, McIntosh adeptly disentangles the temptation to define racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression by the words and acts of individuals who, seemingly, can and must be characterized as either nice *or* racist—nice *or* sexist—as opposed to locating oppression in wider, more broad-spanning systems of power.

McIntosh illuminates the vital ways in which antiracist white educators conceptualize race and whiteness in education. She identifies racism as a multifarious, overlapping system of

power that is foundational, institutional, and intersectional. She also brings to the fore the deliberate invisibility of these systems, which makes their recognition even more difficult for whites who are taught not to see them (1989a). Racism is at once ubiquitous *and* veiled, and those who propagate it are privileged *and* oppressive even if they are "nice." From her own deeply personal deliberations about whether individuals or groups can be simultaneously nice and oppressive, we can glean, just as she did, that where racism and the white privilege are concerned, "niceness has nothing to do with it."

***"All these big white males made all this history"*: The mis-education of white people.** Although the antiracist white educators in this study could clearly identify the ways in which systems, structures, and even their own careers in antiracism afforded them advantageous opportunities and white privilege, they also readily acknowledged the gross "mis-education" they and other whites suffer as a result (see Woodson, 1933/2000 for the origin of the concept). These white educators could specifically point to racism in education as fundamentally devastating in their own schooling processes, and nothing short of tragic for all white students. They routinely referred to curricula as strangely incomplete, based on "fantasy" and "white mythology," and constitutive of a "lie." Participants used the terms "poison" and "imprisonment" to describe the distorted human record and crippling view of the world whites often come away with as a result of Eurocentric curricula and white supremacist schooling.

Jane Elliott explained her own mis-education with passion and disdain. She suffered a mis-education from her formal education along with her parents—who, as McIntosh has pointed out, were also taught not to see white privilege in their own schooling (1988/2000). She explained the source of her anger by describing her mis-education in these terms:

> I had been lied to! They sold me a bill of goods that everything good that was ever done was done by white people! They [my parents] never confronted

> the education system. They were old school: you believed what you were taught…and you don't argue with the teachers.
>
> You teach that lie. You do it in the classroom. You teach all those lies. You force them to stand up and say the pledge of allegiance with the words "under God" in it in a country in which we have separation of church and state. You teach *that* lie. And you keep teaching all this good American history, which isn't American history. It's American *hysteria*. It's American *mythology*. And in order to pass the test, they've got to regurgitate that lie.
>
> And then you say to yourself, "Well, we aren't a racist nation. We have a Black president in the white house." Yeah. So people who say we aren't a racist nation are lying.

Throughout her lamentation of the unquestioning compliance to school teachings by her parents, as well as the "bad bill of goods" she had been sold at home and at school, Elliott illuminates white cultural dominance and the peril of teaching outright "lies" that offer an incomplete, contradictory, unfailingly "mythological" view of the world. She adamantly resents the "lie" that both she and her parents were led to believe by being schooled in a country where its racist roots are hidden, where *only* white males feature prominently in history, and where white normativity reigns supreme. Her parents, and particularly her father, helped propagate what was taught in schools and peddled by a dominant white society: that white males are the makers and keepers of this nation. She noted that she did not realize the depths of her own mis-education until she went to college, at which point she felt particularly duped and disadvantaged by both the racist education system she had just experienced, as well as the same lies her father had come to believe as a result of his own mis-education:

> Until I went to college, I didn't argue with my father. [W]hen I got in college ,[I] started arguing with my father because we'd heard all this: "All these big white males had done all this exploring, and all this discovering, and all this inventing, and made all this history, and had done all these brave and wonderful things…"

It was not until college that she was able to fully grasp the level of curricular incompleteness and historical fallacy she had been fed as a white student studying a white dominant curriculum. In her adult years, she read several progressive works that "backfilled" her

knowledge of American history, but she spoke of the process as totally unnecessary had she never been taught the "lie" of white male-centric history to begin with. She went on to explain that such a curriculum handicaps everyone and "imprisons" white students in particular. Nieto and Bode (2008) have argued that every curriculum is "relevant" to someone's culture. Here, Elliott acknowledges the US curriculum as indeed "culturally relevant"—that is, relevant to the culture, perspective, and dominance of the white mainstream.

Peggy McIntosh also described the US curriculum as particularly "poisonous" and "damaging" for everyone, but especially for whites. She contends that whites are severely limited by an educational "system of power" that falsely and unnecessarily confers racial dominance on their group. She first describes her own schooling experiences—both in her college days at Harvard and as a professor at various universities—where she came to realize the lopsided nature of the "all white, all male curriculum." She begins by recounting her experiences with "womanless" curricula and laments that the only curricular figure she could identify with was the poet Emily Dickinson. She goes on to describe the "mis-education" of her college students at the University of Denver, who were eventually helped along in acknowledging the hegemonic tones of history in their own curriculum, and came to develop realizations that "history is versions." Unfortunately for white students, the "version" of history that is taught panoramically in P-12 schools, universities, and curricular canons never serves them well. In fact, such a mis-education "poisons" and "damages" them greatly.

> Well, first I should say I taught for about 20 years without understanding that I was white, without thinking consciously about race and ethnicity. So it was an all white curriculum…without seeing that.
>
> And then I began to get restless at the University of Denver. I got restless with English—because it left too much out. I felt restless with women's studies because it left too much out. Then I felt restless with ethnic/racial studies because it left too much out. It left out the women…the women's studies. It left out—everybody was *white*.

> [H]ow do these versions of reality take over our lives and keep us from doing well racially, gender wise, class wise, nation-wise, in our physical bodies, in our mental states? How do these inherited versions of reality interfere with our decent development as human beings?
>
> Because the damage done by the belief systems and the things you're taught is enormous. It was news to me that I had been fed a series of poisons, but that's really what the school curriculum did. It serves you *poison*. It says most people don't really count…And poor people got that way because of their defects. And all those things—that poisons the mind and the soul of the student.

McIntosh repeatedly refers to an all white, all male, distorted curriculum as one that leaves everyone incomplete—including white students. Her own trajectory toward antiracism involved the gradual and difficult realization that "history is versions," and the curriculum as it stands leaves almost everyone out. That is, everyone except white males, who surely did not make all history. Like Elliott, McIntosh uses terms like "poisonous" and "damaging" to describe the incredible inaccuracy and incompleteness of "American history" and its teaching.

Both Jane Elliott and Peggy McIntosh are concerned about the mis-education of white students and its effects on them. They argue that while the current curriculum is indeed relevant to the culture of whites, and white males specifically, it serves no one well—*especially* whites—who continue being fed such "poison." These antiracists pinpoint the holes, deficits, and altogether fallacious aspects of their own "mis-education" and acknowledge the senselessness of continuing with a system of education and public discourse replete with this pro-white pathology (Wise, 2006). Indeed, as Elliott suggests, "All these big white males did *not* make history," and these continued "white lies" reveal the deeply damaging function of mis-education in this country.

***"Whiteness is nothing but oppressive and false"* (For white people)**. The antiracist white educators in this study have discussed the loss of joy, psychological well-being, spiritual health, and wholeness suffered as a result of racism. While mis-education in a white-dominant

education system may rob whites of truth, these participants also posit that whiteness itself robs whites of much more. The burgeoning white teachers in Part I of this research recognized the retrogressive aspects of white people, such as their inability to function in a diverse and changing world, their focus on materialistic items and individual progress, and their overall ineptitude at comfortably living and learning alongside diverse people. In other words, they were able to recognize the pathological nature of racial xenophobia, which is predicated on a social construct rooted in "hoodoo science" and arbitrary phenotypical categorization (Gould, 1981; King, 1997; Leonardo, 2009). The white classroom teachers still also, however, clung to some notions of white superiority based on their thoughts about the level of care white parents were assumed to exhibit with their children compared to the deficit-tinged families of students of color. What separates these antiracist white educators from burgeoning antiracist teachers is their view that whiteness offers far less in return for what it steals from whites. Roediger (1994), in *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness*, wrote, "it is not merely that whiteness is oppressive and false; it is nothing but oppressive and false" (p. 13). The antiracist whites in this sample understand it as such, and they too see whiteness as nothing but oppressive, false, and a formidable culprit for why whites will never fully thrive as humanized beings.

Julie Landsman offers her thoughts about why racism and whiteness are detrimental to the health and well-being of white people. In her response, one can sense the deep sincerity, yet unreserved urgency behind her words.

> Oh! I think it's [whiteness has] a huge psychic [cost]—If you were in denial of racial differences, I think you're never coming to terms with the way this country was formed and the way white people have, not only here, but in Europe, colonized other people, enslaved other people, perpetrated genocide on natives, you know, in their form of it on slaves.
>
> I don't think you can live a whole, joyous existence in the world if you do not take this in and understand it and accept some truths. Because then, you're fighting the truth at times. And that's a lot of energy…

> And I find the other kind of anger, the anger at whole groups, that people stereotype or whatever, that kind of anger, people are really unhappy. They hold that and they're really…And so I think it's psychic health for white people and for the country that someday we have…truth in reconciliation.

In her reply about the "psychic cost" of racism and upholding hegemonic whiteness, Landsman describes her rationales for being a white antiracist: the restoration of joy, the elimination of fear, and the advancement of peace and progress. She begins by describing the incredible loss of wholeness and joy that whites surrender when they partake in racist paradigms. She notes that striving for racial equity keeps her whole because she is not living a life of denial or fear. Because she has acknowledged the ways in which our history and present include racial domination and degradation, she understands the full human record and is equipped to avoid history's repeats. Landsman also acknowledges the wasted energy that whites must expend by "fighting against the truth."

Tim Wise made very similar points about how privilege and a false sense of white superiority robs white people of their individual peace, and whole societies of their collective potential. He described how "weak" white privilege renders white people, and how unnecessarily unsettled they can be about racial "others" making gains on them.

> That's the problem with privilege. It can make you soft in a way. So to me that's a pretty good reason to want to overthrow a system that really produces insecurity. Even as it produces great advantage, it can produce this level of constant fear. You know, Satchel Paige used to always say, "Don't look over your shoulder. Something might be gaining on you." And he has a point.
>
> Gore Vidal said something like, "Every time a good friend of mine accomplishes something, a little piece of me dies." How is *that* supposed to be? That has *got* to be a privileged voice speaking. That has got to be the voice of, "If you get what I've got, then the value of what I've got is diminished." And that's a *sick* pathological mentality that will kill you or make you sick and depressed and unhealthy if you indulge in it for too long.

Here, Wise expresses many of the same sentiments as Landsman about the ominous nature of clinging to hegemonic whiteness. He notes that partaking in a false sense of

superiority makes white people less able to cope with the advancement of marginalized groups. He also addresses the sense of "fear" that unnecessarily inundates whites by constantly feeling as though they have to "look over their shoulders" to see who is gaining on them. Whether they are concerned about the diminished value of their progress as whites, or that they will no longer be able to claim all important accomplishments singularly as their own, Wise is adamant that accepting the myth of white superiority hinders whites in very real, very irrational ways. For Wise, "not indulging in whiteness for too long" consists of nothing less than acknowledging the pathological nature of whiteness—for *white people.*

Jane Elliott also spoke about the consequence of subscribing too strongly to a false sense of white superiority. She was adamant about the notion that whites are oppressed by racism themselves:

> "Oppressor" is the wrong word. Because "oppressors" are being oppressed in order to oppress. White people are as oppressed by racism as people of color are. And they don't realize that as long as it's happening to somebody else, they are having to cooperate with it so it's happening to *them.* They don't realize that.
>
> They don't realize the harm it's doing to their own children. When white people realize that their children's experiential backgrounds are lessened and imprisoned by racism…When white people realize that their children are as encaged by racism as children of color are, when they start realizing that, then white people will try to put a stop to this.

Akin to the Freirian (1970/2006) notion of oppression, Elliott illustrates a fundamental grasp of the simultaneous dehumanization that occurs when one group oppresses another. Here she demonstrates her understanding that racially, whites are just as disenfranchised by racism as people of color, albeit in immensely different ways. She explains that in their racial dominance, whites have to surrender a portion of their own psychological freedom by being "encaged and imprisoned by racism" as well. The challenge, she notes, is to bring this reciprocal

dehumanization to the fore for whites, who might then work against racism as a liberatory act for themselves.

Similarly, Joe Feagin has described the binding,"hypocritical" life of whites and the unhealthy toll it takes on them. He conceives the myth of white superiority and the reality of white racial oppression as a slow killer of our nation (or at least a serious inhibitor to our progress) as well as an unnecessary source of personal dissonance in the lives of white people. He explained the incredible burden of living such a "hypocritical life" in these terms:

> So if you talk about whites generally, for all of us it should mean not living a hypocritical life. Whites who say they believe in liberty and justice for all are usually hypocritical. [W]e're living as hypocrites most of the time. If you as a white person do start living by it, and help break down the racist system, you get the huge personal payoff of moral integrity in regard to liberty and justice values.
>
> Most whites and most other people know at some level if they're not living up to it. You have to use a lot of things to repress that liberty-and-justice frame. So one huge payoff for whites doing antiracism is a sense of doing what's right, and just as much as you can. So you get a sense of moral integrity from it and of honesty. You have to kind of live a dishonest life if you don't work against racism in this country.

Like many of the participants, Feagin notes the incredible effort it takes to live a "hypocritical" life and to "repress" what many white people know, but often refuse to admit regarding this nation not living up to its democratic ideals. Tatum (1997) has argued that racism is both passive and active. She puts forth that individuals—particularly *white* individuals—are passively racist if they are not actively antiracist. Feagin extends her argument by noting the "huge personal payoff" and worthwhile benefit of active antiracism. In Feagin's view, whites stand to gain a better sense of "moral integrity" based on the alignment of their ideals with working toward those realities. For him, the gains of pursuing antiracism for white people far outweigh the costs of maintaining the "racist America" in which too far many whites hypocritically reside.

Finally, Paul Gorski describes the deleterious effects of whiteness not only for himself, but for his father, who demonstrated overt racism throughout his childhood. Gorski explained, with palpable sadness, the loss of joy his father exemplified: "I remember interpreting my dad's racism as almost like a cancer within him. It just seemed like, he can't possibly be happy…He was so xenophobic." Fortunately, Gorski was later able to use his observation of his father in his own antiracist development, but the lack of fullness of life that his father missed out on was not lost on Gorski. He remembered that racism was deeply damaging emblematic of the destructive force it is for many other whites.

In a compelling manner, Gorski further describes whiteness as "nothing but oppressive and false" in rather sophisticated terms. He explains the oppressive nature of racism, classism, and consumerism, and how they collude to rob him of reason and ultimate fulfillment as a white person and multiply situated white man.

> There's a socialization process that goes on with consumer culture. How do I benefit from being white? I benefit economically, and also I've been socialized to basically trade every bit of my spiritual well-being in order to participate in that, right?
>
> If I'm socialized to think that [consumerism] is my goal, then I'm supposed to spend my life striving for the accumulation of stuff. [W]hite people who understand, develop some sort of understanding…that I'm being suckered into this by a system that is, for a vast majority of white people, oppressive. It's oppressive financially. It's oppressive spiritually.
>
> For white people who can step back and see, well, wait a second, is this really giving me what I need? I this really fulfilling me spiritually? [A]t least that's what it was for me. Starting to come to a realization that I might benefit. But I benefit in a system that is destructive to me. Not in a system that, ultimately, is good for me.

Here, Gorski describes his progression of understanding whiteness first as a system that has real and valuable benefits, but ultimately as one that undermines him. He explains that by participating in a racist system in which he is conditioned to believe that he has more in common with Bill Gates based solely on his whiteness—as opposed to Gate's secretary, whose class

status and struggles might more closely resemble his own—and by coming to value things more than people, Gorski (alongside all whites) is forced to trade his "spiritual health," sense of reason, and mental well-being to collude with such a system. By coming to understand systemic white advantage as an elusive form of economic exploitation, coupled with the realization that valuing consumeristic tendencies hinders his wellness as a person, Gorski arrived at a firm sense of conscientization about whiteness. What he eventually discovered is that while whiteness indeed confers economic and psychological benefits, it does not serve the totality of his interests as a white person and human being. Gorski has come to understand—and can adeptly articulate—that "it is not merely that whiteness is oppressive and false; it is nothing but oppressive and false" (Roediger, 1994, p. 13).

These participants in this study extended what the burgeoning antiracist white teachers began to identify, but did not fully articulate: that whiteness is fundamentally destructive to whites. These antiracist white educators part from burgeoning antiracists in that they fully comprehend that whiteness will never benefit whites in ways that compensate for that which it takes from them: mental health, moral integrity, and spiritual well-being. We must remember, however, that in any serious racial project aimed at deconstructing racism, the focus on how racism harms whites is simultaneously necessary and problematic to address. These scholar-activists, in many ways, embodied the nuanced manner in which antiracist whites must first and foremost address how racism affects *people of color* and subsequently, how it affects themselves. It is a difficult and delicate balance to strike, as all oppression involves both the oppressed and the oppressor.

But how did you *get* here? Mapping the Journeys of White Antiracists

A key aim of this research was to examine the life experiences that help to explain how a group of staunchly antiracist white educators have come to espouse their beliefs. Thus, I posed the following research question: *What are the life experiences that inform antiracist white educators' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and their commitments to antiracism?* Time and time again, the participants in this study named duping, dissonance, or experiencing the violation of a moral, ethical, or spiritual ethos as germinal in their antiracist development. Many of them also cited deep, emotional devastation and personal, physical separation—based on race—as having painfully memorable, yet lasting influences on their lives. Interestingly, these white antiracist educators valued their close friendships and connections to racial and ethnic others with whom they seemed to enjoy equal status. Upon closer examination of their relationships, however, these white educators were often "patiently re-educated" by the "Americans of color" who actually taught them more about race than they ever would have discovered on their own. Hence, these white educators seem to have engaged in *subordinate status* relationships in which they were not and did not mind being the person with the least amount of racial and cultural knowledge. Finally, these antiracists also discussed being greatly influenced by white exemplars or gaining more self-efficacy about their ability to fight racism based on their own mastery experiences or those of others (see Bandura, 1997; Morris, 2010).

"I don't see why the serfs stood for it!": Duping, dissonance, and the violation of an ethos. Repeatedly and robustly, the participants in this sample cited numerous occasions of experiencing the "ridiculousness of racism" in ways that made no sense to them. In many cases, these white educators could sense that some circumstance, interaction, viewpoint, or utterance was "wrong," and would not have existed were it not for racism. Marilyn Cochran-Smith

offered a compelling account of the dissonance caused by racism in her high school. In what follows, she reflects on one of her most memorable and problematic encounters with the confusing, senseless effects of racism in what we might now call an "apartheid school" (Gollnick & Chinn, 2009; Kozol, 2005; Orfield & Lee, 2004).

> In my high school there was actually a majority of people of color, and a minority of white students, which is unusual. The school was tracked. The highest track has virtually no people of color, not surprisingly so at the time. As I recall it, we're all tracked, so I'm in the top classes. I don't see kids of color in my classes, but we were mixed in home room, in lunch, in gym.
>
> Here is this, essentially two different schools were even though the majority of the student body…is primarily African American, that the college preparatory classes are primarily white...
>
> So there was nobody helping us to unpack that. There was nobody helping us to problematize that. So it was very complex and I think I was upset by it. I think I was confused by it. I think I was very troubled by the unfairness of what was going on, but really didn't have any kind of a framework for really understanding.
>
> And it was very, very clear. How could it be that all the kids in the top group were white? How could that be? So there are only two possible explanations, right? White kids are just naturally smarter and they're always going to be in the top group, or there's something wrong with the system. And for me, it was pretty clear there was something wrong with the system, but I could not have articulated it, I don't think, at that time.

Here, Cochran-Smith illuminates several key points about the confusing and irreconcilable nature of her schooling experience. She notes that her school was technically majority Black, yet these students had somehow been excluded from the highest college preparatory tracks. This violated not only her fundamental sense of fairness, but also common sense with regard to numbers and how her courses should have looked had racism not prevented Black students from participating at the highest curricular levels. She also noted there was no one to help her "unpack" or "articulate" her incredulity at the lopsided nature of the tracking sequence. She knew there was a major problem in the distribution of students in the various tracks, but she was at a loss, at that time, for explaining the dissonance she felt.

Tim Wise has expressed, both in his interview and in his memoir, remarkably similar confusion about noticing how he was gradually separated from his Black friends as he progressed through school. He also described the lack of a vocabulary, or even just an explanation from adults who could have helped him navigate his sense of loss and the inexplicable feeling of tragedy at being newly distant from his friends based solely on race.

> It took a couple of months for it to sink in and then we started to realize that the people you actually hang out with…are not in the class that you're in. And you see them at homeroom, but then you don't see them later because you're in the advanced track even though you really aren't a good student and they're in the remedial track even though some of them are excellent students.
>
> [Y]ou don't know what it is. I didn't have a word for that. And I didn't have anybody to help me process that. I didn't even really process that at home. My parents were awfully progressive on race and probably could have helped me figure it out but I didn't even know how to approach them like, "What's going on?" I didn't even have a language for it until years later. But it was happening really early.

Mirroring the words and experiences of Cochran-Smith, some of Wise's first recollections of how racism violated his sense fairness manifested themselves in racist tracking practices. Even as a young student, he knew his friends of color were being treated unfairly in their educational sequences because Wise himself explicitly emphasizes his average, even sub par performance as a student. The absence of his Black friends in higher level classes made no sense to him, and he, like Cochran-Smith, lacked a vocabulary and framework to describe what he knew was both wrong and racist.

Peggy McIntosh told one of the most vivid, revealing stories about dissonance and the violation of many an ethos with her story about realizing the plight of serfs in an undergraduate course at Harvard. McIntosh had been schooled by Quakers whose inclusive curriculum spanned the globe. She was also raised by politically active, conscientious-objecting parents who protested the bombing of Japan and hosted two Japanese women whose faces had been

disfigured by those bombings. McIntosh noted these experiences as having some effect on her outrage at serfdom, and subsequently, about multiple forms of oppression.

> I was sitting in a first year course on feudalism. And there I discovered… the idea that vast tracts of land were owned by nobles or kings, and the land was worked by serfs. This was astonishing to me. So I crept away to the library to figure out what the feudal system was. And then I came back to class…and all of a sudden one day it just erupted from me. I interrupted and said, "I don't see why the serfs stood for it!" And we hadn't even mentioned the serfs.
>
> And so there was a horrible silence. So I thought that was the stupidest thing I said in college. And then years later, I began to say that was the smartest thing I ever said in college. I don't see why the serfs stood for it. Because it's a good question.

McIntosh spoke of her "dybbuk," or the Jewish term for "something brewing from your soul" over which you have no control. It was something that she at first regretted, but later used to catapult her thinking on systems of power that oppress people unfairly. Based on her background as the daughter of socially conscious parents and the product of a Quaker education that "multicultural in its teaching," McIntosh could not reconcile the injustice suffered by the serfs with what she knew to be true in her soul—that there is "that of God" in everyone, and even serfs deserved just treatment.

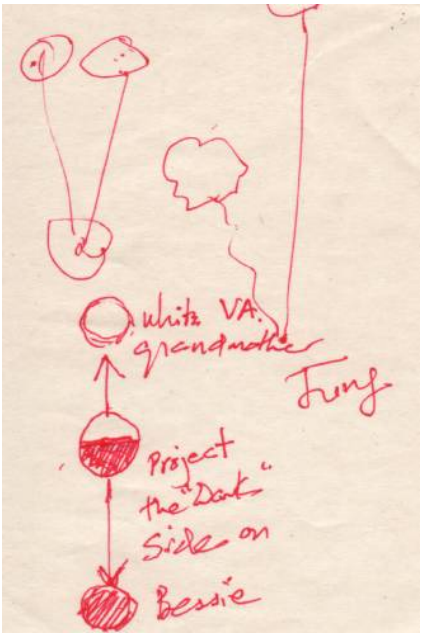
Unlike the teachers in the first sample, the antiracist educators in this study did not simply use Christianity or a particular religious bent to guide their moral compasses for how others should be treated. Rather, the participants cited a wide variety of tenets that often spoke to higher ethical codes such as justice, fairness, integrity, and equality, which dictated how people should have been regarded, but somehow were not. In several cases, the dissonance, the feeling of having been duped or lied to, and the violation of an ingrained set of ethical standards or an ethos prompted them to reconcile these disconcerting discrepancies by later pursuing antiracism.

Beyond injustice: White racial devastation and separation. Another salient finding was the discovery of racial devastation, and physical *and* emotional separation due to the arbitrariness of racism. In the first study, burgeoning antiracist teachers were able to recognize injustices in the lives of people they were close to. Here, however, the participants themselves experienced circumstances that directly limited, crippled, or harshly affected them. Peggy McIntosh offered a poignant story of separation as she described the severe emotional trauma she suffered a result of racism. She shares an intimate account of one of her earliest encounters with the emotional devastation and physical separation caused by racism when she was just six years-old.

> I was rushing out of my grandmother's house. My mother was waiting in the car outside. I realized I had forgotten to say goodbye to the people in the house. So I ran into the kitchen and I kissed Bessie goodbye. She was the Black cook. I kissed Bessie goodbye.
>
> And then I ran into the parlor where my grandmother was standing. And I kissed her. And she reared up and she shrieked at me, "I bet you kissed me with the same little ole lips as you kissed Bessie!"
>
> I was terrified. I had never heard her speak like this. I knew I had done something very wrong. I didn't know what it was. And I internalized the sense that that was bad. But I never touched Bessie again. That's the cost, see, of these systems. I never touched Bessie again.

McIntosh illustrated the emotional devastation and separation from the predictable "breaks" that whites often had to make with their Black "mammies," servants, or friends. (Wallace-Sanders, 2008). Below, she illustrates that she at first loved Bessie and her grandmother, but Bessie's image "wobbled down" like a deflated balloon after her grandmother's racist shriek. Her grandmother, whom she also loved and did not wish to disappoint, "shot up to a formidable height." She was forced to identify with "the apparent protector," which tore apart her heart as a child. McIntosh describes being broken in two,

divided within herself, and in “jeopardy” because the virulent reaction caused her to project “darkness” onto the beloved Black cook in ways that “sullied” her lips and separated them.



←McIntosh depicts her “white Virginia grandmother” and the Black cook, Bessie, first as equals. After the grandmother “shrieked” and repudiated McIntosh for kissing her “with the same little ole lips” with which she kissed Bessie, McIntosh felt compelled to identify with the white grandmother while Bessie “wobbled down” and became the “dark” servant who had “tainted” her white lips.

Figure 2. Peggy McIntosh’s Emotional Devastation and Separation.

Joe Feagin recounted an uncannily similar experience with emotional devastation and physical separation from his good friend and childhood playmate, Robert. He, too, even some 60 years after the experience, was palpably upset about the sad, abrupt, forced separation from his Black friend.

> When I went to my grandmother’s house in east Texas, there was a Black family. The woman in the family used to work for my grandmother and I used to play with some of her children, especially one little boy. He and I were about the same age. Around the time of puberty, I don’t know, 12 years-old or something like that, my grandmother abruptly stopped me from playing with him anymore. Up until that time we had been able to rough house and play.
>
> We could chase rabbits. We could shoot slingshots. We could climb trees. But then around puberty white adults in the South ended children playing together and I can still to this day remember looking through the screen at my grandmother’s house and talking to Robert about why we couldn’t play together anymore. It didn’t make any sense to either one of us.

There is nothing like hearing a well-seasoned scholar, researcher, and antiracist recount the story of his childhood with as much regret, wonderment, and frustration as he may have felt on the day his cross-racial child's play ceased. Such was the heartache one could sense in Feagin, who echoed McIntosh's sentiments about the "breaks" white adults would inevitably enforce on the close relationships of white and Black children.

Julie Landsman shared a similar experience where racism emotionally separated her from a Black caregiver named Jean as well as from her own father, who essentially taught her that she was racially superior and need not worry about the feelings of Blacks. Landsman retold the painful story of a time when she was quite young and sang a song that used the word "Nigger" in Jean's presence. In both her interview and in her books, *A White Teacher Talks about Race* (2001) and *Growing up White: A Veteran Teacher Reflects on Race* (2008), Landsman recalls the pain she felt about hurting Jean's feelings, and the utter disregard her father expressed:

> In Dallas a Black woman came to clean our house. I believe her name was Jean[5]. And so in Dallas…I learned from Jean about race. Hours later I learned from my father about separation.
>
> I was four. I recited the eeny-meeny-miney-moe rhyme with my sister. I used the word "nigger"—as in "catch a nigger by the toe." …and Jean took me and sat across from me…I was almost encased in Jean's thighs. "That hurts me, the nigger word, and I wish that you would not say it."
>
> I nodded vigorously, up and down, up and down, my eyes filling. I was not a child who hurt people and perhaps this is also why the moment stays with me, a crystallized memory I can still feel. Later, as I said goodnight to my father, I told him about the word, how I would not say it any longer because it hurt Jean. [H]e shrugged his shoulders, dismissed me with words like this: "Oh, she is such a sensitive woman, that Jean. Don't worry about it. Doesn't mean a thing. Forget it, sweetie. Colored people are like that sometime."
>
> I knew something was wrong. It hurt Jean too much for this word to have been okay and for him to be right. I kept my confusion about him secret, never speaking of it, uncertain what to do with it. (2008, pp. 17-21)

[5] Wallace-Sanders (2008) has written about how the names of Black caregivers, or "mammies" of white children are often only referred to as "Mammy" and not by their given names. Here, Landsman's recollection illustrates the difficulty with which unnamed "mammies" were spoken and thought of as people. Landsman may also have trouble remembering based on her young age, but seldom knowing the names of Black caregivers is common nonetheless.

Here, and in many other instances, the antiracist white educators recalled a discernable separation not just from their loved ones who were Black, but as in Landsman's case, from the overtly racist parents, family members, or adults who enforced such arbitrary frustrations. These white antiracists were ultimately able to use their unanswered questions as motivation to continue learning about racism and ways to combat it.

"A patient re-education": Subordinate status relationships. The participants in this study repeatedly credited "Americans of color" as having taught them a great deal about race. Whether through scholarship, an upbringing during the civil rights movement, or a close relationship, each of the participants in some way became the "student" of racial minorities who were willing to "patiently" educate or "re-educate" them according to their deficits in racial knowledge. Some of the participants specifically named "equal status relationships," or those in which both they and their friends of color enjoyed parity in some way, as formative in their development. This concept emanates from the work of Allport (1954), who cited equal status relationships as crucial in reducing white prejudice. In the case of these antiracist white educators, who have over the years been gently or aggressively brought along in their thinking by their peers of color, I would argue that they were in many ways participating in *subordinate* status relationships where their friends of color were educating them in ways that could not be reciprocated.

Christine Sleeter candidly recounts how her African American friends patiently re-educated her about racial matters. Whether it was soft admonishment when she committed racial flubs, or didn't understand housing discrimination as experienced by a Black man looking for an apartment, she credits her friends of color with a patient re-education about racial "cluelessness," which many whites often embody. In what follows, she offers a quite personal rendering of how

her African American friends have featured prominently in her development as one of the most respected "antiracist, multicultural teacher educators" of our time.

> I spent about six or seven years living in Seattle and during that time…my main friends got to be a Black/white group. And so the combination of African American friends patiently re-educating me started really shifting my consciousness and my understanding about how things work in the United States.
>
> Living in inner city Seattle realizing that I'm clueless when it comes to African American experiences. And realizing that there's a whole lot I don't know. Because people periodically, gently point that out. One example that I can remember of is when my African American boyfriend in Seattle was looking for a place to live. And it took him two months or so. And it took me like half a day. And somehow he sat me down and he started explaining how housing discrimination works.
>
> And I do remember thinking, "Oh. I thought that all got solved." And then him pointing out to me that it didn't all get solved. And so, that was one of those examples of becoming aware of my cluelessness.

Sleeter described the general racial "cluelessness" she was helped to discover when the friends she enjoyed, or the African American man she dated, patiently and gently aided her in seeing it. DiAngelo (2006) has pointed out that whites, by virtue of power, are frequently left to determine "whether racism has happened." She notes, however, that whites are *not* experts on race and are the *least* qualified to make judgments about race. In Sleeter's experiences, it is not the case that her friends or partners of color did not benefit from her presence in their lives. Rather, it is that her racial "cluelessness" rendered her more dependent on those people of color via the unidirectional education about racial matters, which only *they* could offer *her*. As a white woman, she could not reciprocate in equal ways.

Similarly, Tim Wise has cited his time as a community activist in one of the poorest public housing projects in New Orleans as contributing significantly to his understanding of racial dynamics. He noted that by being a white male, he needed to listen and learn from his fellow Black activists in order to even do his job effectively in a minority community. He also

noted that he learned a great deal from both very young and very old residents of one particular housing project, without whom he could not have thrived in that space:

> I went in there assuming, like a lot of organizers when they first go into that kind of job, they think they're going to offer skills and it's like a one-way thing. [W]ithin a very short period I realized I was…whatever I left of myself, I was going to take back so much more because the people in that community, even though their formal education was less than high school on average, they had an incredible amount of knowledge. And there were 14, 15, 16 year-old kids that could tell you things about race and class that, you didn't learn those things at a university. You just didn't. You learned about abstract stuff, but this was much more. I became a student as much as I was a teacher or educator or an organizer.

Both Julie Landsman and Joe Feagin echoed Wise's sentiments by crediting people of color with assisting them in unlearning racism and learning anew about racial inequities. Landsman credited a Black neighbor who had a Ph.D. and a Black teacher whom she had worked alongside for 40 years for teaching her a great deal about race. Feagin credits "equal status Black friends" in his Harvard doctoral program and specifically, listening to their stories as a primary source for much of his re-education after living and being schooled in the Deep South.

> In addition to having equal status black friends—we'd go over to their house and we ate together—if you had to pick something that most affected my development, it was listening to African Americans talk about their lives and their perspectives on life. They've taught me much about the society.

Given the imbalance in racial knowledge, there was somewhat of a downward, lopsided flow of information that streamed *from* the people of color *to* these white educators. Given that these antiracist scholars themselves credit their relationships with people of color as having formatively stretched, increased, and significantly augmented their thinking, I doubt that any of them would disagree that racially, they took slightly more than they gave.

"I wish somebody had taught me that": Exemplars and efficacy. While many participants in this sample cited early encounters with racism as being germinal in their

development as antiracists, it was also telling to unearth the seminal events that encouraged them to continue on. The participants seemed to gain momentum from successes, mastery experiences, and increases in their self-efficacy regarding their ability to positively effect change and influence people (Bandura, 1997; Morris, 2010). Jane Elliott offered one of the most powerful examples of how her initial success with antiracism continued to fuel her antiracist commitment. She tells the story of how her "reformed" racist father and an "unbroken circle" of possibility inspired her to become, and to remain antiracist.

> My father used to tell racist jokes. And here I had these four children I was trying to raise *not* to be racist, which was hard to do in Waterloo, Iowa. And I finally said to my dad, "Dad, if you're going to keep on telling, saying those things, I can't bring the kids home because I want them to respect you. And they can't respect somebody who says those things." And he said, "Don't worry about it. It won't happen again."
>
> He never said anything like that around me again. And when he saw the first film of me in my classroom…when it was over, [he had] tears in his eyes—and I hadn't seen my father cry since my little three year-old sister died.
>
> Until the day he saw that film. The first film that was made in my classroom. And when it was over, with tears in his eyes he said [Elliott cries as she speaks], "I wish somebody had taught me that when I was 9 years-old." Now, if the father you adored said that to you about something you had done, would you ever stop doing it? No.

Here, Jane Elliott describes the deep emotional satisfaction she gained from seeing her father benefit from her antiracist teachings, even at a markedly older age than her elementary school students. She went on to explain that "from that day on," after he viewed her video depicting the differential treatment of children based on eye color and the insidiousness of racism, he would say in response to others' racist statements, "You'll want to think about that before you say it. You'll want to think about that." In her pursuit of antiracism, Elliott had not only greatly influenced her students, she had also influenced her dad, whom she loved dearly. In her success with him, she found motivation to continue.

Both Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Paul Gorski found exemplars of successful antiracism in books, mentors, activist groups, and even in their fellow antiracist peers. Cochran-Smith discussed the influence of seeing activism in action:

> I also had the wonderful opportunity of working in Philadelphia with a group of teachers…who were—I used to refer to some of them as old socialists and social activists. [I] really worked with people, mostly women, mostly white activist women, some people of color, but who had really made a commitment as educators and activists to try to be part of something bigger that was changing the educational opportunities of kids in school, and that were trying to join with others to challenge the system.
>
> So here I was sort of being enlightened by all of the critical reading and working with this wonderful group of people. And to this day in this book that my colleague Susan Lytle and I just published last year, *Inquiry as Stance,* we talk about the dialectic of inquiry and practice.

Cochran-Smith first highlights seeing mostly white women joined together, working for educational and social justice. She twice uses the term "wonderful" to describe the opportunity to work with people who were actively fighting an unjust system. In this sense, she was able to gather inspiration from exemplars as committed, pro-social justice, mostly white people. The "critical readings" to which she referred also included "romantic critics" of education like Herbert Kohl, Jonathan Kozol, and George Dennison (all white men). She noted that these authors "wrote about the enormous inequities and the very limited life chances of many, many poor students and students of color. And all of that…built on what I had seen in my own high school and in my own experience."

Similarly, Paul Gorski cited being inspired by not just literary voices of color, but also by his fellow antiracist contemporaries. In his own words, he explained their indelible influence: "You know what was huge for me was reading the book *Borderlands* by Gloria Anzaldua. That book knocked me on my ass. Actually, the two books that were hugest for me was that and then reading *Multiculturalism as Social Activism* by Christine Sleeter." Gorski first cites *Borderlands*

as a provocative, poetry-infused piece of critical theory that forced him to "ask a whole new set of questions" regarding the intersectionality and transnationality of oppressions. He also notes, however, that Christine Sleeter's book, along with hers and Julie Landsman's professional guidance as fellow antiracists, continue to fuel his passion to grow in his activism.

Gorski also noted that unlearning racism and committing to antiracism became "addictive" in graduate school, where he signed up to be a teaching assistant for a diversity course *eight* times. Gorski discussed how learning about racism closed the gaps and reduced the dissonance left by constantly having to reconcile his father's racism with his long-term friendship with Aaron, a Black male with whom he had been friends since first grade. Gorski cited the "addicting nature" of increasingly understanding the oppressive forces at play to the point that he was drawn closer and closer to multicultural education and antiracism. He was especially inspired by his mentors, who were white and male and provided exemplars of white vulnerability, antiracist activism, and further reasons to pursue social justice.

> …one of my mentors told me once that the measure of activism is vulnerability. You're an activist to the extent that you make yourself vulnerable to a cause. Where there's no vulnerability, there's no activism.

Much like Elliott and Cochran-Smith, Gorski cited exemplars of antiracist activism in his mentors, as well in the work of his antiracist peers. These participants characterized the "snowball" nature of their antiracist development based on how their teaching and activism brought increased successes even amidst admonishment and critique. Whether they relied on their own previous triumphs as white antiracists or the exemplars and models of other white antiracists, these participants gained self-efficacy and a sense of freedom, legitimacy, and worth based on their antiracist discoveries. Their victories along the way were formative, positively reinforcing life experiences that fueled even deeper commitments to battling racial oppression.

These antiracist white educators continue to draw from those successes and mastery experiences in their antiracist work (Bandura, 1997). Like Elliott, the participants have witnessed "unbroken circles" of seeing, and then helping others to see, the perniciousness of race. In a self-affirming loop, they find strength in their own strength, and they draw inspiration from the strength of other white antiracists.

What do you want to do with whiteness, and what do you want white people to do? **Culturally Relevant Pedagogy for White People and White*ness***

In an effort to determine how best to prepare the mostly white teaching majority we currently have, even as we make fervent efforts to recruit and prepare teachers of color who better represent our racial diversity, I posed the following question: *How are antiracist white educators' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy manifested in their reported teaching practices and scholarship?* I specifically sought answers that would inform teacher education practices in hopes of inspiring more antiracist white educators like those studied here. As a teacher educator myself, I was looking for ways to critically prepare white teachers for a rapidly changing nation by making the curriculum more "relevant" to what white culture could become.

Leonardo (2009) has posited that we must remember "there is a difference between white people, white culture, and whiteness" (p. 186). He has also articulated, quite aptly, that in struggles for social justice: "The problem is not white people. The problem is white*ness*" (Leonardo, 2008). The responses of the participants echo both these sentiments in that these white antiracists would like to see the abolishment of white*ness*, which they conceptualize as a system of oppressive and false racial superiority. They wish to salvage white *people*, however, by giving them "somewhere to go" after they have realized the fraudulence associated with

having a hegemonic white identity that precludes them from striving for racial justice for others and themselves (McIntosh, 1985, 1989b, 2000). Finally, as educators, the participants here would like to see a reconceptualized white culture in which white people are just as outraged by the effects of racism as the people of color who daily experience them. According to Tim Wise (2006), "[T]he project is to pathologize whiteness, white privilege, and institutional white supremacy. It is to make white culture—the dominant cultural form on the planet today—the problem, the enemy, not only of folks of color, but of whites too" (para. 39).

Woven throughout the findings below, we see the pedagogical underpinnings and deliberate strategies of white antiracist educators who are using their own whiteness to undermine institutionalized white supremacy. These educators are quite intentional in serving as "white proxies" and "conscientious co-opters" by simultaneously invoking the power of whiteness to abolish the power of whiteness. Additionally, and of utmost concern to these antiracists, is the notion that racism costs white people their integrity, honesty, and full humanity. Without a severe reduction in, or the eventual obliteration of racism, whites will never be able to reach their potential as human beings who can successfully coexist alongside racial others—be they the current majority, or the future minority.

"You can say things I can't": White proxies and conscientious co-optation. The white antiracist educators in this study were quite clear about the problematic nature of whiteness and even the privilege they experienced in conversations about white privilege. They also, however, found ways to serve as "white proxies" and "conscientious co-opters" who could in some way use their whiteness to undermine it. Both Wise and Gorski, for instance, understood whiteness a system of structured advantage and coordinating racial oppression based solely on skin color. Both contended that were it not for the social significance of their lack of melanin,

the "whiteness" of their skin would not matter. They were also in favor of abolishing whiteness in the sense that they no longer wished to see the effects of white skin privilege on people of color and whites themselves.

Wise spoke candidly about his own novelty as a white antiracist in kick-starting his career as a widely sought after speaker and educator. To his credit, he is a former champion debater who is extremely articulate, impassioned, compelling, and even comical. He has no doubt enjoyed much success as a white antiracist based largely on his talent and the fact that he is impeccably skilled. But he is also highly aware of the "privilege within privilege" and the coordinating ability to co-opt his own whiteness in his work. From securing jobs with audiences who find antiracist teachings from a white male novel and more palatable, and from what Gorski would call his "institutional likeability" and the cache his whiteness confers, Wise is very aware, of how white privilege itself strategically works in his favor:

> The speech I gave last year…that was more militant. And of course, *I* can do that. Because I'm a white guy. And I can get away with it. And I take full advantage of that, knowing of course it's privilege, and always pointing out to the audience in the aftermath, either in the talk itself or in the Q&A.
>
> Look, I really want you to really think about how you *felt* this speech versus how you would have, had the same talk been given maybe even three steps down on the militancy scale by a person of color, by a woman of any color, or by a woman of color especially. What would your reaction have been? And usually when you put it out there for people, which I do all the time, you can see their reaction. They know in that moment. That they took it in a way they wouldn't have taken it, and then that becomes a learning experience for them too.
>
> That becomes a teachable moment like, "[W]hat's going to happen the next time you hear this message from a person of color, because you *will* hear it, and what are you going to do?" In some cases, it opens them up to hearing it.

Wise is keenly aware of the "privilege within privilege" he enjoys as a well-paid antiracist speaker who is often deemed more desirable based largely on his whiteness. He is so aware, in fact, that he makes a point of acknowledging his ability to co-opt privilege with the very audiences who receive antiracist messages far more easily from him than they would from,

as he said, “a person of color, a woman of *any* color, or a woman of color especially.” Wise firmly grasps the power of whiteness even in his own antiracist work and uses it as part of his teaching. Wise is intentional about using even his layered privilege as a teachable moment with his largely white audiences, who often claim unawareness of *any* level of white privilege.

Gorski shares Wise’s sentiment about the inherent meaninglessness of whiteness as a farce, save for its very real effects on those who do not “own” white skin (Harris, 1995). Gorski notes that, “whiteness in and of itself is meaningless. I think the only way for whiteness—to use whiteness to struggle for social justice is that whiteness has to work on eliminating itself.” Gorski is therefore also willing to “use” whiteness to undermine it, but he also cautions against misusing the “institutional likeability” and “privilege within privilege” that comes with being a white male antiracist working to expose the vulnerability of other whites, who based on their socialization, do not always know where to go once whiteness is exposed.

McIntosh is more than willing to use whiteness to eliminate whiteness. In her piece, “White Privilege: An Account to Spend” (2009), she literally conceptualizes white privilege as a bank account that she didn’t ask for, but one she can choose to spend in order to eliminate white privilege-based oppression. In her own written words, her mantra as a white woman is: “Privilege gives me power that I can use for social change” (p. 2). In her interview, she described the piece thusly: “It talks about the way I can use the power that I have from white privilege to weaken the system of white privilege.” Additionally, in a reciprocal interview in which McIntosh sought information about how multicultural educators like myself use her literature in our work, we discussed her role as a stand-in “white proxy” of sorts who can say things I can’t as a multiracial woman. We discussed the role of her pieces in “lending me her voice” and doing the same for multiple others who are engaged in antiracist, anti-oppressive

work. She also noted that, as a multiracial woman of color, I carry with me "the textbook of my life," which is rich and meaningful, but not always a welcome voice. In those instances, she is happy to use her own voice of privilege to write about privilege or even "radical" racial redress of grievances such as reparations "with impunity."

Finally, Julie Landsman is quite aware of her ability to give people of color "a day off" or to relieve them from "being the only one" in her work with teachers and mostly white educators. She noted that her whiteness allows her to at least temporarily take, or share some of the pressure of being the "go to" person whenever there is a racial incident in school, a cultural program to be organized, or a disciplinary situation in which a minority student needs to be "dealt with," for instance. Landsman is both aware and comfortable, even happy to serve as a "white proxy" in her teaching if it means offering brief respite for the people of color who occupy that space and are ordinarily bombarded with all matters pertaining to ethnicity and culture.

> There's a certain group that's very hostile from the beginning. They're in…denial or minimizing. And then there's [sic] some that are going, "Whew! Finally! Somebody's saying this!" Often they are people of color who happen to be there, too. And they say, "You go tell 'em, 'cause I'm tired," you know?

Regardless of the semantics they use—co-opt, abolish, break, day-off—each of these antiracist educators in some way recognizes their role as a "white proxy" for the many people of color who yearn to say to their white peers the same things they do, but can't, knowing full well they will not be received with as much serious consideration, credibility, or credence. It is, then, often the explicit acknowledgement and teaching strategy for these antiracists to use their very whiteness to reduce or eradicate the power of whiteness as a false and oppressive force.

"And all it costs is your integrity and humanity": Antiracism as humanization. The one thing that antiracist white educators overwhelmingly refer to in their rationales for engaging in this work, is the honesty, moral integrity, freedom, and restoration of full humanity it brings. I

and many of the scholars studies there seem to be considering "humanity" in a Freirian sense (1970/2006). Although humans are always "unfinished," even until their last breath, humanity in the Freirian sense means being made fully human by having regard for fellow men and women, not participating in the dehumanization or oppression of others, for "[n]o one can be authentically human while [s]he prevents others from being so" (p. 85). Hence, because full humanization does not occur in isolation, but "in fellowship and solidarity," no one is ever fully human unless her sister in the struggle is also fully human. It is this shared fate that should motivate each one of us to pursue full humanity.

When asked why she engaged in antiracist work, or why whites would ever want to overturn a system that fundamentally benefits them, Marilyn Cochran-Smith said it best.

> I think there is a way in which it has to do with humanity and understanding teaching and teacher education as a humanizing activity. I think there's a genuine sense of this idea of humanity. There's a genuine sense of, why would we assume that white people should have unearned advantages and privileges? Why? Why should they?
>
> I don't think I knew this at the beginning, but I think there's also a great deal that all of us can learn from each other. So if we live in a much more equitable society, everybody has a richer experience.

Jane Elliott extended her commitment to antiracism by imagining herself with multiple, alternate identities. She expressed that she would do this work regardless of her identities because she would ultimately still belong to the human race.

> If I were a lesbian, I would work at this job. If I were Jewish, I would work at this job as a Jewish member of the human race. That's the only race I'm a member of. And that's the only race anybody else is a member of. And if you're going to be truly, fully human, you *have* to, and if you're going to be a citizen of the USA, you have *have* to guarantee people equitable treatment under the law.

In her own words, Elliott acknowledges the common humanity of all people regardless of identity. She sees her antiracist work as all people's "vocation" to become more fully human.

The common connectivity of people, which cuts across race, ethnicity, and sexual identify, for instance, is what unifies humanity and motivates her antiracism.

Finally, in a mini-tome, Wise describes his desire to foment antiracism and become more fully human as the ultimate "vocation" (Freire, 2006/1970), which no other species can achieve. His words about his purpose in engaging in antiracist activism offer a glimmer of the seriousness, yet light-hearted optimism that shines forth in his reflection.

> The ultimate purpose is to leave the world a little bit better for my children than it was left for me. Also it really is to become human. And I'm using that in terms that James Baldwin used it…[O]ne of the things he said was, the process of our life is about becoming human. You're not really fully human just because we're members of the species called homo sapiens. That human is more of a spiritual or metaphysical concept and so to become human is to do those things every day in the course of your life…that allow you to become fully what you're meant to be.
>
> [W]e are the only species I know of that has ever organized collectively for liberation. That's special. And if that's the thing that literally separates us from all the other species, then who are we *not* to do that? Who are we not to do the one thing that actually makes us different in a positive way? It seems to me that to not do that one thing is to really waste your time. So I'm just trying to figure out what it means to be human and achieve that to the greatest extent possible.

Like Wise, each of the participants in this study viewed their own journeys toward antiracism as freeing and emancipatory despite the doubts, critiques, or growing pains along the way. It is now, as antiracist white educators and scholar-activists, that they wish to see other whites join them in collectively organizing for social justice and becoming more fully human. These antiracists see their work as nothing short of personal liberation. They do not consider their teaching, consulting, writing, or everyday living to be in any way reconcilable with the dishonesty and hypocrisy that racism and white dominance confers. Be it in teacher education programs, diversity trainings, public venues, or in the pages of their own scholarly works, these white antiracists embody the promising possibilities of what can happen when white people

change (hooks, 2003). And although they are themselves human, admittedly unfinished, flawed, and ever growing in their own understandings of race, whiteness, and antiracist pedagogy, they present much hope for what we might accomplish as a unified people.

Globalizing the Discourse: The "New" Antiracism(s) and the Next Frontier

Although these antiracist whites understood race, whiteness, and antiracist pedagogy in far more nuanced ways than burgeoning antiracists, the next phase of their antiracist journeys might consist of conceptualizing antiracism in more global terms, with direct consideration of intersectionality, transnationalism, and multiple antiracisms[6]. Whereas these scholars demonstrated a firm handle on racism and oppression that often emphasized a Black-white binary or generally domestic struggles, aspects of their antiracism that were not as plainly explicit were their antiracist commitments to multiple marginalized groups worldwide. Hence, the next frontier in an antiracist project would be to think more comprehensively and to make our antiracist efforts more critically conscious of and responsive to the needs of dominated groups beyond the U. S. To some degree, the antiracist undertakings of many of these scholar-activists were deep, sophisticated, and critical, but perhaps in some ways, bordered. To fully realize a global antiracist project, we must expand our lens to include a more "neo-abolitionist global pedagogy" where whiteness is directly linked to highly interconnected global processes (Leonardo, 2009, p. 169).

Notable exceptions included Christine Sleeter's work with white South Africans mediating the legacy of apartheid, and discussions with Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Julie Landsman about racism against various ethnic groups in the U. S. Cochran-Smith expressed her concern for the racist linguicism currently codified in Massachusetts schools via policies aimed

[6] I am grateful to Dr. Kimberly Wallace-Sanders for introducing the notion of "multiple antiracisms." Her admonishment to deconstruct antiracism according to one's commitment to one, some, or all racially marginalized groups has complicated my thinking and forwarded new paradigms for defining antiracism in nuanced terms.

at forcing English language learners to quickly assimilate. Landsman also described the new racism and emerging xenophobia experienced by transnational students in Minnesota, including Somalis, Eygptians, and Muslims writ large. Paul Gorski, however, has expanded his view of racism to include deep intersections with other axes of oppression, which are ultimately linked to multiple forms of economic exploitation. Gorksi conceptualizes racism as but one layer of a *global* struggle for justice. He explains this intersectional, highly interrelated, global "onion" of oppression by describing his own process of peeling back its layers:

> And to me, my own consciousness has been a progression of realizing every time I think I have a grasp at what this thing racism is, taking one step back and seeing bigger connections. I mean, like, "Oh shit, this is way bigger than I thought." So…seeing it just about as human relations kind of stuff, and then taking a step back and saying, "Oh, this is part of a legacy of imperialist economization," and then stepping back and saying, "Ah, shit, this is global. This isn't just the U. S." And racism within the U. S. helps to socialize us to comply with things like unjust imperialist intervention all over the world, right? And then, taking a step back and saying, "Oh, shit, this is connected to capitalism," so it's even bigger than *that*. And it just gets bigger and bigger and bigger and just a constant process of deepening my consciousness, and I think that's the first step.

Gorski undertands racism not just as a domestic pariah, but a global threat to overlapping and interrelated struggles for human, and environmental justice. Leonardo (2009) might term Gorski's assessment of global manifestations of white racial dominance as integral to his own vision for a "neo-abolitionist global pedagogy." Such a pedagogy and perspective "suggests that teachers and students work together to name, reflect on, and dismantle discourses of whiteness" on multiple levels and with serious regard for the rapid, highly interconnected globalization processes to which Gorski referred (p. 169). Leonardo's (2009) concept helps to articulate Gorski's view of racism in terms that situate this participant's conceptualizations in much broader terms. Gorski believes that racism is highly intersectional, concentric, and global. In this way, his perspective affirms that of transnational feminist scholars who have heretofore

argued the same (Mohanty, 2003; Ng et al., 1995). Gorski also helps to illuminate the important notion that, if left in more rudimentary terms, the ways in which we currently conceptualize race and whiteness will only ever scratch the surface of how deeply and destructively racism truly functions.

In the tradition of expanding the definitions of antiracism since the emergence of whiteness studies in the 1990s (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997), several feminist scholars—particularly feminist scholars *of color*—have provided additional denotations for antiracist feminism, antiracist pedagogy, and possibilities for multiple, feminist transnational *antiracisms.* These paradigms not only help to parse the global antiracist discourse to which Gorski referred, but also help to inform the next phase of a united global antiracist project (Harris, 2008; McWhorter, 2005). Collins (2006), for example, has named the "new racism," to be market-driven, highly nationalistic, colorblind-rhetoric-touting "phenomenon of laissez-faire exclusion" (see also Williams, 1995; Bonilla-Silva, 2003). Collins' (2006) notion of a Black feminist antiracism would invoke "Black nationalism's tenets of seeking group-based remedies for racial inequality and promoting group-based social action" (p. 19). These anti-individualist ideals, which are currently upheld by white mainstream ideology, would be traded for *collective* struggles against racial dominance that more readily fit the ethos, experiences, and struggles of people of color.

Likewise, Ng, Staton, and Scane (1995) have written with disillusionment about the "watering down" of Canadian multiculturalism and its lack of emphasis on dismantling *systems* of racial and ethnic prejudice. The simmering down of multicultural education into a mere tour of racial and ethnic diversity mirrors the increasingly conservative multicultural movements in Britain and elsewhere (Gillborn, 2008, 2006, 1995). Ng et al. (1995) define a more

contemporary antiracist pedagogy as one that considers the explicit role of racism in feminist, critical approaches to Canadian education as well as in global struggles for social justice in education. Rezai-Rashti (1995) also put forth that social class and gender must be considered in antiracist struggles if antiracist education is to eliminate the maintenance of white dominance in Canadian society and international societies writ large. For her, struggles for racial equity are inextricably linked to gender equity and the global, systemic oppression of women, who constitute the world's majority. Finally, Mohanty (2003) has defined feminist, antiracist practice in transnational and global contexts as an activist movement that requires us "to understand our collective differences in terms of historical agency and responsibility so that we can understand others and build solidarities across divisive boundaries (p. 191). For Mohanty, antiracist struggles are simultaneously inward and outward, national and international, local and global. The notion of "borderless" struggles for equity of all kinds—particularly for racial justice—must occur in concert, and in transnational solidarity.

Weedon (1987) would likely situate each of these feminist extensions of antiracism within a larger social project of collective struggle against global white dominance. This scholar might subsume these expanded definitions of antiracism under a feminist post-structuralist framework that "addresses subjectivity, discourse, and power in an attempt to show that we need not take established meanings, values, and power relations for granted" (p. 174). Guided by this lens, transnational feminist antiracism and feminist antiracist pedagogies "pick up" where US multicultural education leaves off. As Sleeter and Bernal (2004) have argued, it is too often a place where educators and schools are "adding in contributions, advocating 'let's all get along,' or promoting individual upward mobility within hierarchical structures rather than critiquing the structures themselves" (p. 250; see also Buras & Motter, 2006 for a discussion of subaltern

cosmopolitan multiculturalism). Hence, using feminist perspectives on antiracist struggles and the intersectionalities they can and must confront, we might better address the demise of racial, gender-based, nationalist, and other strands of domination in education within and beyond the United States.

"The new antiracism"—characterized by a fierce and willful ignorance regarding the role of race in national and global struggles for justice—entails dismantling white dominance worldwide (Bonilla-Silva, 2003). According to these scholars, it is first necessary to expand and "globalize" the discourse on whiteness itself (Leonardo, 2003) in order to arrive at the "multiple antiracisms," antiracist pedagogies, antiracist educators, and antiracist educational reforms we need.

The Making of *More* Antiracists: An Anti-Hegemonic Agenda for Whiteness

A key consideration for teacher educators at this point in history is to simultaneously build a national teaching force that better represents the increasing diversity in this country as well as to attend the specific needs of the overwhelming number of white teachers at the helm of education. To these ends, a few components of an anti-hegemonic attempt to critically address whiteness in teacher education will be briefly discussed. The next chapter will elaborate on key pedagogic strategies.

Chapter 4

Being White is like Getting an A on a Paper You Didn't Write: Toward a Pedagogy for the oppressor in Teacher Education

Learning about the antiracist journeys of classroom teachers and scholar-activists has served as an incredible opportunity to inspire other white educators to follow in their footsteps. As a professor of education, I constantly face challenges associated with dismantling white racism, the invisibility of whiteness, and the retrogressive ideologies that often dominate the psyches of mostly white teacher candidates. Thus, my own perspective as a teacher educator leads me to a pedagogical model that directly transforms what we can glean from studying antiracist whites into workable strategies for leading other whites down similar paths of racial and social consciousness. Based on my research with these white classroom teachers and well-known antiracist educators, I offer a "pedagogy for the oppressor," which directly addresses the racial conceptualizations of whites in a white-dominated education system. This work pays direct homage to Paulo Freire, who put forth a "pedagogogy of the oppressed" (2006/1970). For Freire, "this pedagogy makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation" (p. 30). Whereas he sought to forge a pedagogy with those who were disfranchised in systems of power, I shift focus those who are currently more *empowered.* Racially speaking, I aim to implicate whites.

In a "pedagogy for the oppressor," whiteness is critically centered so as to make teacher education more culturally relevant itself for the majority white teaching force we are currently charged with preparing. Anti-hegemonic whiteness is emphasized over traditionally hegemonic forms so as to avoid the forewarned danger of upstaging the lives and experiences of people of

color in favor of reincarnated, self-referencing white domination (Sheets, 2000). Hopefully, by concentrating on anti-hegemonic whiteness in teacher education in a critical way, we can produce more white teachers who are farther down paths to antiracism than the teachers studied in the first portion of this study, and more like the antiracist white scholar-activists who offer so much hope in the end.

Whiteness in the Classroom: An Uphill Battle

My multicultural courses are primarily filled with white teachers who almost always expect me to lecture about the racial oppression and disenfranchisement of minorities. Much to their surprise, I instead focus our attention on the oppressors, or those who are *enfranchised* by systemic racial inequality. That is, I focus on whites. We discuss power, privilege, white supremacy, and the endemic racial hierarchy that largely dictates how affairs are conducted in schools and society. I present a discourse that challenges common views of colorblindness, meritocracy, and the deeply held myth that anyone, regardless of race, has equal opportunity to thrive as whites do, if only they would (or could) just assimilate (Omi & Winant, 1994; Sleeter, 2004). I encourage my white students to examine how they have come to reside in their neighborhoods as others have been kept out, how they have succeeded in schools as mass numbers of non-whites fail, and how they have lived life often oblivious to the psychological and material benefits they enjoy from having been born white as many non-whites who surround them are ever-aware. In other words, I compel my white students to name that which largely lurks in silence, yet resounds loudly for those who do not possess it. I compel them to name their whiteness.

Much like other teacher educators, I encounter the "tenacious resistance" of whites who take my multicultural education courses but ultimately dispute the message (Sleeter, 2004, p.

164). I recently taught a course in which I shared a bit about my educational background. Before I finished speaking, a white male interrupted with, "Do you think the fact that you're not white had anything to do with your getting into that school?" In a different course, but in a similar tone, another white male retorted, "I can see how there are obstacles Black people face that I don't, but I just don't believe that white people have it easier than anyone else." The comment most recently offered was, "You seem to be saying that white people think they are better and deserve more than others. Who told white people they were superior? No one told me, so I just don't feel it." In each of these instances I groped for instant, delicate words in response. Given my passion for ending the racial oppression that many of these students simply couldn't grasp, many times, they escaped me.

What I have gathered from such statements, heard time and time again, is that no matter how delicately or bluntly I craft my explanations, white students have difficulty comprehending, seriously considering, and accepting what I teach about racism. It seems nearly impossible for them to recognize their whiteness, and they often cannot fathom the power and privilege it confers.

In my constant frustration I have turned to alternate ways of explaining, I have struggled to find more convincing terms, and I have scoured my files for more "indisputable" anecdotes and statistics that illustrate my points about whiteness. Why, I ask, is this so difficult to teach? What are the peculiarities of whiteness that render it far less palatable than the usual, "oppression-of-Other" classroom fare? In my most recent moment of desperation, and lacking answers to these, I stood straightly, looked at my class (filled with Whites), and offered the following:

> Being white is like getting an A on a paper you didn't write. You submitted it all right, but that required less effort on your part. Rather, a group of expert ghost

> writers labored long and hard to produce it for you. And while they were at it, they created the very rules and conditions under which it would never be difficult for you to write a paper again. When the paper was handed back, you were initially ecstatic because yours was the ultimate mark of achievement – evidence that you are indeed the best. But then you remembered that you didn't write it. That earning the highest mark had almost nothing to do with you. You remembered that your A is what set the grading curve for all others, and now everyone in the class has been disenfranchised by an impossible standard. You feel like a fake because you cannot possibly attribute the A to your own hard work…even though you fiercely try. At once you feel fraudulent, false, and oppressive. This is what whiteness is. This is what it means to be white.

At the end of that particular session, a ponderous silence befell us all. Hands did not immediately rise in protest as usual, and I did not have to instantly deflect, "But what about…" comments from an unconvinced crowd. No-one said anything, and we hung on those words for more time than we had. I, for once, felt strangely triumphant. At last I had found a metaphor that began to express what I so desperately needed each of my students to grasp. Words were finally of service to me as I battled through another explanation of whiteness to mostly white people. Briefly, I reveled in the small but sure victory.

I left my classroom that evening with a slight smile and a soft assuredness that there might be hope for my whiteness teachings after all. Before I reached my vehicle, one of my students stopped me and kindly offered, "I am really enjoying the class so far. I told my friend about it today, and I didn't even mention that you were Black. In fact, I don't even think of you as Black!" Exhausted, I thanked her for the comment, got into my vehicle, and started home. The ride ahead was long, as is my work with white teachers.

Why Whiteness? An Introduction

In keeping with national statistics that indicate the steady whitening of the teaching force with the simultaneous "browning" of the U. S. student population, my courses have always, and continue to consist of 90% or more white teachers (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). This

"overwhelming presence of whiteness" (Sleeter, 2001) in teacher education and the nation's teaching force, when compared to an increasingly diverse student body, has significant and far-reaching implications for education (Irvine, 2003). The battle for cultural recognition and educational justice for *all* students has long been waged, and if a vastly white teaching force is not adequately prepared to hold high expectations for all children and to value their array of cultures, it is not likely to be won (Fraser, 1997). Education has become a hotly contested terrain on which both neoconservatives and neoliberals advocate for school reforms that systematically benefit those who are disproportionately White and wealthy. Neoconservatives call for the restoration of a unifying, "common culture" in supposedly fragmented post-9/11 times. So-called "ethnic loyalists" are no longer contented by the stripping away and discounting of their cultures for a common Americanness, which has long eluded those who are not and cannot be white (Buras, 2008; Hirsch, 1992; Schlesinger, 1998; Sleeter, 2004). At the same time, neoliberal open-market advocates rally for school vouchers, standardized curricula, and the privatization of education such that only those who can pay, succeed (Apple, 1996, 2000; Apple & Pedroni, 2005). In both these movements the power, privilege, and material interests of whites are emboldened. Their hushed hegemony goes largely unspoken, and attempting to unearth and dislocate white supremacy in education and in teacher education has become an even more daunting task.

The consequences of following a trajectory toward continued or even increased white dominance in education and society are grave. This trend can, however, be slowed and eventually eradicated if addressed in teacher education and in other spheres such as the legal system, the political arena, school funding, social policy, and the media. Teachers play key roles as gatekeepers, cultural brokers, and possible warriors in the fight for education that is

multicultural, equitable, and just (Darder, 1991; Grant & Sleeter, 1998; Irvine, 2003). The dismantling of whiteness, the institution of critical teacher education, and the implementation of a "pedagogy for the oppressor" are integral tools for disarming racism. A pedagogy for the oppressor will also render teacher education more culturally relevant for the mostly white, middle class, and monolingual population it currently serves (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). Also significant is the overwhelming representation of women in teaching, which has implications for "a politics directed at changing existing power relations between women and men in society," otherwise known as feminism (Weedon, 1987, p. 1). Thus, as we consider the sphere of education, long considered "women's work," we must give credence to notions put forth by feminist scholars who have argued that unless women—white women—acknowledge privilege and their role as racial "oppressors," it neither bodes well for progress in education nor for larger social movements aimed at progress for *women*. Writing as a white feminist in education, Russo (1991) notes that this "does not mean, however that we are incapable of action and change, or that we are always…oppressors" (p. 309). Unless racism and hegemonic whiteness are challenged in education, teacher education, and many other spheres, we all—female and male, people of color and white—stand to lose a great deal.

Race and the Rightness of Whiteness: At the Eye of the Storm

While scholars such as Scatamburlo-D'Annibale and McLaren (2005) disagree that race is a vitally important cause of much oppression in society, critical race theorists such as Bell (1995), Ladson-Billings and Tate (2006), Dixson and Rousseau (2006), and Harris (1995) argue that race is not only important, but *central* to a great deal of human injustice. As a founder of critical race theory, Bell (1995) has put forth that race is permanent and endemic to American society, to the point that "racial equality is not a realistic goal" (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006, p.

47). While I do not espouse the latter sentiment that racial equality is perhaps an unattainable social goal, I do agree that race is deeply embedded, historically rooted, and currently active in the racial oppression of those who are not white. I also concur with Leonardo (2004) that in racial discourse, whiteness stands firmly atop all other racial categories and that "[a]spects of white culture assume superiority over others" on a daily basis, and in powerful ways (p. 119). In everyday society, not only is racism always at play to the detriment of people of color, but whiteness and white culture operate in full force for the benefit of whites.

Critical race theorists who illuminate racism and whiteness as both causes and perpetuators of oppression have turned to education as an important terrain on which resistance to white supremacy can be levied. Education and teacher education, for their impact on both legions of white educators *and* their subsequent P-12 students, can serve as especially instrumental sites for disrupting long-standing traditions of racism and legally endorsed white privilege.

The Relevance of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in P-12 Education

As the first scholars to introduce critical race theory to the field of education, Ladson-Billings and Tate (2006) forward the notion that education, when viewed through a critical race theory lens, is a powerful site of resistance to the status quo. Both scholars have advanced culturally relevant pedagogy as a vital method for "empower[ing] students to critique society and seek changes based on their reflective analysis" (Tate, 1995, p. 169), as well as upturning whiteness in schools and society (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2006, p. 22). Ladson-Billings' (1994) own work on culturally relevant pedagogy illustrates her commitment to educating P-12 children to disrupt racism and social injustice. She advocates for the production of teachers who realize students' need for access to "the culture of power" by way of basic skills and academic

excellence, while using students' own cultures as channels for learning (Delpit, 1995). She also emphasizes the nurturance of students' relevant cultural personalities, allowing them to function both at home and at school while simultaneously drawing upon their unique cultural histories, backgrounds, and assets. Most importantly, Ladson-Billings (1995) names the classroom as an ideal environment for the fomentation of all students' critical consciousness, which "allows them to critique the cultural norms, values, mores, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities" (p. 162).

Drawing on the work of Paulo Freire (1970/2006) and his monumental piece, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Ladson-Billings (1995) ultimately emphasizes what he termed "conscientization," or "a process that invites learners to engage the world and others critically" (Freire, 1970/2006; McLaren in Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 162). To fully implement a culturally relevant pedagogy, therefore, teachers within Ladson-Billings' (1995) framework must model the conscious-raising, status quo-challenging techniques of Freirian teachers of the oppressed. For both Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995) and Freire (1970/2006), teachers who are truly dedicated to educating students to rename and change the world must first recognize that "[t]here is no such thing as a neutral education process," and that teachers play key roles in determining whether the status quo will be upheld or overturned based on that which transpires in their classrooms (Shaull, 2006, p. 34). Both would firmly agree that in order to disrupt hegemony and to fight the dominant powers that be, legions of teachers who are critically conscious and well-prepared to produce *students* who are empowered to challenge the status quo, are sorely needed. Thus, because so much of the nation's teaching force is comprised of white teachers, instituting critical teacher education and a "pedagogy for the oppressor" would begin to remedy many of the social ills and forms of oppression we face.

Toward a Pedagogy for the oppressor

Just as Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995) insightfully named P-12 classrooms as powerful sites of resistance to a current status quo dominated by whites, other scholars have also focused on teacher education as fertile ground for growing such resistors (Delpit, 1995; Sleeter & Grant, 2007). By employing critical teacher education that incorporates a pedagogy for the oppressor of sorts, schools can become launching grounds for teachers *and* P-12 students who refuse to be content with the highly racialized, horribly inequitable, and heavily undemocratic state of affairs. By flatly refusing to participate in schools as the embodiment of the "correspondence principle," which perpetuates the social stratification of society by sifting students and producing various levels of laborers for a capitalist market, teachers can then make choices for multiculturalism, student equity, and social justice in schools and society (Au, 2006). A pedagogy for the oppressor could produce such teachers.

To fully appreciate a pedagogy aimed at racial "oppressors"—that is, primarily white students in teacher education programs—we must first understand a pedagogy of the oppressed, as originally conceived by Paulo Freire (2006/1970). I have termed my approach to critical teacher education, which currently serves a problematic white majority, "a pedagogy for the oppressor" to consciously emphasize whites' status as "oppressors" to pay due attention to the hegemony of whiteness—*particularly* in the sphere of education. Here I present key elements of Freire's original pedagogical vision based on his activism with impoverished, marginalized peoples in Brazil and regions throughout Latin America. I also discuss correspondences between a traditional pedagogy of the oppressed and my assertion of a contemporary pedagogy for the oppressor, borne of my own experiences with mostly white teachers.

Like Freire, I am particularly taken with education, teaching, teacher education, and critical white studies as projects of humanization. In a chapter entitled "Teaching is a Human Act" (1998), Freire explains his understanding of education as a particularly powerful site of oppression and opportunity:

> …education, as a specifically human experience, is a form of intervention in the world. In addition to contents either well or badly taught, this type of intervention also applies both to the reproduction of the dominant ideology and its unmasking. The dialectical nature of the educational process does not allow it to be only one or the other of these things. (pp. 90-91)

First, the concept of humanization features prominently in both Freire's pedagogical vision and mine. He defines humanization as the "ontological vocation" of human beings whereby we use our consciousness and reflective capacity for self-determination and world transformation. For Freire, humanization is the lifelong, ever unfinished process of moving from less powerful "objects" to active "subjects" of the world. Determining our courses of action in life, proposing for ourselves what our personal and professional destinies shall be, owning our labor, and even owning our thoughts by being "masters of our own thinking" each define Freire's ideal human existence (2006/1970, p. 124). He juxtaposes liberation with oppression to show that humanization consists of the former, whereas dehumanization is characterized by the latter. Only humans can engage in praxis, or "the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it" (p. 79). What separates humans from our animalian counterparts, then, is our singular ability to name ourselves as actors in the world, and to reconstruct those worlds for alternate, more just ways of living.

Freire is especially aware that education serves the crucial function of directly intervening in the world. Schooling plays a monumental role in conscientizing students to resist multiple forms of bigotry and to reconstruct the social order. This process of coming to critical

consciousness, or conscientization, unfolds when students learn to read not only the word, but the world (2006/1970). That is, as students become literate, more knowledgeable, and better versed in how dehumanization occurs along numerous axes of oppression, they are better able to reconfigure their lives, cultures, and societies. In his own words, Freire explains:

> Humans…because they are aware of themselves and thus of the world—because they are *conscious beings*—exist in a dialectical relationship between the determination of limits and their own freedom. [A]s they locate the seat of their decisions in themselves and in their relations with the world and others, people overcome situations which limit them. (p. 99)

Freire is an adamant proponent of the liberatory function of education, which should and must increase students' critical consciousness. Education is critical—as in, both necessary and deliberately mindful of existing inequities—in that it should awaken and elevate students' understanding of the ways in which they could be disempowered *and* empowered in the current social order. In this way, education itself becomes a powerful, deeply influential tool for uncovering and dismantling systems of power that both limit and enable its human subjects.

In Freirian terms, education is especially useful in strategically countering the multiple weapons of oppressors. Oppressors follow highly developed "theories of action" that attempt to limit the knowledge, consciousness, and freedom of the oppressed (Freire, 2006/1970). Two such weapons of oppression, which are most relevant to a pedagogy of white oppressors in education, are conquest and cultural invasion. In the oppression of others, conquest is:

> accomplished by the oppressors' depositing myths indispensable to the preservation of the status quo: for example, the myth that the oppressive order is a "free society;" …the myth that anyone who is industrious can become an entrepreneur—worse yet, the myth that the street vendor is as much an entrepreneur as the owner of a large factory;...the myth of the industriousness of the oppressors and the laziness and dishonesty of the oppressed, as well as the myth of the natural inferiority of the latter and the superiority of the former. (pp. 139-140)

Conquest is not only physical, in the form of genocide and unlawful seizing of the land and property of the oppressed, but also psychological. This weapon of the oppressor is especially effective in education, which is one of the largest and most important historical forms of socialization (Spring, 2009; Tyack, 1974). The injection of myths that distort history and the human record is deployed as a form of conquest to subdue and keep ignorant oppressed peoples and their ability to develop critical consciousness of the status quo. Contemporarily we can locate conquest in discussions of colorblindness, meritocracy, and the "death" of racism that was ushered in with the installation of a half Black president (Wingfield & Feagin, 2009; Wise, 2010a). It is a powerful tool in the submission of people whose experiences do not align with such cultural myths.

The weapon of cultural invasion is also particularly relevant in the education system, particularly one in which white teachers are primarily responsible for teaching. This weapon of the oppressor is characterized by "the invader assuming the role of a helping friend" (Freire, 2006/1970, p. 153). Cultural invasion involves, for instance, oppressors who invade the terrain of the oppressed in gestures of "false generosity." In such instances, rather than standing in solidarity, or participating in "true generosity," oppressors dispense just enough help, aid, or the grace of their physical presence in "oppressed" spaces (i.e. urban schools) to placate the oppressed (Freire, 2006/1970, pp. 44-45). The oppressors thereby offer "Band-Aid" remedies and palliative support when only drastic and deliberate measures to countervail unjust systems would serve those they are "helping."

In the pedagogy of the oppressed proposed here, I directly oppose such weapons. In my vision for critical (white) teacher education, I counter these weapons by first making them explicit to those who are most likely to use them—white teachers. I then propose to assist white

teachers in uncovering the inherent dehumanization and oppression that comes with deploying such weapons. By awakening their critical consciousness about the cultural invasion and racial myths that whites often suffer themselves, I intervene in a social status quo and a legacy of white mis-education that all too frequently leaves them unable to articulate the struggles of the oppressed—or that they even exist. Additionally, by directly confronting the "white knight," or "white teacher as savior of culturally deprived children" embodiments of false generosity, I also purport to controvert the cultural invasion that occurs too often in schools and is too frequently glorified in film (Bruckheimer & Smith, 1995; DeVito & LaGravenese, 2007; Haines, 2006).

The task of "hisoricizing," or providing deep context for how both whites and people of color arrived at their oppressed and oppressive stations is also requisite in critical teacher education programs for whites. I aim to directly address the lack of *historical* consciousness that white teachers too often bring with them to teacher education (Haberman, 1991; Haberman & Post, 1998). Finally, by engaging in deep discussions of alternate identities for people of color and whites—including anti-hegemonic white identities—as we cooperatively work toward wholeness and collective humanization, whites might be especially inspired to part from their roles as oppressor. Taken together, and invoked as a "pedagogy for the oppressor," it is my hope that we might proceed with the task of adequately and critically educating a largely white corps in teacher education programs specifically aimed at producing critical, antiracist white teachers.

A Pedagogy for the oppressor in Critical (White) Teacher Education

What might constitute a pedagogy for the oppressor? Based on my research with a group of white classroom teachers and antiracist scholars, I put forth that at least four elements could comprise an effective and successful pedagogical approach for educating masses of white teachers who have the potential to serve as powerful change agents. They include an emphasis

on: (a) the role of self-identity in teaching as a political act, (b) power, privilege, and whiteness in US society, (c) the formation of a healthy, anti-hegemonic white identity, and (d) a cost-benefit analysis of racism. If these four elements—which together form a pedagogy for the oppressor—are instituted in critical teacher education settings, we might begin to stem the tide of pervasive racism and White supremacy, which permeate all aspects of education and society.

The first element, or the role of self-identity in teaching as a political act, indicates the necessity of white teachers to realize how racial self-identities are materialized and incorporated into the everyday classroom teaching practices as well as in the larger educational system. White teachers must be encouraged to reflect on their own racial and cultural backgrounds and make room for race-based conversation in classrooms. All teachers espouse a particular worldview and vantage point which are intimately connected to how their own identities have been shaped by their families, traditions, customs, and social norms (Irvine, 2003). "Cultural conflict in the classroom" occurs when white teachers' unexamined identities clash with the diverse racial and cultural backgrounds of students (Delpit, 1995). This cultural mismatch can lead to the academic underachievement of students of color, strained relations between white teachers and racially diverse students, and the denial of equitable education to students. This disenfranchisement of students of color can be juxtaposed with the coordinating advantage of white students whose home and school cultures are not disparate, but often congruent with those of the teacher and school.

White teachers must also learn to recognize that the culture of schooling and its practices, policies, and explicit and hidden curricula systematically advantage those who hail from white racial identities. Policies such as tracking, referrals to special education, school suspensions, and "push out" rates are all higher for students who are not white (Irvine, 1991, 2003; Ladson-

Billings, 2006). Teachers play key roles in the implementation of such policies, as well as in the administration of a Eurocentric, mostly white, mostly male, mostly middle class perspective in texts, teaching styles, and school traditions (Apple, 2000). White teachers must be informed that whether or not they are cognizant or well-meaning, schools as they are currently fashioned employ a monocultural curriculum aimed at propelling the success of whites while simultaneously stymieing the progress of non-whites. If teachers profess a "colorblind" or "race-neutral" stance on these issues, and therefore deny the role of their own self-identity and how it is manifested in relations with students and in school policies, teachers will contribute to the hegemonic machine that is monocultural education (Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 134; McIntosh, 1990; Nieto & Bode, 2008). They will also, either knowingly or unknowingly, uphold the dominance of whiteness in their teaching whether or not they wish to be implicated in a political struggle. Education is by nature a non-neutral, always political act (Apple, 2000; Freire, 1970/2006). Teachers need only to be conscious of the side on which they will act.

The second element of a pedagogy for the oppressor—power, privilege, and whiteness in US society—maintains that white teachers must be educated about the power that dominant whites hold, the privilege and unearned advantages that all whites enjoy, and whiteness as the standard against which all other racial and cultural forms are measured. In the United States, whites hold institutional power by representing the vast majority of political leaders, business owners, professionals, wealthy individuals, board members, school administrators, and teachers (Gollnick & Chinn, 2009). Based on the particular ways in which whiteness affords its "owners" (Harris, 1995) certain unearned and invisible privileges, whites are free from the burden of thinking about themselves as members of a racial group, of being lumped together with others as opposed to being regarded as individuals, and even spared from having to search for Band-Aids

and hosiery that do match their "natural" skin tones (McIntosh, 1988/2001). White teachers should be exposed to the notion that "whites enjoy privileges largely because they have created a system of domination under which they can thrive as a group" (Leonardo, 2005, p. 48), and that the "white imprint is everywhere" (p. 49). It is essential that white teachers be compelled to grapple with the historical construction of whiteness as a tool of domination, as well as the current reality that whiteness and white culture still construct "official history" and represent "the best that a culture has produced" (Leonardo, 2005, p. 49). We must make known to white teachers that although hegemonic whiteness is "nothing but oppressive and false" as an absolute ideal, its predominance and coordinating power and privilege in society are real (Roediger, 1991, 1994). Unless white teachers first come to understand the oppressive falsehood of hegemonic whiteness for themselves, they will continue to uphold "the innocence of whiteness" and the invisibility of a quite powerful, hegemonic force (Leonardo, 2004).

The third element of a pedagogy for the oppressor encourages white teachers to form a healthy, anti-hegemonic white identity. Encountering one's own white racial identity as false, oppressive, and implicated in the subordination of others reveals a counterfeit form of white existence which, when discovered, can be daunting and leave whites with "nowhere to go." Leonardo even employs the terms "delusional world," "a racial fantasyland," and "a consensual hallucination" to describe the world of whiteness and its bogus rationales for domination over others (Leonardo, 2004, p. 126). Thus, once white teachers have been educated to recognize the oppressive falsehood of hegemonic whiteness, they must be led down a path of recreating their own white racial identities in a *healthy* and *positive* way. Howard (1996, 2006) has advocated that whites develop an affirming sense of whiteness which transcends the normal feelings of guilt and shame that accompany the awakening of how whiteness is deployed as an oppressive tool.

He argues that whites can be educated about the legacies of "John Brown" figures, white freedom riders, lynched but seldom mentioned white civil rights workers, and other whites who have led in the struggle for racial equality and provided viable models for anti-hegemonic whiteness (Harding, 2005). My research and other critical studies like it can continue to augment the list of critical white educators from whom others can model their own antiracist trajectories.

White teachers might also be introduced to the concept of "race traitorship," or whites' conscious decision to reject privilege and to question its very existence each time it is presented (Ignatiev & Garvey, 1996; Wise, 2008b). These whites stand in such solidarity with Blacks that they take on the role of "being, acting, and speaking out as though one were black." A race traitor flatly refuses participation in a racist joke and questions a police officer who stopped her yet let her off with a warning by asking, "Would you have done that if I had been Black?" (Delgado, 1996, p. 615). Theoretically, a collection of such race traitors would so disrupt commonly anticipated features of the white-on-white relationship that other whites would not know who was "white" and who was a race traitor. This random, unexpected disruption of white racial bonding would so profoundly shake white norms of exclusive behavior that whites in general would no longer know how to behave in neither white nor mixed company (Sleeter, 1994). This ingenious, antiracist form of whiteness could be offered to white teachers as one alternative to more "traditional" and oppressive white ways of being.

White teachers who are conscious of the false and oppressive nature of hegemonic whiteness as a tool of social domination, subordination, and control, must be shown how to reformulate their identities to become anti-hegemonic whites. Anti-hegemonic whites are aware of the illusory nature of whiteness, but stand in adamant protest of the reality of white power.

Teacher education must move beyond a "pedagogy of politeness" in which white teachers are granted the emotional space to lament their legacy of power and domination, but are spared the responsibility of taking action against it. As Leonardo (2004) contends, "a pedagogy of politeness only goes so far before it degrades into the paradox of liberal feel-good solidarity absent of dissent, without which, any worthwhile pedagogy becomes a democracy of empty forms" (p. 126). The aim of a pedagogy for the oppressor, therefore, is not to stop at the "feel-good solidarity" that white teachers may come to espouse, but to push these same white teachers to adopt a lifelong mentality of change and conscious action through anti-hegemonic whiteness.

The final element of a pedagogy for the oppressor consists of a necessary and thorough cost-benefit analysis of racism. White teachers must know that although there are costs of overturning a system which advantages them, the long-term benefits of an antiracist society far outweigh the costs. The question of why white teachers (or any whites, for that matter) would want to abdicate their white power and trade it for a truly democratic system in which all racial groups benefit equally is a very valid and real issue, and one that I more thoroughly address in Chapter 5. Why *would* a person want to overturn a system and society that routinely benefits her? Leonardo (2004) articulates this dilemma best:

> The act of interpreting the totality of racial formations is an apostasy that white students and educators must undertake but one which does not come easy or without costs. The costs are real because it means whites would have to acknowledge their unearned privileges and disinvest in them. This is a different tack from saying that whites benefit from renouncing their whiteness because it would increase their humanity. Whites would lose many of their perks and privileges. So, the realistic appraisal is that *whites do have a lot to lose* [emphasis in original] by committing race treason, not just something to gain by forsaking whiteness. This is the challenge. (p. 124)

The "challenge" of which Leonardo (2004) speaks is perhaps the most difficult but crucial element of formulating a pedagogy for the oppressor. White teachers will and must

grapple with their primary purpose as an educator in an inequitable system. Freire (1970/2006) offers the most fundamental answer to this query. He posits that all humans are bound together in the struggle *be human,* that is, to live dignified lives, to achieve self-actualization, to pursue meaningful work, and to have gratifying existences. Freire (1970/2006) rightly asserts that dehumanization, as it occurs to one person, simultaneously involves and implicates *all* others. Thus, if there are groups of humans being sorted for arbitrary reasons and are subjected to inhumane and dehumanizing conditions, we are all, then, responsible for those conditions and are dehumanized and damaged in the process even if there are simultaneous and very real benefits. The earlier words of Martin Luther King, Jr. also eloquently describe the bounded nature of all human suffering as he put forth that, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" (King, 1963). This sentiment is also embodied in the World War II inspired poem about the Holocaust, which reads:

First they came for the Jews
and I did not speak out
because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for the Communists
and I did not speak out
because I was not a Communist.
Then they came for the trade unionists
and I did not speak out
because I was not a trade unionist.
Then they came for me
and there was no one left
to speak out for me.

The piece is said to have been written by Pastor Martin Niemöller, an anti-Nazi activist who reflected on the guilt he felt as a result of not speaking out on behalf of those who had suffered one of the most atrocious injustices of all time ("Who Was Martin Neimöller?"). The poem captures the imminence of self-destruction if certain groups are allowed to suffer discrimination and to perish while others passively look on. It also encourages the solidarity of

all humans against *all* forms of oppression, not simply because we are uncertain of our own demise based on arbitrary or subjective identity hierarchies, but because we can be *sure* of our demise if even one of these identities is placed below our common humanity and responsibility for one another. Freire (1970/2006), King (1963) and Niemöller (1945) provide powerful reasons to pursue the "challenge" (Leonardo, 2004) of encouraging dominant whites and white teachers to engage in the struggle for racial equality, egalitarian forms of democracy, and common humanity. In the absence of such a struggle, whites are no more safe than Blacks; those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and intersex (LGBTQQI); or Jews from fear of dehumanization and destruction. Similarly, if we ponder racial justice as a "Not on my Watch" issue such as the continued human atrocity in Darfur, we are *all* inescapably implicated when gross human suffering occurs as most sit idly by (Citizens for Global Solutions, 2008). For who, we might ask, was watching?

In my view, when millions of minority students enter public schools to search for and not find themselves in the curriculum, to be held to lower standards of academic and life achievement simply based on skin tone, and to daily have their dreams trounced and their spirits crushed, it is as horrific as the cultural genocide that occurs in Darfur. The only difference is that it is slower, more widespread, does not produce instant outrage, and goes largely unspoken. It is a practice that is cruel, brutal, psychologically tormenting, and most importantly, deeply effective. The legions of white teachers who meet such children in schools should be awakened to this atrocity at home, and they should be educated in a way that encourages them to consider what they have uncovered about themselves and society, and to act on that which they find outrageous and unjust. This is what Freire (1970/2006) refers to as "praxis," and this ongoing process of constant reflection and action is integral to the pedagogy for the oppressor if we all

wish to escape the effects of oppression. For whites can look forward to the freeing capability of shedding the usual "white guilt" for a more powerful and potent form of white activism. And non-whites can look forward to having a new legion of allies. It behooves whites, white teachers, and *all* individuals to limit the power of whiteness, and to obliterate all forms of hushed hegemony. In their presence, we all suffer.

What To Do with Whiteness in Teacher Education

Although some scholars may argue that an emphasis on race, much less whiteness, is misplaced in the contemporary multicultural discourse, I hold that a critical view of whiteness and its role in education and teacher education is essential. Other scholars warn that focusing on whiteness too heavily, even as an exercise in critique, can upstage voices of color and re-center the discourse on whites in a "But enough about you, let me tell you about me" maneuver (Apple in Gillborn, 2006, p. 257; Sheets, 2000). Educators should take heed of this warning, but proceed with paying due attention to the issue of whiteness as a salient and vital subject of teacher education. Leonardo (2004) has rightly argued that whiteness and the power thereof thrives on its invisibility and normativity and that: "As a collection of everyday strategies, whiteness is characterized by the unwillingness to name the contours of racism, the avoidance of identifying with a racial experience or group, the minimization of racist legacy, and other similar evasions" (p. 119). Thus, the perpetuation of whiteness depends on whites' very refusal to acknowledge it, and educators must not waiver in their mission to eradicate white supremacy by naming and critiquing it closely. By forcing whiteness to the fore of critical teacher education (at least as we attempt to increase the voices of teachers of color in this space), we might begin to overturn white racial dominance, which is still pervasive and very much alive.

Here I present programmatic[7] strategies for critical teacher education based on findings that emanated from my research with burgeoning and more advanced antiracist white educators. This section will illuminate how we can translate those findings into tangible, programmatic structures in programs that undertake the preparation and professional learning of a majority white teaching force.

Increase white teachers' "exposure" to alternative life experiences. Many of the white educators, particularly in Part I of my research, ascribed their openness and more antiracist predispositions to their exposure to cultural and racial others. Teacher educators can increase these experiences by ensuring a culturally diverse teacher candidate pool, by using the "counterstories" (Delgado, 2000; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) of subordinate groups throughout the curriculum, and by providing ample opportunities for teacher candidates to meaningfully interact with individuals and communities from an array of cultures. Sleeter (2004) has noted that teacher education can and should function differently for teachers of color and whites. For whites, it should provide an opportunity to learn about alternate, but equally viable ways of living, as well as how whiteness itself functions. For candidates of color, teacher education might help them to use their subaltern experiences for political and social change.

Participants confirmed the benefit of such exposure to counterstories and to the presence of racial others by consistently describing their student teaching experiences and personal relationships with people of color as crucial crossroads for discovering, learning about, and empathizing with subordinate others who suffered unjust life experiences. Additionally, the antiracist white scholar-activists cited their exposure to subaltern viewpoints by way of literature, the public presence of civil rights leaders and other visible activists, and being firmly rooted in

[7] The scope and spatial limitations of this work will not allow the inclusion of programmatic *and* more fully detailed pedagogic strategies for critical white teacher education. Forthcoming iterations of this work will include such a discussion, which is especially useful for interested teacher education practitioners.

communities with a listening ear for their struggles. These antiracist educators also cited fellow white exemplars and mentors as models they could emulate. Programmatically, teacher educators should vary the curriculum to include a diverse literature base from people of color *as well as* progressive members of dominant groups. Structured and ongoing community advocacy and activism should also feature prominently in critical teacher education programs.

Teach about injustices as embedded, pervasive, and propagated by institutions. The burgeoning antiracist teachers studied here could often associate problematic societal conditions with the substandard educational and life opportunities their students faced, but at times had difficulty locating racism and classism in systems. Instead, teachers tended to explain racism and oppression more as individual acts of meanness (McIntosh, 1988/2001) than as embedded in institutional practices, laws, policies, norms, and even the national psyche. Both Bennett (2007) and Tatum (1997) have argued that racism in particular must be understood as operating on multiple levels and propagated by more than individuals. The participants in the first sample exemplified less sophisticated understandings of racism as a multifarious, complex, deeply pervasive phenomenon, and demonstrated their need for learning about racism in ways that would better reconcile how it permeates the whole of society and education.

Even the scholar-activists who had more advanced understandings of race and whiteness brought to the fore the necessity to not only locate racism and injustice in national structures, but also in overlapping, highly interconnected *global* structures. Thus, it would not only behoove critical teacher education programs to anchor oppression in courses that address the historical, sociological, psychological, economic, and political foundations of the United States, but also in critical, comparative education courses that define multiple antiracisms and transnational struggles for justice both and home and abroad. Moreover, in addition to critical white studies,

new strands of critical race theory should also be emphasized, including Latino (LatCrit), feminist (FemCrit), Asian (AsianCrit), tribal (TribalCrit), and gay-legal narratives (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997). These critical movements continue to emerge in order to challenge the "tendency toward a Black/white binary" in discussions of structured oppression (Yosso, 2006, p. 169). These emerging fields might be offered as stand-alone or interdisciplinary courses to counter the tendency of even advanced antiracists to center their antiracist struggles in traditionally binary, domestic terms. A serious pedagogy for the oppressor for whites and people of color would call into question taken for granted notions that struggles for racial and social justice are isolated, local, and single-faceted.

Equip teachers with historical context and curricular strategies for talking about race. In stark contrast to Cooper's (2003) findings in a study of "good white teachers" of Black children, the white classroom teachers in this study had little fear about addressing racial issues with their students. Several teachers saw gaps and holes in their children's textbooks, and many used auspicious celebrations such as Black History Month to supplement the given canon and curriculum with more information about Blacks and subordinate groups. Even though teachers sometimes held misguided views about race, each of them welcomed opportunities to discuss it and tended not to shy away from race if broached by their students. Many of them did, however, express the lack of strategies for the teaching racial content they contended with as a result of non-mandatory multicultural coursework in their teacher education programs or the absence of opportunities to learn about non-white cultures in their own education or upbringing. This "mis-education" of whites, so to speak, left them with an incomplete view of the total human record, or with a limited and distorted sense of themselves (Michie, 2001; Nieto & Bode, 2008). The white classroom teachers expressed frequent regret that they were learning about other cultures,

countries, and peoples for the first time only through teaching students from various backgrounds. This was also a shared sentiment among the white scholar-activists who suffered a similar mis-education that often escaped realization until much later in their lives.

Teacher educators should, therefore, seriously consider mandating courses and including non-Eurocentric curricula that would help white teachers to gain valuable cultural and racial content—about people of color *as well as* the normative invisibility of whiteness—so as to not be intimidated by such topics in their future teaching (Marx, 2006). McIntosh (1988/2000) would also argue that courses specifically dedicated to learning about whiteness serve both whites and people of color well. In her recollections of how she formulated her famous list of white privileges, she noted that colleagues and people of color often thank her for the contribution because they were aware of a swirling oppression, but could not name it. Like whites, people of color are also taught not to see whiteness, which brilliantly succeeds in helping to keep white dominance in place. Similarly, Cochran-Smith noted that *all* teachers need to be prepared in ways that minimize marginalization because the ways in which structured oppression functions eludes teacher of color as often as it does whites. A course, or multiple courses focusing on whiteness, white racism, and the formation of a anti-hegemonic white identities would illuminate these issues for teacher candidates of color and whites.

Encourage whites to envision cultural, not absolute democracy. Causey et al. (2000) have used the term "absolute democracy" to describe the deeply flawed consequences of whites' perception of a world in which race no longer matters. Colorblindness plays a polite but insidious role in perpetuating whites' views that claiming not to see their students' color somehow contributes to a more just world in which ignoring race diminishes its significance (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Haney Lopez, 1996). On the contrary, teacher educators would do well to

emphasize Darder's (1991) more aptly descriptive idea of a cultural democracy in which currently subordinate races and cultures are not only acknowledged as rich assets, but positively affirmed in education and society. In the latter vision, whites—and most importantly, white teachers—are no longer tempted to pretend that turning a blind eye toward race eviscerates the very real ways in which it functions as a social handicap. Rather, teachers would focus on learning how to nurture students' "relevant cultural personalities" (Ladson-Billings, 1994), which would not only allow them to feel pride in themselves and their own cultures, but also to thrive in dominant cultures until a cultural democracy is achieved (Darder, 1991). As the burgeoning antiracist teachers in this study revealed, professing colorblindness and clinging to beliefs in a currently nonexistent absolute democracy (Causey et al., 2000) will only delay the attainment of a society in which students actually experience educational and social equity.

Moreover, the more advanced antiracist educators revealed their lack of paradigms, words, or explanations for the violations of democracy they witnessed even as young children. Courses that emphasize the very real and relevant state of racism in society would not only supply teacher candidates with the vocabularies they need to describe the ways in which our current society falls short of its democratic ideals, but would also allow them to expand their visions of society to include more just forms of governance. Neither the classroom teachers nor veteran scholar-activists felt comfortable discussing the racial dissonance they felt at school and in their social lives, much less feeling free to imagine a more just social order. Courses, assignments, action research projects, and community advocacy programs aimed specifically at engaging in conversation and social action sequences that unearth and highlight injustices would be welcomed by teachers who often feel starved for the truth. Such programmatic elements are

requisite for critical teacher education programs that aim to equip their teachers with an antiracist language, paradigm, and vision for the future.

Each one teach one: White allies as mentors. What became surprisingly clear in Part II of my research was the degree to which antiracist white educators knew one another, struggled with and sometimes against one another (in private or in public), and learned and grew with one another. The world of white antiracists is relatively small compared to the many whites who tend to partake in a majoritarian view of racism that is often devoid of an understanding of whiteness, white privilege, and structured white dominance. Given that the number of white antiracists is decidedly fewer than the number we would like to see in a currently diverse and rapidly diversifying society, Bergerson (2003) has posed the question: *Is there room for white scholars in fighting racism in education?* Similar to the notions of serving as "white proxies" and "conscientious co-opters," as came forth from the research, this author would answer with a resounding yes. For Bergerson, a key role of whites is to "bring other whites to an understanding of white privilege, where our words may be heard in places that those of people of color are not" (p. 59). Likewise, Paul Gorski reminded us that the work of antiracism is not and cannot always be the domain of people of color, who are already encumbered with the additional burden of experiencing racism even as they fight it: "I think one of the most important things white people can do is to take on other white people instead of always putting that back on the shoulders of people of color to do that."

Tim Wise, in his antiracist mission, embraced the notion that a significant part of what he does is for the benefit of his own people—*white* people: "It's not charity work. It's not missionary work. It's about reclaiming something that white supremacy steals from us." Wise made clear that his antiracism work is just as much, if not more about maintaining the sanity and

reclaiming the humanity of white people as it is about actively addressing what structured white advantage robs daily from Black and Brown people. He also noted that white people do not always have exemplars of successful, historically or contemporarily active white antiracists from which to draw inspiration for action. One of his projects at the time of writing was to compile an anthology of historical and present-day white antiracists so whites could envision themselves in those roles, actively fighting whiteness.

I concur with Bergerson (2003), Gorski, and Wise in that one of the best contributions antiracist white educators can make is in serving as both cross-racial and *same-racial* allies in antiracist struggles. If each white antiracist makes conscious efforts to not only disrupt, or serve as "race traitors" against the prevailing white ideologies in public spheres (Ignatiev & Garvey, 1996; Wise, 2008b), as well as in private instances of white racial bonding in more closed spheres (Sleeter, 1994), we would make significant headway in reducing white dominance and abolishing whiteness as a hegemonic force. White antiracists could then serve as "mentors," adopting an "each one teach one" strategy borrowed directly from the Du Boisian (1903) concept of African Americans their "talented tenth" model for social uplift.

Programmatically, in critical teacher education programs, course content would be co-taught by both white or dominant group professors alongside racially dominated group professors. In this way, the phenomenon of professors of color primarily teaching "multicultural" content would be directly challenged. Additionally, white teacher candidates would experience opportunities to hear from both subaltern and dominant voices. If a white man is a co-professor with a Black woman, students who might ordinarily position the Black professor as a "racial complainer" might receive the same antiracist narrative from her teaching partner. Using this model, the relatively small, yet influential number of antiracist whites could

take pedagogical responsibility for the mentorship and "patient re-education" of whites who might hear them with more facility. The number of white antiracists might then grow organically, albeit not at first exponentially due to the small base. The goal is to foment, nurture, and inspire more white antiracists. Serving as "in-house" allies in critical teacher education programs would certainly aid whites in starting on those journeys.

White people tend to take over: **The role of white leaders in the struggle.** In "Wanted: A White Leader Able to Free Whites of Racism," Derrick Bell (2000) himself calls for new leadership—white leadership in the struggle against racism. As one of the most influential founders of critical race theory, he issues an open call, and even a standing employment description for what this new white leadership position might consist of to serve the racial project of eliminating the racial project (Omi & Winant, 1994). He writes: "The leader I seek and that this country needs must be well-known, [and] able to be heard with power or charisma to be taken seriously (p. 531). In his appeal for new white leadership in the antiracist struggle, Bell explains that because racism is primarily a white problem, this new white leader "must demonstrate to other whites the economic harms, social disadvantages, and lost opportunities white people have suffer and continue to suffer" as direct result of institutional racism (p. 532). Bell warns that Blacks need not apply for the position because, as in the case of Jesse Jackson or many a Black professor in schools of education and the academy, this message coming from any Black person will quickly be dismissed. Hence, whites *must* be the ones to deliver such a message to other whites whose ears will be more ripe for the hearing.

Bell (2000) is confident that new white leadership in the antiracist project will and can only be beneficial. The visibility of a white person touting racism as the problem and ultimate demise of whites is precisely what we need. Others, however, specifically in education, are

concerned with the re-centering of whiteness and "white problems" in maneuvers that once again render it hegemonic, self-referential, and "all about me"—as in, white people (Apple in Gillborn, 2006, p. 257; Sheets, 2000). To the contrary, Christine Sleeter cited the necessity of seeing instances in which cross-racial coalition, with whites in clearly defined roles that did not usurp the anti-white racial project, was important in her own development as a now actively antiracist scholar. She described a desegregation program and curriculum to which she had been exposed by way of her then African American boyfriend:

> [T]hey called it Rainbow Activities. One of the first early multicultural curricula. A very diverse group. I didn't see the fights. I saw this group seemed to be able to work together. But that had white people in it, but the white people weren't in charge. I was conscious about this, that white people tend to take over. And so I was trying to figure out, if I were to do this kind of work without taking over, what does that look like?

Sleeter, like many of the participants, expressed the ability to commit to antiracist activism as a direct function of seeing exemplars of successful antiracism. Going forward, we must continue to be cautious about antiracist struggles in which "white people take over," but duly recognize the necessary role of the white leadership for which Derrick Bell (2000) himself has issued a call. As we bear in mind that whiteness lends itself to "taking over," we can better address the ways in which this can be counterbalanced with positive leadership from whites who are not only fighting *against* racism, but *for* something much more important—their very own humanity (Thompson, 2003; Warren, 2010). If we could balance these elements, we might make significant headway in fomenting even more white antiracists who understand whiteness and live for antiracism. In critical teacher education, this new leadership might manifest in antiracist-in-residence fellowships, antiracist post-doctoral programs, funds set aside for antiracist research studies, or any other programmatic feature in which the value of anti-hegemonically identified white leaders could serve as emblematic for other whites who need "permission" to follow suit.

While we must be *extremely* careful to not partake in yet another form of white affirmative action with "set-aside" programs or positions of power reserved specifically for whites, we must also give adequate consideration to the ways in which visible antiracist white leadership or the mere presence of an explicitly identified critical white scholar could serve the antiracist project in new, important, and deliberate ways (Katznelson, 2005).

As the student population continues to include more children of color who deserve to have their racial and cultural heritages valued as equally as white culture, a mostly white legion of teachers must be ready, willing, and equipped to handle this democratic demand. If we employ a pedagogy for the oppressor to concentrate white teachers' efforts on recognizing and dismantling this long-standing system of structured racial oppression, all races can be fully humanized. This ideal could come to fruition if educators gather the collective will to engage white teachers in a serious exploration of the oppressive and false nature of whiteness, and the benefits associated with disentangling its power in education and society.

Wishing Whiteness Away

When I returned to my classroom after the mini-victory I scored with the "A paper" metaphor I shared at the outset, I realized it was neither academically sound nor socially humane to continue our class discussion based solely on the fraudulence of whiteness. Thus, equipped with yet another zinger of an example, I proceeded to tell my students two "stories" of what it might be like for a white and Black couple to speak their first words to a newborn child given our current racial situation. I thought these stories would be appropriate since this lecture began with my hopes for a reinvisioned society for future generations in which whiteness no longer reigned, and whites no longer felt "nothing but oppressive and false" (Roediger, 1994). So, having found the will to teach about anti-hegemonic forms of whiteness, I began:

> It should be the goal of everyone in this room not to get rid of white *people*, but white*ness*. We have already discussed the falsehood, oppressiveness, and fraudulence of whiteness, and we will continue to revisit that concept. But let us now focus on how to get rid of whiteness. Because if we don't, what will Black and white parents say to their newborn children born in the world as is? The Black parents might say: "Welcome to the world, little one! We love you, but there are a few things we have to tell you. First, know that you will be considered "less than" based solely on your skin. You will grow into a fine person with a sharp brain, eloquent tongue, and a gentle personality. But no one will assume these things of you at first glance because you are not white. You will work hard in school, do your best, and achieve great things. In fact, you will work twice as hard for your accomplishments because whites will neither expect nor want too many Blacks to succeed. And when you do, white people will say that your presence is tokenistic, that you are an affirmative action hire, and that your accomplishments are ill-gotten, undeserved, and illegitimate. But try not to let that get you down. So welcome to the world, little one, this will be your life!"

My students were sufficiently riveted. Several of my Black students deftly nodded their heads in agreement as I spoke. One Black student lowered her head and rested them on folded arms on her desk. She let out a long sigh as I told the story. I later found out that the story was "heavy" for her and all too familiar[8]. Most of my white students, who sat a bit disengaged through the first "story" began to perk up slightly as I introduced the next.

> Now let's think about what a white family might whisper in their newborn's ears: "Welcome to the world! Hallelujah, you look white! You will go where you want, do what you want, and have what you want. The only thing is, your accomplishments won't have everything to do with you. You'll work hard in a school that teaches all about you and no one else; you'll take tests that were designed for your success; and you will get jobs, have opportunities, and gain access not just for being *you*, but just for being *white*. You will be let in as others are kept out, you will be let go as others are locked up, and you will be made to feel as though your perspective is universal to the point that you will know no other. Oh yes! But remember, most of what you accomplish in life will be less about you and more about a system that favors you! You will run a race that starts closer to the finish line. So however fast you run, know that your path is straighter and your distance is shorter. But try not to let it distract you. Welcome!

[8] While I cannot elaborate in the current manuscript, I take seriously the notion that critically centering whiteness in teacher education could in some ways re-marginalize teachers of color. We must address the complexities of tailoring teacher education to meet the needs of both retrogressive whites and people of color. In forthcoming work, I take up the issue of bifurcating pedagogies for the vastly different needs of multiracial teacher education cohorts (see Jackson, in process; Montecinos, 2004).

I asked my students about the "stories" and solicited their reactions to either, both, or to the general need to eradicate white supremacy. One student replied: "I wish whiteness could go away. I don't want to feel like a fraud or tell my kids they're frauds too. I know what you mean about not deserving the A. I want my As in life to be mine." My student's words were introspective and sincere. I appreciated the sentiment that belied them. She was a particularly difficult student to reach, yet she had at least partly grasped what it meant to be white, as well as what it might mean to dismantle it. I pondered the promise of a pedagogy that led her and several students down a path of lifelong reflection and action—of critical consciousness and praxis (Freire, 1970/2006). I grew excited about using such a pedagogy to weaken whiteness. When I began to think on those things, the possibilities for a pedagogy for the oppressor seemed all the more promising, and certainly more pressing. Most importantly, it felt powerful.

Chapter 5

Which interests are Served by the Principle of Interest Convergence?

Whiteness, Collective Trauma, and the Case for Antiracism

I routinely confront the "tenacious resistance" of mostly white teachers as both a professor of multicultural education and researcher (Sleeter, 2004). Many whites do not fully grasp the endemic nature of racism, cannot locate themselves within a larger system of racial oppression, and truly believe that Barack Obama's presidency and the achievements of a few prominent people of color have ushered in the death of racism (Wise, 2009, 2010). Given my work with mostly white students who hope to become teachers in increasingly multiracial schools, I find it necessary to offer a conceptual framework that will simultaneously assist whites in regaining their full humanity and improve the lives of the diverse students they will soon teach (Freire, 1970/2006).

All oppression directly undermines the basic humanity of those who are oppressed as well as the oppressors. In a system of racial hierarchy, people of color are dehumanized by arbitrary systems of phenotypical identity that severely limit freedom, expression, and self-determination (Leonardo, 2009; Mukhopadhyay, Henze, & Moses, 2007). Whites on the other hand, who benefit in real and tangible ways from that system, are also disenfranchised as both participants in and beneficiaries of a racially oppressive power structure. My role as teacher educator is to prepare a nearly 90 percent white majority of teachers for education in a multicultural, far from post-racial society. Racism is harmful to everyone, and the multiple interests of the white teachers charged with doing most of the educating in this country are both relative and absolute (Landsman & Lewis, 2006; Wise, 2009). To adequately prepare white

teachers and build a stronger coalition of antiracists, whites must be able to fully parse their own stakes in ending racial inequality.

Beyond White Guilt: A Look Back to See the Way Forward

Disaggregating the many ways in which whites are especially and adversely affected by racism—an assertion which itself may appear counterintuitive—first requires examining the guilt, collective trauma, and "pathology" that many whites face as a result of racism (Schwartz & Disch, 1970). "Black pathology" is an oft-used and insidiously deployed concept to describe the purported cultural deprivation, moral bereftness, and social maladjustment of African Americans who have long been identified as the racial "problem" in the United States (see, for example, Moynihan, 1965/1997; Wilson, 1985/1997). Racism, however, causes whites to arrive at illogical and self-limiting decisions that they would otherwise never make. Upon more careful inspection of the irrational, delusional, and painful effects of racism on whites, then, we find that racial rationales which prompt a false sense of superiority, assumed entitlement, and the physical and emotional separation of people is more aptly described by the notion of "white pathology." Although not an ideological tit for tat, a closer examination of racism reveals its power to move far too many whites toward alienating and self-inhibiting modes of thinking that can at best be described as illogical and at worst, pathological (Goodman, 2001; Wise, 2006).

In the following example, we see that whites are able to recognize the incredible injustices that people of color often suffer. When they do, there is an unnecessarily painful shaking of their conscience that could easily be avoided by a full understanding of racism at the outset. When Xernona Clayton—organizer for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and friend of Coretta Scott King—recollected the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., she offered

this story about her interactions with a white storeowner in her quest to dress Mrs. King for her slain husband's funeral:

> First, I went to this store [Joseph's] downtown. I told him, "I have to dress Mrs. King, but I didn't want to bother her for a credit card, but I don't have any money. May I take them?" I took several garments home for her to choose. I went back to the store and said, "Here's [*sic*] cards to cover the cost." He said, "You don't have a bill with us. I'm a white American; I have to take some of this guilt and pain, and this is a way to assuage my grief. You have no debt here." (Burns, 2008, p. 133)

The white store owner's reaction to Clayton's attempted payment, and most importantly, to King's slaying, exemplifies the menacing guilt that whites often feel when they reflect even briefly on the pernicious effects of racism in this country (Tatum, 1994). In Joseph's instance, his guilt may have been prompted by the individual actions of a fellow white man (the confirmed white gunman), or perhaps by the shameful actions of many white civil rights protestors (represented in extreme form by the Ku Klux Klan). Whether beknownst to him or not, his sorrowful and guilt-laden reaction may well have been the culminating result of a legacy of white supremacy in this nation and the trauma he experienced as an admitted beneficiary of racial oppression. His heavy-hearted response is an exemplar of the psychological and moral bankruptcy of white dominance, the devastation of "realizing racism," and how the totality of white interests is not always served by the ongoing racial project in the United States (Omi & Winant, 1994).

The Principle of Interest Convergence: A Magnified View

Interest convergence is a key principle of critical race theory, or the lens through which one can view social and structural power relations as primarily mediated through race. Derrick Bell, one of the theory's founders, has defined interest convergence in this manner: "The interest of Blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the

interests of whites" (1995, p. 22). Thusly denoted, Bell (1995) contends that progress toward racial equality for Blacks (and all people of color) is contingent upon the degree to which whites are calculated to benefit from that progress. Bell has argued that a seminal example of interest convergence was the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision which outlawed de jure public school segregation in the United States. While a superficial glance at the decision might lead one to believe that racial progress had occurred *despite* the undermining of white interests, Bell has quite sophisticatedly put forth that far greater ends, which exclusively benefited whites, were also achieved. Among the benefits of *Brown* for whites were:

1. Gains in global credibility regarding the struggle against communism. By legally uprooting the "separate but equal doctrine" at home, the United States could make a better case for its pursuit of democracy abroad.
2. Reassurances to African American soldiers that equality and freedom were not empty precepts that were fought for and available only to foreigners, but equally available to returning soldiers from World War II.
3. Acts of dismantling segregation as an obstacle to southern industrialization. The economic interests of Southern whites who wished to profit from the abolition of segregation were indeed served and yielded greater fiscal returns than state-sponsored apartheid and its unpopularity with prospective investors.

Bell (1995) contends that *Brown*, while a seemingly direct symbol of racial progress, was actually a mere smokescreen for the bundle of benefits that whites stood to enjoy as a result of its "implementation[9]." That is, when racial progress takes one step ahead, whites take several leaps.

A more contemporary example of interest convergence is Barack Obama's presidency. At the time of writing, Barack Obama, a half African American/half European American man, is the current president of the United States. Obama's margin of victory was overwhelming and nothing short of a political spanking for his opponent. His supporters spanned all races and included educated voters of various backgrounds (Warren, 2010). His backers cut across class,

[9] White resistance to the 1954 *Brown* decision was so ardent that a second decision handed down in 1955, known as *Brown II*, had to be implemented. In the latter, the US Supreme Court mandated that desegregation occur "with all deliberate speed," or at a discernable rate in light of the relative inaction that followed *Brown I* (Kluger, 1975).

gender, and even political affiliation lines. Obama amassed the votes of a wide swathe of citizens and built a formidable coalition of donors who funded his campaign primarily through small pledges (Obama for America, 2008). Most notably, for the first time in history, a biracial African-American man is the first non-white[10] president. Initially, one might assume that we have made so much racial progress that a Black man occupies the highest leadership post in the country (Wingfield & Feagin, 2009). Obama has seemingly transcended the multitude of barriers associated with being a Black man in the United States. His triumph over a divorced home and the difficulty of "difference" as a biracial minority enable some to believe that we as a nation have transcended race alongside him (Feagin & Harvey, 2009; Leonardo, 2008; Wise, 2009). Specifically, Obama's success story pacifies the racial guilt felt by many whites and contributes to the illusion of a "colorblind" society. After all, if Obama can do it, so can everyone else (O'Reilly, 2009). In this way, the "feel good" psychological interests of whites are served, and resolution to our long-standing race dilemma seems to have been reached.

When we pause to take a magnified view of Obama's presidency, a very different portrait becomes clear. While we might concede that having a biracial president is undeniable progress, we must also assess the costs associated with his triumph. Of particular interest are the various ways in which white interests are served *and* undermined by Obama's victory. I contend that while the guilt many whites feel as a result of their participation in an endemic system of racial domination is placated by the Obama win, the cognitive dissonance that whites continue to experience has hardly subsided. Even now, as Obama is president, the structural conditions that render Black and Brown people 146% more likely to experience infant mortality, 447% more likely to be imprisoned, 521% more likely to die of homicide, and 42% more likely to lack health

[10] The term "non-white" is itself a tool of white dominance given that whites are a global numerical minority. We do not refer to whites as "colorless" or "people without color" (Elliott, 2010). "Non-white" is employed here only to emphasize that all forty-three presidents since the inception of this nation have been white.

insurance are firmly in place (Banaji, 2008). That is, in the absence of a serious upturning of the social realities that create such racial inequity, whites continue to benefit *materially* as they always have, and *emotionally* by experiencing a new "reality" that aligns quite perfectly with colorblind, meritocratic, "pull yourself up by the bootstrap" ideologies (see, for example, Bell, 2002; Gotanda, 1995; Lawrence, 1995; Leonardo, 2004a; Sleeter, 2004). Whites enjoy the same superior quality of life they enjoyed prior to Obama's presidency while believing that all is well because we now have a Black[11] president (for which many whites have voted). I put forth, therefore, that whites are simultaneously disenfranchised *psychologically* and *morally* by partaking in a "false consciousness" that does not and cannot adequately explain the subordinate position of Black and Brown people even after Obama's win (Marx & Engels, 1848/1998). Neither does his victory eviscerate the incongruous dualism that whites continue to experience in the multiple, unequal Americas over which a Black man presides. Even in an Obama-led United States, the inferior financial and cultural status of people of color persists, and the systemic advantage of whites who benefit from such oppression remains. Whites' material and emotional interests are indeed served, but the greater effect of persistent racism on their psychological and moral interests continue to take their toll. With this "multiple interest" analysis in mind, those who use critical race theory to analyze social and structural power relations can consider the concept of "interest" in a more magnified and complex manner, that we might all more fully understand the deeply embedded nature of racism in our nation—regardless of who is president.

"Interest" Disaggregated: Toward a Nuanced Understanding

[11] Barack Obama is biracial, but based on the legacy of the law of hypodescent, or the "One Drop Rule," his half African American heritage renders him the nation's first "Black" president regardless of how he wishes to consider himself. Because whiteness is a form of property, only those who can physically pass for white may claim it. Obama does not "own" a white phenotype and can therefore only be known in the United States as "Black" (Harris, 1995).

As others and I have illustrated in the *Brown* decisions and Obama's presidency, when racial progress is achieved through convergence with white interests, we must disaggregate "interest" to reach a more nuanced understanding of how racism simultaneously serves and undermines the *multiple interests* of whites. I posit that "interest" consists of at least four types, and that racial progress panders to particular white interests while at the same time undercutting others in a somewhat contradictory fashion. In this simultaneous enfranchising and disenfranchising, empowering and disempowering of whites in particular ways, I contend that the costs of losing psychologically and morally far outweigh the benefits of winning materially and emotionally[12]. Below I outline each type of interest and offer brief examples of circumstances in which white interests are served or undermined – or both:

The Multiple Interests of Whites

1. Material Interest (Having)
2. Emotional Interest (Feeling)
3. Psychological Interest (Thinking)
4. Moral Interest (Doing)

Figure 3. The Multiple Interests of Whites

1. *Material Interest (Having)* refers to gains in or the maintenance of the superior socioeconomic status of whites. Material interest encompasses what whites can *have* based solely on being white. At present, whites enjoy higher rates of political representation, professional careers, leadership positions in governing bodies, home and business ownership, high school graduation and college matriculation rates, academic achievement, and physical health (Feagin & McKinney, 2003; Gollnick & Chinn, 2009). Material property interests ranging from employment and educational opportunities to

[12] Allen (2004) has employed the DuBoisian concepts of material and psychological benefits as part of the "wages of whiteness" that whites of low socioeconomic class have used historically to gain advantage. He has also posited that although the benefits of being white are real, opportunities for cross-racial solidarity that would lead to collective social uplift across races and classes have been, and will continue to be thwarted in the absence of a critical deconstruction of how the wages of whiteness will never yield a larger sum than the end of racism.

home ownership via higher loan approval and lower interest rates, for instance, are protected, maintained, and increased by laws, institutional practices, and unspoken cultural norms favoring whites. In addition to these tangible benefits, material interest also refers to whiteness itself as a form of property (Harris, 1995). The concept of whiteness as property delineates the terms by which people who phenotypically "pass" for white can "own" whiteness and the exercise power to determine who else can or cannot claim whiteness for themselves. Whiteness "owners" receive the many fiscal advantages of being a member of the dominant racial group. Those with white appearances have access to a series of unearned privileges that can only be enjoyed by owners of whiteness, and such white privilege is directly translatable to economic opportunity (Darder, 1991; Lipman, 2004; McIntosh, 1988/2001).

2. *Emotional Interest (Feeling)* refers to the sense of well-being that whites can *feel* as a result of being white. Emotional interest describes whites' ability to temporarily experience an alignment of circumstances that reify colorblind, meritocratic, "bootstrap" ideologies that are not real, but seem to be on the surface. Emotional interest also includes the assuaging of white guilt (negative emotions associated with being implicated in white racism) based on short-lived or "band-aid" remedies to endemic racial oppression in society. Examples include the passage of the civil rights amendments, affirmative action, and the limited power of a few African American public figures such as Barack Obama, Oprah Winfrey, or Tiger Woods. The prominence of these "Black, but not too-Black," mainstream-palatable people of color allow whites to temporarily enjoy the illusion and corresponding set of positive emotions based on the idea that if they have made it, others can and will given the proper amount of "hard work" (O'Reilly, 2009; Wise, 2009). The triumphs of a few popular minorities permit whites to feel as though nothing more must be done to undermine the gross disparities between people of color and themselves. For a time, whites are free to enjoy the "feel good" emotions associated with how much racial progress we have made, and how many successful exemplars to which they can point (Omi & Winant, 1994).

3. *Psychological Interest (Thinking)* refers to whites' positive and negative thoughts in response to race. On the one hand, whiteness and white dominance afford whites the psychological freedom from the constant burden or preoccupation with thoughts about whether their race negatively impacted their getting a job, housing, or school admission (Harris, 1995; McIntosh, 1988/2001). Additionally, whites are often seduced by a depiction of themselves as universally correct, founders and innovators of all things, and the most civilized "race" (Leonardo, 2004a; Loewen, 1995). On the other hand, the cognitive dissonance and collective trauma that enlightened whites frequently face once they realize their accomplishments have less to do with merit and more with whiteness is crushing. Privilege is the only force that disrupts meritocracy, and whites' discovery of the role of unearned advantage in their achievements can be likened to the discovery that there is no Santa Claus. Revelations of artificially helped-along achievement at the expense of others, and the reality of a white existence that is primarily "false and oppressive" far outweigh the freedom of mind and bogus sense of superiority that whites initially experience (Roediger, 1994). Whiteness unduly causes devastation of ideologies—that is, how whites tend to *think* about themselves, their identities, and the

role of race in their lives. Whites' psychological interests are ultimately undermined by racism and the false superiority it confers.

4. *Moral Interest (Doing)* refers to the moral and ethical bankruptcy of humanity that whites often encounter as a result acting out of "false charity" rather than acknowledging the legacy of white racism and actively working against it in *solidarity* (Freire, 1970/2006). Whites' moral interests are initially upheld by their work with racial subordinates because they feel morally triumphant in their ability to consider others, to act on the behalf of racial minorities, or even to use their own racial privilege to help those without. Examples include slaveowners' wives teaching slaves to read while simultaneously holding them captive, affirmative action policies that select a "token" Black, or savior-esque white women "sacrificing" themselves by teaching in urban schools with missionary zeal (Giroux, 1997; Leonardo & Hunter, 2007; McIntyre, 1997; Peller, 1995; Sleeter, 2004). At first glance, the moral interests of whites are superficially reified by serving people beneath them on the racial ladder. Upon closer inspection, however, whites eventually struggle with the demoralization of people of color and the lack of genuine progress toward racial parity. As whites discover their role in a racially oppressive system, their dehumanization becomes apparent and can be devastating in light of their initial "moral" position. In many instances, whites may well enter situations in which their actions can be perceived as "moral," but based on the unchanged nature of structured racial oppression, are ultimately revealed as immoral and devoid of full humanity. In sum, the moral vacuousness of temporary or misguided attempts to placate racial oppression will *always* fall short when compared to the dedicated efforts of whites to abolish racism, overturn white privilege, and end the dehumanization of both racial minorities as well as themselves (Feagin, 2010; Leonardo, 2008, 2009).

While not exhaustive, this list offers an initial disaggregation of what a more complex definition of the "interest" in Bell's (1995) interest convergence principle might resemble. An expanded and more nuanced view of "interest" must be invoked if we are to fully comprehend the ways in which racism both benefits and disenfranchises whites. It is also an essential viewpoint when considering how best to incentivize more antiracist whites in the struggle for racial justice.

It Pays to be White: The Material Interest of Whites

With the exception of sparse and misleading statistics about immigrant success, few metrics can refute the broad, panoramic domination of whites in almost every sphere of US life. Lee (1996, 2005), for example, has documented the experiences of Asian American students and illustrated the divergence in perceptions of how race and class (adversely and systemically)

affect the academic, social, and life outcomes of Asians who are a presumed hyper-successful "model minority." Similar statistics regarding the educational advancement of African students have caused some not only to celebrate the relative social successes of immigrants of color writ large (see, for example, Journal of Blacks in Higher Education Foundation, 1999), but also to bolster claims of a now "egalitarian" state. Still, however, laws established by a mostly white electorate, institutional practices such as "good ole' boy" systems of nepotistic inclusion, and everyday cultural norms in the form of "the hidden curriculum" in schools, for instance, all cater to the material interests of whites (Howard, 2006; Irvine, 1991). Here I present two examples—No Child Left Behind legislation and neoliberal school voucher programs— that typify how the material interests of whites are systemically upheld in society. I also present the alternative view that even though whites enjoy material benefits as a result of white-dominant legislation and school programs, the ultimate costs of racism are more fiscally unproductive than the individual and collective wealth of whites. Additionally, the psychological and moral "costs" of such policies far exceed their material benefits.

A salient example of governmental protection and proliferation of white material interests, or "whiteness as policy" (Gillborn, 2005; Leonardo, 2007), is the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This monumental piece of legislation was signed into law during the George W. Bush administration and continues to serve as the prevailing mandate for nationwide school reform. The unspoken premise of NCLB is that US schools should provide an array of workers for the knowledge economy in which some students fill service jobs while higher performing students occupy technological and managerial positions[13] (Lipman, 2004). Under NCLB, states

[13] While NCLB is not without flaws in its effect or support of white material interests, a progressive tenet of this legislation is its requirement to disaggregate scores based on race, ability, etc. A positive outgrowth of this mandate is that "achievement gaps" between racial/ethnic groups can be rendered explicit for the purposes of garnering more attention and being more fervently addressed (Meier & Wood, 2004).

are required to set standards that will render students "competitive" in a global market, and the achievement of those standards are to be met by tests that ultimately succeed in measuring the accumulated cultural and class capital of middle-class white children (Gillborn, 2005). When schools "make AYP," or adequate yearly progress, monetary rewards are meted out based on these test scores. Schools that fail to meet AYP are penalized by withdrawals of funding or even takeovers by municipal or private entities.

The material interests of whites are served by NCLB in myriad ways. First, by using standardized tests which have been normed on the achievement of white middle-class children, NCLB succeeds in "empirically validating" the inferiority of low income and minority children whose cultural and class capital is neither valued by schools nor tested on bubble sheets. In so doing, a "legitimate" sorting of children takes place whereby whites can rightfully claim that "objective" tests have been administered based on equal instruction by equally responsive teachers. Thus, failure to perform well on such tests *must* be attributable to the students' inability alone (Darder, 1991; Leonardo, 2007; Lipman, 2004). Schools with higher concentrations of economically disadvantaged and minority students are punitively sanctioned based on lower collective scores. Consequently, schools that were under-funded and ill-resourced to begin with are asked to do more with even less. Parents with adequate cultural capital, transportation, and time can transfer their children to schools with higher AYP rankings while low income and minority students, whose parents cannot, are left to perish in severely under-resourced schools. This strategic shepherding of white children to better performing schools, and *rewarding* schools with more white children who test higher, serves whites' material interests by helping to ensure that white students are better educated than students of color (Leonardo, 2007).

An adequate education is and will continue to be the key determinant for the career choices and economic futures children can secure, as "who has access to what knowledge is critical" (Lipman, 2004, p. 11). In the NCLB sorting process, higher-paying and better professional opportunities for white children are almost certainly secured based on the legislation's inherently flawed achievement standards (white-normed tests) and the "choice" it grants those parents (mostly white) who can maneuver their children to the best schools. In this way, the material interests of whites are maintained by using a purportedly legitimate system of sorting students while simultaneously "proving" the inherent inferiority of students of color who may not test well. White children receive higher quality P-12 education, then higher quality post-secondary education, which translates materially into higher paying jobs at the top of the knowledge economy (Lipman, 2004). Private wealth is therefore built and sustained primarily in the white sphere via free, well-resourced, culturally tailored public education (Irvine, 2003; Nieto & Bode, 2008).

A logical outgrowth of the "school choice" movement so heavily propagated by NCLB is a voucher program that allows parents not only to enroll their children in better-performing public schools, but also in private and parochial ones. In this system, the notion of "choice" is expanded so that those who can supplement the annual per pupil expenditure that a public school voucher is worth can then save money on the private or parochial tuition they could have afforded even without a voucher (Apple & Pedroni, 2005). Because whites hold a higher concentration of wealth in society, white parents and families primarily benefit from such a system. Private and parochial schools generally have smaller student/teacher ratios, more aggressive college preparatory curricula, and better qualified faculties (Irvine & Foster, 1996). This highly coveted and expensive form of education, therefore, is made more readily available

to mostly white parents who can supplement their public school vouchers with private monies. Children who attend private schools often enjoy higher matriculation rates into Ivy League colleges such as Harvard, where "historical relationships" are forged between reputable schools and the university. Alumni interviewers for Harvard are sometimes made privy to informal "slotting" practices for academies as Phillips Exeter and Andover, where undergraduate admission "slots" are favorably granted to students who attend such prestigious schools. Generally, this predictable trail of higher quality P-16 education holds truer for those who can afford elite and private pre-collegiate schooling with or without subsidy. Hence, the private wealth of mostly whites is fortified by public tax dollars at the mass's expense, and largely white private schools benefit from public monies along the way.

Both NCLB and the neoliberal, free-market inspired school voucher programs serve the material interests of whites by all but securing their dominant place in the knowledge economy. Qualified teachers, higher-order critical thinking skills, liberal arts curricula, and advanced college preparatory courses are rationed out only to those who score well on tests or can afford higher quality schooling (Apple & Pedroni, 2005; Haycock, 2000; Lipman, 2004). In both practices, traditions of white wealth and racial dominance are protected, perpetuated, and publicly subsidized. While the effects of NCLB and school voucher programs promote financial gain and confer economic superiority to whites, a nuanced understanding of "interest" allows us to further investigate the true costs of under-educating children of color and to tease out how both practices ultimately disservice minorities and whites alike.

While on the surface both NCLB and school voucher programs seem to serve the totality of white economic interests, we must also consider the tremendous fiscal toll that an uneducated citizenry takes on society as a whole. Levin (2009), Darling-Hammond (2006), and others have

written extensively about the costs of inadequate education and the ultimate financial penalties of large-scale public school disinvestment (Lipman, 2004). Levin, after decades of attempting to quantify the cost of under-education, has described at least four areas of taxpayer burden and loss of public funds when students drop out of high school: loss of tax revenue, increased costs of criminal justice, higher costs for public assistance, and increases in public health expenditures. Most significantly, he found that each new student who graduates from high school will "on average, generate economic benefits to the public sector of $209,100" for a net societal benefit of $45 billion dollars per year (p. 15). Darling-Hammond (2006) has also shown that investment in early childhood programs, quality P-12 education for all students, community centers for teens, afterschool programs, and college assistance programs all yield a much higher return on the dollar than does the building of prisons and youth detention centers, or drug, gang, and violent crime prevention. Nisbett (2009) and countless economists have also demonstrated that every dollar spent on prekindergarten schooling yields an eight dollar savings on crime, public assistance, and supplemental schooling. Derek Bok, former president of Harvard, has more concisely synopsized this cost-benefit analysis quite cleverly with, "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance." In these few words, he powerfully described the peril of leaving legions of students in academic squalor while foolishly awaiting their demise with open wallets.

Although one can discern the incredible advantage that NCLB and school voucher programs afford whites—among whom the concentration of wealth is already disproportionate—a more longitudinal assessment of their effects must be taken into consideration. Whites benefit from a system of public education that tests their accumulated cultural and class capital and overwhelmingly rewards children who are white. However, leaving a significant number of students of color to languish in a system that is meant to sort and prepare them for subordinate

jobs is far more expensive than assuming the more worthwhile task of educating all students to their highest potential (Bennett, 2007). Despite normative claims that children are and must be "sorted" so as to ensure a laboring class, I put forth that such sorting along racial lines—as opposed to personal choice and self-determination—is both morally bereft and unnecessary (Spring, 2007). In capitalist societies, a perpetual class of service workers is a necessity, but I posit that such a class of workers must not be created based on arbitrary and racially unjust sorting measures. I also dispute whether a contrived laboring class is compatible with our fundamental democratic ideals and notions of cultural pluralism, to which we should be ardently striving[14] (Feagin, 2010; Gollnick & Chinn, 2009).

Without addressing the additional negative effects of how the material interests of whites are ultimately undermined by educational policies that propagate economic privilege and disproportionately sort whites into higher-paying professions, we miss the complexity of how whiteness as policy directly translates into fiscally expensive and morally bankrupt practices. We might ordinarily allow the superficial material interests of whites to dictate the utility of particular forms of racial progress, but a closer examination of "interest" and the longitudinal costs of structured racism in education indicate that we should do otherwise.

Delusions of Grandeur: The Civil Rights Era and Affirmative Action

Emotional interest, or how whites *feel* about racism, is based on the precept that individuals tend to demonstrate "positivity bias[15]." Generally, many people assume and desire to assume that life is good and fair. And despite trauma or contradictory evidence, we fervently

[14] Feagin (2010) has argued that racism is irreconcilable with the "liberty and justice for all" framework established by our democratic ideals. Racism directly contradicts fundamental notions of democracy in the United States and cannot coexist alongside it.

[15] The research upon which "positivity bias" is supported may well be based on white samples. All too often in the empiricist tradition, the perspectives of racial, gender, or sexual identity minorities are disregarded (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Positivity bias may be reduced in minorities based on their everyday lived experiences as marginalized individuals. Ayoub's research, however, is still instructive for describing the wish of many, including whites and minorities, for a default state of societal benevolence and the end of racial injustice.

cling to representations of the world that are positive (Ayoub in Lambert, 2008). Feagin and Vera (1995), along with Bell (2002), have employed the term "sincere fictions" to describe whites' overwhelming desire to hold fast to the ideals of racial equality, meritocracy, and rugged individualism so as to feel good about our society despite periodic racial "incidents." To explore how whites' emotional interests are served by racial parity projects, the civil rights era and affirmative action policies provide apt examples.

Omi and Winant (1994), Peller (1995), and others have argued that the civil rights era and the passage of its amendments effectively laid the groundwork for the belief that racism is dead. After what Omi and Winant (1994) describe as "the Great Transformation," many whites in the United States experienced an ideological shift toward post-raciality, or the identifiable end of racial oppression. When there were no longer televised sit-ins, bus boycotts, marches, and coordinated public outcry, a paradigmatic transformation occurred such that "Race shouldn't matter" was directly translated into "Race *doesn't* matter" (Schmidt, 2005). According to Omi and Winant (1994), by the end of the 1960s, "all failed to grasp the comprehensive manner by which race is structured into the US social fabric. All *reduced* race to: interest group, class faction, nationality, or cultural identity" (emphasis in original, p. 111). Contemporary interpretations of the racial progress borne of the civil rights era include contentions that the movement and its coordinating legislation not only fully achieved racial equality, but policies to pacify the interests of so-called "ethnic loyalists" and minority factions have actually *gone too far* (Hirsch, 1992; Schlesinger, 1998; for a critique, see Buras, 2008).

One of the most popular and hotly contested reforms of the civil rights era was affirmative action. Ladson-Billings (2006) has argued that it is the best known example of a "dramatic policy" designed to recognize the centuries-old marginalization of people of color and

truly address racial inequality in its persistent, contemporary manifestations. Although the primary beneficiaries of that policy have been white women, many whites in the United States seem convinced that affirmative action has lifted legions of subordinate minorities out of poverty and leveled the playing field, and has even gone so far as to make the "game" of school admission and job placement unfair. Consequently, many whites now feel disenfranchised by people of color in an epidemic wave of "reverse racism" (Bennett, 2007; Gotanda, 1995). The post-racial rhetoric has been so potent as to invade the logic of many including Thomas Sowell, an African American anti-affirmative action activist who has said, "The battle for civil rights was fought and won—at great cost—many years ago" (Sowell in Crenshaw, 1995).

In both the "We have arrived" and "Affirmative action has gone too far" lines of reasoning, one can easily identify how the emotional interests of whites have been served. Many whites have allowed feelings of post-civil rights era "victory" to infiltrate their psyches to the point of emotional satiation. The inverted "now-it's-our-turnism" (Kennedy-Dubourdeiu, 2006) argument well-articulated by the Reagan administration and its contemporary neoconservative counterparts has enabled many whites to emotionally invest in contentions that affirmative action has not only helped people of color achieve total racial equality, but has overextended itself into the comfortable, normative, superior position of whites, who now feel subordinated themselves (see, for example, Buras, 2008). Bell captured this sentiment best: "Whites simply cannot envision the personal responsibility and the potential sacrifice inherent in blacks' conclusion that true equality for blacks will require the surrender of racism-granted privileges for whites" (1995, p. 22). Thus, whites' emotional interests (specifically fear and resentment of unfairness) have been successfully tapped into with a post-racial, falsely egalitarian rhetoric. These emotional investments and delusions of grandeur are not easily surrendered.

A complexified understanding of "interest" allows critical race theorists to parse a post-racial discourse and the reverse racism outcry in more sophisticated ways. While civil rights era victories and affirmative action policies provide a palpable sense of "feel good positivity" that allows some whites to cling to their inherent goodness and sense of charity for having "lost the civil rights war" or for "letting others run the show for a while," we can also unearth the ways in which whites' emotional interests are not served by such false claims. The cognitive dissonance felt by whites who proclaim the "racism is dead" mantra while simultaneously serving on diversity search committees at corporations or diversity task forces at universities, for instance, is not lost on the critical race theorist who deeply comprehends that multiple "interests" can simultaneously be served and undermined. In these cases, whites may well believe that affirmative action has "gone too far," but because they do not see the tangible results of the over-selection of minorities on their campuses or at their corporations, they cannot reconcile the common rhetoric with common sense (Gorski, 2009). Whites' investments in wanting to experience the reality that minorities have overly benefited from affirmative action programs are served, but their emotional interests are ultimately undermined by experiencing a reality that directly disrupts their feelings. The dissonance felt by a university admissions counselor who is suddenly placed on a diversity recruiting task force, for instance, is just as real as her desire to maintain a "positivity bias" toward the inherent (un)fairness of the admissions process. Seeing that that process has not and will not result in even a representative number of non-whites in a meritocratic, "if you just work hard enough" society is disappointing and unnecessarily conflicting. For whites to experience the joy of actually living in a post-racial society and seeing the fruits thereof, we must make the realities of society match the hopeful, emotional investments of well-meaning whites (Wise, 2009, 2010). Until then, perceptions of a society in which

normative whiteness is no longer a reality will continue to fuel the emotional devastation that often follows when positively biased whites realize that racism is still very much alive.

Psychological Interest, Collective Trauma, and the Origins of "White Pathology"

Whites experience an enviable degree of psychological freedom where race is concerned (Harris, 1995; McIntosh, 1988/2001). Wise (2009) has described such states of relative ignorance as "racial blind spots." If ever a white person is declined an interview, apartment, or loan, she is generally free of the heavy burden of wondering whether her race negatively impacted her ability to secure them. Such is not true for people of color, and the experience is epidemic. The exception is when whites feel disenfranchised by minorities who have supplanted them based on supposed "reverse discrimination" (Bennett, 2007; Gotanda, 1995). In these instances, whites become taken by the notion that their entitled successes have been unfairly granted to minorities who are less deserving and presumably "unqualified." In circumstances in which whites are oblivious to the constant affirmative action they receive as a result of simply being white (Katznelson, 2005), or those in which they feel unduly punished for being white, their psychological interests are affected. In the former case of obliviousness, whites experience an incomplete view of the world, a lack of knowledge about alternate cultural perspectives, a false sense of superiority, and a "pathology of privilege" that renders them highly susceptible to a particular form of collective trauma. In the latter instance of whites firmly believing that they have been robbed of their expected, rightful entitlements, whites still unnecessarily suffer from thoughts of perceived injustices that often do not exist (Gurin, Lehman, Lewis, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2004). Schwartz and Disch (1970) have written extensively about the "pathology" of white racism, which addresses the multiple ways in which whites' psychological interests are not always served by endemic, unjust racial supremacy (see also Wise, 2008b). Attorney,

community activist, and educational rights advocate Mike Molina has stated, "There is a pathology that comes with privilege.[16]" He has aptly described the unnecessary and disequilibrating state of mind ushered in by false superiority, which thwarts human contact and breeds an incredible waste of human potential (Bennett, 2007; Feagin & Vera, 1995).

Scholars like Goodman (2001) and Nieto and Bode (2008) have argued that largely invisible socialization into white dominance and monocultural education that excludes, marginalizes, or distorts the histories and perspectives of racially diverse people damages whites just as much, if not more, than students of color (McIntosh, 1990). Based on their exposure to only a narrow Eurocentric presentation characterized by the over-inflation of racially dominant perspectives, many whites are left with "limited self-knowledge and a distorted sense of self" (Goodman, 2001, p. 106; see also Ladson-Billings, 2004). As a result, whites like Michie (1999) and Stalvey (1970) often experience nothing short of a crisis of identity when they are forced to confront the extent of their "limited self-knowledge" and are left feeling quite ignorant and duped. In the case of Michie (1999), a white teacher, his inability to teach mostly Latina/o students was fueled primarily by the paucity of information he had received about cultures other than his own. He had succumbed to the universality of white perspective that is all too often propagated in literary canons and textbooks. His ignorance of other vantage points handicapped him as an effective educator and "educated" man, which Michie himself came to acknowledge and even resent (see also Apple, 2000; Buras, 2008). Similarly, Stalvey (1970), a white resident of a racially mixed neighborhood, experienced the deep betrayals of the limiting nature of white dominance by ultimately coming to rely on her relationships with Blacks more than those with overtly racist whites. In fact, when she was deemed sympathetic to Blacks and a veritable

[16] Guest speaker Mike Molina contributed this thought to a class discussion in the course, "Critical Race Theory and Urban Education" at Emory University on April 28, 2008.

"niggerlover," a white woman—demonstrating certain white pathology—admonished her by angrily shouting, "I hope your daughter marries a big Black one!" (p. 297). We can observe similar expressions of pathologies that are rooted in racism by examining countless photos of white mobs proudly posing next to the charred, hung, missing body part, mutilated bodies of lynching victims throughout history (Allen, Lewis, Litwack, & Als, 2000). White racism, deeply bought into, causes whites to fear Black and Brown people with an often vehement, or even violent xenophobia that motivates irrational thought and behavior, separates people physically and emotionally, and ultimately prevents meaningful interaction, social productivity, and optimal human flourishing[17] (Bennett, 2007; Goodman, 2001).

Susan Abadian has coined the term "collective trauma" to describe "the pervasive consequences communities suffer when powerful external forces violate their physical and/or sociocultural integrity" (in Lambert, 2008, p. 40). Although she originally conceived of this idea as pertaining exclusively to Native Americans and traditionally subordinated people of color, I invoke the term here to describe the almost inevitable violation of sociocultural integrity that whites experience when their "oppressive and false" subject position as racially privileged individuals is uncovered (Roediger, 1994). The "collective trauma" described here is not to be confused with Truong's (2010) notion of "racial trauma," which is experienced by people of color who suffer the "psychological, emotional, physiological, social, functional, and spiritual consequences of having suffered racism-related stress" (p. 18). Collective trauma in this instance is a re-appropriation of Abadian's concept, which more closely encapsulates the

[17] I wish to thank Professor Devon Carbado for lending invaluable insight into the normative nature of my thesis at the 2009 Critical Race Studies in Education Conference in Tucson, AZ. I contend that if whites fully grasped how racism undermines their *multiple* interests, more of them would be moved to antiracist action. Although not all whites will be so moved—or moved for reasons that venture beyond self-interest, as Bell (1995) originally put forth—I maintain that improved social function and racial progress that drives us closer to optimal human flourishing would still be achieved. A disaggregation of Bell's "interest" does not require antiracist action solely motivated by altruism, selflessness, or self-disinterest. Rather, this framework simply requires that whites comprehend the panoply of their interests and that, ultimately, racism does not serve the *totality* of their interests.

emotional devastation of the *majoritarian* group as a result of shattering the thin and volatile "integrity" of whiteness and hegemonic white identity. For whiteness itself is a fragile house of cards built from illusions. Racism adversely affects and most certainly traumatizes whites as well as people of color, albeit in markedly different ways. Hence, I contend that much like a people whose mental and cultural integrity has been violated by unjust circumstances or conquest, so too can whites experience a form of psychological trauma if they become aware of their role in a racial hierarchy, and their existence as a people for whom achievements have less to do with individual merit and more with a legacy of unearned privilege.

While certainly not identical to the situation of minorities for whom race has been externally constructed and specifically designed to subordinate them, the collective trauma of whites can nonetheless be devastating upon sudden realization that they are the undeserved beneficiaries of a great deal of human suffering. Whites may be quite content in their ignorance about alternate perspectives, world histories, or equally viable ways of living. But that ignorance can be abruptly or slowly shattered. Newly revealed is an ugly past, an oppressive present, and an uncertain future. Even as the material and emotional interests of whites can be upheld for quite a long while—or perhaps even a lifetime—those who are fortunate enough to recognize and productively work through their racial privilege can become disinvested in those interests (Allen, 2004; Raible & Irizarry, 2007). Whites' psychological interests are far better served when they come to a critical consciousness of the state of racial inequality (hooks, 2003). These realizations constitute a liberatory ontology and a powerful, personal freedom for whites. Put simply, antiracism is a more honest life[18].

[18] Prominent white antiracists in my own research and others' have attested to the "joys of unlearning racism" as liberation, freedom, and personal victory (Thompson et al., 2003; Goodman, 2001; Warren, 2010). They view antiracist activism as the ultimate alignment of their democratic, moral, or even spiritual beliefs. White antiracists

The wholeness, intactness, and empowerment that emanates from discovering oppression is far more worthy than the psychologically traumatic and highly exhausting ways of clinging to "sincere fictions" and white racial obliviousness (Bell, 2002; Feagin & Vera, 1995). While the rudeness of white awakening may be painful, the psychological interests of whites are best served by realizations that racial parity has not been achieved, and that progress in the United States has yet a long way to go. We can liken the devastation of discovering white privilege and racial oppression to the reaction of believers whose worlds implode at the news that there is no Santa Claus. My own reaction was, "Why didn't someone tell me sooner?" While some may argue that it is better to have believed in Santa for a time than never to have believed at all, such an exact translation does not work with whiteness. Racism is nasty, pernicious, and literally life-threatening (Feagin & McKinney, 2003). And interestingly, one of the only ways to effectively combat it is to expose the invisibility of whiteness (Marx, 2006; Sue, 2004). Ending racial injustice is far too urgent to invest any amount of psychological interest in its perpetuation. Thus, if whites are not made privy to the unfinished business of racial progress as early as possible, they stand to experience trauma, cognitive dissonance, emotional devastation, identity crisis, and the embodiment of white pathology—almost inevitably—at some later point (see, for example, Derman-Sparks & A.B.C. Task Force, 1989; Schwartz & Disch, 1970; Tatum, 1997; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001). A false sense of self and world, and its coordinating irrational beliefs and exhausting efforts to uphold it, are unnecessary and preventable casualties of racism.

Moral Interest and the Demoralization of Whites

The moral interest of whites is directly related to how "good" one can feel about the injustice-appeasing actions that take place in a society primarily controlled by whites. The

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also attribute this congruence as a primary motivation for their willingness to engage in what others often perceive as "working against" their own racial interests.

response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and its juxtaposition with the response to the California wildfires in 2007 provide apt illustrations of the moral bankruptcy that can be incurred by whites as a result of endemic racism. The neglect of mostly low income, primarily African American residents in New Orleans has been described as "criminal" (Buras, 2007). While George W. Bush carried on with daily life and Michael Brown, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) insisted that things were copasetic, thousands of Black and Brown people were literally left to drown, to wait in squalor with no help on the way, or to die in unforgiving heat. Katrina and the underwhelming response it garnered is one example of how a white-dominant government, from the state to the federal level, so devalued the lives of poor Blacks that children, the elderly, and everyone in between died as a result of a predictably disastrous hurricane in the richest nation on the planet. It is also an exemplar of how the moral interests of whites are neither served by white supremacy nor any other racial project.

To be clear, white material and emotional interests were most certainly served by the responses to Katrina and the California wildfires. During Katrina, whites who lived on higher ground were reported as having "everything" at a time when a disproportionate number of Blacks at the superdome and throughout the city of New Orleans had nearly nothing. Mayor Ray Nagin reported that conditions for whites who were generally wealthier and lived in suburban areas were "like the Ritz Carlton. They had water, they had ice, they had everything" (Buras, 2007, p. 111). Similarly, both the FEMA website and CNN reported the anticipatory and drastically different response to the California wildfires, which primarily affected wealthy whites whose high-dollar homes were threatened by fire. Conditions at San Diego's QualComm Stadium were akin to those at Zephyr Stadium for primarily white New Orleanians (CNN.com, 2007a, 2007b). In California, even as the wildfires were unraveling, people rendered homeless

by the fires could immediately apply for aid at www.fema.gov, a fully functioning website rife with contact information, real-time news updates, and information about how to locate loved ones (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2008).

Even a cursory analysis of Katrina versus the California wildfires reveals a disparity in the level of priority and immediacy of care for human beings based on race[19]. The response to Hurricane Katrina was pitifully slow, agonizingly inadequate, and criminally sub par, and it remains so even now (Buras, Randels, ya Salaam, & Students at the Center, 2010). Conversely, the treatment of mostly white Californians was swift, luxurious, and seamlessly executed. I specifically recall one victim of the California wildfires reporting that there was "too much food" at QualComm stadium, and his greatest concern was whether the uneaten items would go to waste (Booth & Geis, 2007). The juxtaposition of these two "natural" disasters helped to unearth America's moral deficit regarding the marked difference in the nation's treatment of racial groups. This disparity—regularly played out in education, the criminal justice system, and multiple spheres of US life—abruptly unfolded in the horrendous response to mostly blacks in New Orleans versus the smooth handling of mostly whites in California. During Katrina, many whites were confronted with the unfinished business of racial parity and the blatant devaluation of people of color. Kanye West spoke harsh words on live television by announcing that: "George Bush does not care about Black people." It was a comment that many, still tempted by illusions of racial parity, could not at the time acknowledge.

Katrina and the California wildfires both illuminate how white material interests were served in both instances based on their superior treatment. The preservation of real estate and the immediacy of financial assistance from FEMA surely helped to maintain the financial

[19] One could argue that disparities in the hurricane responses were also based on class. That discourse, however, is beyond the scope of this work. For a full discussion of Katrina and its complexities, please see Buras, 2005, 2007 and Buras et al., 2010).

investments and material interests of whites. These disasters also revealed, however, the ways in which white moral interests were not served by exposing the unfortunate lack of regard for primarily poor, primarily Black "refugees." By depicting New Orleanians of color as looting welfare dependents who should have "gotten out sooner" or "left when they could," moral claims of fairness and neutrality to an on-looking public could no longer be made. Not only were there stares from disapproving fellow US citizens, but an engaged global audience was confused about how something so "third world" and inhumane could happen in the United States (Buras, 2005). After Katrina, and especially after the California wildfires, it was far more difficult for whites or anyone to deny racial discrimination and unequal treatment without simultaneously investigating basic principles for how human life is valued along racial lines in this country. New Orleans is a city in which the very placement of homes —with wealthier whites living on natural levees in uptown and economically disenfranchised people of color dwelling in the most vulnerable of flood plains—is a demonstration of how racism affects geography and city planning itself (Buras, 2005). The loss of real estate alone (which is the single best way to build wealth), and its disproportionately devastating impact on minorities revealed how even natural disasters uncover disparities in who owns homes, who suffers damage, and most importantly, who can afford to rebuild (Gollnick & Chinn, 2009). In the case of New Orleans, Blacks also contend with the issue of who is welcomed, encouraged, and allowed to return (Buras, 2005; Buras et al., 2010). Katrina and the California wildfires plainly illustrated that whites' material interests were secured in their skewed ability to save their homes and even their lives. The moral interests of a white-governed country, however, were abruptly unveiled and severely undermined.

Until Katrina occurred, and later the wildfires (against which we could compare disaster responses), the brokenness of our moral compass was hidden from view. When these telling

disasters took place, many whites were prompted to question the integrity of our decisions when mostly poor Blacks versus mostly wealthy whites are involved. Katrina brought to the fore the ugly revelation that people who are not white represent danger, and even when their very lives are at stake, they will be held back at gunpoint and stopped from crossing bridges that lead to safety, "good neighborhoods," and white people (Burnett, 2005; Healy, 2007). We also witnessed that when the estates of whites are threatened, FEMA will move quickly and decisively not only to salvage their properties but to make the inconvenienced whites as comfortable as possible throughout their "ordeal." One might argue that the California wildfires were handled differently based on the two-year period in which FEMA could better prepare itself to respond. Even if elapsed time were a consideration between the disasters, however, one still cannot fully explain the disparity of treatment for whites in New Orleans who were protected by guns, and their minority counterparts who were targeted by them. The moral interests of whites are never served by maintaining myths that post-raciality has been achieved, nor by the idea that whites and people of color experience fair and comparable treatment even in the case of disaster. Rather, moral interests are far better served when whites are able to consider the many ways in which racial parity is still elusive, that they might arm themselves for a different and much more ethical fight.

The Store Owner's Guilt Revisited: A Prognosis for "Pathologized" Whites

When a white storeowner named Joseph provided the mourning attire for Coretta Scott King based on his own guilt about the slaying of her husband, a form of personal healing took place that served his best interests. As a white male proprietor, his material interests had been served via business ownership and perhaps by access to generational legacies of wealth built on ownership of whiteness alone (Harris, 1995). But when Joseph chose to act on behalf of all

whites by forgiving Ms. Clayton's debt as a small payment for his racial advantage, his psychological and moral interests were addressed ways that freed him from the pathology of hegemonic whiteness. Unfortunately, whiteness dictates an unnecessarily delusional existence based on false precepts that too often exist in the majoritarian psyche. This storeowner regained his personhood by assuming a stake in Martin Luther King's slaying. He most certainly regained his humanity, which moved him to make a single Black person's life easier, if only in a limited manner. Joseph's response to King's death marks the perfect beginning to the end of racism.

Like this man, the pathway to healing and full humanization can most certainly be achieved by every white person who dares to uncover the truth about racism. Opportunities abound for discovering the salience of race and the seduction of colorblindness. Similar to the burgeoning and committed antiracist educators I have studied (see Chapters 2 and 3), whites need only to understand that it is ultimately in their best material, emotional, psychological, and moral interests to act on behalf of racial progress rather than to thwart it or deny its necessity even with a Black president. The prognosis for whites in a nation plagued by white dominance need not be bleak. With nuanced understandings of how the "interest" in "interest convergence" is not monolithic, but varied and complex, we can fully grasp how racism undermines the psychological and moral interests of whites in ways that are far more disadvantageous than their material and emotional interest gains ever will be. We might also use these new understandings to abolish racism, to reduce trauma, and to firmly undergird the case for antiracism.

Chapter 6

White Teachers Stay Here…Everyone Else is Dismissed:

The Unintended Consequences of Whiteness Research

Critical white studies and research designs aimed at examining whiteness in education have become more popular over time (Marx & Pennington, 2003; Marx 2006). I have conducted a series of research studies aimed at learning more about the journeys of antiracist white educators, and I have also reflected on my own dealings with mostly white students in teacher education. While it is imperative to *critically* center whiteness in educational research, there are unintended consequences associated with actualizing the research in real time, in real schools, and with real people (Haviland, 2008; Sheets, 2000). Here I offer one exemplar of the missteps associated with conducting whiteness research and the inadvertent consequences of centering whiteness in ways that further marginalize minorities. I also suggest practical solutions for avoiding the reinscription of whiteness in future studies and forward conceptual considerations for how to re-theorize research on whiteness and dominant groups writ large.

The Allied Counterstories of Whites

My research on antiracist white educators is undergirded by critical race theory and specifically, the notion of counter-storytelling. A key tenet of critical race theory is that those who are marginalized by endemic racism must be afforded opportunities to share stories that directly confront majoritarian narratives of meritocracy, racial equality, and ubiquitous fairness in society (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Thus, in an attempt to improve teacher education for mostly white teachers, I conducted well-intentioned research studies seeking the "allied counternarratives" of critical white educators who, despite socialization in a white supremacist

society, have managed to develop critical consciousness around race and teach for social justice (Howard, 2006).

Johnson (2002) has advocated the use of autobiographical narratives as a pedagogical tool in teacher education and research. She warned, however, that soliciting stories from white teachers about race should not downplay or equalize their racial experiences with those of people of color, but draw out the role of privilege and oppression in white teachers' everyday lives (see also Sheets, 2000). Asking white teachers to construct autobiographical narratives could help them reflect on the life experiences that have shaped their racial awareness or lack thereof. In the absence of self-interrogation, Johnson noted, it is difficult to determine the factors that shape white teachers' racial understandings.

The studies I conducted constitute well-intentioned research on antiracist white educators who have adopted progressive views of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy. In pursuing this type of inquiry, however, I have unintentionally reinscribed whiteness in several ways and violated a fundamental tenet of critical race theory, which is to dismantle a status quo that positions whiteness as the foremost, universal perspective (Bell, 2002; Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995; Harris, 1995). Here, while trying to study whiteness in order to name, render obvious, and confront passive racism in education, I inadvertently allowed whiteness itself to be co-opted as a tool for oppressing the teachers of color who were *not* included in the first portion of this research study (Freire, 1970/2006; Marx, 2006). This documentary account, therefore, offers anecdotal as well as theoretical considerations for how to conduct research that minimizes the chances of reinscribing whiteness or dominant social positions.

Working with Whiteness

I conducted a two-part research study of antiracist white educators. In the first portion, I studied a sample of twelve white teachers who were nominated by African American female principals as exemplary, highly effective, and dedicated to multicultural education. I conducted three interviews and at least one classroom observation of these white teachers who taught in mostly minority, underfunded schools. From the study's inception, I kept an extensive researcher's journal whose purpose was to record my feelings, hunches, triumphs, and difficulties associated with the research (Merriam, 1998). I felt progressively uncomfortable about the exclusive recruitment of the white teachers, the dissemination of information about my study to the surrounding teachers of color, and the perceived exclusion of the minority teachers who often directed me, with subtle resentment in their tones, to the classrooms of the "star" white teachers I sought:

Researcher: *"Excuse me, could you tell me where Ms. _____'s classroom is?*

Teacher of Color: *Oh, I knew you were looking for her. Her class is that way.*

As time went on, more teachers of color began to stop me in the hallways to inquire about the study and to probe for additional information about why I had chosen to study ONLY white teachers.

At the close of Part I of my research study, several teachers of color approached me about results-sharing, and some passed along their personal email addresses or phone numbers so they could read the dissertation and any articles that emanated from the research. It became increasingly evident by the end of the first segment that teachers of color in each school felt overlooked, alienated, excluded, and marginalized by my exclusive interest in "exemplary" white

teachers who were, in large part, doing what teachers of color had been doing for years (Foster, 1997; Irvine, 2002, 2003; Lipman, 1994; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Walker, 1993, 1996).

Below lies a smattering of verbalizations from teachers of color (who were not included in my research studies) that typified my growing consternation:

1. After an open faculty meeting (with all teachers present) in which the principal allowed me to introduce myself and the research study, his final words of the meeting were: *"White teachers, stay here. Everyone else is dismissed."*
2. After the same school-wide meeting, a Black female teacher approached me and said, *"Have you considered studying us? We like gift cards too."*
3. That same teacher proceeded to say, *"Have you also thought about studying Black teachers who teach in all white schools as the minority? I have a friend in that situation. I wonder why nobody studies what that's like for us."*
4. At the close of Part I of the study, a teacher who self-identified as multiracial said, *"Could you send me your dissertation so I can read it? I feel like I want to know more about what you wrote. I think I know where you're coming from, but I'd like to see."*
5. When one teacher of color was attempting to be helpful by reaffirming the sample of white teachers who had been nominated for the study, she asked: *"Did you talk to Miss X? She's half white and she is an AMAZING teacher. Oh, but you just want the pure white teachers, right?"*
6. Just after a classroom observation and before an afterschool interview, a Black teacher from the classroom next door visited one of my participants. To introduce

me, the white teacher said, *"Ms. X, meet Ms. Jackson. She's the lady from Emory. She's here to help us because I'm white!"*

7. When I shared with a fellow teacher of color and colleague that I would collect "counterstories" from antiracist white educators, her reply was, *"Can white people even TELL counterstories?"*

Comments regarding the inclusion of white teachers and the *exclusion* of teachers of color in the study were frequent, problematic, and always bothersome. Minority teachers *not* participating in the study expressed a desire for more information. White teachers participating in the study were fascinated by their inclusion in the research based on their whiteness, which was somewhat novel to them because whites are not generally identified by their racial markers or affiliated with any racial group (Leonardo, 2004; Nieto & Bode, 2008; Tatum, 1994). This type of incident, which happened repeatedly throughout the first portion of the study—along with new challenges to consider whether whites can tell counterstories—is precisely the type of healthy criticality I welcome, but was not expecting.

Transgression by Omission: Minority Teacher Exclusion

One of the most hurtful unintended consequences of conducting research with white teachers in mostly minority schools was the painful sense of exclusion felt by the surrounding teachers of color. Time and time again, as I arrived at various schools and walked their hallways, I was chillingly reminded of the difficulties associated with choosing to work with some teachers and not others solely based on race. At the outset of my research study, I never asked myself what it would mean in real time, in real schools, and in real people's lives if I routinely entered a school, selectively worked with white teachers only, and therefore sent the following message to the principals who nominated them: *"I am a researcher who wants to*

study excellent teachers of mostly minority children. You know how you have all these wonderful teachers of color here doing just that? Now, give me the names of your WHITE ones."

This message resounded loudly and clearly after a kind principal at a local school placed me on the agenda of an early morning school-wide meeting. He supported my research and wanted the entire faculty to be aware of the research study that would soon take place in his school. He first made announcements, discussed teacher contracts, and finally invited me to the front of the school media center to introduce myself and solicit participation in my study. My presentation marked the end of the meeting, so after I had made my case, the last words he uttered to all teachers were, *"Okay, that's all I have everyone. So, white teachers stay here with Ms. Jackson. Everyone else is dismissed."* In the moment, some white teachers giggled in surprised amusement, and a brief bout of nervous laughter from everyone filled the air. But it was such an awkward comment—and the last one that *all* teachers heard before leaving—I noticed that many of the remaining teachers of color paused to glance at one another as they rose from their seats, pushed in child-sized chairs, and filed out of the library murmuring and with eyebrows raised.

But some teachers of color did not leave. In fact, one Black female teacher was sure to push in her chair and walk over to me straightaway. She approached me and said, *"Have you considered studying us? We like gift cards too."* She was responding to my explanation of the incentive to participate, which was a $20 gift card to support their educational efforts. We had a lively exchange about how my research interests had emanated from nearly a decade of being a teacher educator. I explained that throughout my years of teaching, I continued to encounter white teachers who consistently express their desire to teach in suburban schools where they would not have to "deal with" minority children and "urban problems." I noted that, if vast

numbers of minority teachers showed the level of resistance that my white teachers did, I would have conducted a study of antiracist teachers of color. But since a heavy majority of my white students expressed their fear, disdain, or complete disinterest in teaching in schools like theirs, I needed to learn from the white teachers who did just the opposite—their colleagues.

The same teacher agreed that many white teachers express problematic attitudes about minority children and urban education. But she continued to challenge me to change my research trajectory in the future by at least including Black teachers who choose to work in all-white schools, or those that many of my preservice teacher education students *only* wish to work in. She pressed the issue with, *"Have you also thought about studying Black teachers who teach in all white schools as the minority? I have a friend in that situation. I wonder why nobody studies what that's like for us."* I was moved by her comments, to say the least. Here she revealed the exclusion, overlooking, and lack of attention she felt as a teacher of color. She mentioned a friend who worked in an all-white school, yet she used the word "us" to inquire about why no one seemed to study or care about what it is like to be a teacher of color surrounded by whites. At that moment, I felt as though I had indeed made a terrible mistake in presuming that I could enter a school with a mixed faculty, choose to study just one racial group, and have no one question my decision to do so. I assumed everyone would see the merits of my "expertise research," in which I would find only the best urban white teachers and highlight their beliefs and practices to take back to the nearly ninety percent white teaching force we currently have (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). I thought that by studying the life experience of whites who have somehow adopted multicultural stances despite a lifetime of socialization characterized by white power, I could convince more whites to teach critically and with social justice in mind. It was more complicated than that.

At the conclusion of this study, I presented the preliminary results again at a school-wide faculty meeting. I was grateful to have an additional opportunity to clarify my original aims, to let each teacher know how much I appreciated their sacrifice (be they participants or innocent bystanders), and to share what I had learned from the initial data analysis. Again, just after I had finished speaking, a teacher who was half Black and half white approached me directly. During an earlier visit to the school, one of her colleagues asked: *"Did you talk to Miss X? She's half white and she is an AMAZING teacher. Oh, but you just want the pure white teachers, right?"* This comment disturbed me greatly not only because her peer was making distinctions between who could be considered white and thus "pure," and those who could not (and were therefore useless for my research purposes), but also because she was clamoring to have her colleague, whom she considered to be an *amazing* teacher, included in a study about amazing teachers. Whiteness has been guarded as a form of property for centuries (Harris, 1995), and it was hurtful to me that I had forced someone to pit a biracial woman against her "pure" white peers. Moreover, the biracial teacher was obviously highly regarded for her teaching alone, and to her friend, it was a missed opportunity for her not to have been included in the study based on her pedagogical skill set.

The biracial teacher expressed her own concerns when she approached me after the end of year meeting. She said, *"Could you send me your dissertation so I can read it? I feel like I want to know more about what you wrote. I think I know where you're coming from, but I'd like to see."* In this statement, the teacher seemed to indicate her uncertainty about my rationales for conducting the research and presenting some of my findings. Several other teachers were waiting to speak with me at the meeting, so I later visited her classroom to extend the conversation and to offer her every opportunity to express her concerns. When we spoke in her

room, this teacher expressed that she understood why I needed to learn more about antiracist whites given that so many of my white students were resistant to: teaching in urban schools, believing in the teachability of minority children, and dedicating themselves to teaching *all* children well—not just suburban white children whom they perceived to be "easier" students. But in the presentation of my preliminary findings, I not only focused on the white teachers' beliefs and life experiences, I also highlighted their *practices* which I found to be culturally relevant. This teacher made clear that she wanted to know more about "what they did differently," and why it was significant. I appreciated her concern for wanting to ensure that I was not unduly highlighting the "specialness" of white teachers who are often cast as "white knights," or the only ones capable of "rescuing" minority children (McIntyre, 1997). That, by the way, is how we often arrive at films aimed at celebrating angelic white teachers who save the day in "chaotic" minority schools (see, for example, *Dangerous Minds*, Bruckheimer & Smith, 1995; *Freedom Writers*, DeVito & LaGravenese, 2007; *The Ron Clark Story,* Haines, 2006). For instance, the cover of *The Ron Clark Story* reads: "No one believed in them. Except him." Are we really to believe that in a class of 25–30 students, not a *single* person cared about these urban, Black and Brown students except the new "white knight" teacher (Giroux, 1997; McIntyre, 1997)? Furthermore, would we ever read this kind of promotional blurb or be led to believe this same taken-for-granted declaration if the movie were about even the poorest, most disadvantaged white children? It is precisely this focus on "white teacher as savior" that I wished to avoid in my research. Still, it was the astute and indeed "amazing" biracial teacher *not* included in my sample who pointed out my unintentional reification of it.

In many of the aforementioned instances, I felt both terrible and hopeful at the same time. How awful, if you are a teacher of color, to be told that you are dismissed, even as your white

counterparts stay behind in a school-wide meeting to participate in an "innovative study" about excellent teachers. What's more, how hurtful to be excluded in research that highlights best practices with minority students in ways that might suggest only *white* teachers are capable of employing them. Finally, how incredibly unfortunate to not be asked to participate a study based on biracial identity, knowing full well that race itself is arbitrary, based on phenotype, and ultimately more related to power—not self-identity, culture, or how multilayered people experience their everyday lives (Harrison, 2009; Leonardo 2009; Mukhopadhyay & Henze, 2007). At the same time, we cannot hope to overturn racism without a serious deconstruction of whiteness and the necessity of cross-racial efforts to combat it (Bell, 2000; hooks, 2003). While we must be planful, careful, and thoughtful about the ways in which we approach critical white inquiry so as to not injure or racially traumatize people of color along the way, neither can we allow white dominance to escape interrogation altogether (Truong, 2010). Whiteness thrives on invisibility by largely eluding acknowledgement and attention by both whites and people of color. As critical race researchers, even in circumstances in which the practical, on-the-ground effects of conducting whiteness research is "messy," we must continue to highlight the salience of whiteness and white identity to make lasting headway in any serious antiracist project.

Hurtful Humor and the Novelty of White Identity

A paradoxical consequence of singling out white teachers to participate in my research was that both the naming and "novelty" of whiteness occurred. On one hand, whites are not generally identified by their racial markers or affiliated with any racial group at all. Thus, to name whiteness in a mixed setting and to force whites to first identify themselves *as* white is an important step in critically centering their racial identity and acknowledging their membership in a dominant group (Leonardo, 2004; Nieto & Bode, 2008; Tatum, 1994). On the other hand, as

was the case here, the novelty of being identified by their whiteness not only reified dominance but conferred an unnecessary level of discomfort upon bystanding teachers of color. In each of these instances, I am thankful that white identity was brought to the fore, but I deeply regret that the jokes and sometimes carelessly flippant racial dialogue surrounding the *novelty* of such a concept was unduly and unintentionally hurtful to the teachers of color who were privy to it.

I was in a participant's classroom awaiting the end of the school day. We were to interview just after dismissal. A fellow grade-level teacher, who was a Black woman, came into the classroom. The teacher I was just about to interview introduced us by saying, *"Ms. X, meet Ms. Jackson. She's the lady from the university. She's here to help us because I'm white!"* The teacher went on to explain that I would be volunteering in the classroom (for observations) and possibly sending over some students from my university to volunteer in the future. Thus, she indicated that she was to receive some additional "help" from me based solely on my interest in her whiteness. Both the teacher and her Black friend giggled after she said this. But for her fellow teacher who came in just to chat, I wondered if there were tears behind her laughter.

In such instances, the potential for harm to bystanding teachers of color is rendered more and more evident. On one hand, it is deeply important that whites come to understand their racial identity as a central part of racism *and* multiracial struggles for racial justice (Howard, 2006; Sue, 2004). Hence, to ask whites to racially identify themselves, and to highlight their whiteness as something that is significant in both education and wider society is a positive consequence of educational research. However, the unintended consequences of whites' reaction to the novelty of doing so is where damage is done. People of color, on the other hand, face "forever foreign syndrome," where no matter how many centuries their ancestors have occupied this land, if they do not look white, they will perpetually be asked what they are, where they are

from, and why their English is so good (Takaki, 1993). For whites, the normalization of their existence is so universal and invisible, only through a study involving race would white teachers find themselves contemplating their whiteness and being asked to check a proverbial white box.

While it is beneficial to create a situation in which whites must identify their whiteness, I must also take responsibility for the psychological and racial trauma that can ensue for the people of color surrounding them (Truong, 2010). In the instance of white teachers gathering in a hallway, in mixed company, and shouting down a hallway that it's time for a "white person interview," one cannot underestimate what hearing that must have been like for the bystanding teachers of color. Those teachers were not summoned, and may have already felt overlooked, or as though I was not interested in their work. I consider the fact that millions of children are lagging behind and languishing in schools where ninety percent of teachers are white to be a *serious problem* (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). My presumption is that so did the surrounding teachers of color who have sons and daughters in those same schools. Thus, even the presumption that the research, or my visits, or my decision to study white teachers was *nothing* but serious caused some consternation of my own. Not to mention that of their fellow teachers of color.

The unintended consequences of whiteness research include both positive and negative effects. The positive consequences include whites' realization that their identity does factor into their teaching, into education writ large, and into the functioning of a white dominant society. It is also important for the critical centering of whiteness to sometimes "study up" as researchers, or to call attention to groups that are dominant and do not traditionally see themselves as part of the multicultural conversation (Howard, 2006). Whites play a major role in the problem of racism *as well as* in struggles to end it (Pearce, 2005). Indeed, it is not only the burden of people

of color to work for racial justice, it is the burden of everyone. Thus, even though I accidentally reinscribed whiteness in hegemonic ways throughout my research, I maintain the inherent value of collecting and using the "allied counterstories" of whites from whom we can learn a great deal.

"Can White People Even TELL Counterstories?"

A significant reminder of the importance of both semantics and voice came when a former teacher, historian, Black female colleague of mine questioned the ability of whites to even tell "counterstories." Her concern was that, based on her understanding, only someone who is racially marginalized can tell a story of marginalization. In her view, equally problematic was my assumption that whites—who are not racially oppressed—could tell stories about their own lives that would qualify as a critical race counterstory as we know them. I was grateful for her forcing me to clarify first what it means to solicit "counterstories" from dominant group members who were not systemically marginalized, and second, what it means to wrest from the hands of oppressed groups the exclusive ability to tell stories about struggles against endemic racism. By asking whites how *they* experience race, and what it is like for *them,* was I not re-centering the dialogue on whiteness while simultaneously depriving minorities of the very right to their own counterstories and to tell them for themselves? But need we be so arbitrarily exclusive in who can tell counterstories if they all serve to undermine racism? Regardless of the storyteller, should we not gather as many stories as possible, which all actively counter a majoritarian narrative? In considering these questions, I had to return to the original aims of the research.

A fundamental goal of my research studies was to develop narratives, or "allied counterstories" to describe white educators' pathways to antiracist activism (Chapman, 2007;

Delgado, 2000; Dixson & Rousseau, 2006; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). I concur with my peer in that ordinarily, counterstories are the untold stories of marginalized people. Their stories interrupt the racist status quo by countering majoritarian narratives of colorblindness, meritocracy, and post-raciality (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). According to Delgado and Stefancic (2001), counterstories generally serve to illuminate what life is like for those who are systemically marginalized. Hence, counterstories are about both substance *and* storyteller.

In considering, therefore, whether whites can tell counterstories, the answer is both yes and no. The stories of antiracist white educators who have developed critical consciousness around issues of race and are actively pursuing the end of racism do confront traditionally hegemonic white paradigms, which is a crucial function of counterstories (Delgado, 2000; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). We must bear in mind, however, that whites are not *racially* marginalized, and are therefore limited only to telling "allied counterstories." White counter-storytellers themselves may experience individual retaliation by fellow whites who shun them socially or label them as "niggerlovers" (Stalvey, 1970) or self-hating whites (Wise, 2008b). Still, however, whites are not systemically oppressed by pervasive, endemic racism, and can only speak from a position that is racially privileged, and not marginalized (Feagin, 2010).

Much as in the case of Afrocentric feminist epistemology, for instance, "only Black women can truly know what it is to be a Black woman" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 155; see also Collins, 2000). Thus, while it is extraordinarily important to consider the experiences of antiracist whites who constitute a peculiar, often socially ostracized "minority" among other whites, we must not hegemonically recenter the dialogue on whiteness by equating the allied counterstories of whites with the counterstories of people of color (Apple, 1996; Apple & Buras, 2006). At best, whites can inform us about the triumphs and challenges of being antiracist white

people among more majoritarian-minded whites. They can also tell "allied counterstories" about what it means to actively counter a racially unjust status quo in their teaching, scholarship, activism, and everyday lives. They cannot, however, serve "as a means for giving voice to marginalized groups" because at best, they can only sympathize—not *empathize*—with racial marginalization (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004, p. 27).

The term "white ally" is used to describe whites who stand in solidarity with people of color in overturning the racial status quo (Tatum, 1994). The counterstories of white allies who have developed critical consciousness for racial justice will illuminate how other whites might embark on the lifelong journey of assuming counterhegemonic white identities, or those that reject normalized white supremacy (Leonardo, 2009; Sleeter, 2007). The allied counterstories of the antiracist white educators in my research serve as a "tool for analyzing and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege," which these educators actively interrogate or reject altogether (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32). In this way, their allied counterstories are powerful in the struggle against normalized white supremacy and racial injustice for all.

Recommendations to Avoid Retrenchment

Based on my experience as a critical race/multicultural education researcher, I will offer here several practical suggestions for how to conduct research on whiteness without simultaneously reifying racial hegemony and centering whiteness in a manner that is counterproductive to the enterprise of social justice (Sheets, 2000). When I shared the nature of my research and my plans to feature the "allied counterstories" of antiracist white educators with my colleagues (primarily women of color), many of their reactions typified this statement: *"Oh, so you're doing a 'Beyond the Big House' for white people?"* This comment made direct reference to Ladson-Billings' work with African American, multicultural teacher educators

(2005b). Indeed, since the inception of my research, my greatest fear has always been to widen the space that allows for whites and white educators to say, "Enough about you, let me tell you about me" (Apple, 1996). I do posit, however, that highlighting the "allied counterstories" of whites who provide much hope, direction, and models of development for other whites is a worthwhile enterprise. It is also a necessary endeavor if we are to reach any meaningful goals toward ending racism and injustice by way of cross-racial community-building and social justice coalition (Feagin & Vera, 1995; Sleeter, 2007).

As I have learned from conducting both of these studies, there are incredibly important implications for critical race research that speak to the necessity of asking larger questions about what it means to use critical race theory and critical whiteness as frames for studying *privileged* groups without further marginalizing *oppressed* groups in the process. Here lie my recommendations for both the practical considerations of dominant group studies as well as a critical re-theorization of whiteness research.

Countering Hegemonic White Reification in Critical Whiteness Research: A Practical Guide

In thinking of my own research design, there are veritable, practical strategies for avoiding the minimization of the minority experience while simultaneously extracting very important aspects of the white majority experience. The following tips serve as self-admonishments for my own future work engaging in critical white research and should assist fellow researchers in avoiding many of the pitfalls I have encountered heretofore.

1. Establish an open and honest line of communication with the administrators of the schools at which you conduct research. Principals, administrators, and teacher

leaders serve as crucial advocates of the study when the researcher is not on the premises.

2. Attend or assemble as many school-wide, or cross-racial faculty gatherings as possible so teachers of color do not feel excluded from physical spaces or denied important information about the research study. Address both groups at such meetings.
3. Forge and maintain informal connections with surrounding faculty of color and directly solicit their views of the research. Focus groups or casual interactions play a crucial role in gathering minority faculty counterstories (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002)
4. Take advantage of the entire faculty for results-sharing, member-checking, or the co-construction of data. Faculty of color in spaces where white teachers are studied are an integral part of the school unit and have valuable knowledge about the inner-workings of the school as well as advanced understandings of fellow teacher performance and the racial dynamics in that space.
5. Do not hesitate to serve as cultural brokers for faculty of color who seek out researchers for information, insight, or help.
6. Use "allied counterstories" as a frame for gathering the racial narratives of whites. Do not let the semantics or the research enterprise equilibrate the racialized experiences of whites with those of people of color, nor of dominant group members and the dominated. They are inherently different and all counterstories are not created equal.

Rethinking Whiteness Research: Theoretical Considerations

The future of critical white studies rests on our ability to pose important questions about what it means to "study up," or to critically center dominant groups in multicultural research. Carefully considering the following might begin to take our research designs in directions that minimize the reification of whiteness and maximize the rich data that lie in multiracial research settings and communities.

1. How can we as researchers name whiteness without simultaneously re-centering it in hegemonic ways (Freire, 1970/2006; Sheets, 2000)?
2. Can we consider the storytelling and narratives of critical, anti-hegemonically identified whites as counterstories and counternarratives (Johnson, 2002; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002)?
3. How can we avoid whites recentering themselves in an, *"Enough about you, let me tell you about me"* maneuver (Apple, 1996; Apple & Buras, 2006)?
4. What are the moral and ethical methodological considerations of conducting actual research in mixed-race school settings where the needs of both white participants and participants of color must be met (Marx & Pennington, 2003; Tochluk, 2007)?
5. How can we as critical race and critical whiteness researchers balance the justification and veritable need to "study up" with privileged communities given the legacy of white researchers "studying down" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005)?
6. How can we critically center whiteness within critical race and critical whiteness research methodologies in ways that productively dismantle white supremacy while simultaneously attending to the need for due attention to minority counterstories and anti-majoritarian narratives of the oppressed (Bell, 1995; Freire, 1970/2006)?

These and other important inquiries emerged from my own account of how to and how *not* to address these issues with critical race, critical whiteness, and critical multicultural research designs.

Treading Lightly on Whiteness

The increasing focus on whiteness, privilege, and dominant groups within educational research is an important and useful trend in dismantling endemic systems of racism (Allen, 2005; Gillborn, 2005; Howard, 2006). Studies that call into serious question the legitimacy and invisibility of hegemonic whiteness move us closer to racial dialogues that name racism not just as a people-of-color problem, but a *white* problem (Lipsitz, 1998; Owen, 2007; Wise, 2006). If we proceed with research designs that critically center whiteness in an attempt to combat it as an oppressive regime, me must exercise extreme caution in considering the unintended consequences of such inquiry in practical terms.

In my study of white teachers of racially diverse students (as well as in my study of white educators writ large) I inadvertently re-inscribed white dominance by not taking full account of the effects of my research on the surrounding people of color who were passive participants in the study. How, then, can we simultaneously study the beliefs and practices of critical white educators while *not* contributing to the unintentional heroification of white teachers whose stories and contributions to education, at the end of the day, still trump those of re-marginalized minorities? How might we also honor the journeys, activist commitments, and scholarly contributions of antiracist white scholar-activists without hegemonically centering their "allied counterstories" in ways that enhance and support, not diminish the counterstories of people of color? This admonishment, borne from my own experience of falling short in doing so,

hopefully illuminates suggested answers to very necessary questions about thoughtful, counterhegemonic research design for the future of antiracist scholarship and action.

Appendix A

Research Study I:

Participant Profiles

The participant profiles below include more detailed information about the twelve elementary teachers who participated in part I of the study. Here, protective pseudonyms, grade levels, subjects taught, and experience levels of each teacher are included. In instances where particular information may unduly identify an individual, facts and conspicuous items have been altered or replaced. The profile portion outlines salient details about each teacher, which she or he elaborated on or reiterated as important during the course of the research.

Table 1

Participant Profiles by Gender, Grade/Specialization, and Teaching Experience

Pseudonym	Gender	Grade Level or Specialization	Years of Teaching Experience	Profile
Ms. Applegate	Female	5	3	One of 6 Jewish children who had a Black housekeeper; never a "good" student and did not attend college initially; felt extreme disgust for the Ku Klux Klan, which was active in a community near her.
Mr. Bentley	Male	3	6	Grew up making sacrifices so siblings could attend college; father participated in baseball activities that exposed him to diversity; enrolled in several African American history and cultural studies courses in college.
Miss Brighton	Female	Health and Physical Education (all elementary grades)	3	Had Black/white biracial cousins; was dating a Black man at the time of study; lived in a multiracial athlete's dorm in college; attributed desire to work at a Title I school to her student teaching in diverse schools.
Mrs. Darling	Female	4	4	Raised in a highly segregated community and "all white school," where she witnessed de jure segregation in water fountains and restaurant service; purposely sent her own children to diverse schools to counter her own experience growing up; has a firm belief in multiple intelligence theory.
Mrs. Fielder	Female	1	3	Experienced de facto segregation in the counties she was from and taught in;

				attributed her openness to diverse others to her mother and a mixed group of friends, including LGBT identified individuals; recognized inconsistencies and missing counterstories in textbooks; rectified textbooks by supplementing the curriculum to include more information about minorities.
Ms. Jordan	Female	2	8	Held strong feelings against whites who were unduly afraid of people of color; lived in a diverse, urban area for several decades; had a strong sense of community, or that individuals should work together to solve problems; attributed her openness to diversity to a long lineage of family members who participated in charity work.
Mrs. Prescott	Female	1	9	Immigrant from another country; a pioneer in her previous profession; attributes diversion of thought about race and society to a family history of innovators and non-conformists.
Mrs. Reardon	Female	5	8	Has close Latino relatives; enjoys urbanicity and the diversity that comes with it; would like to study the pedagogy of a well known urban educator with an academy near her.
Mr. Royal	Male	4	30	Experienced a life-changing mentorship with a Black man during his student teaching; frequented the teachers' lounge of an all Black school and learned a great deal about segregated schools from their perspective; travels widely to Spanish speaking countries and is fluent in the language.
Ms. Searle	Female	Special Education (grades 2 and 5)	8	Experienced racism in her own home growing up when a brother could not bring a Black friend home; has siblings who are gay and have marginalized status; believes in keeping pace with the literature on educational theory and practice to self-improve; exposed to more open, Eastern philosophies in college, which were radically different from the closed racial paradigms she had experienced before then.
Mrs. Springfield	Female	2	4.5	Often the only Jewish student growing up, and one of two outwardly identified teachers on her faculty; mother was a teacher and administrator at Title I schools similar to the one at which she currently teaches.
Miss Underwood	Female	Kindergarten	3	Moved and traveled frequently as a child; was earning a master of business administration at the time of study; sees education as needing an overhaul so as to not continue legacies of educating the elite.

Appendix B

Research Study I:

Methods and Matters of Interpretation

Methods

For those who wish to replicate the data collection or analysis, here I offer a more detailed explication of both. Part I of this study followed a qualitative, "collective case study" design (Stake, 1995) to answer important questions about the development of culturally relevant white teachers. Merriam (1998) notes: "A case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved" (p. 19). Due to the nature of the research questions, this design allowed gathering an in-depth understanding of how culturally relevant White teachers conceptualize race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy, and how those understandings informed their teaching. Each "case" was represented by a single teacher, and a total of twelve teachers comprised the collective case (Stake, 1995). This select group of white teachers enabled me to examine their classroom practices and underlying beliefs to improve teacher education and professional development for the population of interest—white teachers.

I used three data sources—transcripts from in-depth, phenomenological interviews (Seidman, 2006), interview field notes, and field notes from at least one classroom observation—to understand the racial conceptualizations, classroom practices, and life experiences of culturally relevant, antiracist white educators. The interviews yielded insight about the rationales underlying their pedagogies with racially diverse students. Field notes taken during interviews allowed me to record information and my own thoughts while interviewing teachers, my observations of classroom if teachers stepped out during interviews, and insights not captured on

tape due to breaks in the tape (e.g. having to flip or replace a tape during an interview). Field notes from classroom observations also enabled me to see how each teacher's conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy may have manifested in their classroom practices.

Setting. This study was conducted in four public elementary schools in a southeastern metropolitan area. All sites were Title I Distinguished Schools, which met or exceeded Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) mandates or significantly improved academic achievement for two consecutive years with 35% or more impoverished students (National Association of State Title I Directors, 2008). I conducted this research in elementary schools because unlike middle and high school settings, teachers generally remain with the same group of students for the duration of the school day. With the exception of a special education and physical education teacher in this sample, I was not limited to observing teachers during a particular subject, nor was I constrained to a time of day when teachers instructed a specific group of students. Given the nature of the classroom observations, seeing most teachers with a single group of children at various times throughout the day allowed me to focus on the particulars of the teachers' practices and not on varying dynamics with different groups of students. Even in the case of the specialist teachers, each of them taught either a self-contained special education or health education class on a daily basis.

Participants. The participants in this study were twelve white elementary school teachers. I employed Foster's (1993) and Ladson-Billings' (1994) community nomination method to select these participants. The African American female principals at each school were given a consent form outlining the aims, scope, and specific details of the study. I then asked the administrators who agreed to participate to recommend White teachers who were, in their view,

commitment to teaching racially diverse students, and to share a brief anecdote about the nominated teacher. I posed the following question: *"Please share the names of White teachers at this school who want to be here, who are committed to teaching children of color, and who demonstrate an appreciation for cultural diversity in their teaching."* I also requested examples by asking: *"Please give me an example or share a brief story about why you are nominating this teacher."* By soliciting more in-depth information about their choices, I took the first opportunity to assess the administrators' understanding of my nomination criteria. I relied on the judgment of these African American women in identifying teachers who were culturally relevant and dedicated to the enterprise of teaching racially diverse children. At one school, I had the unique opportunity to befriend the president of the Parent Teacher Association, who had held that post for more than a decade. She also volunteered the names of each teacher whom she thought was exemplary and dedicated to racially diverse students. I was then able to cross-check her nominations with those of the administrators, and the lists were almost identical.

I originally intended to solicit teacher nominations from parents via Parent Teacher Association (PTA) presidents. I attended the holiday programs and largest annual meetings of each PTA and introduced myself to the PTA president. However, at each school, both the administrators and PTA presidents warned of the difficulty of soliciting nominations from parents either individually or as a group based on low PTA participation. Both cited parental challenges such as odd work hours, multiple jobs, and the general inability of parents to communicate with me or them in ways necessary to receive their nominations. Thus, although I was able to attend at least one PTA meeting at each school, I was unable to solicit parents for their own nominations of teachers.

At initial meetings in which I officially invited the nominated teachers to participate in the study, I introduced myself, notified them that they had been nominated by their administrators, and distributed a consent form. For those who agreed to participate, I asked them to complete an additional form to gather basic information about subjects and grades taught, years experience, best methods for contacting them, and names they wished to be called, for example (Seidman, 2006). A final sample of ten women and two men were chosen. Profiles of these participants are available in Appendix A.

Teacher participation in this study involved three semi-structured interviews, spaced one to two weeks apart. At the end of data collection, teachers received a $20 gift card to support their educational efforts in exchange for their participation. Seventeen teachers originally comprised the sample. The five participants who withdrew from the study, or could not participate in all three interviews or the observation still received the gift card as compensation for their time.

Data Sources. Once I gathered all consent forms from principals and participants, I used three data sources—three interviews, interview field notes, and one classroom observation with field notes—to explore the racial conceptualizations, teaching practices, and life experiences of culturally relevant white teachers.

Interviews. I conducted three interviews with each teacher following Seidman's (2006) three-session sequence for in-depth, phenomenological interviewing. Using this structure, life-history and in-depth interviewing methods were combined to describe a phenomenon, or a research topic that a particular sample knows well from experience. Phenomenology "enables researchers to examine everyday human experiences in close, detailed ways" and "attempts to discover the meaning people place on their lived experiences" (deMarrais, 2004, p. 56). Using

Seidman's (2006) technique, researchers ordinarily conduct three interviews to make sense of a phenomenon by first establishing the context of the participants' experiences in a focused life history interview in which participants are asked to reconstruct their early experiences in families, schools, neighborhoods, and other settings. A second, "details of experience" interview asks participants to lay bare the details of current circumstances that inform their experience with the study topic—here, racial conceptualizations and culturally relevant teaching practices. I found it necessary to reverse the order of the first and second interviews in this study based on my need to build rapport with the teachers. Thus, in the first interview, I found it easier to ask teachers about the "details of experience" teaching in Title I schools. In the second interview, I sought information regarding the context of their experiences and focused more on their life histories. I found it awkward and preemptive to directly inquire about teachers' backgrounds, upbringings, and childhoods in the first interview after only a brief introductory meeting in which I gathered consent forms and their contact information.

I did, however, revert to Seidman's (2006) sequence in the final, "reflection on the meaning" interview. I asked participants to make meaning of any relationships between their past and present life experiences regarding the phenomenon in question – in this case, their commitment to racially diverse children and teaching in under-resourced minority schools. Ultimately, interviewees had at least three opportunities to answer primarily open-ended questions that helped me to reconstruct the influence of their life histories on their current experiences as teachers in Title I schools (Seidman, 2006). Due to the nature of these semi-structured interviews, where the focus was to organically build upon themes mentioned by participants, I provide a partial list of interview questions that attest to the scope of my inquiry, but does not include each question that was posed.

Background, Family, and Childhood Experiences:

- ☐ What was it like growing up?
- ☐ What was your family like?
- ☐ What was your neighborhood like?
- ☐ Do you remember any encounters with race? What was that like for you?
- ☐ Did you ever notice that someone else was different than you? What was that like?
- ☐ Growing up, were your friends the same or different from you? In what ways?

Education, Teacher Preparation, and Inservice Training

- ☐ Tell me about your schooling experiences. What were they like?
- ☐ How did you decide to become a teacher?
- ☐ Tell me about your teacher education. What was that like?
- ☐ What do you remember most about your teacher preparation?
- ☐ Tell me about your professional development as a teacher. What is that like?

Whiteness and White Privilege

- ☐ How do you identify yourself?
- ☐ What does being white mean to you?
- ☐ What is it like for you to teach at this school?
- ☐ Does race come up in your teaching?

Adulthood, Adult Relationships, and Experiences

- ☐ Tell me about your family.
- ☐ Tell me about your friends.
- ☐ Do you have relationships with people who are different than you? In what ways?
- ☐ Tell me about your relationships with people at this school.
- ☐ Tell me about your relationships with students.
- ☐ Tell me about your relationships with parents and families.
- ☐ What is it like for you to teach in this community?
- ☐ What does your family think about what you do as a teacher?
- ☐ What do your friends think about what you do as a teacher?

Teaching Philosophy and Life Experiences that Influence Ideologies

- ☐ What is your main purpose in teaching?
- ☐ What influences the way you think about teaching?
- ☐ Do you teach your students differently than you would others?
- ☐ What influences the way you think about race?

The interview transcripts did reveal, however, a remarkable consistency in my asking teachers many of the same questions, often using identical, verbatim phrasing.

During our initial meetings, I built a "balance of rapport" with the white teachers in this study (Seidman, 2006). The interviewees needed to trust me enough to share the sensitive

information I sought, yet clearly understand my position as researcher. I established rapport by introducing myself as a graduate student, teacher educator, and former preschool teacher. As Seidman (2006) suggests, "the interviewing relationship can be friendly but not a friendship" (p. 97). I shared information about myself as a fellow teacher to build adequate camaraderie, but refrained from sharing information (e.g. my political views) that would unduly sway the interviewer-interviewee relationship. In the first interview, I asked teachers to share their teaching philosophies, their classroom practices, and the ideologies guiding their instructional methods. During the second interview, I asked questions to gain an understanding of each teacher's ideas about race and whiteness and the connection of their racial understandings to their teaching.

After the second interview, I conducted at least one observation of each teacher, during which I took field notes. Classroom observations yielded important perspectives on how teachers' expressed philosophies in the prior two interviews manifested in their teaching. The third interview included a discussion of the observations and how teachers' observed practices aligned with topics raised in the first two interviews. The final interview also focused more pointedly on each teacher's upbringing, background, family history, schooling, and life experiences that were fundamental in shaping their understandings of race, whiteness, culturally relevant pedagogy, and the development of their understandings over time (Marshall & Rossman, 1989).

Classroom observations. Between the second and final interviews, I asked to observe teachers during a time or lesson that they felt best illustrated their multicultural teaching practices. I used the following statement to request the invitation: *"I am trying to understand how you teach with diversity in mind. Please tell me a lesson or day I could observe to see your*

best practices." The teacher and had prior knowledge of the scheduled classroom observation. Many teachers scheduled a time, but four insisted that I come at any time (unannounced) because they always taught the same way, for the same purposes. One teacher invited me back for a second observation because she wanted me to witness the children learning in a different manner than what I had observed during the one visit. Three other teachers followed suit by asking me to return on other days for events activities about which they were excited, or which they considered not to be missed. In this way, I not only fulfilled my original desire to conduct unannounced observations, but I also succeeded in observing some teachers more than once. Each observation varied in length but ranged from 55 minutes, to 2 hours, to a half day, to 1 or more hours on two separate days, according to the scheduling patterns of schools and the specific requests of teachers.

During observations, I intended to be a non-interactive observer who did not seek contact with students or teachers. In two instances, however, teachers encouraged or asked me to assist children in groups or individually. Their expressed rationale was that, as long as I was in the room, I could offer assistance from which the children could greatly benefit. In these situations, I served as a participant observer (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002) at the behest of the teachers.

I did not follow a specified observation protocol. Rather, I took note of 'the physical setting, the participants, activities and interactions, conversation, and subtle factors" (Merriam, 1998, pp. 97-98) in the classroom. I examined the materials in the room; observed teachers' interactions with students; took note of artifacts such as distributed literature, books, and posters; noticed aspects of teaching style such as adherence to classroom rules, procedures, and cooperative versus competitive activities; and noted physical features of the class such as seating arrangement, work areas, and student placement. I included diagrams to document the mapping

of each class in the field notes. In each of these, I attempted to understand how teachers' expressed teaching philosophies and conceptualizations of race and whiteness translated into their practice. I recorded my observations using pen and paper, but the notes were typed shortly after class visits to maintain the integrity, detail, and accuracy of the session (Merriam, 1998).

Data analysis. I employed Miles and Huberman's (1994) multi-tiered method to code all data gathered in this study. Guided by the theoretical frameworks of culturally relevant pedagogy and critical race theory, as well as themes that emerged from similar studies in the literature review, I first coded for all possible themes, then combined like terms and reduced thematic codes into categories (Merriam, 1998). "Travel," for example, first emerged as one of many themes leading to race consciousness, but it was later collapsed into the category of "recognizing a different life experience." In what soon follows, I present categories that emerged from these data in order to: a) parse out similarities in ideologies regarding race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy, b) describe culturally relevant teaching practices in various forms but with common underlying tenets, and c) describe multiply occurring life experiences among White teachers that affect their racial understandings, teaching practices, and commitments to culturally relevant pedagogy.

Validity and reliability. To address issues of validity I used "triangulation, member checks…and researcher's biases" (Merriam, 1998, p. 204). Triangulation involved using multiple sources of data, including interview transcriptions, interview field notes, and classroom observation field notes from which to draw conclusions. I also conducted member checks with participants during the second and third interviews. At those times, I asked teachers to clarify particular statements they had made during previous sessions or to help me understand elements of the classroom observation. These checks also provided teachers with opportunities to ask

questions about any interactions we had theretofore, to share something they had forgotten at a previous interview, and to contextualize or reflect upon their observed teaching practices (Hays, 2004). Additionally, I kept a close account of my researcher's biases throughout the study as part of the fieldwork journal. These important strategies helped to increase the validity of the study.

Finally, I have left a clear audit trail by documenting detailed explanations of how I collected the data, extracted themes and categories in the data analysis, and made choices throughout the research study (Merriam, 1998). An important component of the audit trail is a spreadsheet, which was created to record the emergent themes, the participants who supported the themes, the data sources in which themes are found, and the evidentiary text supporting each theme. Below, I provide a detailed excerpt of the audit trail spreadsheet.

Table 2

Audit Trail Spreadsheet

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: What are the life experiences that inform White teachers' conceptualizations of race, whiteness, and their commitment to culturally relevant pedagogy?			
Recognition of a different life experience	Royal	Interview 1	p. 29: I was in an all Black school in the Delta where there was no compulsory school attendance at all. p. 30: You know, they had to work in the fields
	Royal	Interview 2	p. 6: So the school was rundown, very rundown, and the children were in and out, because when I was there it was fall. That's the time you harvest cotton, so some days they were there, some days they were not.
	Royal	Interview 2	p. 7: I would hear them talk about things that they knew that were going on in the community that otherwise, I would never have been aware of, even as a teacher there. …it was out of my world of experience, it was definitely eye-opening. p. 10: So a lot of the things I was hearing about the injustices, I don't know if they* were telling me that because, "We know your father's the police chief, and we've got his ear indirectly through you," or what"
	Royal	Interview 3	p. 15: From seeing it from the Native American's perspective probably came from a movie, and it was

			Dancing with Wolves. And I usually show that move when we study Native Americans…
	Darling	Interview 1	p. 17: I come from suburbia. I've never experienced – other than seeing firsthand here, I've never experienced the cultural aspect of a minority child living and how they celebrate traditions. 'cause I only had my side. Coming from White suburbia, I was never exposed to the other side and there's two sides of America. p. 17: They were growing up when I was… and they never saw my world, and I never saw their world.
	Darling	Notes Interview 2	p. 1: Working, roughing it, started to open my eyes. "I never did live in a perfect world."
	Applegate	Interview 1	p. 30: they've never seen the ocean. They don't know what sand looks like. They don't know anything besides this neighborhood, you know, and that makes me sad.
	Jordan	Interview 1	p. 20: So you know these are kids that have never been to the beach…You know they had never been in a diverse environment.
	Jordan	Interview 3	p. 15: I've spent my life trying to better the lives of kids and from different kinds of situations.

Each set of categorized themes was organized by the three research questions posed in the study for those who wish to see the evidentiary base for how themes were extracted from the data. Any researcher who desires to replicate this study has ample, documented instruction (Merriam, 1998). Together, these strategies increased the reliability of the research.

Matters of Interpretation

The most difficult challenge in this research process was resisting the temptation to be "easier" on the participants in their retrogressive thinking based on the fact that I liked each of them a great deal. Two teachers sought to keep in touch after the study by finding me on a popular social networking site. One teacher routinely made calls, left voicemails, and sent text messages to my cell phone. These teachers, just like anyone else, are on a trajectory of lifelong learning toward cultural sensitivity and race consciousness. Thus, they expressed both progressive and problematic attitudes regarding race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy. I had to constantly resist the temptation to discount their more negative expressions in favor of those I would hope they would espouse as nice people. I sought my advisor's

wisdom numerous times to reveal and make plain my strong desire to treat participants more as friends, to give them the benefit of the doubt, and to give them far more credit than was due.

The analytic memoranda I penned as part of my researcher's journal were crucial in keeping the data analysis as objective as possible. Those memos allowed me to keep track of my own feelings toward the teachers themselves or their words. These memos and the vital self-awareness they forced into the fore increased the heightened scrutiny I used with the findings and my interpretation of the data (Miles & Huberman, 2002). Additionally, carefully documenting the words of teachers and my direct observations of them in the audit trail spreadsheet not only provided some qualitative tracking of the number of times participants mentioned certain themes, but forced me to be more meticulous in drawing out veritable themes in the text as opposed to quotes and ideas that provoked personal, emotional reaction.

Additionally, I struggled with knowing whether teachers were comfortable discussing racial issues with me given my own status as a minority. In several instances teachers implied race—particularly when speaking about parents and families accusing them of racism—and would not actively name race in our conversations. At least two teachers spoke of friends whose "parents kept the school grounds" or "worked for them in the home, for example, and I had to explicitly ask: "Do you mean they were Black?" It was also difficult to handle teachers' candor at the conclusion of the study when some of them expressed feelings about not wanting their children to end up on welfare, and the need to end voluntary segregation, which Blacks engage in. It was not surprising that I heard such statements during the last minutes of their final interviews, which was, I suppose, when the teachers and I had built enough rapport to verbalize quite hegemonic things. Hence, I struggled at the outset with too much "politeness" in racial

dialogue, and I struggled even more at the end of the study with their honest and most heart-felt opinions about the misguided nature of minorities and the poor.

Throughout this study, I also found myself holding each teacher accountable to the vast multicultural literature base I have read, and I had to take several steps back to afford them the appropriate slack. Some teachers had never had a multicultural course as part of their formal curriculum, so my holding them accountable for concepts, ideas, and progressive ideologies to which they had never been exposed was unreasonable and consistently tempting. My tendency to want to treat them as uninformed friends rather than as examples of how the master narrative runs deeply and affects even culturally relevant teachers, I believe, all balanced out in the end. The harshness with which I judged their often hegemonic answers and words was constantly juxtaposed against my extreme desire to find the very best in them as people I had befriended. I pray this balance is evident in the data analysis. For the second portion of this study, I plan to make full use of my awareness about simultaneously judging harshly and treating too kindly my participants/"new friends." To remedy my biases, I plan to enlist the help of the interviewees themselves to validate, and provide reliability measures for the data I collect from a smaller sample of white educators and scholar-activists whom I have grown to admire heretofore. I am confident that the awareness of my fondness for these participants, coupled with additional research methods, will lessen or obliterate the effect of participant likeability.

Appendix C

Research Study I:

Excerpt from the Audit Trail

The data analysis for the first empirical research study began once all transcripts were complete. I first coded each transcript based on common threads that seemed to emerge. At least 42 initial codes emerged based on the first research question: *How do white teachers conceptualize race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy?* I then created a spreadsheet organized into three sections—one for each research question—to categorize the set of codes that pertained to each research question. When I recoded the data a second time, I could combine like terms and collapse codes into at least 15 themes. A third level re-coding allowed me to collapse each sub-theme into four major themes: 1) Qualified colorblindness, 2) Deficit theories are "true," but the "true" deficits are…, 3) Whites are no better; In fact worse, or pathological and 4) Racism is real, but decontextualized understandings prevail.

Here I will detail how I arrived at one theme: *Deficit theories are "true," but the "true" deficits are…*to provide additional insight about the data analysis. Below you will find a pictorial representation of the process for collapsing themes to arrive at the aforementioned list of salient findings.

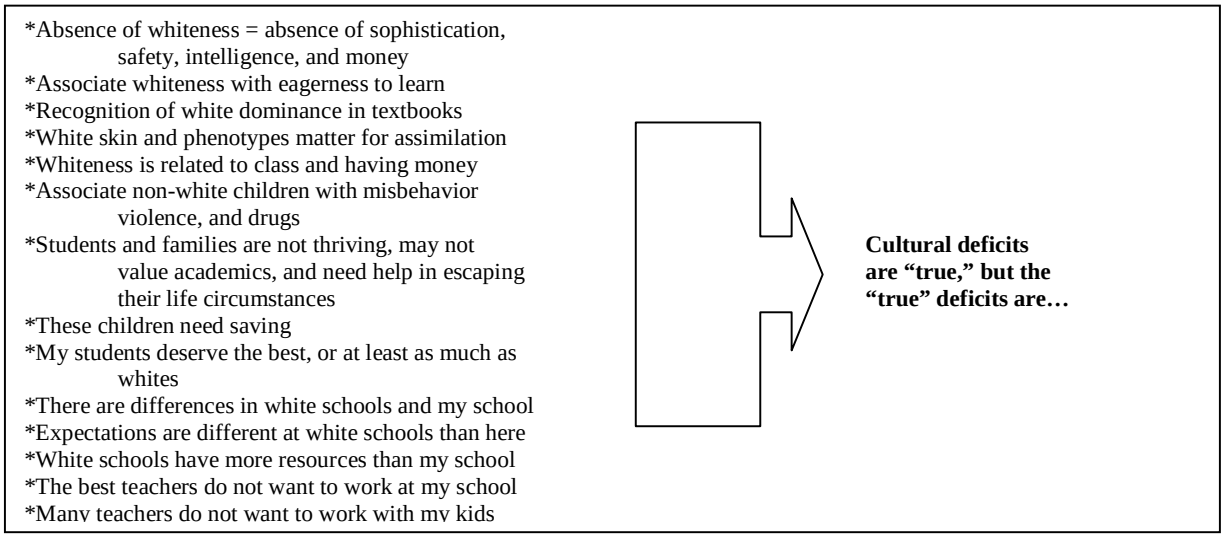

Figure 4. Visual collapse of sub-themes into major themes.

Consistent with each of the major themes, teachers presented both retrogressive and progressive strands of reasoning in their responses. In what follows I will provide an extended "density of data," textual audit trail for a single teacher who exemplified both the deficit-tinged thinking *as well as* lucid recognitions of the broader challenges that her class of all-Black students faced. Ms. Applegate is an exemplar for many of the teachers in the sample who expressed, and in many ways, embodied commitments to culturally relevant pedagogy and burgeoning antiracism while simultaneously adhering to ideologies about supposed inherent Black cultural pathologies

Table 3

Audit Trail Spreadsheet Excerpt for Ms. Applegate

RETROGRESSIVE strands of thought	Interview 1	p. 29: I mean, you've got discipline problems, but whatever, you're going to have some problems, you know…so it's like I have to deal with discipline.
	Interview 2	p. 1: My mom was a commercial real estate agent. She sold things in all the worst parts of town. We used to drive over to horrible, horrible, horrible drug streets and Stuart Avenue.
	Interview 2	p. 26: Some of them have siblings that have been shot in a gang.
	Interview 2	p. 17: my mom always invited strays to dinner and whenever we had things. The underdog or whatever you call it was always invited. So she always taught us to help the needy, I guess, charity work and helping everybody.
	Interview 2	p. 19: You can walk around with your britches around your knees and you can watch Jerry Springer all day and you can join your families that haven't graduated, or you can work hard and you can be the first in your family to graduate and be successful.
	Interview 2	p. 19: if you wanna stay home and pop out a hundred kids and be on welfare, that's your choice, but some of you are going to be successful.
	Interview 2	p. 19: if you wanna watch Jerry Springer…so there are gonna be some that are just gonna, you know, I can't save.
	Interview 2	p. 26: because I know somewhere deep inside, they have a good heart, and they probably just don't have anybody at home to bring it out for them.
	Interview 2	p. 26: they come from an environment where they have a lot of siblings in jail.

	Interview 2	p. 27: Yeah, a lot of them are gonna be the first people in their family to graduate from high school, most of them.
	Interview 2	p. 27: Yeah, the whole conversation about you can walk around with your pants around your knees and watch Oprah all day, or you can go to college. It's your choice.
	Interview 2	p. 28: But so you can tell that they don't get a lot of attention. I have a couple boys that just can't keep quiet because at home, there's so many of them, they have to be the loudest in order to get attention.
	Interview 3 Notes	p. 2: It's not about me. Neighborhood poor. Perhaps not safe.
	Interview 3 Notes	p. 2: Cussing them out. Belts and shirts are a battle. The norm. Their priorities are out of whack.
	Observation Notes	p. 3: She said, "If we don't tell them to wash their clothes, it's not like anyone at home is going to do it."
PROGRESSIVE strands of thought	Interview 1	p. 26-27: So I'd rather teach the less fortunate than the fortunate, 'cause fortunate children have every opportunity. You know, there's always going to be people that want to teach them, so I'd rather teach the ones that nobody wants to teach.
	Interview 1	p. 27: You know, they're just as smart as anyone else, but they just might be undeveloped, like you said, or they just don't know what's out there.
	Interview 1	p. 29: They don't know that there are schools where, you know, everything is nice and all the books are new and all the teachers, you know, bake, and all the parents bring Christmas presents. They don't know any of that. This is it.
	Interview 1	p. 31: And they're not any different and they still need encouragement, and they still need somebody to teach them. Just 'cause they live in a poor neighborhood doesn't make them insignificant, I guess.
	Interview 1	p. 30: they've never seen the ocean. They don't know what sand looks like. They don't know anything besides this neighborhood, you know, and that makes me sad.
	Interview 1	p. 30: And you know what's the big deal, coming here and teaching them? Nothing. They're great.
	Interview 1	p. 30: And the first I guess, whatever, two weeks of school the IP teacher gave me the deficiencies for all the children, and for everybody she gave me these deficiencies, and she's like, "You need to send them home." And I was like, "It's too soon to know if these children need deficiencies."
	Interview 1	p. 32: So I didn't realize how exceptional they were but I didn't teach up to them and I didn't teach down to them…I just had high expectations and whatever we offered them they took and they ran with… but I didn't teach any differently.
	Interview 1	p. 30: So two of my best students are the ones that got written off last year for behavior and because they're "never going to amount to anything." They're my best readers, they're my best writers, and they're my best math students. And nobody has ever, ever done anything for them.
	Interview	p. 30-31: You know what; I've never sent home a deficiency, and I

	1	just ripped it up. And I said, "I'm going to assume that I don't ever need to give you a deficiency again." …she has the worse reputation for behavior in the school…she's very respectful to me.
	Interview 1	p. 31: if they act out it's because there's some deficiency somewhere. It doesn't mean that they're stupid or they can't do it; it's because somebody missed the boat when they were teaching them.
	Interview 1	p. 31: I tell them they're smart. You know, if you tell them that they're smart they're going to live up to it. I guess I just encourage them, you know
	Interview 1	p. 32:…everybody should have high expectations for their students. …But as long as they meet the expectation that you can set for them they they're going to live up to it.
	Interview 1	p. 35: My best math student, my worst behavior. My favorite student in the whole world couldn't read a lick when I got him, and nobody knew how smart he was at math. Now he can read, and he is right up there.
	Interview 1	p. 36: He's going to be – I want him to be an architect, 'cause that's how good he is, and he likes to draw. But if you can't read, what's the point? You can't drive. You can't drive; you can't go to the grocery -
	Interview 1	p. 30: I think the African American population is misunderstood and they're unappreciated and they're undervalued.
	Interview 2	p. 2: But originally, when our city was built, the people that had the "highest" opinions about other people lived in [North County]. You'd often see them dressed up at night in the middle of the night, going from house to house.
	Interview 2	p. 2: So I wasn't conditioned to think that Black people were not deserving or not as deserving as white people.
	Interview 2	p. 17: Because if these children aren't successful, then really, we're the ones that are gonna have to pay for it, so why wouldn't we do what we can to help them in order for them to be independent and successful? They deserve as many opportunities as anybody else, irregardless of where they came from, I guess.
	Interview 2	p. 18: I want to a private Hebrew School…Jewish people were mistreated in World War II and Jewish people are mistreated, and they have stereotypes, which are incorrect. …So growing up my educators made it very clear that even though we deserve equality, we never got it.
	Interview 2	p. 18: So I guess it would be the same with the Civil War. African-Americans were mistreated, same kinda thing. Except for I think that the Jews blended better into society than the African-Americans, because it's obvious, like you said, that if you're not White you're not White. So I think that still, a lot of people look at African-Americans as if they were slaves because they stick out a lot more than Jewish people do.
	Interview 2	p. 19: and we do examples, like street smart stuff.
	Interview 2	p. 19: I have to, like, do real-life examples with them.

	Interview 2	p. 23: I guess it's maybe because I realized that there are probably better ways of teaching students than the way I was taught, because I didn't get anything from it.
	Interview 2 Notes	p. 1: "Parts of Speech" Miko and Amelia (names used on a poster in the room)
	Interview 2 Notes	p. 1: Capitalization poster: Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Mexico, Spanish
	Interview 2	p. 27: I would call her…and she would say, "Oh, they just need a hug. Just give them a hug."
	Interview 2	p. 28: when I work with them, it's like they scoot their chair right up next to me so we're touching, which I know is completely against the law.
	Interview 2	p. 32: And then I started going to school with a mixed demographic of people than when I went to private school.
	Observation Notes	p. 8: She thinks good pedagogy transcends grade levels. …We don't sit at desks…We sit on the carpet, they lie down, it's more comfortable. It worked in Kindergarten. Who said we have to stop?
	Observation Notes	p. 4: Ms. Applegate explained that she wants them to use the dictionary, encyclopedia, and other traditional research methods before Google. "Otherwise," she said, "that's all they'll know. Anyone can look on Google, but you need to have research skills, too." …if they didn't have "T" for Thailand, they then could look up Asia in the "A" volume. Brilliant.
	Observation Notes	p. 1: She invited me to come on this day to "hang out with us" and read to her students, who were accustomed to various friends and community members coming to do the same.
	Observation Notes	p. 7: and then mentioned wanting to have my Emory students come to her next year to work as tutors, just to see.
	Interview 3 Notes	p. 1: Community guests (invitations). It's the right thing to do.

In many of her verbalizations, Ms. Applegate demonstrated either deficit-tinged or rather progressive views of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy, or at times *both* simultaneously. Ms. Applegate experienced marginalized status herself as a Jewish woman. She spoke quite eloquently about understanding the racial struggles of Blacks via her own experiences with anti-Semitism. Specifically, Ms. Applegate could recognize the importance of having a white phenotype and the ease with which Jewish people could more easily assimilate to US culture and life based on looking white and therefore evading the negative stereotypes and real discrimination associated with Blackness. At the same time, however, Ms. Applegate's frustrated, isolated tirade about watching Oprah and Jerry Springer, for instance, also revealed

rather sweeping, negative assumptions about the types of families from which she *assumed* her students hailed. Among her primary fears was that students would "end up" like many of their gangster siblings and family members who were shot, killed, or presumed to be involved in illicit street behaviors. The assumption of large families characterized by multiple children, noisy volumes, and low educational aspirations was evident in her rant. In so doing, she revealed an ascription to cultural deficit theories of Black and minority culture, which dominate retrogressive, majoritarian modes of thought.

Ms. Applegate also presented quite sophisticated understandings of the societal, more deeply entrenched, institutional barriers for her students' achievement in school and in life. She made multiple references to children having been failed by previous teachers based on the fact that many of them could not read or had already been "written off" as disciplinary problem-children and throwaways of sorts. Ms. Applegate noted that when she began her tenure at the school, fellow teachers made a point of passing along the negative "reputations" of several of her students even before she even had the opportunity to know them for herself. She also noted disparities in school, textbook, and curriculum quality and gave examples of how she must supplement the ill-equipped school with her own books, materials, and curricular examples that are more relevant to her students' lives. In fact, almost the entirety of her library consisted of books, tapes, and listening equipment she purchased and maintained herself.

In addition to the absence of high expectations, proper materials, and disciplinary savoir faire from their previous teachers, Ms. Applegate was also quick to illuminate the lack of care her students had received in the past, and were legally prohibited from receiving even from her. She had great difficultly with laws against hugging and physical touching, and she lamented both on and off the record about her sadness and frustration. Such policies, she believed, stripped

children of much-needed human interaction, which she longed to give children whom she presumed either did not receive at home, or desired it irrespective of home conditions. Ms. Applegate also questioned and outright condemned the basic inattention to her children's developmental needs as they related to furniture, classroom arrangement, and the structure of the US classroom itself. On a tour she led, Ms. Applegate showed me the abandoned Kindergarten room from which she had removed several items for use in her own class. She used large rugs for lessons on the floor, low furniture and bookshelves for easy access from the carpet, and she employed circle time-esque floor activities for children who needed more physical space, comfort, and room to roll around. She disliked the very assumptions associated with how children are expected to sit upright and learn, and she blamed a lack of inattention to their basic needs as children for much of their previous failure or disinterest in academics if there was any.

Importantly, Ms. Applegate could quite readily point to the undervaluation of African Americans and their culture as one of their primary reasons for low achievement in schools and society. She spoke several times about their impoverished (yet assumed to be unsafe) neighborhoods, but fully understood that the city in which she lived was bifurcated and segregated along strict racial lines. She spoke of a county in the north, which was designed as a destination for white flighters and staunch racists—even serving as the seat of the Ku Klux Klan. She also spoke of the stark contrast in neighborhood quality she gained exposure to as the daughter of an urban real estate agent. She understood city lines as primarily demarcated based on race even though she attributed some degree of pathology to those who could not escape their boundaries.

Like many participants in this study, Ms. Applegate offered a variety of verbalizations and innuendos that both supported and refuted her expressed and demonstrated commitments to

culturally relevant pedagogy and antiracist ideas. By examining an extended trail of her data set, one can also surmise that both progressive and retrogressive strands permeate her responses and ideologies about race and whiteness, and how she makes meaning of teaching minority children. Her beliefs and practices are representative of many others in the sample, and the intricacies of thought she presented strongly typify those identified throughout this research. Like Ms. Applegate, many teachers in this study still adhered to some retrogressive tendencies of the white majority, thus upholding and somewhat reaffirming cultural deficit theories. What distinguishes them from many others, however, is that they also grasp larger concepts of the "true" deficits, or school and social impediments, that preclude their students, their families, and Black communities from progressing as whites do. It is their recognition of the "true" deficits in US schools and society that offer strong glimpses of hope for the more progressive thought patterns and practices of white teachers who are burgeoning antiracists.

Appendix D

Research Study II:

The Method and the Madness

Methods

Here I provide the more "nitty gritty" elements of what Ladson-Billings (2005) has termed "the method and the madness" (p. 13) for the second portion of this research. Fortunately, given how extraordinarily helpful, introspective, and supportive of my work the participants were, "madness" was minimal. Similar to Ladson-Billings' explanation of the methodological techniques she employed to examine the multicultural commitments of a group of African American teacher educators, I offer needed details, instructions for replication, and possible new directions for researchers who may wish to design studies with similar aims. Ladson-Billings' (2005) and my studies depart, however, in that I explore the antiracist trajectories of *white* educators who comprised the sample for the research presented here. My goal was to examine the racial conceptualizations, culturally relevant pedagogies, and the formative life experiences that led a small group of white teacher educators and scholar-activists down similar paths toward more multicultural stances and antiracist views. With that challenge in mind, I embarked on my research journey using the following methodological techniques, considerations, and limitations.

Participants. This sample of participants chosen for this study consisted of eight well-known, highly vocal teacher educators and scholar-activists whose work I repeatedly encountered in: my studies as a doctoral student, my involvement in teacher education, activist meetings and venues, professional research conferences, and the most popular and widely-used literature in multicultural and antiracist education. All participants in the sample appear on one

or more lists generated by the 2010 Social Justice and Multicultural Teacher Educators Resource Survey (Gorski, 2010). For instance, five of the eight participants—Christine Sleeter, Paul Gorski, Peggy McIntosh, Marilyn Cochran-Smith, and Tim Wise—all appear (in this order) on the list of "Most Influential Multicultural or Social Justice Education Scholars." Additionally, Julie Landsman's *A White Teacher Talks about Race* appears on the list of "Most Recommended Entry-Level Books on Multicultural or Social Justice Education." Jane Elliott's "Eye of the Storm" and "Blue-Eyed" documentary accounts of her famous racial experiment with white elementary school students are the seventh and ninth "Most Helpful Documentary Films" in multicultural and social justice education. Finally, Joe Feagin's "Racism Review" blog was also named as one of the "Most Helpful Websites" for social justice teacher educators. Each participants in this study appears on at least one, and in many cases, *multiple* lists generated by EdChange, a respected group of educators "dedicated to equity, diversity, multiculturalism and social justice" (EdChange, 2010). The results of these polls—generated by multicultural teacher educators and activists dedicated to racial and social justice—indicate the powerful presence, significant influence, and almost ubiquitously recognized contributions of those included in my sample.

To arrive at the identified sample, I was guided by the following selection criteria:

1. Explicit stance and scholarship in the field
2. Self-identity as educators
3. Introspection

Explicit stance and scholarship in the field. The eight white educators and scholar-activists in this study were chosen based on the degree to which they had formerly expressed their views on race, whiteness, and antiracism. That is, the participants selected here are

"known" in their respective fields for their antiracist stance and work. Christine Sleeter and Joe Feagin, for instance, have written pieces entitled "White Racism," (Feagin & Vera, 1995; Sleeter, 1994) in which both scholars denounce whites' purported colorblindness, their invisible and often willful ignorance about race, and their unearned racial privilege. Peggy McIntosh, Julie Landsman, Paul Gorski, and Tim Wise are frequenters of the annual White Privilege Conference and the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity, for example, at which these scholars continue to make public their strong stance on antiracism.

Marilyn Cochran-Smith has served as a keynote speaker at venues such as the National Association for Multicultural Education[20], where she has rendered explicit the necessity to revise teacher education to meet the needs of children of color. Similar to many of the participants, Cochran-Smith also expresses her multicultural, social justice-centered "stance" on education in ample publications on matters related to the transformation of teacher education and P-12 education in ways that challenge "cycles of oppression" and upturn the social status quo (Cochran-Smith, 2001, 2004, 2005; Cochran-Smith, Shakman, Jong, Terrell, Barnatt, & McQuillan, 2009). Neither Jane Elliott nor Peggy McIntosh has authored books on their work, and in the latter case, in direct opposition to the race and gender-based oppression in the institution of academia. Rather, Peggy McIntosh pens brief working papers on various topics related to race, whiteness, and white privilege. Likewise, Jane Elliott uses her website, her popular "Brown Eyes/Blue Eyes" instructional video series, and her multiple public speaking engagements and diversity training sessions to make unmistakably clear her commitment to antiracism. Each of the participants selected for this research, by way of their own scholarship,

[20] Marilyn Cochran-Smith delivered the keynote address entitled, "Teacher Education for Social Justice" at the November 2005 National Association for Multicultural Education (2005) annual conference, which I attended and heard her address.

engagements, and activities, communicated an explicit stance against racism in addition to their pronounced commitments to antiracism.

Self-identity as educators. What distinguishes this research from previous studies of white antiracists is its exclusive focus on white antiracists who deeply influence education in general and teacher education in particular. Therefore, it was crucial that each of the participants identify themselves as teachers, teacher educators, or *educators* in some capacity. Marilyn Cochran-Smith, Jane Elliott, Julie Landsman, Peggy McIntosh, and Christine Sleeter have all served as classroom teachers. Each of the participants, many of whom also explicitly self-identify as teacher educators, have a direct hand in educating large numbers of future classroom teachers. Joe Feagin, who self-identifies as "a sociologist who works on race and racism issues," also made clear his favorite occupation: Teaching students is what I enjoy most in life. Serious students represent the future of this nation—and this world. And I feel privileged to have taught so many fine young people over four decades now" (Feagin, 2011). Similarly, Tim Wise self-identified as an "antiracist writer and educator" (Wise, 2011) whose work frequently entails "capacity-building trainings with teachers about how to do antiracist pedagogy in the classroom, classroom management, curriculum design, and all of that…not with just colleges and universities, but obviously K-12s, both public and private." Each of these participants maintains a close affiliation with education as former or veteran teachers, teacher educators, or scholar-activists whose teaching spheres are not limited to universities, schools of education, or P–12 classrooms. Rather, these educators occupy a variety of "classrooms" and reach wider swathes of "students," including multiple publics in non-traditional settings.

Introspection. A chief aim of this research study was to uncover the foundational experiences, formative events, and significant life experiences that inform the participants'

understandings of and commitment to antiracism. Thus, the white educators and scholar-activists chosen for this research are constantly engaged in introspective processes of naming and describing the significance of race, racism, and whiteness in their own lives. Whether in their academic scholarship, personal autobiographical accounts, ongoing engagements, or personalized research trajectories, the white educators in this sample have, and continue to make public their own reflections on race. In "Blind Vision: A Story from a Teacher Educator," Cochran-Smith (2004) candidly reveals both her triumphs and missteps as a "White European American woman" at helm of a teacher education program. In her self-reflective piece, she makes no secret about her struggles as a white teacher educator then and now:

> …despite my deep commitments to an antiracist curriculum for all students, whether children or adults, and despite my intentions to promote constructive discourse about the issues in teacher education, I realized I didn't 'get it' some (or much) of the time. (p. 86)

These participants' willingness to publicly share their introspective processes, as Cochran-Smith (2004) engages in here, was requisite for inclusion in this sample. Fellow antiracist teacher educator Christine Sleeter also frequently reflects on her white identity in her scholarly discussions of the vast number of white, female, middle-class, primarily monocultural pre- and inservice teachers (Sleeter, 2001, 2004). In a chapter entitled "White Preservice Students and Multicultural Education Coursework," Sleeter (1995) did not fail to include her own self-assessment:

> About twenty-two years ago, I occupied the same conceptual space as the White students I now teach. In retrospect, two of the most important lessons I learned—and learning them took a great deal of time and work—were to ask the right questions and to seek answers from people I had been socialized to ignore or look down upon. (p. 28)

Sleeter's (1995) and Cochran-Smith's (2004) self-admonitions are characteristic of the reflection and introspection demonstrated by all participants in this study. Peggy McIntosh's

(1998/2001; 1989a, see also 1990) reflections on her discovery and unlearning of white privilege are seminal in the field of education in general and teacher education in particular. Julie Landsman's (2001, 2008) reflections on her experiences as a veteran white teacher are also among the most popularly cited memoirs for use with mostly white women in teacher education (Gorski, 2010). In Jane Elliott's (2011) frequently booked antiracism workshops, and as an "internationally known teacher, lecturer, and diversity trainer," she is constantly reminded of the necessity for her own racial awareness, vigilance, and self-refinement: "I struggle with it all the time. And I say things—I know I say things that are flat out *wrong.* And I can remember when I said them" (Elliott, 2010). Her sobering reflections on her own constantly developing antiracist commitment are not only helpful to others, but characteristic of the antiracists featured here.

Similarly, much of the scholarly work by Paul Gorski (1998; in process) and Tim Wise (2008a, 2008b) focuses explicitly on racial self-reflection and centralizes their own autobiographies as white men as the primary subject matter. Feagin (2010) also uses his research and scholarship to reflect upon and refine his personal pursuit of "liberty and justice for all" in the context of a "racist America" (2001). In pieces with such titles as, "White Isolation and the Price We All Pay" (in Feagin, 2010), the author includes himself in the racial dialogue and poses serious questions about the direct costs of racism to himself as a white American in a foundationally racist country (see also *The Many Costs of Racism*, Feagin & McKinney, 2003). Feagin also calls for action and what some view as "radical" racial remedies (a new constitutional convention, for instance) that would help to fulfill his unending quest to reconstruct a country that lives up to its democratic ideals. In so doing, Feagin exposes his desires, hopes, and dreams for visible and active antiracist movements that will draw both

citizens of color *and* himself closer to the America he frequently reflects upon—one which he openly states he would love to take part in (Feagin, 2010; Feagin & Vera, 1995).

Data sources. I used two data sources—an extended interview and a body of autobiographical literature and academic scholarship—to explore the racial conceptualizations, pedagogical practices, and life experiences of eight antiracist white scholar-activists.

Interviews. I conducted an in-person interview with every antiracist educator included in this study. Each interview followed a compressed form of Seidman's (2006) three-session sequence for in-depth, phenomenological interviewing. This format differs slightly from its original use as a multi-interview process over time and was implemented on the basis that each of the interviewees had established bodies of literature and resources from longitudinal and ongoing reflection spanning decades. Thus, the truncated interview sequence was more justifiable because the interviews were but one iteration in the lifelong sequence of reflection previously engaged in by these scholars. Moreover, the topics on which participants were asked to further reflect were priorly addressed in their own work to varying degrees.

Phenomenology "enables researchers to examine everyday human experiences in close, detailed ways" and "attempts to discover the meaning people place on their lived experiences" (deMarrais, 2004, p. 56). Using Seidman's (2006) technique, I conducted an interview lasting one to two hours to make sense of the white antiracist phenomenon by first establishing the context of the participants' experiences in a focused life history segment. Participants were asked to highlight salient early experiences in families, schools, neighborhoods, and other settings that were formative in the development of their racial conceptualizations and antiracist commitments. In a second segment, or the "details of experience" portion of the interview, I asked participants to lay bare the details of current circumstances that informed their experience

with the study topic—here, their racial conceptualizations and pedagogical practices. The final, "reflection on the meaning" portion of the interview required participants to make meaning of any relationships between their past and present life experiences regarding their commitments to antiracist activism. In this way, interviewees were given extended opportunities to answer open-ended questions that clarified the influence of their abbreviated (yet previously written about) life histories on their current experiences (Seidman, 2006).

Due to the nature of these semi-structured interviews, where the focus is to organically build upon themes mentioned by participants, I provide below sample questions from the interview protocol which attest to the scope of my inquiry, but could not include each question posed to interviewees.

SEGMENT 1: LIFE HISTORY

- ☐ What was it like growing up?
- ☐ What was your family like?
- ☐ What was your neighborhood like?
- ☐ What were your friends like?
- ☐ Growing up, were your friends the same or different from you? In what ways?
- ☐ What was your school like?
- ☐ Tell me about your schooling experiences. What were they like?
- ☐ What do you remember most about your education?
- ☐ When did you first notice that someone else was different than you? What was that like?
- ☐ What was your first encounter with race? What was that like for you?

SEGMENT 2: DETAILS OF EXPERIENCE

- ☐ How do you identify yourself?
- ☐ What does being white mean to you?
- ☐ How did you decide to become an educator?
- ☐ Tell me about your professional roles prior to now. In what ways have you been involved in education?
- ☐ What is it like for you to be a white person doing the type of work you do?
- ☐ How do you handle instances of resistance in your teaching?
- ☐ Do you have relationships with people who are different than you? In what ways?
- ☐ Do you maintain relationships with people you knew before you started doing this work?
- ☐ Tell me about your relationships with the family you have now.
- ☐ Tell me about your relationships with the friends you have now.
- ☐ Tell me about your relationships with the people you mention in your work.
- ☐ Tell me about your relationships with the students or teachers you mention in your work.
- ☐ What is it like for you to teach in various capacities?
- ☐ What does your family think about the work you do?
- ☐ What do your friends think about the work you do?

SEGEMENT 3: REFLECTION ON THE MEANING

- ☐ What is your primary purpose in the work you do?
- ☐ What is your primary purpose in the writing you do?
- ☐ What MOST influences the way you think about education?
- ☐ What MOST influences the way you think about race, racism, and whiteness?
- ☐ What MOST influences the way you think about racial or cultural others?
- ☐ What MOST influences the way you think about whites?
- ☐ What MOST influences your commitment to do the type of work you do?
- ☐ What MOST influences your commitment to write the things you do?

In the protocol, I categorized sample questions that illustrate the scope of the interviews according to Seidman's (2006) modified in-depth, phenomenological interviewing sequence. Participants were not asked questions that deviated significantly from those found here, or those they had not previously broached themselves in their autobiographical and scholarly writings.

Ordinarily I would conduct multiple interviews with study participants. However, these scholar-activists maintained demanding schedules and made clear at the outset that they could only accommodate a single one to two-hour interview. I was, however, able to establish rapport with each participant that left open the possibility of extended conversations via email and phone. In fact, four of the eight participants requested some type of scholarly contribution from me as a form of reciprocity. Both Julie Landsman and Paul Gorski requested that I make contributions to their edited books by writing a chapter. Joe Feagin asked that I post the findings of my research on his *Racism Review* blog. Peggy McIntosh requested a reciprocal interview so she could gather my thoughts on the use of her work in my teaching. Thus, after I interviewed her for my study, she immediately interviewed *me* for her own research. In this way, we both served as interviewer and interviewee—as participants in one another's research. Tim Wise shared that he was in the process of assembling the stories of historical and contemporary white antiracists and requested that I share my data with him for the compilation of his own work.

Participants were fully encouraged to keep in contact with me (the researcher) in the

instance of wanting to add to their responses, to clarify specific issues we discussed in person, or simply to talk collegially about topics raised during their interview. Indeed, after each of their interviews were transcribed, all participants had opportunities to respond to these four follow-up questions:

1. Is there anything you would like to clarify, which might help to explain how you have come to your racial understandings?
2. Is there anything you would like to add, which might help to explain how you have come to your racial understandings?
3. Do you still struggle in your understandings or actions where racism, or any forms of oppression are concerned?
4. Do you have any new thoughts about your life experiences, this process, or any unmentioned ruminations sparked by participating in this interview?

With the exception of two participants, all interviewees responded to these queries by providing direct answers, including new input on their revised transcripts, or pointing me to published work in which they had previously discussed these issues. Julie Landsman supplied lengthy and substantive answers to each of these questions in lieu of editing her original transcript. Participants in this portion of the research study do not remain anonymous and were made aware of the lack of anonymity. Each interviewee provided written, informed consent acknowledging their agreement to participate as named individuals. Because the participants are identified in the presentation of data, I was especially careful to provide each interviewee with these opportunities to edit, revise, or expand their interview transcriptions and thoughts. Additionally, interviewees were given opportunities to edit the drafts of all written products associated with this research before they were made public.

Of the eight participants, four edited their interview transcripts to include further detail, clarify thought, or make slight corrections. Christine Sleeter, for example, re-ordered the schools at which she had taught as a young teacher because I had chronologically transposed their names. Likewise, Joe Feagin inserted parenthetical terms such as “(smiles)” to emphasize the light-

hearted nature of a comment he made during the interview, which lost its savor as a joke without the emotional and parenthetical qualification. In sum, five of the eight participants expounded on the content of their original interview by editing their transcript, answering the aforementioned follow-up questions, or a combination of both. Again, because each participant is named in the presentation of results, I found it quintessential to give the interviewees every opportunity to own their data, and therefore, to tell their own story.

Autobiographical and scholarly literature. To further bolster the data set, in addition to the interviews and follow-up communications, I also used a second data source—the participants' own autobiographical literature and scholarship—to develop context and clarity for my interview questions and data analysis. In this study, I had access to ample, published, readily available details about the lives of each participant. Their scholarship and multimedia resources (DVDs, instructional videos) included illustrations of their work with students, teachers, and wider audiences, and their writings provided details about their life experiences. Hence, during interviews with these well-known antiracist white educators, I could more acutely focus on asking each of them to describe or reiterate the formative events that were fundamental in shaping their views on race, whiteness, culturally relevant pedagogy, and antiracist activism based on the bodies of literature and materials they had already produced.

Because these antiracist educators were not limited to teaching in traditional classrooms or teacher education settings and were located across the nation, I was unable to observe their practices as culturally relevant pedagogues and active educators. I did, however, during the interview, solicit specific examples of instances in which they had confronted racism, countered whiteness, or intervened in the resistance to multiculturalism that white teachers—or whites in general—tend to show. Each scholar-activist selected for this sample had also written about

such instances in their publications. Unlike the elementary school teachers studied in Part I of this research, I could rely on both the verbal retellings and written accounts of how these participants had employed culturally relevant, critically conscious pedagogies with a broad range of learners.

Paul Gorski is a known scholar who, as a participant in his own dissertation research, offered ample detail about his personal journey toward antiracism, which he described as having spawned from the ugly racist expressions from his father at a time when his best friends were Black and Latino (1998). Christine Sleeter has discussed her background as a resident of various racially sheltered, mostly white neighborhoods and communities characterized by "white racial bonding" (1994). Similarly, in his work, Joe Feagin (2010) offered reflection on his whiteness by way of his strong, "equal-status" relationships with black friends and the many "Americans of color" who helped him to gain racial perspective and freed him from a life of white hypocrisy. Even in acknowledging his own resistance to white racism, Feagin (2010) simultaneously cautioned against exalting a few white antiracists to balance out the overwhelmingly oppressive regime of racist whites who dominate the racial landscape. In her books, Julie Landsman (2001, 2003, 2008) shared intimate details about her encounters—positive and negative—with people and students of color. Similarly, Cochran-Smith (2004) gave ample insight into her own world as a beginning white female teacher educator in Philadelphia and her "experience as a first-generation-to-college, working-class girl who had pushed into a middle-class, highly educated, male profession" (p. 87). Finally, both Jane Elliott and Tim Wise offer "racial reflections" in multiple videotaped accounts of their speaking engagements and training sessions. Wise is especially well-known for his personal memoirs of coming to see racism as profoundly problematic and white racism as altogether pernicious (2008a, 2008b). In extended interviews

with each of these antiracist white educators, I inquired about the experiences that best explained their public pursuits of racial justice. I supplemented these interviews by also drawing upon the life experiences they had themselves chosen to highlight in their own published work.

Before and after in-person interviews with each participant in this study, I used samples of their autobiographical literature and publicly available work to help construct "allied counterstories." Prior to each interview, I identified works in which participants had offered detailed examples, personal background information, or the specific formative events they found salient in the formation of their antiracist commitments. Each of their works in which such instances are mentioned were examined to formulate questions that were uniquely tailored to each interviewee. The inclusion of their literature and self-produced resources also helped to clarify answers given *during* the interviews and enriched the narratives of each participant. Below lies a table with select examples of literature-based questions that fell within the scope of the semi-structured interview protocol but further honed in on the specific, previously written about experiences of each participant.

Table 4

Examples of Individually-Tailored Interview Questions

Interviewee	**Tailored Interview Question**
Marilyn Cochran-Smith	■You wrote that you were a first generation college student and working class girl who managed to push into a middle class, highly-educated, male dominated profession. Do these things help lead you to a more multicultural stance? Why did you list these identities and not others? ■Was the first time you started thinking deeply about race through your experiences in Philadelphia? Or had you started thinking about race and whiteness before you went there?
Jane Elliott	■I know you conducted the first brown eyes/blue eyes experiment with your all-white students around the time Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated? But was that the impetus for the lesson, or was it something else?

	■You say,"The task of combating prejudice and racism requires education, introspection, and commitment." Can you tell me a bit more about what prompted your own introspection about race?
Joe Feagin	■You make a point of expressing gratitude for the Americans of Color around you who have contributed to your perspective. Is that what explains your commitment to antiracism? ■Throughout your books you are a proponent of equal status relationships between whites and Americans of Color. Why? Did you experience very many of those relationships in your own life?
Paul Gorski	■In your dissertation, you describe your father and your Black and Latino friends as being a source of cognitive dissonance. Why? ■As a white male, what motivates you to be president-elect of a multicultural organization and a member of an anti-sexist organization?
Julie Landsman	■You mention the incident of using the "N word" with your black housekeeper in both of your books. Is this your earliest memory of racism? ■When did you realize that your childhood neighborhood was all white not by accident, but because of restrictive covenants? Did you question it then? Or later in life?
Peggy McIntosh	■In your writing, you mention your ability to discover white privilege through your work in women's studies and examining male privilege. Is this parallel what explains your commitment to dismantling white privilege? ■You mention that you were "taught not to see" white privilege throughout your entire life. Can you tell me when you first began to realize that?
Christine Sleeter	■In the book you edited with Larkin, you mentioned that you had views similar to your teachers in 1973. What did you mean by that? ■In the biographies you include in your Un-standardizing the Curriculum book, you describe yourself as an antiracist multicultural teacher educator. Why not just a multicultural educator? Why distinguish yourself as an "antiracist?"
Tim Wise	■You mention the separation from your Black friends as particularly painful in White Like Me. Is this the reason you became an antiracist? ■ You speak about your early learning at a historically Black university – Tennessee State. Was that germinal in your commitment to antiracism?

At the conclusion of interviews, follow-up correspondence regarding the interview transcriptions, and analyses of the participants' autobiographical and scholarly literature, I also penned entries for my researcher's journal. These reflective and analytical entries served as expanded "notes that represent some level of inference or analysis" (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002, p.

153; Merriam, 1998). The entries also served as record of a personal dialogue with myself regarding "hunches" about findings and possible interpretations. Throughout the study, my journal entries allowed me to "stay self aware" (Miles & Huberman, 2002, p. 397), to draw out my researcher's perspective (see Appendix E), and to remind myself of its influence on the data collection and analysis.

A primary aim of this research was to understand life experiences that enable certain whites to more readily embrace antiracism and develop critical consciousness. Thus, a critical race methodology enabled me to describe the specific events or life experiences that might help to inspire more whites to do the same. By using allied counterstories to highlight what is possible in fomenting antiracist white thought and commitment, I disrupted the oft-cited and well-documented tendency of white teachers and teacher educators to adhere to dominant white ways of thinking (see, for example, Bell, 2002).

Member checks. Regarding member checks, or "taking data back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results were plausible" (Merriam, 1998, p. 204), participants were given the option to review copies of their interview transcript to clarify their responses, reflect on their answers, or check the accuracy of their statements according to the transcription. In this way, the participants could co-construct meaning, define their own experiences, and collaborate on representing their words, particularly because their identities were attached to the data they supplied (deMarrais, 2004). Additionally, interviewees were given opportunities to edit the drafts of written products associated with this research before they were made public.

Unlike the previous empirical study, I entered the second portion of this research with stronger suppositions that the participants would actively employ race consciousness and

culturally relevant pedagogies. My assumptions about their more advanced antiracist stances were likely based on their established reputations and scholarship in multicultural education. Therefore, I used interviews, follow-up correspondence about transcriptions, and the participants' own literature to present the allied counterstories that describe the individual journeys of antiracist white educators who are farther along the spectrum of critical consciousness. These allied counterstories were characterized by "thick, rich description" and interweave the educators' life experiences into a coherent story of their development (Geertz, 1973; Merriam, 1998, p. 29). The narratives yielded a deeper understanding of the developmental trajectories of antiracist whites who have been traveling down paths toward antiracism long enough to be well-known for their scholarship and activism in this arena. Before counternarratives and possible typologies describing the relationship among life experiences, racial conceptualizations, and embodiments of their antiracist activism could be constructed, however, data from interviews and autobiographical literature were analyzed.

Critical race theory and data analysis. Critical race theory (CRT) provided the theoretical framework and underpinning for how this data set was analyzed. CRT undergirded the research study based on its recognition of the deeply embedded nature of race in the United States and its permeation of the national white psyche. This theory originated in the legal field with the scholarship of Derrick Bell, Richard Delgado, and Alan Freeman (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), but was later introduced to education via Ladson-Billings and Tate (2006). Its fundamental goal of challenging the dominant discourse on race, however, provided an apt frame for examining education and analyzing data with an oft-avoided race-conscious lens (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Specifically, a central feature of CRT is the use of counterstorytelling to challenge majoritarian narratives (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

Critical race methodology and the analysis of counterstories has been employed by Solorzano and Yosso (2002), Gutierrez-Jones (2001), and others. Yosso (2006) defined critical race theory as "a theoretical and analytical framework that challenges the ways that race and racism affect educational structures, practices, and discourses" and "a social justice project that works toward the liberatory potential of schooling" (p. 172). Although the tenets and "conceptual tools" (Gillborn, 2006) of critical race theory are many, the most pertinent elements of CRT that informed the data analysis for this research are:

1. Highlighting the centrality, permanence, and endemic nature of racism in U. S. culture and society;
2. Exposing the pervasive dominance of whiteness in the prevailing racial hierarchy as put forth by critical white studies;
3. Challenging the "master narrative," or the dominant ideology that claims neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy.

A primary aim of this research was to understand life experiences that enable certain whites to more readily embrace antiracism and develop critical consciousness. Thus, a critical race methodology allowed me to describe the specific events or life experiences that might help to inspire more whites who can do the same. By using allied counterstories to highlight what is possible in fomenting antiracist white thought and commitment, critical race researchers disrupt the oft-cited and well-documented tendency of white teachers and teacher educators to adhere to dominant white ways of thinking (see, for example, Bell, 2002). The task of this research was to "work backwards" from the self-reported formative events and life experiences that white educators attributed as being the most influential in their decisions to adopt antiracism. It was my hope that by using critical race theory to analyze the events that most significantly contributed to their racial understandings, antiracist activist efforts, and commitments to cultural relevance, race-conscious pedagogical models for other white educators could be generated.

I first used Miles and Huberman's (1994) multi-tiered method to code the interview data. I coded for all possible themes by using colored highlighters to mark content that corresponded to each research question. I then transferred the coded content to "code sheets" for each interviewee, which again disaggregated the content by research question. I chose to use code sheets as opposed to a multi-interviewee matrix both to maintain the integrity of each participant's story, as well as to compare findings across participants since there were only eight. In Part I of my research study, I determined beforehand that attempting to maintain the narrative of a dozen teachers would be cumbersome for the reader and less useful than looking at commonality of experience across a sizable group. Here, however, because each allied counterstory is compelling in itself, I coded the data first *within* transcripts, then *across* transcripts.

In the instance that codes overlapped, they were included under each relevant research question. For example, many interviewees cited their belief in the "malleability" of white power and white people, or the belief that structural white power, the majoritarian white psyche, and whites themselves can and must change. This was relevant both to how they conceptualized whiteness as well as their purposes for teaching specifically to the needs of white students, teachers, and audiences. Next, I reduced thematic codes into categories that more broadly encapsulated what the themes individually referenced, but collectively described (Merriam, 1998). The combination of like terms also addressed overlaps in coding based on better capturing the gestalt of the individual codes. Many of the participants, for instance, expressed beliefs about the incompleteness of a "white-washed," Eurocentric curriculum—which they often suffered through themselves. What they were collectively referencing, however, was the "mis-education" that they and other whites suffer when the perspectives of the world's majority

populations are routinely omitted. Hence, codes and like terms referencing an "incomplete curriculum" were collapsed into the category of "The mis-education of white people" to better encapsulate the fullness of what the participants were describing. I also cross-referenced participants' responses with their own literature, which, in many cases they pointed me directly to. When Joe Feagin edited his interview transcript, for example, he also wrote:

> I have edited it a little here and there, and clarified some of my comments a bit. You can also get some of my personal perspective in the first and last chapters and introductions of the *Racist America, Systemic Racism,* and *White Racial Frame* books.

Hence, after I coded the interview data, I re-read the participants' own autobiographical and scholarly literature to make sure I had full context for the ideas they referenced in their interviews and understood, with as much depth as possible, their thoughts on race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy.

As in the first research study, I employed Miles and Huberman's (1994) multi-tiered method to code the interview transcriptions, my interview notes containing any verbalizations not captured on tape, and email correspondences regarding the follow-up questions. I coded for all possible themes, then combined like terms and reduced thematic codes into categories (Merriam, 1998). Based on my empirical findings and their own writings, for example, racial devastation, or the deeply hurtful experience of being emotionally or physically separated from people of color, is one of many themes that comes to mind when considering the life experiences commonly mentioned by this small group of scholar-activists. Next I linked categories as a basis for drawing conclusions about the commonalities among the trajectories that these white educators followed in developing their racial conceptualizations and commitments to antiracism (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Using this analysis, I was able to describe the development of a small, collective case of antiracist white educators, generalizable to a similar population of white

educators and teacher educators (Stake, 1995). I then reported conclusions that emerged from the data in hopes of establishing findings that are useful in understanding the development of a sorely needed group of white antiracists in classrooms.

A review of the autobiographical and scholarly literature produced by the participants in the dissertation sample was also conducted. Generally, more formal document analysis entails mining physical, written artifacts for messages that are specific to a theme (Merriam, 1998). Here, I reviewed multiple published works from each participant in order to understand the ways in which the interviewees themselves had highlighted the salience of various events in shaping their racial beliefs, critical consciousness, or commitments to antiracism. Each of the participants authored books, seminal journal articles, or took part in video recordings that lent some insight into how they came to espouse critical views of race, whiteness, and culturally relevant pedagogy. This additional layer of analysis allowed me to formulate questions before our interviews, as well as to support the significance of any themes that emerged from their answers during the interviews. An analysis of the participants' own literature served as an additional data source to more fully understand the life experiences of white antiracists who had already highlighted the importance of such incidents prior to the invitation to participate.

Limitations

The proposed study was not without design flaws. The first limitation is that I could conduct only one interview with each of the participants. Seidman's (2006) protocol for phenomenological interviewing calls for at least three sessions so both the interviewer and interviewee have time to adequately reflect on the questions posed and answers given. In this study, I was unable to interview participants more than once based on highly demanding schedules. All participants were professors, active teacher educators, consultants, and authors.

They were also highly sought after speakers, lecturers, presenters, and diversity trainers. Thus, time constraints only permitted a single meeting with each. Even though I conducted a single interview, the availability of their own literature and widely published information about each of them recompensed for the limited time they could dedicate to this study. Additionally, I mediated the effects of conducting only one interview by establishing and maintaining a rapport with each participant that was conducive to a post-interview relationship in which both they and I felt comfortable continuing our dialogue via email, phone, or other technologies.

A second limitation is that I was unable to observe the pedagogical practices these educators employed. As teacher educators, professional development consultants, public intellectuals, and scholar-activists, the participants in this sample taught in a wider variety of venues than traditional teacher education settings. Still, they interacted frequently with white teachers, fellow white educators, and whites in general. I specifically solicited examples of how they "taught" in settings with whites who can be just as resistant as the white preservice teachers I routinely encounter, or the white inservice teachers I frequently conduct workshops for. Although I was unable to rely on direct observation of how, precisely, they employed notions of cultural relevance, I could rely on their verbal reports as well as their written accounts. Because each of these scholars has written and published the details of their own teaching, I could access additional information about their practices from their own writing.

Finally, one might argue that a small sample of eight antiracist white educators is insufficient for generalizing to a larger population of antiracist whites. I sought to create thick, rich descriptions of the trajectories of a small group, however, so we could better understand the complexities of their journeys and the intricacies of their development. Additionally, because the sample is almost equally gender-balanced, for example, we could also gain valuable insight

into how antiracist whites develop in ways that are not limited to their lived experiences as a monolithic group.

This small cadre of antiracist white educators was drawn from an already modest number of whites who represent anti-hegemonic white identities, or those that reject and actively work against white racial dominance (hooks, 1995; Leonardo, 2009). In fact, many of the participants in this sample knew one another, regularly worked with one another, and could suggest few other white participants beyond those I had already contacted for participation in the study. The sample was, by nature, not representative of most whites. Hence, studying a small number of antiracist white educators is all that one *could* do. It was precisely their distinction as antiracist whites from which I hoped to learn and formulate a set of pedagogic recommendations that would more broadly engage whites in antiracist teaching and activism. As I did then and do now, I firmly believe that from few antiracist whites can come many.

Appendix E

Research Study II:

The Researcher's Perspective

In the first portion of this research study, I used the emic perspective of African American principals to arrive at a sample of white teachers who were outstanding in multiple ways. The teachers embodied complex and often self-conflicting views of race, and the intricacy of their thoughts slightly vexed and disappointed me at times. As a multiracial, multicultural educator, it was difficult to ever so often hear the deficit-tinged utterances of teachers who were stellar on so many fronts. I was left hopeful about the possibilities for white teachers, yet daunted by the enormity of the task of moving even expressly progressive white teachers along a never-ending continuum toward antiracism.

I am deeply inspired by the work of the antiracist scholars in my second sample. I must, however, continue to resist the temptation to hold them up as exemplars of antiracism knowing full well that NO ONE is perfectly antiracist. I must also arm myself against my tendencies toward liking my participants as people and being tempted to tread lightly around their statements that are retrogressive, indicative of majoritarian narratives, and laced with white racism. I hope to find that each of these eight participants is as antiracist as one could possibly be. But I am soberly reminded that whites, Blacks, all of us are surrounded by the smog of racism (Tatum, 1997). We inhale it constantly, we have no choice about having it permeate the smallest of our bronchioles, and we all release it every now and then no matter how badly we resist it. I must be prepared for instances in which participants fail to be "poster children" for antiracism, and I must honestly document my fears about that here in order to do justice to the data.

I am inspired by the work of bell hooks (2003), whose chapter entitled, "What Happens When White People Change" gives me every bit of confidence I need to conduct this worthwhile study. In it, she reminds us that we must never give up hope that even white people can, in large numbers, come to understand and rebuke racial injustice fully and completely. In my quest to find such white people, I have arrived at eight people who can hopefully show me just how that battle is waged (…and won?). Even though I understand how long, arduous, and incomplete their journeys are, I am hopeful that these antiracist white educators can point the way for other white teachers, white teacher educators, and white people to take up the cause of antiracism.

As a woman who is not white, and as a teacher educator who encounters *so* much resistance from whites in my multicultural courses, I sometimes have difficulty clinging to hope that Bell's (1993) notion of racial realism—or the insurmountable permanence of racism—is too harsh an assessment. Saying that racism is and will always be permanent is *such* a different starting point than saying, "Yes, this is huge. But it won't always be so. We made race and racism, so we can unmake them. We made whiteness and white racism, so we can unmake them too" (Rasmussen, Klinenberg, & Wray, 2001). I pray that by the end of this study my hope is restored, and that I might offer some concrete guidance on how to teach teachers of all kinds, renovate teacher education, and coexist so that racism faces certain death. That would make it all worthwhile.

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