

Justice in Practice:  
An Investigation of the Instructional Practices of LGBTQ Supportive English Language Arts  
Teachers

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**Abstract**

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This dissertation study investigates the instructional practices of secondary English Language Arts teachers with strong intentions to be supportive of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students. Comprised of three manuscripts written for journal publication, the dissertation includes (1) a frame analysis of scholarship on LGBTQ issues in education that presents a periodization of the literature since 1969, (2) a comparative case study one of teachers' responses to public prejudice in the classroom, and (3) a comparative case study of teachers' engagement strategies when teaching LGBTQ content. By investigating how teachers supported students from a historically marginalized social group within the nuance of their daily classroom instruction, this research bridges the gap between scholarship on teaching practice and social foundations scholarship on equity and identity. Developing a sophisticated understanding of how teachers promote justice and equity within their daily work as classroom instructors will benefit scholarly communities primarily interested in equity and those primarily interested in instruction.

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## Introduction

Research into the school experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth reveals that these youth are significantly more likely than heterosexual youth to experience negative treatment from peers and adults while at school. They are more likely than heterosexual youth to be expelled (Himmelstein & Brückner, 2010), to experience in-school peer harassment and assault (Williams et al., 2005), to miss school because of threats to their safety (Kosciw et al., 2011) and to feel teachers are not looking out for their safety while at school (Advocates for Children, Inc., 2005). Unsurprisingly, these negative school experiences contribute to a host of negative outcomes. LGBTQ students run a higher risk than their heterosexual peers for depression, suicidality, sexual risk behaviors, and drug use (Bontempo & D'Augelli, 2002; Munoz-Plaza et al., 2002). These research findings reveal entrenched educational disparities between LGBTQ youth and their heterosexual peers. There is a growing body of evidence that LGBTQ students who believe that their teachers are LGBTQ-supportive are significantly more likely to report feeling safe at school, feeling a sense of school belonging, receiving higher grades, and having higher educational aspirations (Kosciw et al., 2011). They are also significantly less likely to miss school, (Kosciw et al., 2011), and to experience suicidal ideation (Eisenberg & Resnick, 2006).

Building on research suggesting that teachers may play a key role in decreasing existing educational disparities between LGBTQ youth and their heterosexual peers, researchers have turned their attention to understanding the practices of LGBTQ supportive teachers. The majority of this teacher-focused research examines teachers' work in extracurricular spaces (Mayo, 2013; Valenti & Campbell, 2009; Watson et al., 2010). Breaking this trend, DePalma & Atkinson's

(2009) investigation of the *No Outsiders project* in Great Britain, investigates how primary school teachers combat heteronormativity within classroom instruction. DePalma and Atkinson's study has been deeply informative for teacher educators and professional developers tasked with preparing teachers to promote LGBTQ equality when working with young children. There are not yet complimentary studies of teachers' LGBTQ supportive work with older students, however. Understanding the practice of LGBTQ supportive secondary teachers would be a significant contribution to the base of knowledge that is currently informing our efforts to improve schooling for LGBTQ youth. Responding to this gap in the literature, this dissertation study investigates the following question: *What are the classroom practices of secondary teachers with strong reputations and intentions for LGBTQ support?*

### **Framing the Study: Banks' Five Dimensions of Multicultural Education**

As one of the very first studies of LGBTQ-supportive teaching practice, this dissertation study is exploratory in nature. I do not offer generalizable findings about the nature of effective teaching of LGBTQ youth. Instead, I offer readers approaches for improving practice and theory, by describing and theorizing teacher practice in classrooms where teachers have strong reputations and intentions for LGBTQ supportive work.

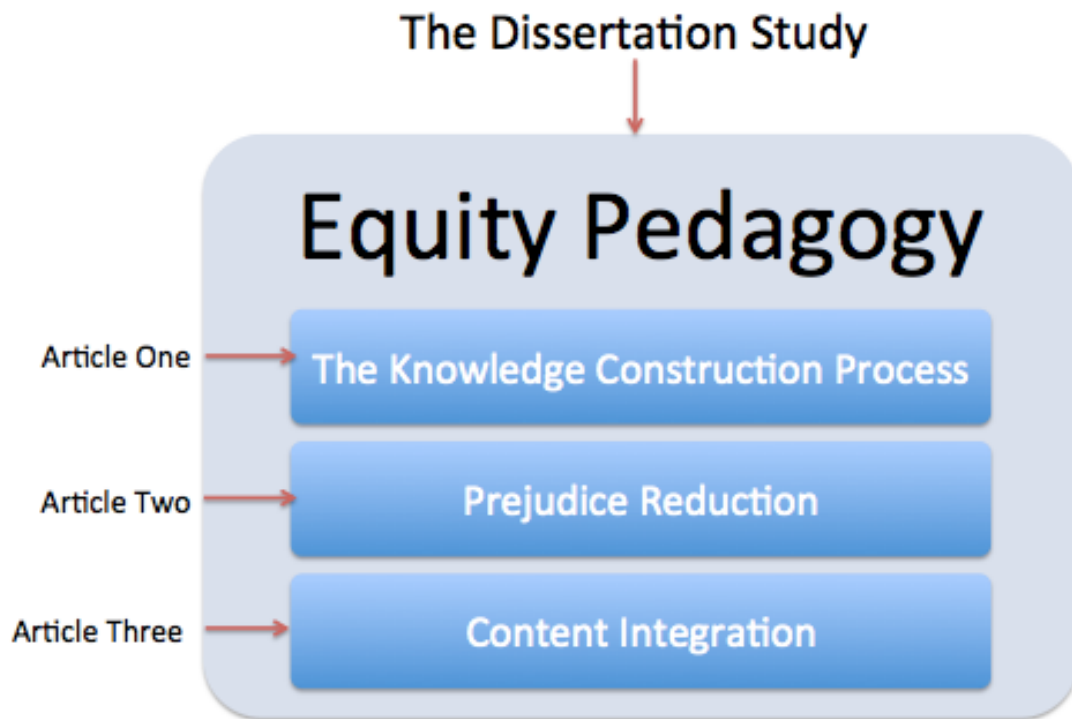
When I first began this dissertation project, the exploratory nature of the study presented a series of challenges, the first of which was the daunting task of defining and narrowing the scope of my investigation. A teacher's work is broad and multifaceted. Which practices matter when it comes to LGBTQ support? Where does one look to find them? As I began my research, it became clear almost immediately that as a field we knew very little about what LGBTQ supportive teachers do within their work as classroom instructors. Because of this paucity of

knowledge, I could not look to existing literature on the teaching of LGBTQ students to answer these questions. Consequently, I began my investigation with a hypothesis about what LGBTQ supportive teaching entails that I drew not from research on the teaching of LGBTQ students, but instead from a much more robust and established body of literature: multicultural education.

I developed the initial hypothesis that guided my research design by drawing from Banks' (1991) five dimensions of multicultural education. Originally conceptualized as an organizing frame for research and practice relating to the education of students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups, Banks' five dimensions offered a useful framework for understanding domains of educational practice that counter historically entrenched social inequities. The five dimensions framework allowed me to narrow the scope of my research by offering five entry points to teacher practice: (a) content integration, (b) the knowledge construction process, (c) prejudice reduction, (d) equity pedagogy, and (e) empowering school culture.

To narrow my scope even further, I eliminated the fifth dimension, *empowering school culture*, from my investigation because its focus on school level issues (i.e. school discipline policies, and school dress codes) lay outside the bounds of my classroom-level investigation. The remaining four dimensions, all of which I could examine at the level of teachers' instructional practice, became the organizing frame for the series of papers that comprises this dissertation study. Figure one illustrates how these four dimensions organize the study as a whole and in the pages that follow, I offer a detailed description of the dissertation's organization and its conceptual grounding.

*Figure One: Banks' Dimensions as the Overarching Frame for this Dissertation Study*



**Equity pedagogy as an overarching frame.** Focused on the pedagogical practices of LGBTQ supportive teachers, the overarching research question that is the foundation for all three papers in this dissertation study is a question about equity pedagogy. Banks and Banks (1995) define equity pedagogy as “teaching strategies and classroom environments that help students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups attain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively within, and help create and perpetuate, a just, humane, and democratic society” (p. 152). By investigating pedagogical practice that is aimed at interrupting inequities

affecting LGBTQ students, all three papers in this dissertation study ask: What is equity pedagogy when it comes to the education of LGBTQ students? For each paper, I focus on a different one of Banks' dimensions to approach the question of what equity pedagogy might entail for the education of LGBTQ students.

**Paper one: Knowledge construction.** The first paper of this three-paper dissertation focuses on *the knowledge construction process*, which Banks (2004) defines as “the procedures by which social, behavioral, and natural scientists create knowledge, and the manner in which the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence how knowledge is constructed within it” (p. 4). The paper investigates how knowledge has been constructed about LGBTQ issues in education over the last 45 years of LGBTQ education research. Through a frame analysis of the research literature on LGBTQ issues in education, I propose a periodization of the paradigms that have framed scholarship about LGBTQ issues in education over the last half-century. The paper argues that while research literature falls into five distinct frames, all of these frames understand LGBTQ issues through the lens of individual identity. I conclude the paper by calling for a paradigm shift away from individual identity and towards social practice as the site where inequities are produced and reproduced. By shifting our focus from identity to practice, we might begin to understand the role that pedagogy plays in the production of both equity and inequity.

**Papers two and three: Prejudice reduction and content integration.** Adopting this practice lens, the second and third papers investigate teachers' pedagogical practices related to *prejudice reduction* (paper two) and *content integration* of LGBTQ topics (paper three). Both papers are comparative case studies investigating the pedagogical practices of teachers who hold

reputations and intentions for LGBTQ support. In the second paper, I analyze teachers' responses to students' public expressions of prejudice and in the third paper, I analyze how case teachers engage students in making sense of LGBTQ issues. While one paper attends to prejudice reduction and the other attends to content integration, both papers examine teachers' pedagogical practice as a site where inequities are reinforced or interrupted.

**Rationale for three-paper format.** All three papers in this dissertation attend to the study's overarching research question: *What are the classroom practices of secondary teachers with strong reputations and intentions for LGBTQ support?* I chose a three-paper format because it allowed me to investigate this question about equity pedagogy through three different lenses: (1) the knowledge construction process, (2) prejudice reduction, and (3) content integration. The three-paper format helped me to be responsive to my overarching framing by allowing me to ask three different analytical questions, draw from three different cross-sections of data, and apply three different theoretical frames. For the knowledge construction paper, I approached existing research on LGBTQ issues in education with the question: *What paradigms have framed scholarship on LGBTQ issues in education?* For the prejudice reduction paper, I approached my qualitative data with the question: *How do teachers who want to reduce prejudice among their students respond to public expressions of prejudice in the classroom?* Lastly, for the content integration paper, the question that framed my analysis was: *When integrating LGBTQ content, how do teachers with strong intentions to support LGBTQ students facilitate student engagement with LGBTQ issues?* The choice to compose my dissertation using the three-paper format, I was able to investigate fully all three parts of my analysis.

**Using Banks' framework to study teacher practice: Scholarly significance.** Along

having implications for the format of my dissertation, the choice to ground my work in Banks' five dimensions also has implications for the scholarly significance of my study. By framing a study on teachers' pedagogical practice using constructs from multicultural education, I believe my work makes a significant contribution to contemporary scholarship on teaching practice. In the paragraphs below, I first describe how practice scholarship would benefit from engaging in conversations about identity, equity, and justice. Next, I examine how work on identity, equity, and justice would benefit from engaging in conversations about practice. Finally, I articulate how, by investigating justice *in* practice, I use this study to build a bridge between multicultural education scholarship (*justice*) and teacher practice scholarship (*practice*) in the hopes that further conversations and cross-pollinations between these two fields will emerge.

### **The Turn to Practice in Research on Teaching**

Scholars and researchers interested in improving classroom instruction increasingly argue for a shift away from trying to understand and change teachers (their characteristics and beliefs), arguing instead that we should be trying to understand and change the practice of teaching (Hiebert & Morris, 2012). This turn to practice has come about because researchers generally have found weak relationships between teacher characteristics and teacher effectiveness (Buddin & Zamarro, 2009; Goe, 2007; Solomon, Bigler, Hanushek, Shulman, & Walberg, 2004). The scholarly community that is driving the turn towards practice is primarily doing so by pushing for the development of core teaching practices around which teacher education and professional development can be organized. While no consensus has been reached on what core practices for teaching might be, there are common characteristics of the core practices that researchers are proposing. They (1) are located at the center of high quality teaching, (2) happen frequently in

classrooms across curricula and instructional approach, (3) are research-based and facilitate student learning, (4) can begin to be mastered by novices, (5) enable novices to learn more about students and about teaching, (6) preserve the integrity and complexity of practice (Grossman, Hammerness & McDonald, 2009).

Advocates of core practices argue first that if the field were able to come to consensus on a set of core practices, we might be able to develop a common language for describing the practice of teaching, which could aid us in aggregating knowledge and agreeing on standards of practice. Identifying learnable practices that maintain the integrity and complexity of practice would help teacher educators address the problem of enactment that has for so long plagued teacher education (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Ball, Sleep, Boerst, & Bass, 2009; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Grossman & McDonald, 2008; Lampert, Beasley, Ghouseini, Kazemi, & Franke, 2010). Scholarship on core practices has the potential to deeply influence how the field decides both the content and the structure of teacher education. It is important, therefore, to note that core practice scholarship has been built almost exclusively out of research on instructional methods in the content areas and has yet to engage with scholarship on the work of teaching that has historically resided in social foundations.

**Core practices and social justice teaching.** Scholars like myself, who work in social foundations and who approach their examinations of teachers and teaching using a social justice frame (sometimes referred to as multiculturalism, anti-oppression, or anti-racism) and not an instructional methods frame, have a lot to learn from this movement towards core practices. Educational researchers have a long history of investigating teachers who teach towards justice, by which I mean teachers who interrupt inequitable disparities between social groups. However,

much like research on teaching more broadly, investigations of teachers who have successfully interrupted these disparities have almost exclusively focused on either teacher beliefs (Ladson-Billings, 1994) or teacher characteristics (Klienfeld, 1975). Research about teachers who effectively interrupt inequitable disparities between social groups focuses entirely on who these teachers are and what they believe. Therefore, even when teacher educators effectively change teachers' beliefs about students and the social groups to which they belong, teachers' practice often remains unchanged. In fact because researchers are so unclear about what it means to teach for social justice, we are not even sure what we could measure that would offer us information about whether or not teachers are engaging in social justice teaching practice.

Investigations into the practice of teachers who interrupt disparities between social groups potentially can benefit both scholarly communities interested in core practices and those interested in social justice teaching. By incorporating scholarship that approaches teaching using a different lens than content specific instructional methods, scholars working on core practices might be able to expand their conception of the work of teaching. Alternately, scholars interested in teaching for social justice would benefit from supplementing their investigations of teacher's characteristics and beliefs with investigations of teacher practice.

### **The Dissertation Study**

This dissertation study is motivated by three primary goals. First, I hope to contribute to core practice scholarship by offering research that broadens that scholarly community's conceptions of what is entailed in the work of teaching for justice and equity. Second, I hope to inform research on social justice teaching, which has historically focused on teacher characteristics and beliefs, by offering a deeper understanding of the role of teaching practice in

promoting equity and justice in education. I also hope to add a new perspective to empirical research on LGBTQ issues in education by increasing understanding of how teachers approach the pedagogical work of supporting LGBTQ students in classroom instruction. The three papers that follow are the beginning of my scholarly efforts towards these goals, goals which I intend to pursue well into the future.

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From Contagious to Resilient and Beyond:

A Periodization of Educational Research on LGBTQ Issues from Stonewall to Today

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### Abstract

This paper is a periodization of educational research on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) issues since 1969. Using a frame analysis, I mapped ideological and chronological patterns in the conceptualizations of LGBTQ youth in educational research reports over the last 45 years. My sample of literature included over one hundred articles from educational research databases. All sampled literature was published between 1969 and 2014, was tagged with LGBTQ-related keywords, and relied on quantitative or qualitative data to develop findings. My analysis revealed a chronological and ideological patterns in the framing of research, which I present in this paper as a periodization of five paradigmatic frames for understanding LGBTQ youth in educational settings: (1) homosexuality as a social contagion, (2) homosexuality as a private identity, (3) LGB youth as “at-risk,” (4) LGBTQ youth as victims, and (5) LGBTQ youth as resilient. While distinct, all five frames understand the problem of sexual diversity in schools at the level of individuals. I argue that contemporary efforts at educational improvement would benefit from research that expands beyond individual-level analyses into investigations of social and professional practice.

Research on the education of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth cannot be disentangled from broader social perspectives on gender and sexuality. Prior to the Stonewall riots of 1969, the experiences of LGBTQ people, families, and communities were largely invisible to the heterosexual public in the United States. Along with marking the birth of the modern gay rights movement, the year 1969 also marks some of the earliest mentions of LGBTQ people in educational research. Since that date, we have built a robust body of knowledge about educational realities for LGBTQ students, teachers, and families and have engaged in debates about how our knowledge about LGBTQ stakeholders in American education might inform policy and practice. My aim in this paper is to review educational research literature on LGBTQ issues and to argue that our knowledge has been built within theoretical frames that have remained largely unexamined and have constrained the knowledge we have been able to create. Produced out of a frame analysis, this paper presents a periodization of the frames we have used to understand LGBTQ youth over the last half century. I argue that these theoretical frames have consistently focused our attention at the level of individual identity and experience. I consider the implications of focusing at the individual level for current issues in policy and practice and propose that contemporary efforts at educational improvement would benefit from a paradigm shift away from focusing on individuals and towards focusing on educational practice.

This review builds on earlier research reviews on LGBTQ populations (e.g., Herek, 1985; Maher et al., 2009; Mayo, 2007); however, unlike many of its predecessors, my analysis focuses only on educational research and particularly educational research that presents findings that emerged from an analysis of quantitative or qualitative data. I exclude theoretical treatments of

LGBTQ issues in education because my aim is to understand the unarticulated theoretical framings underpinning our existing empirical knowledge base. My hope is that by uncovering the theoretical frames underlying our current understandings, we might reveal previously unseen paths forward for research and practice aimed at improving education for LGBTQ youth.

I begin my review by providing a description of my methodology for selecting and analyzing literature. This includes a general introduction to educational research on LGBTQ youth and a discussion of methodological trends in existing research and methodological difficulties that have plagued the field. Following my overview of the literature, I describe how I deployed a frame analysis in order to construct a periodization of the literature. Finally, I present the findings that emerged from my analysis: a periodization of frames in the research literature on LGBTQ issues in education and describe each of the chronological frames in detail:

- *Pre 1973* – Homosexuality as a social contagion
- *1973 onward* – Homosexuality as a private identity
- *Mid-1980s onward* – LGB youth as “at risk”
- *2000 onward* – LGBTQ youth as victims
- *Mid-2000s onward* – LGBTQ youth as resilient

The first frame, *homosexuality as a social contagion*, is comprised of clinical psychology literature, which is focused on finding causes of and cures or treatments for homosexuality. The second frame, *homosexuality as a private identity*, emerged following the American Psychiatric Association’s official removal of homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-III (DSM-III)*. The emergence of this frame marks the beginning of conceptualizing homosexuality as a private identity isolated within an individual. Studies that

assume this frame are primarily concerned with two major questions that captivated researchers in the 1970s: (1) whether lesbian and gay individuals should be allowed to teach in public schools and (2) what it means to promote healthy development for same-sex attracted youth. The third frame of research, which conceptualizes *LGBTQ youth as “at-risk,”* focuses on documenting LGBTQ students’ high risk for suicide, depression, and other negative health outcomes. The fourth frame, where most contemporary research is situated, conceptualizes *LGBTQ youth as victims* of interpersonal discrimination and investigates the prevalence and effects of homophobic bullying. The fifth and final frame has only emerged in the past decade and conceptualizes *LGBTQ youth as resilient* change-agents in their schools and communities.

Later in this paper, I describe how each of these frames emerged in the research literature and how each frame shaped what was possible in educational research on LGBTQ issues. Following my description of each frame, I discuss what is shared across all five frames: a focus on individuals’ experiences and identities. The paper concludes with a discussion about potential reasons why this focus on the internal lives of individuals arose, and why now may be the time to shift perspectives and begin examining LGBTQ issues in education by investigating expanding our investigations to focus on social and professional practice in educational settings and how practice reinforces or interrupts the inequitable disparities between LGBTQ youth and their heterosexual peers.

### **Literature Review Methodology**

In the following section, I describe my sampling strategy for reviewed literature. In addition, I describe frame analysis as a methodology and discuss how I deployed this analytic

methodology to construct my periodization of educational research on LGBTQ issues in education.

### **Data Sources**

**Search strategy and selection criteria.** Relevant research concerning LGBTQ issues in education was identified by searching educational research databases for primary research material. Key articles were obtained from ERIC, Education Source, and the University of Washington Library. In order to ensure that relevant studies were not missed, the search terms were varied and broad. These included, LGBT, LGBTQ, LGB, GLB, GLBT, GLBTQ, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning, queer, sexuality, sexual orientation, sexual identity, homosexuality, and homosexual. For this first round of selection, articles needed to include one of the above keywords anywhere in the title or abstract. No language restrictions were employed. Studies were eligible for consideration in this review if: (a) the focus of the study was on LGBTQ people or related curricula or policy in educational settings, (b) the study reported findings from the analysis of quantitative or qualitative data (theoretical treatments of LGBTQ issues were excluded), and (c) the study was published between 1969 and 2014.

**Study descriptions.** Most educational research on LGBTQ issues that reports on analyses of qualitative or quantitative data has been survey studies. While most of these survey studies employ quantitative research methods (Murdoch & Bolch, 2005; Espelage et al., 2008; Gruber & Fineran, 2008; Birkett et al. 2009; Poteat et al., 2009; Wilkenson & Pearson, 2009; Sandfort et al., 2010; Walls et al., 2010), a few have employed qualitative methods (Adelman & Woods, 2006). Qualitative studies are less prevalent in the field overall and most focus on the individual experiences or beliefs of educators (Tooms, 2007; McCabe & Rubinson, 2008;

Dessel, 2010; Payne & Smith, 2010; Zach, 2010), while a smaller segment of studies focus on the experiences of LGBTQ youth (Lee, 2002; Savin-Williams, 2005; Davidson, 2009; Russell et al., 2009). Almost all research, whether quantitative or qualitative, has been focused on understanding individual-level, person-centered identities, experiences, and beliefs. A few studies have examined LGBTQ related issues in education using an organizational perspective (Fetner & Kush, 2008; Goodenow et al., 2006; Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009) or a legal lens (Biegel, 2011; Dennis & Harlow, 1986). However, these studies are the exception to the rule of individual-centered analyses. Only two studies have foregrounded practical activity as a site of meaning making in the lives of LGBTQ youth: Pascoe's (2007) ethnography examining the social practices of masculinity among adolescent boys and DePalma and Atkinson's (2009) investigation of the professional practices of British primary teachers who participated in a curricular intervention aimed at addressing LGBTQ issues with young children.

*Methodological considerations of reviewed literature.* While exceptions exist, the trend in educational research on LGBTQ issues has been to develop an understanding of individuals' internal lives and defining characteristics. Because most of this research has been aimed at generalizing to a population, researchers have needed to identify an LGBTQ population to which findings could be generalized. However, attempts to quantify the population of LGBTQ youth have been methodologically challenging. There is no consensus among researchers or the general public about how to define the boundaries of the LGBTQ population. Savin-Williams' (2009) review of research that has attempted to quantify the LGBTQ population found that researchers have used a variety of measures to define this population and that these definitional measures are often only loosely correlated (Meyer & Wilson, 2009). Definitional measures have included self-

identification as LGBTQ, same-sex attraction, exclusive same-sex attraction, sexual experiences with same-sex partners, sexual experiences exclusively with same-sex partners, romantic relationships with same-sex partners, and romantic relationships exclusively with same-sex partners. While defining the population of LGB persons is difficult, there is even less consensus about how to delineate the boundaries of transgender or questioning populations. When studying youth, these definitional problems are compounded by the fact that many youth are just coming to understand their sexual attractions and/or have had few or no romantic relationships or sexual encounters.

In addition to definitional problems, the social stigma attached to LGBTQ identities and desires makes it difficult to rely on survey respondents to reveal LGBTQ identities, same-sex attractions, or same-sex sexual encounters or relationships. However, most (if not all) research on LGBTQ youth relies solely on self-report data to identify LGBTQ samples. In addition to the problems of self-reports, researchers have often relied on opportunistic sampling and limited sources of recruitment. These sampling tactics have resulted in the field developing knowledge only about the experiences of particular segments of the LGBTQ population, generally of those individuals who openly identify as LGBTQ and those who have sought out LGBTQ communities (Meyer & Wilson, 2009).

### **Analytic Methodology: Frame Analysis**

My goal was to review selected literature to uncover how research has conceptualized the nature of the problem posed by gender and sexual diversity in schools. To achieve this goal, I needed an analytic methodology that allowed me to identify and compare conceptual frames across a wide swath of literature. Often applied to studies of public policy or communications, a

*frame analysis* is a methodology for uncovering the underlying conceptual frames that undergird descriptions of problems (Fischer, 2003). Kuypers (2009) describes framing as “a process whereby communicators,” in this case researchers, “consciously or unconsciously, act to construct a point of view that encourages the facts of a given situation to be interpreted by others in a particular manner. Frames operate in four key ways: they define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies” (p. 190)

I deployed a frame analysis of selected research literature on LGBTQ issues in education to create a map of how researchers have framed the problem of gender and sexual diversity in schools over the last half century. I analyzed each selected research report for framing features (Dombos, 2009) by asking and answering the following questions: What is the problem to be solved? Who is affected by it? Who/what causes the problem to appear or reproduce? What solutions to the problem are presented, if any? I then open coded my frame descriptions for each research report, looking for patterns in the conceptualization of problems, subjects, and solutions. After several iterations of coding, both chronological and ideological patterns emerged that resulted in the periodization of frames in the literature that I present in the following pages.

### **Five Frames in the Literature**

In the following section, I describe the five frames revealed through my analysis of selected literature. My analysis uncovered a chronological pattern to the emergence of these conceptual frames, which has resulted in my development of a periodization of educational research into LGBTQ issues. For each frame I describe, I offer an approximate year during which the conceptual frame appeared as a shaping force in the educational literature. I do not provide end-dates for frames because analysis revealed that once a frame became paradigmatic

in research, it continued to shape the development of knowledge for years to come. This finding is consistent with Maher et al.'s (2009) review of empirical research on LGBTQ issues. In a review of literature across many fields in the social sciences, Maher and colleagues identified “waves” in empirical research on LGBTQ issues and found that the waves they identified had beginnings, but not endings. My analysis of research specific to the field of education revealed a similar pattern. Once introduced into the field, novel conceptual frames continued to shape the way that knowledge was produced even many years after it had been discredited. Our contemporary conceptualizations of LGBTQ populations still retain the traces of framings that were paradigmatic half a century ago.

### **Pre-1973: Homosexuality as a Social Contagion.**

The emergence and development of educational research related to LGBTQ issues cannot be disentangled from broader LGBTQ social movements. Just as the experiences of LGBTQ people were mostly invisible to the U.S. public prior to the Stonewall Riots of 1969, educational research databases are almost free of pre-Stonewall mentions of homosexuality. Aside from the inclusion of homosexuality in a handful of lists of emotional problems and psychological disorders (Abt & Weissman, 1965), the topic rarely arises outside of a small collection of clinical psychology texts focused on understanding and preventing the childhood “causes” of homosexuality (Evans, 1969; Hooker, 1969; Gundlach, 1969). These early researchers were grounded in what I call the *social contagion* paradigm, which conceptualized homosexuality as an epidemiological problem. This view of homosexuality as a disease would soon shift in 1973 when the American Psychiatric Association officially de-pathologized homosexuality by removing it from the third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

(DSM-III). Education literature did not see a great deal of scholarship on LGBTQ issues produced prior to 1972. However, in the next section I describe how the legacy of the social contagion paradigm shaped education research on LGBTQ issues in education for years to come.

**1972 onward: Homosexuality as a private identity.** As a result of the removal of homosexuality from the DSM-III and the growth of the Gay Liberation Movement, many changes in the educational landscape for LGBTQ youth occurred in the 1970s: groups for gay students began forming on college campuses (Liebert, 1971; Gibbs & McFarland, 1974); Lavender University, America's first college for gay students, opened in San Francisco (Sievert, 1974), a handful of high schools began introducing curricular units on homosexuality (Morin, 1974), some school counselors advised gay students to join gay organizations (Killinger, 1971) and the courts began to complicate the stance that homosexuality was adequate grounds for dismissing teachers from their posts (Ekes & McCarthy, 2008). These changes, although significant, did little to change the realities of schooling for most LGBTQ youth and educators. They were, however, strong enough to give rise to a body of educational research into LGBTQ issues in education.

Early educational research into LGBTQ issues cannot be understood outside of the context of the Gay Liberation movement of the 1970s or the political and social realities that gave rise to that movement. Understanding these connections can help to illuminate why, for the last half century, educational research on LGBTQ issues focused so heavily on the internal lives of individuals and conceptualized LGBTQ identity and experience as existing inside of individuals and not within collective activity and practice. Conceptualizing LGBTQ identity as a private and internal feature of an individual mapped directly onto the right-to-privacy arguments that Gay

liberationists were making in support of gay rights in the years between Stonewall and AIDS. In order to secure a legal right to privacy, the primary political goal of the Gay Liberation movement in the 1970s, LGBTQ activists had to push against the social contagion paradigm that had permeated perspectives on gays and lesbians prior to 1973 when the DSM-III depathologized homosexuality. For gay activists at this time, pushing against the social contagion paradigm meant pushing against conceptualizing LGBTQ identity as socially enacted. The emergence of the *private identity*, which conceptualized LGBTQ identity as an internal feature of an individual served the contemporary political needs of gay activists fighting for legal privacy rights.

Before the AIDS epidemic brought about the rise of a radical politics of visibility in LGBTQ social movements, Gay Liberation was organized around the fight for a legal right to privacy. Griswold v. Connecticut (1965), the first explicit articulation of the legal right to privacy in the United States, uses the language of the “marriage bed” in its definition of legal privacy rights. Therefore, in its first articulation, the American right to privacy was defined as a right only accessible to those who could enter into a marriage contract. Consequently, gays and lesbians were excluded from legal access to a private sphere. This exclusion was formalized in Bowers v. Hardwick (1986), which explicitly denied gays and lesbians a right to privacy.

Beyond the courts, debates about homosexuality focused on privacy rights as well. The 1969 Stonewall riots were a series of violent demonstrations that erupted following a police raid of the Stonewall Inn, a popular gay bar in New York City’s Greenwich Village. The riots are often cited as the catalyst that gave rise to the modern gay rights movement. Erupting out of frustration

with continued state intrusion into private, gay spaces, the Stonewall riots exemplify how gay liberation in the 1970s was focused on fighting for the right to privacy.

Unsurprisingly, the 1970s saw the rise of privacy as a theme in debates about LGBTQ issues in education as well. Embroiled in debates over whether gays and lesbians should be allowed to hold positions as teachers, gay activists argued that LGBTQ identity did not render someone unfit to teach. The most common warrant for this argument was that LGBTQ identity was an entirely private identity – unconnected, in all ways, from a person’s identity in their place of work. It is in this political environment that LGBTQ issues in education came to be framed around individuals’ private worlds.

*Homosexuality as a private identity.* Most of the research from the 1970s and early 1980s was exploratory. It existed on the fringes of mainstream educational research and could rarely be described as reliable by any contemporary standards. Although most of the research relied on weak methodologies, these early researchers did succeed in introducing questions that had never been considered before about the rights and responsibilities of lesbian and gay teachers (Mathews, 1973; La Morte, 1975; Rivera & Galvan, 1975; Ostrander, 1975), what school counselors should do to support the emotional health of gay students (Birk, 1974; Rehm & Rozensky, 1974; Canon, 1973, Killinger, 1971, Ivey, 1972), whether and how curricula should address homosexuality (Morin, 1974), and if and how the structure of educational institutions contributes to the oppression of gay students (Liebert, 1971).

Researchers in the 1970s pushed against the social contagion paradigm of the 1960s by framing homosexuality as a private identity. Adopting a private identity frame for conceptualizing the problem of sexual diversity in schools allowed scholars to argue that

teachers' sexual identities were entirely separate from their professional role (Mathews, 1973; La Morte, 1975; Rivera & Galvan, 1975; Ostrander, 1975). Under this new framing, researchers could push back on the long-held belief that LGBTQ teachers' sexual identity would influence their students to become gay.

Along with affecting research on teachers, this shift in framing profoundly influenced research on students as well. Before the introduction of the private identity frame, many believed that youth developed same-sex attractions when they were exposed to the “wrong” social messages about gender and sexuality. School counselors were tasked with “changing” same-sex attracted youth by exposing them to the “right” social messages. Grounded in the emergent private identity frame for understanding homosexuality, researchers informed counselors that same-sex attraction is not socially influenced, it is instead a fixed part of an individuals' private identity and cannot be changed (Killinger, 1971). Research into curricula investigated whether learning about homosexuality made students more likely to become gender or sexual “deviants” and found, unsurprisingly, that learning about homosexuality did not influence individuals' private gender and/or sexual identities (Morin, 1974). While investigations into teachers, students, and curricula asked very different research questions, they were all centrally concerned in investigating whether or not same-sex attraction was a social contagion or a private identity.

*LGBTQ teachers as role models of (im)morality.* By far, the most frequently tackled LGBTQ-related educational research questions in the 1970s and 1980s focused on gay teachers. This is not surprising because the Gay Liberation Movement sparked a series of legal battles about whether sexual orientation was adequate grounds to discharge schoolteachers (Ekes & McCarthy, 2008). These issues were also widely covered in the mainstream press. Legal battles

over the rights of gay teachers pushed up against an existing practice in schools across the country of discharging all teachers perceived or known to be gay or lesbian (Blount, 2006; Graves, 2009). As the Gay Liberation Movement affected social mores and established employment practices, educational researchers began asking questions like: “What is the school’s reaction when homosexuality is a trait of a teacher” (Mathews, 1973, p. 3)? Under what circumstances should gay teachers be discharged from teaching in the public schools (La Morte, 1975; Rivera & Galvan, 1975)? Do gay teachers have a duty to keep their sexual orientation private (Ostrander, 1975)? By the 1980s, these questions were frequently being asked in the field of education law (Dennis & Harlow, 1986) as legal scholars weighed the individual liberties of LGBTQ teachers against broader public attitudes towards homosexuality.

*LGBTQ students: fixed or changeable?* In addition to investigations into the rights and responsibilities of gay teachers, a robust body of literature for school counselors emerged in the 1970s addressing the social and emotional needs of gay adolescents. Even after the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from the DSM-III in 1973, much of the research literature on school counseling described strategies for “changing” same-sex attracted youth (Birk, 1974; Rehm & Rozensky, 1974). However, while the change-oriented approach to counseling gay and lesbian youth was prevalent (and still exists today), the 1970s saw the emergence of voices stating that school counselors could better serve gay youth by reevaluating counselors’ own attitudes towards gay people, increasing knowledge about the experiences of gay people (Canon, 1973; Killinger, 1971), and referring youth to gay organizations (Ivey, 1972).

*Can curriculum make kids gay?* Curriculum research relating to LGBTQ issues has always been sparse. In the 1970s, researchers began investigating how and whether curriculum could be used to educate students about homosexuality. Contemporary researchers can acquire knowledge about how little was known in the 1970s by examining the hypotheses tested in these early curriculum studies. One study, for example, investigated whether participating in a unit on homosexuality changed high school students' "levels of masculinity and femininity" (Greenberg, 1974) (it, unsurprisingly, did not). Another less dated study revealed that educational programs on homosexuality including gay speakers significantly changed the attitudes of students towards gay people (Morin, 1974).

***From social contagion to private identity.*** The early years of research about LGBTQ issues in education reflect the political struggles of the time. During the 1970s, social scientists and legal scholars shifted their frame for conceptualizing LGBTQ identity. Abandoning the frame of homosexuality as a social contagion, scholarship in the 1970s framed homosexuality as a fixed, discrete, and private identity. This shift in frame supported the fight by gay liberationists for expanded rights to a legal private sphere. However, the rise of the private identity frame also imposed rigid limits on the conditions under which rights to privacy could exist. For example, the private identity frame undergirded the arguments for employment protections for lesbian and gay teachers. Advocates of employment protections argued that because homosexuality was a private, fixed, and internal identity, it in no way affected a teacher's classroom practice and could not be grounds for dismissal. The logic of the private identity frame did succeed in expanding employment protections by supporting gay and lesbian teachers' right to privacy. However, along with supporting a *right to privacy*, the logic of the private identity frame also

supported the *requirement of privacy*. If a teachers' lesbian or gay identity did in some way affect their performance in the classroom, their employment would not longer be protected. A significant growth in the volume and sophistication of educational research on LGBTQ issues occurred in following the 1970s. However, the dominant paradigm of understanding homosexuality as a private identity unconnected to social and practical activity would continue to characterize the research agenda for years to come.

**1985 onward: LGBTQ youth as “at-risk.”** The third frame to emerge in LGBTQ education research arose in the mid-1980s. This frame positioned LGBTQ youth as “youth at risk” and focused on identifying their high risks for negative social, academic, and health outcomes (Hetrick & Martin, 1987; Robinson, 1994; Remafedi, 1987; Savin-Williams, 1994; Center for Population Options, 1992). Like other youth populations that have been labeled as “at risk,” research on LGBTQ youth that adopted the at-risk frame located both the problem and the intervention site within individual adolescents. Te Riele (2006) has criticized the use of the frame “youth-at-risk,” arguing that it leads to a focus on what is wrong with individuals rather than what is wrong with the contexts of social practice and collective activity in which those individuals live, an approach that often promotes stereotypes and sometimes even moral panic about the negative influence that youth labeled “at risk” may have on society.

Though problematic because of the exclusive use of the youth-at-risk frame, early research did identify troubling trends in the experiences of LGBTQ youths and significant disparities between LGBTQ youth and their heterosexual peers. This research also prompted two decades of research and the development of a valuable body of knowledge on the experiences of LGBTQ adolescents. The most influential and widely cited study that adopted the at-risk frame

was the 1989 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services study of the prevalence of suicide among gay and lesbian adolescents. This report cited suicide as the leading cause of death for adolescent gays and lesbians. It revealed that gay and lesbian youth were two to six times more likely to attempt suicide than heterosexual youth and that the suicides of lesbians and gays accounted for more than 30% of all teen suicides. This widely publicized study received intense media attention and profoundly shaped the direction that research on LGBTQ adolescents would take over the next two decades. Much like earlier research on gay and lesbian adults (Meyer & Wilson, 2009), the 1989 U.S. Health and Human Services study has been criticized for its use of biased sample populations. However, findings from subsequent and more reliable studies have confirmed that LGBTQ youth are at a significantly higher risk than their heterosexual peers for suicide ideation (D'Augelli & Hershberger, 1993; Hershberger & D'Augelli, 1995; Remafedi et al., 1998).

In the years following the U.S. Health and Human Services report, a series of studies on LGBTQ youth revealed that these youth had a high risk of experiencing many negative social, academic, and health outcomes. D'Augelli and Hershberger (1993) found extremely high instances of depression among lesbian, gay, and bisexual adolescents with 28% of females and 41% of males reporting that they experienced depression. Rotherarn-Borus et al. (1994) conducted a study of 131 gay and bisexual adolescent males and found that they were significantly more likely to use alcohol and illegal drugs than heterosexual adolescent males. Victim Services (1991) found that 42% of adolescent runaways surveyed in their study self-identified as LGBTQ. Perhaps due to the large percentage of LGBTQ adolescents among the population of runaways and homeless youth, Coleman (1989) found evidence across studies on

adolescent male prostitution that approximately two out of three male adolescent prostitutes self-identify as gay or bisexual. Many of the at-risk studies were of troubled populations in which LGBTQ youth were overrepresented, not of LGBTQ youths as a whole. Studies like these point to troubling trends. However, they also focus solely on the most troubled LGBTQ youth, ignoring the majority of the population. The tendency to examine only the most troubled portions of the population has been a consistent pattern in research on LGBTQ youth. These same types of sampling biases produced the findings used to support the continued definition of homosexuality as a mental illness until 1973 (Meyer & Wilson, 2009).

Educational research on LGBTQ youth also utilized the youth-at-risk frame. Studies in education described a likelihood of poor academic performance, truancy, and non-completion for LGBTQ youth (Hunter & Schaecher, 1990; Price & Telljohann, 1991; Martin & Hetrick, 1988). In 1987, Remafedi found that 40% of his sample of gay and bisexual male adolescents had problems with truancy, 80% were experiencing ‘declining school performance,’ and 30% had dropped out of school completely. These early studies brought attention to LGBTQ students in U.S. schools, a population that had previously been largely ignored by the research community. However, while highlighting previously unexplored issues, research that framed LGBTQ youth as at-risk also introduced LGBTQ students into the research literature as a population whose defining characteristics were proclivities towards drugs, alcohol, depression, prostitution, homelessness, suicide, and academic failure. The introduction of the youth-at-risk frame would profoundly shape the way that LGBTQ youth were framed for decades. To this day, we measure the effectiveness of educational interventions aimed at LGBTQ youth by asking whether those interventions decreased incidence of depression, non-completion, drug and alcohol use, and

suicidal ideation (Lee, 2002; Goodenow et al., 2006; Walls et al., 2008). Our contemporary conceptualizations of what it means to effectively educate LGBTQ youth are still deeply grounded in a perception that LGBTQ youth are an at-risk population.

**2000 onward: LGBTQ youth as victims.** At the start of the 21st century, researchers were no longer satisfied with uncovering LGBTQ youth's high risk for experiencing negative outcomes and began asking *why* these outcomes were so prevalent. What was causing LGBTQ youth to be depressed and resort to suicide? This new perspective shifted the site of the problem and the potential intervention away from at-risk LGBTQ adolescents, conceptualizing the problem as external to the youth themselves. The vast majority of this research focuses on measuring how LGBTQ youths' high risk for negative outcomes is influenced by (1) peer-to-peer bullying and harassment and (2) LGBTQ students' belief that their teachers care about them. This new frame for understanding LGBTQ youth experience continues to conceptualize LGBTQ youth as being a population at risk, but it begins to widen the scope of analysis from the personal to the interpersonal. By examining LGBTQ students' beliefs about their teachers and LGBTQ youths' experiences of peer-to-peer bullying, researchers have begun to see the experiences of individuals as contextually embedded in systems of activity that include more than one isolated individual.

Through analysis of several recent survey studies, researchers have found significant correlations between the LGBTQ students' experience of interpersonal victimization and their experience of negative outcomes like depression, drug and alcohol use, and academic failure. Williams et al.'s (2005) findings suggest that while LGBTQ adolescents are more likely to experience symptoms of depression than their heterosexual peers, these symptoms are more

highly correlated with their experiences of victimization and lack of supportive relationships with peers and family members than with their sexual orientation. Birkett et al. (2009) found that a lack of homophobic teasing and bullying combined with students' belief that their teachers respected and cared about them significantly decreased the correlation between sexual orientation status and depression, drug use, suicidality, and truancy. Kosciw et al. (2009) found that LGBTQ students who could identify supportive teachers were more likely to feel safe at school, have a sense of school belonging, receive higher grades, and have higher educational aspirations. They were also less likely to miss school, be harassed or assaulted at school, or feel victimized at school.

These studies are a sampling of a the myriad survey studies from the last decade that have found correlations between the prevalence of interpersonal discrimination and the negative experiences of LGBTQ youth (Morrison and L'Heureux, 2001; Murdock & Bolch, 2005; Advocates for Children, Inc., 2005; Russell et al., 2001; Espelage et al., 2008; Gruber & Fineran, 2008; Poteat, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009; Wilkenson & Pearson, 2009; Sandfort et al., 2010; Walls et al., 2010). All of the studies that employ this frame identify the problem facing LGBTQ youth as one of homophobic victimization. Most studies define victimization as peer-to-peer bullying and a few describe the prevalence of teachers turning a blind eye to peer-to-peer bullying. A study by Himmelstein and Bruckner (2010), however, focused on the discriminatory practices of authority figures. They found that non-heterosexual youth experience higher rates of punishment from school officials and police and that these higher rates of punishment are not explained by a greater engagement in illegal or transgressive activities.

Most intervention studies have been firmly grounded in the youth-at-risk conceptual frame and have focused on identifying whether programs such as Gay/Straight Alliances reduce the incidences of negative outcomes like suicidality among LGBTQ youth. However, as the interpersonal discrimination frame has become more widespread, some intervention studies have begun to focus on whether programs lower rates of homophobic bullying and name-calling in schools (Walls, 2008). The authors of these studies have found that the presence of Gay/Straight Alliances decreases incidences of homophobic bullying and harassment.

**2005 onward: LGBTQ youth as resilient.** The vast majority of the research into LGBTQ youth is grounded in the first four conceptual frames. However, since 2005, an alternative frame for making sense of the experiences of LGBTQ youth in schools has arisen. Several studies have moved beyond risk factors and experiences of interpersonal discrimination to examine resiliency among LGBTQ youth (Russell, 2005; Davidson, 2009; Russell et al., 2009). This trend in the research came about in response to the literature's exclusive focus on the prevalence of experiences of victimization and negative outcomes. Scholars who adopt resiliency frames argue for a need to better understand what factors lead LGBTQ youth to lead healthy adolescent and adult lives (Russell, 2005).

Much of the research utilizing the resiliency frame focuses specifically on youth who act as change agents within their schools. Russell et al. (2009) found that LGBTQ youth became empowered to change their school climates through their involvement in Gay/Straight Alliances. In a study of the experiences of three gender non-conforming adolescent males of color, Davidson (2009) describes how his participants actively engaged in reshaping their school's heterosexist climate. This shift towards understanding LGBTQ youth as empowered change

agents within schools has also been examined by some educational philosophers. In conceptual pieces, educational philosophers, such as Talburt (2004) and Hackford-Peer (2010) argue that while the resiliency literature opens up a new discursive position for LGBTQ, it does so by introducing an “out-and-proud” foil to previous visions of the “suicidal drop-out” depicted in the youth-at-risk literature. This new discursive position, they argue, continues to draw distinct limits on how LGBTQ students and their schools are imagined.

### **Conclusion: Why Turn to Practice?**

I have attempted in this review to organize the research literature on LGBTQ issues in education in a way that illustrates how research has conceptualized the nature of the problem posed by gender and sexual diversity in schools. Through a frame analysis of research literature spanning the last half-century, I revealed a series of ideological and chronological patterns that I present in this paper as a periodization of frames in the research literature on LGBTQ issues in education. I concluded that pivotal historical moments in the struggle for gay rights coincided with the introduction of novel conceptualizations for understanding LGBTQ youth and the problem of sexual diversity in schools. Along with identifying and periodizing five distinct frames, my analysis also revealed that all frames have shared a common focus: individual identity. Across eras, research into LGBTQ issues in schools has focused almost exclusively on examining individuals’ defining characteristics, proclivities, experiences, and beliefs. With the introduction of bullying studies, researchers have begun to conceptualize individuals’ experiences as embedded in contexts of social practice. However, bullying studies remain primarily focused on understanding how individuals’ identities are influenced by social practices – the practices themselves have remained largely unexamined.

Regardless of whether research focuses on privacy, risk, victimization, or resiliency, the research literature during the last 45 years has conceptualized everything from shame and heterosexism to pride and academic achievement as attributes of individuals and not byproducts of social practice and collective activity. Understanding trends in the experiences of individuals helps to identify disparities across communities; however, it does little to point us in the direction of how to change those disparities. In order to better understand how we might interrupt inequitable disparities between LGBTQ and heterosexual students, we need to develop a body of knowledge about phenomena affecting LGBTQ youth at the level of social practice. Since any shaping of social practices at the student level would require targeted work from educational professionals, the field would benefit from developing knowledge about how the professional practices of educators reinforce or interrupt inequitable disparities between LGBTQ and heterosexual students. If in the last half-century we have built a body of knowledge that illuminates the distinct experiences of LGBTQ students and teachers, perhaps we can spend the next 50 years deepening our understanding about how those experiences are constructed through social and professional practice.

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Justice in Practice:

Investigating teachers' responses to expressions of prejudice in the classroom

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### Abstract

The turn to practice in research on teaching has been criticized as return to a technocratic perspective that neglects issues of equity and justice. Presenting an alternative perspective, I argue that we might deepen our understanding of the complex work of interrupting inequity in the classroom by foregrounding practice when investigating teaching for social justice. This paper reports findings from a comparative case study of the instructional practice of three secondary English Language Arts (ELA) teachers, each holding strong orientations towards social justice and prejudice reduction. For one semester, I documented how teachers responded to prejudice in the classroom through a series of interviews, classrooms observations, and daily logs. Findings indicate that even when teachers hold very similar intentions to reduce prejudice among their students, their instructional practice in the face of prejudiced remarks can differ greatly. By applying a practice-based perspective on teaching to an investigation of public prejudice in the classroom, this study aims to (1) broaden the conversation about teaching that is currently occurring among scholars interested in core practices of teaching and (2) counter the view that investigations of practice are not compatible with equity orientations to the work of teaching.

“*Ew! Gross!*” Cynthia Barnes recalls her eighth-grade English Language Arts students shouting while she was reading aloud to her class from the novel *True Believer*. A male character had just revealed his attraction to another boy and her eighth-graders did not hesitate to express their disgust at these romantic feelings. In response to students’ expressed revulsion, Ms. Barnes recounted instructing her students to do a silent stop-and-jot in their journals before beginning a conversation about what had just happened in the classroom. She recalls what she said to students as she instructed them to stop-and-jot:

*That was a moment where a lot of people had some challenges to their thinking. Write down what your thoughts were at that moment. Did you feel something personally? Did you respond to somebody else who said ‘ew?’ Did it make you think?... [Ask yourself:] was I thinking anything? Was I not? Was I responding to other people, that kind of peer pressure?*

I begin this paper with this brief vignette because it represents atypical pedagogical practice. Ms. Barnes prompts her students to interrogate their own thoughts and actions surrounding an expression of prejudice. In hundreds of hours of interviews, classroom observations, and daily teacher logs, I have collected many stories of middle and high school English Language Arts (ELA) teachers responding to students’ expressions of prejudice in the classroom. I have collected examples of teachers lecturing to students, ignoring students, prompting students to challenge each other, and offering students alternatives to prejudice, but the vignette above is the only example I have in which a teacher asked her students to explain their thinking and respond to each other’s reasoning. I begin my paper with Ms. Barnes’ words because the fact that they are rare raises questions for me about how and why teachers respond to

students' expressions of prejudice in the ways they do. More specifically, my research has been guided by the following two questions:

- How do teachers who want to reduce prejudice among their students respond to prejudice when it is expressed in the classroom?
- What accounts for variations in the ways that teachers respond to expressions of prejudice by students?

It is the focus on practice that makes these questions significant. We know a great deal about the beliefs and characteristics of teachers regarding social justice issues (Enterline et al., 2008; Klienfeld, 1975; Ladson-Billings, 1994) such as responding to students' prejudices. However, we still know very little about teacher's pedagogical practice relating to issues of equity and justice (Sheets, 2003). Because our knowledge about teachers who effectively interrupt inequitable disparities between social groups focuses mostly on who those teachers are and what they believe, it is not surprising that we have difficulty changing teachers' practice (Kennedy, 1999). Because we are so unclear about what it means to teach for social justice at the level of instructional practice, the only tools we have for measuring social justice orientations among teachers are measures of beliefs and perspectives (Enterline et al., 2008; Ludlow et al., 2008)

Investigations into the practice of teachers who intend to teach for social justice have the potential to benefit both scholarly communities interested in teaching practice and those interested in social justice teaching. Scholars engaged in conceptualizing and investigating teaching practices (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Lampert, 2009) would benefit from expanding their conception of the work of teaching beyond content specific instructional methods. Scholars interested in teaching for social justice (Ayers et

al., 2010; Banks, 2004; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1994) would benefit from supplementing their investigations of teacher's characteristics and beliefs with investigations of teacher practice.

To answer the research questions I described above, I use constructs from sociocultural perspectives on both prejudice and learning as well as contemporary scholarship on teaching practice to offer a framework for understanding the relationship between instructional practice and social practice designed to promote justice and equity in the classroom.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This analysis is an examination of how teachers' responses to students' expressions of prejudice are embedded with tacit assumptions about (1) the nature of prejudice, (2) how students learn to think and act in unprejudiced ways, and (3) how teachers facilitate that learning. In the text that follows I describe the conceptual underpinnings of these three parts in my analysis by drawing on sociocultural theories of prejudice and learning as well as contemporary scholarship on teaching practice. First, I draw on sociocultural theory to conceptualize public prejudice as dialogic, cultural practice (Condor, 2006). In addition, I describe several different cultural perspectives on the nature of social practice that works against prejudice. Next, I draw on sociocultural theories of learning to conceptualize the process of learning to think and act against prejudice as both social and situated. Finally, I describe how through examinations of teaching practice, we can reveal assumptions about what it means to counter prejudice and the process through which people learn to do it.

#### **What is Prejudice?**

In 1954, Gordon Allport famously defined prejudice as “an antipathy based on faulty and inflexible generalization.” (p. 9). Since the publication of Allport’s seminal piece, a vast body of scholarship on prejudice has emerged, which includes a long history of contested conceptualizations and theorization (Augoustinos & Reynolds, 2001, Brown, 1995, Clark, 1986; Pettigrew, 1998; Stephan, 1985). In Allport’s classical definition, prejudice is viewed as an internal possession that resides within an individual. It is distinct from discrimination, which is typically conceptualized as the external expression of a prejudiced internal state (Bodenhausen & Richeson, 2010). In this paper, I draw on the social psychological concept of *public prejudice*, which combats the thought/action split between prejudice and discrimination (Fazio & Olson, 2003). Condor (2006) defines public prejudice as a “collaborative discursive accomplishment” that is “the outcome of joint action in situated social encounters.” I draw on Condor’s definition to offer a conceptualization of prejudice as a cultural practice. By understanding prejudice as cultural practice, I hope to open doors for new ways of thinking about pedagogical approaches to prejudice reduction in the classroom.

**Prejudice as cultural practice.** From a sociocultural perspective, prejudice is understood as a socially situated, collaborative activity that occurs between and through multiple individuals situated in particular social contexts (Condor, 2006). This perspective challenges the cognitive and macro-social assumption that prejudice is a possession, one that resides either inside the head of individuals or inside the social milieu. By eschewing the understanding of prejudice as a discrete possession, whether that possession is individually or collectively held, we reveal how prejudice is continually constructed in the course of everyday interpersonal activity (Rouse, 2006). Understanding prejudice as cultural practice, I am less interested in

analyzing the underlying animations (whether individual or social) that are “brought out” when prejudice is publically expressed and am more interested in public expressions of prejudice in and of themselves. This focus on the interpersonal practice of expressing prejudice is grounded in the assumption that public expressions of prejudice make and remake themselves through enactment (Rouse, 2006). This reconceptualization opens doors for understanding the fine-grained pedagogical work of responding to prejudice when it is expressed in the classroom.

***Countering prejudice.*** This paper investigates what teachers’ instructional practice when responding to prejudice can tell us about their perspectives on (1) what it means to counter prejudice and (2) the process of learning to counter prejudice. Grounded in a theoretical perspective on prejudice as cultural practice, I conceive of the work of countering prejudice also as cultural practice – as practice that represents our cultural and historical realities and is constructed through our practical activity. In the text that follows, I describe three different ways of conceptualizing practice that counters prejudice: (1) following social rules, (2) seeking out and applying accurate social information, and (3) collaboratively reasoning about social response.

***Following social rules.*** In the 1990s, many college campuses adopted speech codes to regulate discriminatory speech. The adoption of these codes follows a logic that conceptualizes the work of countering prejudice as a project in enforcing social rules. Along with the legal construct of hate speech, speech codes are the most prominent application of a rule-following logic for conceptualizing the work of countering public prejudice. A rule following logic assumes the existence of a culturally determined linguistic code that classifies some language as offensive and therefore forbidden (Matsuda et al., 1993). Following this logic, to counter prejudice, one must enforce the rules of the linguistic code. In classrooms, a rule-following

conceptualization of the work of countering prejudice would be present if a teacher declared, “we don’t use that word.” This linguistic rule-following schema arose alongside identity politics and the linguistic turn in academia, during which academics and activists began attempting to change social reality by changing language use (Gould, 2005). Understanding language to represent and control thought, proponents of identity politics argued that by controlling language use, we could re-mold cultural attitudes over time. While affective, cognitive, and social changes are goals of this social practice, they are conceived of as the results of linguistic rule following.

*Seeking and applying accurate social information.* Another popular understanding of prejudice is that it is simply another face of ignorance, a result of a lack of knowledge. A web-search for the words prejudice and ignorance will unearth a plethora of T-shirts and bumper stickers declaring, “prejudice=ignorance.” Scholarship, as well, has typically understood ignorance as the knowledge problem that accompanies the attitudinal problem of prejudice (Thornicroft et al., 2007). Following this logic, acting against prejudice first and foremost involves seeking out and then applying accurate information about stigmatized social groups. In this view, affective, behavioral, and social changes occur as a result of seeking and applying accurate social information.

*Negotiating social realities.* A third perspective is that acting against prejudice is not something one can do alone. Instead it is the work of democratic citizenship, of engaging in interpersonal negotiation and sacrifice in order to build social trust. To describe this third perspective, I draw on Allen’s (2004) construct of political friendship, which she describes as “a set of hard-won, complicated habits that are used to bridge trouble, difficulty, and differences (p. xxi).” In this view, acting against prejudice is a social and dialogic process wherein people work

together across difference to build trust in one another by sharing themselves, sacrificing for one another, and trusting that their sacrifices will be reciprocated. In this view, affective, behavioral and cognitive changes occur as a result of social negotiation and the building of social trust.

### **Learning To Counter Prejudice: A Sociocultural View**

The first part of my analysis (described above) is an investigation of how teachers' responses to students' expressions of prejudice reveal perspectives about the nature of prejudice and how a teacher might work against it. The second part of my analysis, which I describe below, is an attempt to understand how teacher practice is grounded in assumptions about (1) how students *learn* to act against prejudice and (2) what kind of classroom activity supports that learning. For this second part of my analysis, I adopt a sociocultural perspective on learning, understanding it as a culturally and historically situated social process through which an individual becomes a more central participant in social practice over time. In the text below, I draw on sociocultural theory to describe my conceptualization of the process of learning to engage in social practice that may reduce prejudice.

Grounding my analysis in Vygotsky's early argument that "all higher psychological functions are internalized relationships of the social kind" (Vygotsky as cited in Valsiner, 1987, p. 67), I understand social interaction as the primary component of human development. In this view, learning is a socially situated process through which interactions between individuals, artifacts, and social others result in a social formation of the individual mind (Wertsch, 1985). I view the learner not as a passive recipient of information, but as an agent of meaning making who exists in a cultural context and uses social tools in the construction of meaning.

Operating with a sociocultural perspective, I investigate the practical activity in which teachers engage students following expressions of prejudice. When an opportunity to unlearn prejudice arises, does the teacher ask students to follow prescribed behavioral rules (e.g. “we don’t use that word in this classroom”)? Does he ask students to consume information that might counter their worldview (e.g. “Serena Williams ‘plays like a girl’ and she is a world champion.”)? Does she engage students in a social negotiation of meaning (e.g. “What are you trying to communicate when you say ‘that’s gay?’”)? Each of these types of practical activity reveal different assumptions about what it means to stand against prejudice, how one learns to participate in it, and how teachers can facilitate that learning. Analysis of classroom activity and the pedagogical choices that teachers make to structure that activity can provide insights into our assumptions about prejudice and what it means to work against it.

### **Teaching Practice: The Facilitation of Classroom Activity to Counter Prejudice**

The final part of my analysis is an investigation of teacher practice. I investigate what teachers do when they are responding to expressions of prejudice and how what they do structures the practical activity of the classroom. I am particularly interested in investigating how the different responses to public prejudice reflect different conceptualizations about what it means to counter prejudice. I rely on contemporary scholarship on core practices of teaching to conceptualize teaching practice as the vehicle through which teachers structure the practical activity of the classroom. Teaching practices are goal-oriented, prototypical, interactional routines that rely on characteristic talk, tasks, and tools and adhere to underlying principles (Reckwitz, 2002; Windschitl et al, 2012). Lampert (2010) describes them as habituations “of the way time and space are used, who talks when, and how one gets access to the materials

necessary for participation.” For this study, the construct of a teaching practice is useful because it offers language for answering the question: what are teachers doing to prompt students to participate in particular types of social practice (following social rules, gathering and applying social information, or engaging in social negotiation)?

Currently, there is not consensus about which grain-size of classroom activity counts as a teaching practice – some scholars argue that facilitating discussion is a teaching practice (Ball & Forzani, 2009), while others argue that facilitating discussion is a domain that contains multiple practices (Boerst &2, 2010). For this study I entered my data without have decided upon one perspective on grain-size, instead drawing from various scholars’ conceptualizations and used analysis to uncover the practices that best aligned with the data. The teaching practices that emerged through analysis as ones that teachers employed following students’ expressions of prejudice were: eliciting student thinking, modeling and facilitating guided practice, and offering information. In the text below, I discuss how teachers used these practices to structure the practical activity of the classroom in ways that reflected rule following, information gathering, or social negotiation perspectives on what it means to counter prejudice.

### **Study Design**

This inquiry into teachers’ responses to students’ expressions of prejudice is part of a larger qualitative, comparative case study of the practices of teachers who attempt to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students. Portions of the data collected for that study are utilized for this analysis – some directly relate to issues pertaining to LGBTQ students, while other portions of the data relate to expressions of prejudice directed at women and at minority ethnic and racial groups.

## **The Overarching Study**

In 2013, I initiated a qualitative, comparative case study of the practices of four secondary ELA teachers who had exceptionally strong intentions to be supportive of their LGBTQ students. My qualitative study design offered me the flexibility to follow relevant lines of inquiry as they emerged (Wolcott, 1990). As I investigated the practices that study participants employed in their efforts to support LGBTQ students, my data collection and analysis revealed a problem – that of understanding the variation across pedagogical practice of teachers with very similar intentions. All teachers were selected because of their strong intention to reduce prejudice among their students, but each teacher took a different approach to the work of reducing prejudice in his or her classroom. This problem was pertinent to understanding my study participants’ practice, but was under-researched. As I conducted my initial readings of the data collected for the larger research project, my thinking was prompted about the relationship among theories of learning, theories of prejudice, and scholarship on teaching practice. In response to the problem that emerged from the larger data set, I developed a focused comparative case study of only the data that captured teachers’ responses to students’ expressions of prejudice. I hoped that by focusing on a subset of my data – only that data capturing teachers’ pedagogical practice in the immediate aftermath of an expression of prejudice – I might be able to investigate variation in teachers’ practice when faced with the common dilemma of public prejudice.

## **Settings and Participants**

The four case teachers whose practice is investigated in this study were selected for their exceptionally strong intention to support LGBTQ students. The goal of the larger study was to learn more about what teachers do to support LGBTQ students by examining teaching practice as

well as the contextual supports and constraints on that practice. (Serving the goal of the larger study, this particular inquiry focuses on how teachers with exceptionally strong intentions to reduce prejudice respond to public expressions of prejudice.) Sampling included a multi-staged process that began with collecting reputational recommendations for LGBTQ-supportive teachers followed by both a questionnaire and an interview on teachers' pedagogical practice related to LGBTQ support. Along with having strong reputations for LGBTQ support, all four teachers held strong intentions to actively support LGBTQ students through engaging in prejudice reduction activities, integrating inclusive content, and advocating for or with LGBTQ students. These four teachers are atypical with respect to their intentions to reduce prejudice among their students – they hold exceptionally strong intentions to do, which makes them rich cases for understanding pedagogical approaches to prejudice reduction.

I collected data about the four selected teachers for seven months by observing instruction, conducting interviews, and collecting daily logs and curricular materials. While the teachers shared strong intentions and reputations for LGBTQ support, their professional and personal experiences, and the contexts in which they taught were quite different. As detailed in figure three, the case teachers' contexts in several ways: the age of their students, the demographic make-up and location of their schools (although all were in the Pacific Northwest), their own depth of experience as teachers, and their own sexual orientations.

**Figure 3: Case Teachers**

<b>Case Teachers <i>names are pseudonyms</i></b>	<b>Grade taught at time of study</b>	<b>Years taught</b>	<b>School Population: Race &amp; Ethnicity</b>	<b>School Population: Free &amp; Reduced</b>	<b>School Location</b>	<b>Teacher sexual orientation</b>

				<b>Lunch</b>		
<b>Cynthia Barnes</b>	Grade 8	13 years	90% minority	65% free & reduced lunch	Urban	Female and partnered with a woman
<b>James Masterson</b>	Grade 10	9 years	10% minority	10% free & reduced lunch	Rural	Male and married to a woman
<b>Jonathan Jones</b>	Grade 11	12 years	68% minority	21% free & reduced lunch	Suburban	Male and married to a man
<b>Kerry Herlein</b>	Grade 10	5 years	62% minority	40% free & reduced lunch	Urban	Queer identified female, partnered with a man

Teachers completed daily logs about LGBTQ supportive practice in which they provided information about upcoming lesson plans. I observed their practice when upcoming plans indicated a focus on LGBTQ people or related issues like love, discrimination, prejudice, or political controversies.

### **Data-Collection Strategy**

The research relies on a variety of data collected over a seven-month period beginning in June and extending through December, 2013. Data include observational data of classroom teaching, informal exchanges between teachers and students outside of class time, teacher engagement in extra-curricular activities, interviews with individual teachers and administrators, daily logs completed by case teachers, and a variety of relevant school and classroom documents. Central to my data collection strategy was the review of teachers' daily logs, in which teachers reflected on their daily practice as it related to LGBTQ support and described any upcoming lesson plans and school activities that were related to LGBTQ issues, such as discrimination,

romantic love, family, religion, or political controversy. Sampling of lessons was conducted through review of daily logs and those lessons that teachers indicated would include discussion of LGBTQ people or related issues were observed. Along with observational data, I conducted monthly interviews with case teachers about their pedagogical practice as it related to LGBTQ support. These conversations were audiotaped and transcribed. I assumed that these records would help me understand how participants enacted practices aimed at supporting LGBTQ students in their role as teachers.

### **Analyzing Responses to Prejudice**

This analysis started with a question: “How do teachers who want to reduce prejudice among their students respond to public expressions of prejudice in the classroom?” Guided by this question, I developed a unit of analysis called episodes of response to prejudice (ERPs) to make sense of the data. I define the ERPs to be units of data that capture teachers’ pedagogical decision-making around any student’s expression of prejudice, which I define as an utterance that communicates distaste or indifference towards one or more social groups. ERPs existed across three of the four case teachers. No ERPs existed in data collected on Jonathan Jones’ practice, so no data from his classroom was included in analysis for this inquiry. Some ERPs are captured by only one data source (usually a teacher log or a teacher interview) and contain limited information about a teacher’s pedagogical decision making, such as this excerpt from a daily log:

*We were looking at one particular passage [in All Quiet on the Western Front] where the main character [a male soldier] describes his love for the father-figure of his section.*

*Words such as intimate, love, understanding, etc. are used by the author. There were a*

*couple of quick chuckles from some students and I quickly asked whether this "is something to laugh at, is this at all about physical attraction, what is the author really getting at here." (Or something along those lines). There were no problems moving right along and having them dive back into the text and analysis.*

While some ERPs, like the one above, are short and contain little information about teacher decision-making and goals for student learning, other ERPs consist of data from multiple sources including observational data, teachers' logs, and interview data. These ERPs contain records of multi-party classroom discourse, the teacher's logged recollections of the episode, as well as teacher's reflections on the episode in interview data.

Using open coding, I developed a list of informal codes from an initial read of the ERPs. The next pass at coding employed a list of codes developed out of the study's theoretical framework. Drawing on both open codes and theory-driven codes, I coded a final time using two sets of top-level codes. The first set of codes detailed teaching practices: *Eliciting Student Ideas*, *Offering Information*, and *Modeling & Guided Practice*. The second set of codes described the social practice of countering prejudice: *Following Social Rules*, *Gathering Social Information*, and *Engaging in Social Negotiation*. These two top-level coding categories yield the ERPs I focus on in this paper. ERPs provided a means for comparing teachers' pedagogical approaches to responding to public expressions of prejudice and the assumptions about learning that underlie each of these approaches.

### **Focal Data Selection**

In this paper, I compare three ERPs to illustrate the differences between *Eliciting*, *Offering*, and *Modeling & Guided Practice* as responses to public expressions of prejudice and to describe

how these teaching practices relate to ideas about what it means to counter prejudice. All focal data chosen was selected because it was a clear example of a teacher attending to prejudice. While the data corpus includes instances where teachers do not respond to prejudiced utterances, I do not engage with those ERPs in this paper. None of the focal ERPs are typical in the data – all were chosen because they are more in-depth than most. Though atypical, each is representative of the type of response to prejudice it illustrates, albeit more clearly elaborated on, making each focal ERP rich for analysis.

For most ERPs, analysis is based on the following data: observational field notes of classroom activity, the teacher’s daily log from the observed day of instruction, and follow-up interview data with the teacher. For the “Eliciting/Social Negotiation” ERP, however, my analysis is based solely on interview data. I describe the reasons for this difference in the following section on limitations.

### **Limitations of the Analysis**

The data corpus includes ERPs representative of all three teaching practices (eliciting student thinking, offering information, and modeling & guided practice) and describes the relationship of each to conceptualizations of the practical work of countering prejudice (following social rules, gathering and applying social information, and engaging in social negotiation). Both eliciting student thinking and engaging in social negotiation appeared significantly less frequently in the data than the other teacher practices and conceptualizations of prejudice. Because eliciting emerged less frequently in the data, none of the eliciting ERPs in my data corpus contained all three data sources (interviews, logs, and observational field-notes). Therefore, data on eliciting as an approach to responding to prejudice are less robust and less can

be garnered about teachers' pedagogical decision-making when employing an elicitation approach. In my analysis, I am mindful of what is missing from the data and provide interpretations that reflect the data and information to which I have access.

While data on eliciting as a pedagogical approach is less robust, I highlight it in this paper because of its theoretical implications for understanding teachers' response to prejudice in terms of pedagogical practice. The existence of eliciting as a pedagogical approach has important enough implications for teachers' pedagogical practice and warrants examination in this paper alongside the more frequently used approaches of offering information, and modeling and guided practice.

### **Teaching and Learning From Prejudiced Remarks: Three Illustrative Cases**

I analyze three different episodes of teachers' responses to expressions of prejudice in the classroom. Drawing from my theoretical framework, I examine an expanded version of the vignette that opens this paper as a case in which a teacher responds to an expression of prejudice by *eliciting student thinking*, another in which a teacher responds by *offering* students information, another case in which a teacher *models* a response to prejudice that she intends for students to take up and then *guides* students through a sequence of steps (or prescribed rules) for responding to prejudice when it is expressed. I conclude with a discussion about how each of these responses allows students to engage in different types of social practice (rule-following, information gathering, and social negotiation).

#### **Eliciting Student Thinking**

**Overview.** In this section, I present an expanded version of the vignette that begins this paper. I present the focal ERP in this section as an illustrative example of responding to public

expressions of prejudice by *Eliciting Student Thinking*. I first provide some background to the ERP, contextualizing the actions of both the teacher and the students. A close analysis of the ERP follows, in which I pay particular attention to (1) what the teacher does following the student's public expression of prejudice and (2) how the teacher makes her pedagogical decisions. Finally, I synthesize these strands of analysis and reflect on how this particular instantiation of the teaching practice of eliciting student thinking created an opportunity for students to *Engage in Social Negotiation*.

**Background of the event.** The ERP that follows is an excerpt from an interview with Cynthia Barnes in which she recounts an episode of her teaching during the previous year. Ms. Barnes has been a teacher for 13 years, three years of which were spent teaching at Wildwood K-8 (a pseudonym) where, at the time of this study, she worked as an eighth-grade humanities teacher. Wildwood is an urban school in a major city in the Pacific Northwest that leans left on the political spectrum. Ninety percent of Wildwood's students are students of color (the student body represents a mix of African-American, Asian-American, Latino, and White students) with 65% of all students receiving free-and-reduced lunch. In the interview excerpt that follows, Ms. Barnes reflects on a moment in her teaching. With her eighth grade ELA class, she was conducting an interactive read aloud using the novel *True Believer*. At one point in the novel, a male character reveals his attraction to another boy. In the ERP below Ms. Barnes describes the experience of reading this portion of the text aloud to her students.

**ERP 1: Engaging learners in social negotiation.**

<p>Ms. Barnes: <i>It's always very interesting because [when we read the character's disclosure that he has a crush on a boy] students will be like, 'Ew.' When</i></p>
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*I hear that with kids, usually what I think in my head, as a teacher, is that it's a moment to re-adjust their equilibrium and their thinking. Some people, especially young teachers, are like, 'what do you do?' I think you need to take that as an opportunity. Something has just jarred their thinking in a way that is uncomfortable for them. They're trying to figure it out; it's a learning opportunity. But when young teachers hear comments like that, a lot of times they're just like, 'Oh shh, shh, we're not going to...' and then they don't ever talk about it and they'll say, "yeah, I think I'm really supportive because I don't allow those things," but they don't ever – there's never the follow-up educational part of like, 'okay so maybe saying that is not okay. So let's explore what that means.'*

Interviewer: *What happens after the 'ew' moments in your classroom?*

Ms. Barnes: *We might do, like, a silent stop-and-jot in our journals. Like, 'that was a moment where a lot of people had some challenges to their thinking. Write down what your thoughts were at that moment. Did you feel something personally? Did you respond to somebody else who said 'ew?' Did it make you think?' So I might often times just give them an opportunity to put their thinking down or make them focus on, 'was I thinking anything? Was I not? Was I responding to other people, that kind of peer pressure?' Then maybe we would open up to a conversation.*

Ms. Barnes' first response to students' utterances of "ew" is to say, "that was a moment when a lot of people had some challenges to their thinking." Here, Ms. Barnes names for her

students that there has just been a clash between a new piece of information (the character's same-sex attraction) and students' worldview. By naming this clash, Ms. Barnes calls her students' attention, not to the expression "ew" itself, but instead to the cognitive dissonance that students were experiencing that might have prompted them to say "ew." After marking students' cognitive dissonance, Ms. Barnes elicits students thinking: "Write down what your thoughts were at that moment. Did you feel something personally? Did you respond to somebody else who said 'ew?' Did it make you think?" Notably, she elicits *all* students thinking, both those who said "ew" and those who "responded to somebody else who said 'ew.'"

Ms. Barnes provides some insight into her reasoning behind having students stop-and-jot in response to a prejudiced moment in an interview. She describes the move as an attempt to gather information about kids thinking in order to inform her pedagogical decision-making:

*A lot of times I'll have kids journal where they can have a private conversation and they can maybe give me their thoughts or ideas. In that moment you're just gathering in some information [to see] if there is either a very strong judgment or a misconception or whatever the issue is, so you have a better understanding of how maybe to handle it. I think just opening it up for discussion all the time can sometimes get -- I think it's just harder to make the best decision of how to handle it. A lot of times, if I'm unsure and I'm not sure of where to go with the conversation or discussion if something comes up -- literally, I'm trying to figure out in my head: what is the best way to talk about this that's it's not just left under the rug. A lot of times, I'll ask kids to journal about it.*

Here Ms. Barnes identifies two reasons for eliciting student thinking: (1) to give students a moment to reflect and "have a private conversation," (2) to "gather information" to determine

whether the expression of prejudice was grounded in a “misconception,” a “strong judgment,” or something else. Both of these reasons rest on a set of assumptions about teaching, learning, and students. First, the move to ask students to have a “private conversation” rests on an assumption that some new piece of information has been presented to them and they would benefit from an opportunity to make sense of that information using nothing more than their existing cognitive frameworks. When asking students to stop-and-jot in response to the character’s revelation of same-sex attraction, Ms. Barnes identifies two specific things that students might “have a private conversation” about: “challenges to their thinking,” and their “responses to other people’s” prejudiced remarks, identifying both as relevant for student sense-making.

Second, the move to “gather information” about why students said “ew” rests on an assumption that if a student’s prejudiced remark was grounded in “a misconception” the teachers’ response should be different than if a student’s prejudiced remark had been grounded in a “a strong judgment.” Here Ms. Barnes is articulating a belief that students’ choice to say “ew” is the result of student sense-making and that an effective response from the teacher would be one that engages directly with the particular reasoning process in which the student was engaged. Ms. Barnes’ pedagogical decisions following her students’ expression of prejudice were all grounded in a basic assumption that all of her students, whether they had expressed prejudice or not, were engaged in making sense of new information and that her job as a teacher was to facilitate this sense-making by eliciting their ideas and using discussion to offer students an opportunity to engage in social negotiation of those ideas.

### **Offering Information**

**Overview.** I use an ERP from James Masterson's teaching practice to illustrate the practice of responding to a public expression of prejudice by *Offering Information*. I first provide some background to the ERP to contextualize the actions of both the teacher and the students. Background is followed by a close analysis of the ERP focusing on what Mr. Masterson does following students' expression of prejudice and how he makes pedagogical decisions. Finally, I discuss the relationship between the teaching practice of offering information and a conceptualization of prejudice as ignorance.

**Background of the event.** This ERP takes place in Mr. Masterson's 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA classroom at Jackson Heights High School (a pseudonym). Jackson Heights is located in small mountain town an hour outside of a major city in the Pacific Northwest. The school has a public history of contention around LGBTQ issues. In 2008 the school was making national news because protests became heated in response to the Gay/Straight Alliance's institution of a Day of Silence (an event intended to raise awareness of the harassment of LGBTQ students). Months of protests were followed by a violent beating of a freshman boy who defending another student against anti-gay slurs in the school's locker room. This school, more than most, has a public identity of controversy around LGBTQ issues. Mr. Masterson is the faculty advisor of the school's Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) and led the GSA (along with another teacher who left the school due to the struggles around LGBTQ issues) through the year when the school was making national news for the anti-LGBTQ protests.

**The lesson.** The ERP analyzed below occurred in one of Mr. Masterson's regular tracked tenth grade classes. The lesson takes place on the first day of a short unit on Shakespearean sonnets. The ERP takes place following Mr. Masterson's introduction of the structure, rhyme

scheme, and meter of Shakespearean sonnets and centers around his introduction of the content of the sonnets. An excerpt of classroom discourse is printed below followed by an analysis. I also draw from interview data and teacher logs to provide insight into Mr. Masterson's pedagogical decision-making.

**ERP 2: Offering information.**

Mr. Masterson: *So there's some really interesting things that we've discovered by looking at his sonnets – number one: most of them are probably not written to Ann Hathaway, if any of them, right? There is a mysterious, dark lady that appears in like 22 of the poems. Some of them are clearly written to a younger female that they can probably figure out is, like, aged 14, 15. Some of them, listen to this, some of these looking at the pronouns are written to a younger male. That's in there too.*

[Chatter and laughter erupt]

Tina: *Ew.*

Jon: *That's awkward.*

Brian: [in a tone that indicates sensuality] *Oh, yeah.*

Mr. Masterson: *Pretty common for the time. Right? Some of them are written to like groups of people – whatever that's about. So when you think about it though, listen. The cool thing about it though is that regardless of whether or not Shakespeare's writing to Ann Hathaway or the mysterious dark lady or some young Juanita or some young Juan, or whoever it is, right... so whoever he is writing to, the cool thing about it*

*though is, like, again, this is this writer that we put up on this pedestal for kind of, like, defining what love is and we have all these different perceptions of love and sometimes its about desire and sometimes it's about something physical and sometimes its much more emotional and personal and you can get these different perspectives from him, which is kind of cool to be able to look at.*

The public expression of prejudice that marks this ERP comes in the middle, when chatter erupts in class following Mr. Masterson's statement that there is evidence that Shakespeare might have written some of his sonnets to a younger male. When Tina says, "ew" she reveals a prejudiced attitude towards same sex love relationships. Mr. Masterson's response to Tina's prejudiced remark is indirect. He does not call attention to Tina in any way, but he does offer an alternative interpretation. If "ew" is one interpretation of the fact that Shakespeare may have written some of his sonnets to a man, the alternative interpretations that Mr. Masterson presents is that same sex love is "pretty common" and that its "kind of cool" to be able to "get these different perspectives."

Mr. Masterson chooses not to make the prejudiced comment itself into a topic of conversation, instead his focus stays on the content about which the comment was made (in this case, the possibility that Shakespeare wrote some of his sonnets to a young man). He treats the prejudiced comment as one interpretation of that content, but in addition presents an alternative idea to the prejudiced comment. When reflecting on this lesson in an interview, Mr. Masterson said:

*I want that [prejudiced] reaction to be countered by someone who could just deal with it. And by me, just moving on past it. I think, again, it helps normalize that relationship [between Shakespeare and a young man], like, [LGBTQ people] exist and they have always existed.*

When Mr. Masterson says that he wants students to express “that reaction” so that it can “be countered by someone who could just deal with it,” he is articulating a desire for students to express their authentic (and potentially prejudiced) ideas so that he has an opportunity to counter prejudice by offering information that conveys a different perspective. In effect, he uses Tina’s public expression of prejudice as a prompt for presenting novel information about a marginalized social group.

The teaching Mr. Masterson engages in following Tina’s prejudiced remark takes the form of exposing his students to a new idea – that same-sex love is “pretty common” and “kind of cool.” He doesn’t offer students opportunities to engage in sense-making and social negotiation, choosing to own the presentation of ideas himself. This is not typical for Mr. Masterson, who often engages students in social negotiations of meaning about literature. His choice not to use a social negotiation approach following an expression of prejudice is calculated. In an interview, Mr. Masterson’ describes his decision:

*A part of [normalizing LGBTQ existence] means moving quickly and not necessarily lingering and allowing something to erupt into some kind of moment where somebody can latch onto it and turn it into a joke. If that does happen, you know, attempt to normalize it: somebody says, “Oh man! That’s disgusting!” I say “Well, it’s pretty common back then. It’s still pretty common today. We see this throughout history,” and*

*then I move right into the next thing without even allowing them the opportunity to go with it... Maybe I'm trying to protect the blowup, the explosion. I don't want some kid to have to feel terrible about themselves... It can turn into something pretty hostile, right? Speed can address that.*

Here Mr. Masterson is explicit in his choice to minimize student talk. By “moving quickly,” he is attempting to limit students’ “opportunity to go with it.” He intentionally chooses not to leave room for social negotiation because he predicts that if student ideas were shared they would contradict his message that LGBTQ people are normal. Weighing the potential pitfalls of a social negotiation approach, he chooses instead to engage in an *offering* approach to teaching that assumes that students will acquire teacher-presented ideas.

### **Modeling and Guided Practice of Behavioral Rules or Procedures**

**Overview.** I present the following ERP as an illustrative example of a teacher who responds to a public expression of prejudice by *Modeling a Procedure* and then *Guiding Students in Procedural Practice*. I first provide some background to the ERP, contextualizing the actions of both the teacher and the students. A close analysis of the ERP follows, in which I pay particular attention to (1) what the teacher does following the student’s public expression of prejudice and (2) how the teacher makes the pedagogical decisions that she does. Finally, I synthesize these strands of analysis and reflect on the implications of *Modeling A Procedure* and *Guiding Students in Procedural Practice* as an approach to responding to students’ prejudice.

**Background of the event.** The ERP that follows is an excerpt of classroom discourse from the first week of Ms. Herlein’s 10<sup>th</sup> grade World Literature course in the 2013-2014 academic year. Ms. Herlein is a fifth-year teacher in her second year teaching ELA at MLK High

School (a pseudonym). MLK is an urban school in a major city in the Pacific Northwest that leans left on the political spectrum. Sixty-two percent of MLK students are students of color and 40% receive free-and-reduced lunch. The class in which this ERP occurs is approximately 90% students of color. The school has a tracking system that causes within-school segregation. The episode that follows occurred during the first week of school. It is the only ERP in this paper that begins proactively, anticipating prejudice before it is expressed. Prior to any expressions of prejudice, Ms. Herlein explicitly teaches students a prescribed sequence of actions that she wants them to take up if and when prejudice is expressed in the classroom. As the ERP continues, students express ideas that Ms. Herlein perceives as prejudiced. She then guides them in enacting a specified procedure to respond to those expressions of prejudice. The routine procedure for responding to prejudice that Ms. Herlein introduces in this ERP was frequently enacted in her classroom throughout the year. It was enacted at least once during each of my observations in her classroom. The ERP that follows is the first time it is introduced to students. The episode begins at the start of a “philosophical chairs” discussion about stereotypes and discrimination when Ms. Herlein establishes a routine procedure for how she would like students to respond to each other when they feel hurt by a comment made by a classmate.

**ERP 3: Modeling a procedure and guiding students in procedural practice.**

Ms. Herlein: *Before we move on, what is the only rule in the classroom?*

Students: [Speaking in unison] *RESPECT*

Ms. Herlein: *And did we already talk about Ouch/Oops in this class?*

Students: [a handful of students respond] *No*

Ms. Herlein: *Especially when you’re talking about sensitive topics. I’m pretty*

*sensitive, especially when it comes to respecting other people. If you ever are hurt by what someone else said, you can say “ouch.” Whether you totally understand or not, I want you to say what?*

Students: [Reading together off the board] *Oops*

Ms. Herlein: *Sometimes when we have time, we can talk about it and sometimes we can move on. Somebody said something insensitive. It’s just ouch...*

DeShawn: *Oops*

[Nia, a student, enters the room late and takes her seat.]

Ms. Herlein: [Pointing to the right side of the room] *Okay, so this is the agree side, [pointing to the left side of the room] this is the disagree side. The statement is: “Stereotypes are destructive” ... Okay, are we ready to start? Raise your hand if you would like to start the discussion. We’re gonna start with Rachel. Don’t forget ouch/oops. Keep it school appropriate.*

[A debate about whether or not stereotypes are destructive begins: students argue both sides.]

Nia: *Both sides had great points. [Stereotypes] are funny in certain situations. Look up [television show]. That show is funny because it’s making fun of stereotypes by using them. [But on the other hand], people call me drunk even though I don’t drink and I hate that, even though Germans are stereotyped as drunk.*

Ms. Herlein: *Ouch. Oh, Nia, you weren't here. Just say a quick oops.*

Nia: *Oops.*

[Ms. Herlein speaks next and moves on to a new topic]

In this episode, Ms. Herlein introduces the following procedure: when person A says something that person B finds hurtful, person B says “ouch,” which will prompt person A to say “oops.” She engages students in learning this procedure by modeling the procedure herself and by engaging students in guided practice. First, to introduce the procedure, Ms. Herlein gives an instruction, “If you are ever hurt by what someone else said, you can say ‘ouch.’” She then asks students to recite the procedure back to her, “whether you totally understand or not I want you to say what?” Ms. Herlein then creates an opportunity for practice by opening up a conversation about stereotypes and instructing students, “don’t forget ouch/oops.” When a student says something that Ms. Herlein perceives as prejudiced, she models saying “ouch” and then she explicitly directs the student to initiate the final step in the sequence: saying “oops.”

Unlike the other the ERPs discussed in this paper, in this ERP, Ms. Herlein’s instructional goal is not to offer students new information or elicit students thinking about the prejudiced remark. Instead she views her instructional goal following an expression of prejudice as supporting her students to develop a skill, in her words, the skill of “calling each other out.”

*[Ouch/Oops] is my way of having them sort of call each other out and they're always, I hope they're welcome to call each other out ... and I'm a teacher, I'm modeling the behavior. I was like, "Oh, when you're calling someone out, this is how you do it." I would never want to just leave it up totally to the kids because they don't know how to do*

*it yet. Some of them do. Some of them are awesome. They know better than I do, but some of them need the modeling.*

A common practice in anti-racist communities, the practice of “calling someone out” entails naming something someone has said as prejudiced, thereby challenging the ideas that were expressed in the statement. In a later interview, Ms. Herlein defines “calling out:”

*Calling out, I think it's labeling. It's in line with the Ouch/Oops thing. It's naming something as, 'Oh, what you just said is sexist, or is homophobic, or is heterosexist.' Not letting someone just slip that by.*

In contrast to Ms. Barnes and Mr. Masterson, who made decisions to elicit students’ thinking or to offer information following an expression of prejudice, Ms. Herlein’s immediate goal is to model behavior. Her choice to engage in procedural modeling reflects her instructional goal: (“I’m modeling the behavior...they don’t know how to do it yet... some of them need the modeling”).

While Ms. Herlein’s pedagogical decisions reflected her instructional goal, her decision to model and then engage students in guided practice was also an explicit and intentional decision to avoid social negotiation. In a later interview, she articulated her rationale for engaging in the ouch/oops routine thusly:

*My dilemma at MLK High has been that I'm not comfortable enough yet to let a conversation, a tangent conversation, happen because I feel like it breaks apart and I'm not willing to let go of control because I'm too scared of what kids might say. And I really want to protect everyone in the room and I don't want to allow a*

*few loud voices to kind of hijack the main point and turn it into a joke or turn it into an insult.*

Similar to Mr. Masterson, who tried to prevent hostility in the classroom by not “lingering” long enough to allow students to talk, Ms. Herlein takes a preventative approach to hostility by scripting the student talk that she will allow in charged moments. Both Mr. Masterson and Ms. Herlein’s decisions to constrain student talk, while different in pedagogical approach, resulted from the same fear of hostility and desire to “protect” their students.

### **Discussion**

By applying an instructional practice lens to an investigation of teachers’ responses to prejudice in the classroom, I situated this study in the intersection between what we know about instructional practice and what we know about the cultural practice of prejudice. Since scholarship on instructional practice has traditionally focused on content learning, I wondered: how might we use what we know about teaching practice from research in the content areas to inform our understandings of teachers’ instructional practice when it is aimed at social justice goals such as countering prejudice. I chose to examine how teachers respond to public expressions of prejudice in the classroom because it is a common problem that teachers face and has clear implications for how teachers support students in engaging in equity-minded social practice. Using a comparative case design, I explored the varying instructional goals and corresponding pedagogical decisions about instructional practice that teachers made when students expressed prejudice in the classroom.

Given the widespread claim made by teacher preparation programs that they prepare “social justice educators” (McDonald, 2007) and the paucity of relevant research that defines

how teachers learn to engage in teaching practice aimed at social justice goals, this in-depth examination of three cases is informative for practical and theoretical reasons. In what follows, I propose practical implications for a line of research on teaching practice for social justice. I then reason from these three cases to theory by returning to my theoretical framework and summarizing my findings about the relationship between instructional practice and social practice. Finally, I generate hypotheses about that emanate from my theoretical framework about the relationship between justice and practice in the work of teaching.

First, I draw some practical implications from this study. Opportunities for teacher learning about non-content-specific social justice issues characteristically take place in the foundations courses of teacher education programs. Foundations courses are typically built to help teacher candidates develop underlying beliefs and attitudes about social justice, not pedagogical skill in the enactment of instructional practice. The split between foundations and methods is an entrenched programmatic structure found across teacher education programs. It assumes that strong dispositions and beliefs about social justice will translate into effective instructional practice. My analysis describes a more complicated picture; that the social practice of countering prejudice is created *through* instructional practice and that teachers with strong beliefs and intentions related to countering prejudice adopt widely varied pedagogical approaches.

A practice perspective on the work of countering prejudice raises questions about whether, by situating educational foundations courses in the realm of beliefs and dispositions, we are bypassing a particularly fruitful site for teacher learning: instructional practice itself. If the social practice of countering prejudice is created through enactment of instructional practice,

what would it look like to reimagine the pedagogy of educational foundations courses in ways that use instructional practice as a primary site for novice teacher learning? While the move towards practice-based teacher education has taken hold in the content areas (Grossman et al., 2009; Kazemi et al., 2009; Windschitl et al., 2012; Zeichner, 2012), it has yet to significantly influence teacher education at the level of educational foundations. This study could have implications for the way that we think about preparing teachers to do the work of teaching towards social justice.

Along with holding implications for teacher education at the level of programmatic structure and pedagogy, this study raises a set of questions relating to how we prepare teachers to teach for social justice. Future research could explore questions regarding if and how social justice oriented teacher preparation programs prepare teachers for the work of instruction as it relates to social justice. How do teacher educators and coaches engage teachers in developing their instructional practice related to social justice? Do social justice oriented teacher education programs advocate for particular instructional practices or particular instructional goals related to social justice? How, if at all, do teacher candidates take up these practices in their classrooms? What accounts for teacher take-up of instructional practices that support teachers in reaching their goals for student learning about equity and justice?

Second, my analysis raised questions regarding student learning in response to various pedagogical approaches to countering prejudice. While this study documented teachers' practice following public expressions of prejudice in the classroom, the study does not help us understand what students learned from each of these different approaches. There has been a great deal of research on differences in students' content learning between approaches that teach rules and

procedures before engaging students in developing conceptual understanding and approaches that attempt to build conceptual understanding first (Rittle-Johnson, Siegler, & Alibali, 2001). Future research could investigate similar questions about student learning about countering prejudice. What do students learn when they are taught behaviors for responding to prejudice? What do students learn when teachers offer them information that counters prejudice? What do students learn when they are asked to reflect on their own thinking following public expressions of prejudice? There is a paucity of research on how teachers' instructional practice influences students' development of social consciousness and this study contributes to the call for further development of this line of research.

Turning to the theoretical implications of this paper, there is a great deal of knowledge about teaching that can be gained from understanding instructional practice as a creative site when it comes to social practice. Scholars in the content areas have made similar arguments about the relationship between instructional practice and disciplinary practice (Lee & Spratley, 2010; Moje, 2007; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). In his work on historical thinking, Wineburg (1991) describes the relationship between the disciplinary practices in history and the instructional practices of teachers. In a history classroom, if a teacher asks students to participate in historical thinking by recalling dates and names, then her instruction defines the practice of historical thinking as historical recall. However, if students are engaged in asking historical questions and answering those questions by crafting text-based arguments, the disciplinary practice of historical thinking is defined through instructional practice as historical inquiry. I hypothesize that the relationship that scholars in the content areas describe between disciplinary practice and instructional practice is mirrored in the relationship between social practice and

instructional practice. Just as a teachers' instructional choices in a history classroom define what it means to engage in disciplinary practice, so too do a teachers' instructional choices in response to prejudice define what it means to counter prejudice. Study participants used instructional practices (eliciting student thinking, modeling and guided practice, and offering information) as tools not just for countering prejudice, but also for conceptualizing of what it means to counter prejudice. By eliciting student thinking, Ms. Barnes defined what it means to counter prejudice as engaging in social negotiation. Ms. Herlein, on the other hand, defined countering prejudice as enforcing social rules, by modeling how to "call someone out."

The findings of this study do not indicate that particular instructional practices are correlated with particular conceptions of prejudice. While one teacher in this study modeled rule following, one can imagine a teacher modeling a different approach to countering prejudice, perhaps social negotiation or seeking and applying information. The findings of this study are significant, not because they reveal the relationship between particular instructional practices and particular conceptions of prejudice. Instead the contribution of this study is a theoretical one. Findings illustrate how instructional practices are creative tools used by teachers to craft social practice. Physical tools, such as hammers, wrenches, and pliers can be used to build a wide variety of creations. Each tool, however, offers you something different and has a limited number of things that it can accomplish. Similarly, when we view instructional practices as creative tools for the construction of social practice, we reveal that while each instructional practice can be used to achieve a variety of ends, each offers something specific and is limited in what it can accomplish. We have tended to conceptualize social and cultural practices, such as public prejudice, as arising either from within individuals or from within the social milieu

(Condor, 2006). Instead of conceptualizing instructional practice as a site where social perspectives are reflected, I approached this study with a theoretical perspective that I drew from Rouse (2006) and conceptualized instructional practice as a site where social perspectives were formed. This theoretical shift towards practice may have significant implications for both research on teaching and the preparation of teachers around issues of justice and equity.

Although these cases are instructive about the relationship between social and instructional practice, they are not scientifically generalizable (Donmoyer, 1990). I am not attempting to prescribe any particular pedagogical approach to prejudice reduction. Instead I hope to prompt a conversation about how we might better utilize what we know about instructional practice and how people learn in our investigations of questions related to teaching for social justice. Research is needed to investigate what and how students learn from different instructional approaches to prejudice reduction as well as how teachers can be supported to develop instructional practice that effectively interrupts public prejudice.

At the classroom-level, the work of teaching for social justice is a fine-grained, everyday occurrence. It occurs within the quick choices a teacher makes following a student's cry of "ew." It occurs in his consideration the racial dynamics of the classroom when assigning seats and in the nuanced choices that he makes about gender when reading aloud a book about ballerinas or baseball. When viewed this way, being a social justice educator is not an orientation – it is a practice. I draw from Cook and Brown's (1999) definition of practice as "the coordinated activities of individuals and groups in doing their 'real work' as it is informed by a particular organizational or group context" (p. 386, as cited in Lampert, 2009). Cook and Brown elaborate on this definition using an analogy from the practice of medicine:

If Vance's knee jerks, that's behavior. When Vance raps his knee with a physician's hammer, that's action. If his physician raps his knee as part of an exam, it is practice. This is because the meaning of her action comes from the organized contexts of her training and ongoing work in medicine (where it can draw on, contribute to, and be evaluated in the work of others in her field). (p. 387, as cited in Lampert, 2009)

This perspective on practice views activity as a site for collaborative meaning making about professional identity (Wenger, 2003). In this conceptualization, the doctor's exam or the teacher's read aloud is not a site where an already existing professional identity gets reflected, but instead a site where professional identity is built.

The turn to practice in research on teaching, or what is being called the core practice movement, is resulting in a proliferation of investigations of the practical activity of instruction (Core Practices Consortium, 2013; Grossman et al., 2010; Lampert et al., 2010; Windschitl et al., 2012). If these investigations were researching the practice of doctoring, they might focus on the practical activity of the exam described above by Cook and Brown. Studies of teaching, however, focus on understanding the practice of facilitating discussion, modeling, eliciting student thinking, and other common classroom routines. Taken together, these investigations of core practices of teaching present a particular perspective on the professional meaning of the practical activity of the classroom. Currently, these investigations all approach instructional practice through the lens of content learning. I offer this study as a contribution to core practice research – one that enters the practical activity of the classroom through an equity and justice lens as opposed to a content learning lens. I believe my work illustrates how a focus on practice might contribute to our understanding of the practical work of teaching for social justice. In

addition, I offer this study as an illustration of how core practice scholarship might expand its scope to include perspectives on instructional practice that view the work of teaching through lenses other than those now represented in the core practice community. Currently there is a deep divide between scholarship on justice and scholarship on practice. The field is ready to rethink this divide by investigating the work of teaching for social justice *in* practice.

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The Promise of Anonymity:

Investigating how ELA teachers engage students in making sense of LGBTQ content

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### Abstract

States and districts across the country have begun adopting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) inclusive curricula. A proliferation of scholarly debates have emerged as the field determines what LGBTQ topics will be included in the new curricular canon. There remains a paucity of knowledge, however, about instruction as it relates to LGBTQ students. If we hope for curricular inclusion of LGBTQ topics to act as a democratizing force in education, we will need to investigate not only the curriculum, but also how teachers use it in practice. By investigating the pedagogical implications of integrating LGBTQ content into the mainstream curriculum, this paper contributes to scholarly debates about the extent to which classroom discourse can be a democratizing force in the classroom when marginalized identities are the topic of conversation (Boler, 2004; Parker, 2006). I report findings from a comparative case study in on the instructional practice of two secondary English Language Arts (ELA) teachers who cover LGBTQ content. Through a series of interviews, classrooms observations, and daily logs collected across a semester of instruction, I captured data on participants' pedagogical practice as they taught about LGBTQ topics. Findings indicate that participants felt a tension between their desire to make LGBTQ identity visible and their desire to protect LGBTQ students' privacy. The paper pays particular attention to the promise of anonymity as a pedagogical tool that allows for both visibility and privacy when helping students to make sense of LGBTQ content.

As lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people have become more accepted by U.S. society (Pew Research Center, 2013), educators have begun calling for the integration of LGBTQ related content into the K-12 curriculum (Blackburn et al., 2010; Koschoreck & Tooms, 2009; Lipkin, 2004). This push for the inclusion of LGBTQ content has been particularly strong in English language arts (ELA). In 2009, the National Council of Teachers of English issued a resolution to strengthen teacher knowledge of LGBTQ issues, calling for the production of instructional materials that address LGBTQ topics. In the resolution, the Council argues that LGBTQ curricular inclusion is integral to “fair and democratic schooling in a diverse society” (NCTE, 2009). With this statement, the Council situates the issue of LGBTQ curricular inclusion within a long history of scholarship on democratic education and education for citizenship in a diverse society (Banks, 2008; Hess & Avery, 2008; Parker, 2003). I begin this paper with NCTE’s resolution because it is representative of a significant trend in calls for LGBTQ curricular inclusion. It is a common argument that the inclusion of LGBTQ content in curricula is democratizing force in education because it (1) offers a more authentic representation of the public (Thornton, 2003), (2) engages students in deliberations about authentic political controversies (Hess, 2009), and (3) exposes biases that cause social divisions (Blackburn et al., 2010).

As the arguments for LGBTQ curricular inclusion increase, we should be aware of lessons learned from earlier efforts to integrate content related to historically marginalized groups (Banks, 2004). Feminist and anti-racist scholars such as Boler (2004), Jones (2004), and Mansbridge (2004), have argued that without skillful facilitation, the introduction of controversial content about issues of identity into the mainstream curriculum can further

marginalized minority students from full participation in classroom discussion. This catch-22 of content integration has long frustrated scholars. A functioning democracy depends on citizens' engagement with a diversity of perspectives. However, the integration of content representing traditionally marginalized groups often brings front and center what Parker (2006) has called "relations of subjugation and acquiescence" (p. 15). These relations are the interpersonal byproducts of historical oppression and, as Houston (2004) discusses, not all teachers are prepared to support students to navigate the complex relational patterns that emerge in discourse across difference. Because teachers are not prepared for the demands of facilitating discussions that highlight the discursive legacies of historical oppression, the democratizing power of engaging in traditionally marginalized content often remains unrealized.

Among intergroup dialogue scholars such as Maxwell et al. (2011) and Zuniga et al. (2007) there is agreement that relations of subjugation and acquiescence can be mediated when teachers adopt facilitation strategies that take into account the way that the legacies of historical oppression manifest within classroom discussion. The importance of facilitation to the productivity of intergroup dialogue suggest that LGBTQ curricular integration may fail to act as a democratizing force if not paired with work on teacher practice. By learning about how teachers deal with oppression when engaging students in learning about LGBTQ content, we might intensify the extent to which LGBTQ curricular inclusion moves us towards the democratic goals that inspired them to integrate LGBTQ content into the curriculum.

Consequently, my research has been guided by this question:

- *How do teachers with strong intentions to support LGBTQ students facilitate engagement with LGBTQ issues in secondary ELA classrooms?*

To frame this question and the research more broadly, I situate my work within scholarly debates about democratic education and its implications for curricular reform and teacher practice. In my analysis, I pay close attention to “the closet,” which I define as the state of secrecy or concealment that many LGBTQ people maintain around their gender or sexual identity. I examine how the closet is a vehicle for LGBTQ oppression that poses particular challenges for the free exchange of ideas about difference in a classroom setting.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Because LGBTQ content integration is frequently warranted with claims that it will increase democratic education, I frame my investigation of how teachers engage students in making sense of LGBTQ content within scholarly debates about education for democracy. I first provide a definition of democratic education and then discuss two popular approaches to promoting democratic ideals in classroom instruction: content integration (a curricular approach) and discussion (a pedagogical approach). I then explain why, when adopted simultaneously, these two approaches pose challenges for the free discussion of ideas about difference. To offer some historical reasons for this pedagogical challenge, I provide a brief history of LGBTQ struggles for full citizenship in the American legal system. I use this history to illustrate how a classroom discussion about LGBTQ topics is a culturally and historically situated event. I suggest that the same challenges to democratic participation that have plagued LGBTQ people in the legal system may be at play for students in their efforts to democratically participate in the classroom.

### **Democratic Education**

Parker (2003, 2006) describes democratic education as an approach to schooling aimed at helping all students become citizens who are able to fully participate and act as agents of change in civic society. Educators pursue this goal within a context plagued by pervasive inequities. These historic inequities shape, often unconsciously, our conceptions of self and other (Ellsworth, 1997; Wilson, 2002) and negatively influence the daily lives of some people, while privileging others (Artiles et al., 2002; Lopez, 2003; Meiners, 2007). Teachers interested in creating classrooms that approach a democratic ideal are challenged by the problems that these prejudices and privileges pose. Entrenched privileges and prejudices make it very difficult to listen to and hear others' lived realities and collectively commit to each others' well being (Jones, 2004). Education for democracy has implications both for which content is taught and for how teachers help students in make sense of content.

**Democracy and curriculum: Content integration and the politics of representation.**

Scholarship on content integration examines questions about what content should be included in the curriculum, how and where that content should be integrated, and who should be the audience for content on marginalized social groups (Banks, 2004). Since the 1960s and 1970s, multicultural educators have used the language of democratic education to support their arguments for the integration of content that include the histories, experiences, and knowledge of diverse groups. Proponents of content integration such as Banks (2004), Gay (2004), and Sleeter (2005) maintain that a pluralistic curriculum representing the diversity of the public and its varied ways of knowing is an essential component of education in a democracy. Scholars arguing for LGBTQ content integration have called on the same logic to warrant their claims. Thornton (2003), for example, discusses how the integration of LGBTQ content into the curricular cannon

will increase the power of the curriculum to represent a multi-voiced public and offer students practice in listening to a diversity of perspectives.

**Democracy and pedagogy: The promises and pitfalls of discussion.** While scholarship on content integration offers many ways to think about how and why to infuse the principles of democratic education into the curriculum, it does little to help us understand how to translate those principles into classroom practice. To understand democratic education in practice, I turn to scholarship on pedagogy. Most of the literature on pedagogy and democracy focuses on classroom discussion as an instructional method (Boler, 2004; Bridges, 1979; Parker, 2006). Parker (2006) describes how classroom discussion prepares students for the work of democracy by offering them practice in publically listening to and speaking with others who hold a diversity of perspectives. The facilitation work that is required to engage students in productive dialogue about difference, however, is no simple task. The legacies of historical oppression that arise in diverse classrooms when issues of identity and power are put on the table for discussion pose many challenges for teachers who hope to use discussion as a tool for promoting democratic dialogue (Boler, 2004).

The difficulties of facilitating discussions about difference have prompted some progressive critics of discussion, such as Jones (2004) to view “inequality not as something to be reduced by dialogue, but as a barrier to genuinely productive conversation” (p. 59). Boler (2004), Jones (2004), and Houston (2004) all examine how histories of oppression render some speech and some speakers silent. This silence occurs either because of the consequences that follow particular speech or, as Butler (1997) discusses, because some speech and some speakers are deemed illegitimate by the public. Jones (2004) calls the silence of already marginalized voices

that signals the presence of relations of oppression in the classroom, “disturbing silence” (p. 60). Disturbing silence presents a challenge for teachers who hope to use discussion as an instructional method aimed at democratic education. How can teachers engage students in practicing the work of civic dialogue about identity and equity when the legacies of historical oppression enter the classroom in the form of disturbing silence?

**Democracy and LGBTQ persons.** Understanding why “disturbing silence” emerges in discussions about LGBTQ content requires an understanding of the history of LGBTQ oppression in the U.S. Because of the particular way that LGBTQ oppression has operated in both the legal and social spheres, LGBTQ individuals, families, and communities have long been challenged by a perennial tension between the need for visibility and the need for privacy. Classroom discussions of LGBTQ topics are situated within this social and legal history. Understanding the historical tension between privacy and visibility informs my examination of how teachers engage students in LGBTQ content. This history illuminates the broader social reasons why open dialogue about LGBTQ issues is both necessary and difficult.

*A brief history of LGBTQ citizenship.* Political activists have fought for LGBTQ people to be granted a full legal right to privacy since the 1960s. The first legal articulation of a constitutional right to privacy for any American is in the Griswold v. Connecticut (1965) decision, which overturned a statute prohibiting the use of contraceptives on the grounds that the statute violated a “right to marital privacy.” The verdict of Griswold states that the “intimacies of the marriage bed were beyond control of the law.” By articulating a right to privacy that existed only within marriage, the constitutional right to privacy, in its first articulation, implicitly excluded gays and lesbians from accessing the private sphere. This exclusion was formalized in

Bowers v. Harwick (1986), which *explicitly* denied gays and lesbians a right to privacy. It was not until 2003, in Lawrence v. Texas, that the 1986 decision was reversed and a right to privacy was extended to gays and lesbians. This legal admittance to the private sphere, which did not take place until the 21<sup>st</sup> century, was a major victory in the struggle for LGBTQ rights because it decriminalized homosexual relationships thus allowing LGBTQ family life to be free from undue government intervention. However, because of its history of contestation, gays and lesbians' right to the private sphere often carried with it a requirement of discretion about sexual orientation (Brown, 2004).

While LGBTQ people can now legally enjoy a right to privacy, often that right is paired with an obligation to keep identities, feelings, and families a secret. This obligation is seen in its most stark relief in policies such as the military's 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy, which was in effect from 1994-2011. Admittance to the private sphere for LGBTQ people is, in many cases, paired with limited access to the public sphere, as illustrated by the regularity of statements such as, "Why can't they just keep it to themselves?" or "I don't care what they do, as long as they don't bother me about it" (Tierney, 1992, p. 44). Near the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this discretion requirement, known popularly as being "in the closet," prompted LGBTQ communities to begin enacting a new politics of visibility. Organizations such as Queer Nation and ACT UP tried to bring LGBTQ identities and families into the public sphere stating that, "*visibility* is critical if a safe public existence is to be forged for American gays, for whom the contemporary nation has no positive political value" (Berlant & Freeman, 1992, p. 158). However, as activists began enacting a politics of visibility they were often attacked. In order to navigate the competing needs for privacy and visibility, LGBTQ activists developed methods of blending visibility and

privacy by engaging in highly visible political action anonymously. Anonymous political actions included publishing manifestos, hanging banners, spray painting public spaces, and wearing masks at public protests (Brown, 2004).

### **Democratic participation in classroom discourse about LGBTQ topics.**

Understanding the tension between visibility and privacy in LGBTQ civil rights struggles is helpful for understanding how this same tension arises for LGBTQ people participating in civic deliberation the classroom. The rights of LGBTQ persons to be visible in public are contested, as is the right to privacy. When the topic of LGBTQ existence emerges, LGBTQ students may become caught in the liminal space between visibility and privacy without feeling secure in their right to be out or their right to keep their sexual identity private (Berlant & Freeman, 1992). At the classroom level, the tension between visibility and privacy often gives rise to the “disturbing silence” that Jones (2004) describes (p. 60). Most students risk violence and hostility if they make their LGBTQ identity visible at school (Kosciw, 2011), therefore engaging in discourse about LGBTQ topics is no simple choice. Teachers who wish to promote the free exchange of ideas about LGBTQ topics should recognize this reality if they wish to use LGBTQ topics to further the cause of education for democracy. It is this dilemma that gives rise to my research and evoked this question: how do teachers who hold strong intentions to support their LGBTQ students facilitate engagement with LGBTQ topics in secondary ELA classrooms? In the text that follows, I describe the research methods I used to investigate this question and then discuss my findings and their implications for practice and future research.

### **Research Method**

This inquiry into how teachers facilitated student engagement with LGBTQ issues is part of a larger comparative case study of the pedagogical practices of teachers who hold strong intentions to be supportive of LGBTQ students. My primary goal has been to learn what these teachers do to support LGBTQ students within their classroom instruction. I chose a comparative case study approach (Yin, 2003), which gave me the ability to comprehensively investigate teaching practice. Because there is a paucity of research on LGBTQ-supportive teaching practice, a comparative case study gave me the tools I needed to expand the field's knowledge base through the development of tentative hypotheses that might help to guide future research (Merriam, 2009).

### **Participants**

I observed four teachers from June to December, 2013. To select a purposeful sample of information-rich cases (Miles & Huberman, 1994), the teachers were selected based on the strength of their intention to support LGBTQ students through (1) integrating LGBTQ content, (2) engaging in prejudice reduction activities, and (3) advocating with and for LGBTQ students. Selection occurred through a multi-staged process. After collecting reputational recommendations for LGBTQ-supportive teachers, I administered a questionnaire to the 30 recommended teachers to determine their self-reported intentions to integrate LGBTQ content, reduce prejudice, and advocate for LGBTQ students. Twenty-five of the 30 teachers responded. Based on teachers' questionnaire responses, I chose a subset of seven teachers with whom I conducted follow-up interviews. The interviews focused on the teachers' pedagogical practices related to LGBTQ issues. Selection concluded with the selection of four teachers who held exceptionally strong intentions to support LGBTQ students within the realm of classroom

instruction. The strength of these teachers' intentions for support was determined by the extent to which they were able to report past experiences with content integration, prejudice reduction, and advocacy efforts for and with LGBTQ students and families.

### **Data Sources**

I drew on a variety of data sources including observational field notes of classroom instruction; interview data of teachers' discussing their pedagogical decision-making; and daily logs through which focal teachers reflected on their everyday classroom practice as it related to LGBTQ support. I interviewed the teachers about their practice prior to the start of the school year and then interviewed them once a month for one semester of their teaching thereafter (for some teachers I conducted further interviews focused on particular classroom incidents). Once the school year began teachers completed daily logs. In these logs, teachers reflected on any of their daily activities that they perceived to be LGBTQ supportive. In addition to interviews and daily logs, I observed classroom instruction and made observational field-notes about their teaching. After a preliminary base-line observation during the first two weeks of school, I used teachers' daily logs to determine when they would be teaching lessons that included LGBTQ issues or issues when questions or comments about LGBTQ people might likely emerge (lessons that were focused specifically on identity, sexuality, love, or discrimination). Lastly I reviewed pertinent classroom materials and artifacts connected to case teachers' LGBTQ content integration efforts.

### **Data Analysis**

My analysis of the data was focused by the question, "when integrating LGBTQ content, how do teachers with strong intentions to support LGBTQ students facilitate student

engagement?” Guided by this question, I first selected only the data that included teachers’ pedagogical decision-making and practice relating to teacher-initiated references to LGBTQ topics occurring during class time. Interested in how teachers facilitated student engagement with LGBTQ issues, I further whittled the data down to only those teacher-initiated references to LGBTQ topics for which teachers elicited contributions from students. This excluded all references to LGBTQ people or issues that (1) were initiated by students or (2) occurred in passing during lecture or text and were not followed-up. Teachers varied widely in the extent to which they were able to integrate LGBTQ content into their curriculum and so these planned references to LGBTQ issues or people varied greatly in depth. At the highest levels of LGBTQ content integration, a “teacher-initiated reference to an LGBTQ topic” was an entire unit about LGBTQ identity that relied on multiple LGBTQ themed texts. The lowest level of LGBTQ content integration was a two-minute discussion of a poem as potentially having homosexual undertones.

Focused only on teacher-initiated references to LGBTQ topics and guided by my question about how teachers facilitate student engagement with LGBTQ content, I coded the data by engagement strategy. Codes I employed in this pass through the data included, *student-to-student talk*, *individual writing*, *whole-class discussion*, and *student-to-student writing*. I then coded the data by types of questions that teachers asked for students. This approach to the data allowed me to differentiate between moments when teachers were asking students questions about themselves, questions about the content, or questions that required them to draw on both the content and their own experiences. Examples of these codes include, *personal*, *text-based*, and *text-to-self*. After coding the data using these two approaches, I was able to cross-reference

engagement strategies with type of information that teachers were requesting from students. Finally, using what I learned from the first coding passes, I coded again using codes that came from my theoretical framework. These codes included, *Privacy*, *Visibility*, and *Anonymity*. By analyzing the relationships between all three sets of codes, I was able to compare the ways that teachers navigated the tensions between privacy and visibility as they engaged students in making sense of LGBTQ content.

### **Limitations of the Analysis**

Although this analysis reveals important dimensions of teachers' practice when facilitating student engagement with LGBTQ content, it is limited in its access to the full complexity of the phenomenon under examination. The analysis tracks how teachers supported students to make sense of LGBTQ content, but is limited by the fact that the data revealed very few instances of LGBTQ content integration, even among those teachers with the strongest of intentions to integrate LGBTQ content. In this way, the study participants were representative of teachers in general, who rarely integrate any LGBTQ content (Kosciw, 2009; Loutzenheiser et al., 2001). Despite the fact that very little LGBTQ content integration occurred among participants, my analysis reveals important resources for teachers' practice related to LGBTQ content integration. Although teachers had only a few opportunities to make decisions about how to engage students in making sense of LGBTQ content, their decisions had an impact on students' opportunities to learn in the classroom. The fine-grained decisions at the level of classroom instruction have great enough consequences to merit examination in themselves, even though, in the current historical moment, opportunities to make such decisions arise infrequently for teachers.

### **Selection of Focal Teachers**

To illustrate my findings, I focus on two ELA teachers who taught at the same school, Sinclair High (a pseudonym). Sinclair is a large, comprehensive, suburban high school in a wealthy suburb of a major city in the Pacific Northwest. Sinclair High serves a student body that is 45 percent White and 40 percent Asian American. Only 13 percent of the study body receives free-or-reduced lunch. The two Sinclair teachers were selected because they were atypical in the data when it came to their experience with LGBTQ content integration. They were members of a group of 12th grade ELA teachers at Sinclair who had collaborated for four years to develop and implement a 12th grade identity unit that included a selection of texts on LGBTQ identity. The teachers from Sinclair were atypical in the data for two primary reasons. First, they were atypical because the extent of their experience integrating LGBTQ content. Most participants struggled to include any curricular materials that touched on LGBTQ identity, while Sinclair teachers had repeatedly taught units of instruction that engaged students in investigating questions related to LGBTQ people and families. The Sinclair teachers were also atypical because while most participants engaged in the work of LGBTQ support alone, they collaborated to integrate LGBTQ content. The depth of the Sinclair teachers' experience as well as their collaboration made their practice in supporting students to make sense of LGBTQ content rich for analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

### **Facilitating Student Engagement with LGBTQ Content:**

#### **Navigating Privacy & Visibility**

All of the teachers who participated in this study expressed a desire to integrate LGBTQ content into their curriculum. In practice, they were able to do so to differing degrees and in

different ways. One teacher taught an entire unit on LGBTQ identity, while another mentioned the LGBTQ identity of canonical authors in passing. Regardless of the depth at which teachers included LGBTQ issues in their curriculum, when they tried to engage students in making sense of LGBTQ content, they experienced a common tension. On the one hand, teachers wanted to make LGBTQ identity visible, while on the other hand, they wanted to allow LGBTQ students privacy so as to protect them from hostility. The tension between visibility and privacy had implications for how the teachers' facilitated student engagement with LGBTQ content. In the text that follows, I use examples from the data to describe two different approaches that teachers took to navigate the visibility/privacy tension. The first approach was to create parallel engagement strategies for students – some public and some private. The second approach that teachers' took was to simultaneously allow for privacy and visibility through the use of anonymity.

### **Visibility and Privacy in Parallel: Public Discourse Bookended by Private Reflection**

Michael Smith teaches English Language Arts (ELA) at Sinclair High School, the wealthy suburban school described above (I use pseudonyms when referring to both the school and the teacher). Michael's practice provides a rich example of engaging students in LGBTQ content in a way that addresses LGBTQ students competing needs for visibility and privacy. Michael, a straight man who was raised in a fundamentalist Baptist family, was in his fourth year teaching at the time of this study. His LGBTQ integration work was not prompted by his personal passions, but instead was a product of collaboration among the four 12th grade ELA teachers at his school, two of who identified as LGBTQ themselves. Over a period of several years, these four teachers developed a unit on identity for Sinclair High School's senior ELA

curriculum. As Michael described it, each of the four senior ELA teachers brought their “personal crusades or agenda to the table and those sort of make up religious tolerance, sexual and gender tolerance, and notions of class. And so we decided to combine our different areas of expertise into a unit that really teaches kids and makes them aware of the world outside the Sinclair bubble.”

Within a 12th grade unit on personal identity, Michael had students participate in various activities that ask them to engage with lived experiences of LGBTQ people. These activities included: reading texts about LGBTQ topics and writing in response to them, listening to poetry, watching documentaries, and participating in class discussions. When Michael led these activities, he found himself facing pedagogical decisions about how best to support his students to make meaning from those texts while at the same time maintaining a safe and supportive classroom environment that was productive for learning. To describe Michael’s approach to engaging students in constructing meaning from the LGBTQ-themed texts, I first examine how Michael promotes LGBTQ visibility by using modeling and public praise to encourage students to make personal connections to course texts through public discourse. Next, I describe how Michael uses journaling and anonymous exit slips to give students opportunities to perform individual and private engagement with LGBTQ texts. I conclude this section by describing Michael’s method as a *parallel* approach to addressing LGBTQ students’ competing needs for visibility and privacy. I follow my analysis of Michael’s practice with a discussion of the practice of another teacher in Michael’s department who, instead of attending to *visibility* and *privacy* separately, took a *simultaneous* approach to the visibility/privacy tension.

**Supporting visibility through public discourse.** Michael stated that he placed a high value on class discussion and wanted his classroom to be one where students worked together by publically sharing and expanding on each others' ideas to extend the meaning of course texts beyond the page. He understood the work of making meaning from text as a collaborative process of connecting words on a page to lived experiences and saw discussion as a productive way to support students' comprehension and interpretation of text. Michael's strong belief in the power of public discourse to support students in constructing textual meaning extended to his pedagogical treatment of LGBTQ-themed texts. However, Michael was clear that facilitating discussions of LGBTQ-themed texts put additional demands on him as a discussion facilitator.

*I try to sort of verbally recognize when the students have courage in sharing something, particularly around sexuality and gender... When students will share something that's really personal, I'll say something like, "you know, thank you, Suzie Student, for sharing that. I know that it takes a lot of courage to share something like that and to be vulnerable and I just want to remind everyone that the best conversations we have in class are when you all take risks and share a piece of yourself with someone because you never know who else in the room might be feeling that way. So thank you for contributing to our discussion."*

When discussing issues of sexuality and gender, Michael understands that when students publically make text-to-self connections they are making themselves vulnerable. He praises this risk-taking, believing that when students share their personal experiences related to sexuality and gender there is something to be gained for other students in the room who "might be feeling that way." The work of encouraging students to feel comfortable sharing in text-based discussion is

not specific to engaging around LGBTQ content. However, Michael acknowledges that “particularly around sexuality and gender,” being visible requires risk and takes “courage.”

While Michael stops discussion to mark and praise students for sharing their personal connections to LGBTQ themed texts, this is not his only pedagogical strategy for promoting public and collaborative engagement with LGBTQ content. Michael also models risk-taking in public discourse by making his own personal connections to the texts.

*Michael: I'll disclose things about myself to kind of pave that way a little bit or sort of verbalize in class that while I'm straight and I do this, I know that other people have this experience. So I sort of try to put it out there as something that can be discussed and is okay to be discussed in the classroom. So that might make other people feel like, well, if Mr. Smith is doing it, I can too.*

*Interviewer: Can you walk me through a concrete example of a time when something like that happened?*

*Michael: Sure... We read an article in class about laws in Mississippi, that you can legally evict someone or fire them for being gay and so I tried to share, as a straight, married man, my feelings of wanting to provide for my wife and my child and the security that I feel in knowing that I'm part of the majority and that I don't have to worry about being discriminated against and then I shared my own feelings of empathy or, I guess, sympathy, about what it would be like to have to hide a part of myself for fear of not being able to provide for my family.*

Michael describes how the introduction of an LGBTQ themed text is not enough to signal to students that LGBTQ issues are appropriate for classroom discussion. He models making personal connections to LGBTQ themed texts because he believes that students need extra reassurance that LGBTQ issues are “something that can be discussed and is okay to be discussed in the classroom.” Michael uses modeling as a way to invite students into public discourse about a topic that is usually deemed inappropriate for public discussion in school. In addition, his modeling illustrates to students – who typically have not had school-based discussions about LGBTQ issues – what that discussion might look like.

**Supporting privacy through private reflection.** Along with using several strategies to encourage risk-taking in public discourse, Michael also made a different set of pedagogical decisions to provide his students with opportunities private and individual engagement with LGBTQ-themed class texts. Within his identity unit, students kept a “synthesis journal” in which Michael provided students with various prompts asking them to make personal and cross-text connections about the content under study. In the synthesis journal, Michael allowed students to use various mediums, including prose, visual art, and poetry to respond to and interpret texts.

*I tell them that anything they do for the synthesis journal, if they don't want to have that shared with their class, they always have the option of saying, “it's going to be private today” and they get the anonymity... I have a student who's in the process of coming out right now and she had incredible anxiety about the [journal assignments.] So then I was able to... tell her that she was able to be as private as she wanted about this and so she ended up not really sharing anything with her peers, but in the project that she turned in, just did some incredibly detailed art pieces about her struggle right now to sort of*

*grapple with her identity, reveal that to the people that are important to her in her life, ways that she's felt unsafe or slighted by religious students and what she hears in the media. And so it was just this really powerful sort of coming together of the different things that she's experiencing. So I think in that sense, I felt kind of happy that this class could sort of serve as a place for her to process what she's experiencing.*

The way Michael engaged students in journaling was markedly different from the way he engaged students in discussion. When facilitating discussion, Michael encouraged public vulnerability as one way to support students as they made meaning of LGBTQ themed texts. In contrast, when prompting students to journal, Michael assured them that their disclosures would never need to be shared with their peers. In the case of discussion Michael invited personal disclosure and in the case of journaling Michael was promising non-disclosure. He explicitly invites public disclosure (“the best conversations we have in class are when you all take risks and share a piece of yourselves”) and he explicitly promises privacy (“if they don't want to have that shared with their class, they always have the option of saying, ‘it's going to be private today’”). Michael's choices to be very explicit about students' rights to privacy and visibility in the classroom make sense when understood within a social and legal history of contestation about LGBTQ people's rights to the public and private sphere.

Along with creating opportunities for LGBTQ students to engage in private sense-making of LGBTQ content, Michael also employs privacy strategies to support participation by students who hold anti-LGBTQ views.

*I also try to sort of prevent any anger explosions from peer to peer. I tell them, “At the end of class today you’re going to have an anonymous exit slip that you can tell me whatever you’re feeling about this. So if you feel upset, I want you to direct the anger towards me and not against your classmate who is just an innocent bystander in my curriculum.” And so they kind of laugh about that, but then some of them really do. I mean I’ve had students write me notes saying, ‘this is total bullshit. Stop cramming your agenda down our throats. You shouldn’t be telling me what to think.’*

Along with using assurances of privacy to assuage anxiety among LGBTQ students, Michael also uses assurances of privacy to prevent peer-to-peer “anger explosions.” Both reasons for guaranteeing privacy are aimed at creating opportunities for students to express their own ideas in a safe environment – whether those ideas are connected to a lived experience of being LGBTQ or a negative perspective on LGBTQ people.

Ensuring that students have opportunities to express their ideas privately contrasts significantly with Michael’s strategy of praising students for publically making text-to-self connections. Within the same unit of instruction, Michael uses both approaches as strategies for supporting students’ interactions with LGBTQ themed content. To support public discourse about LGBTQ themed content, Michael models personal disclosure and publically praises students for public vulnerability. He bookends public discourse with private sense-making opportunities in order to ease LGBTQ students’ anxieties about coming out publically and allows them to express frustrations with LGBTQ themed content. I call Michael’s approach a *parallel* approach – one that attends to the demands of both visibility and privacy, but at different times during instruction. Next, I will discuss a different approach, one that attends to the demands of

privacy and visibility *simultaneously* by using anonymity as a way to make students voices public, while at the same time allowing them to keep their identities private.

### **Simultaneous Visibility and Privacy: The Use of Anonymity**

Jonathan Jones (a pseudonym) taught with Michael Smith in Sinclair High School's ELA department. When the 12<sup>th</sup> grade identity unit was first developed, Jonathan led the push for LGBTQ content integration. He had selected most of the LGBTQ themed texts that Michael taught. At the time of this study, however, Jonathan was not teaching 12th grade ELA. He was teaching 11th grade only and while the district's 12th grade curriculum included a unit on identity that could easily be adapted to include LGBTQ issues, the district's 11th grade curriculum did not include any units that easily aligned with LGBTQ issues. Working with a curriculum that offered few opportunities for LGBTQ content integration, Jonathan relied on (1) his own identity as a gay man and (2) students' lived experiences related to LGBTQ identity (their families, their prejudices, their interests) to integrate LGBTQ issues into his teaching. Michael and Jonathan took different approaches to LGBTQ content integration, however both teachers navigated the privacy/visibility tensions that arose when they helped students to understand LGBTQ issues. Michael opted mostly for a parallel approach to managing this tension. In contrast, Jonathan frequently used a simultaneous approach to deal with the visibility/privacy tension. He employed various strategies to create anonymity and therefore make student voices public while at the same time respecting the privacy of individuals.

**Using anonymity.** Jonathan's practice included many opportunities for student anonymity when interacting with LGBTQ content. In the next section, I describe a series of instances when Jonathan used anonymity to help students engage with LGBTQ issues. I describe

each event and then discuss how, in each case, Jonathan used anonymity to surface student ideas without revealing student identity. I discuss how his use of anonymity allowed him to use the experiences and opinions of students as resources for learning without making individual students vulnerable to hostility.

***Fielding students' questions after coming out.*** On the first day of school, Jonathan introduced himself and his course to students using a PowerPoint presentation. Among several other slides, which detailed course requirements and other brief introductory information, Jonathan included a photograph of himself with his husband, Martin, their two children, and their dog. Following this introductory presentation, Jonathan handed students index cards. On the cards, he asked students to write their first name on one side and on the other side write one of their strengths, one thing they did over the summer, and one question they had either about the course or about Jonathan himself. Several times a week for the next three weeks, Jonathan began class by taking five minutes to read students questions aloud and respond to them. When he read students' questions, he did not reveal their names. The following excerpt is from field notes taken during one of these five-minute Q & A sessions at the start of class. Jonathan holds student cards in his hand and says:

*These are the cards that you filled out for me at the beginning of the year. I wanted to take a moment to answer more of your questions.* [Jonathan reads from an index card] *Will we have practice writing essays?* [Jonathan looks up from the card] *What do you think, are we gonna have practice writing essays?* [Students are nodding their heads. A handful of students say "yeah"]. *Yeah, we will have practice. We will have plenty of practice for the process essays. We'll take somewhere in the neighborhood of two weeks*

*to write those. We'll have our writing group time. We will also be doing individual proof reading. [Jonathan reads from an index card] How long did you know you were gay or when did you first notice and how did your friends and family take it? [Jonathan looks up from the card] Uhhh, let's see, when did I first know? I can't pinpoint an actual day when I knew. I think by the time that I was in middle school or definitely high school I had a pretty good idea, but I didn't come out to my family and friends until after I graduated from college and I was in my mid-20s when I did that. My friends were pretty cool with it on the whole. It was pretty much of a non-event. They were like, "Ok, so what, doesn't change anything." Um, and my family was a little bit, they had a tough time of it. My parents had a tough time with it at first just because it was new information for them and I had dated girls in high school and college and they were confused by this new information and they had seen my life and maybe their lives going in one direction and then there was a change, but on the whole they've been great and really supportive and they come to visit me and my husband and my kids all the time. So there's that.*

[Jonathan reads from an index card] *Um, Will I get points taken off my essay for printing it a day late? [Jonathan looks up from card] You'll get points taken off your essay if you submit it to turn it in after the submission date. I don't do a lot of printing and bringing to class. The submission to turn it in is what matters.* [Jonathan reads through nine more questions about course requirements. He answers each in detail and then he reads the final question] *How many of these do you get that say "are you gay?" [Students laugh] I'm serious that's really a question. Well, actually, I don't get any, because I think that I make it really clear earlier in that class period on the first day of school that I am gay, so*

*I don't think there's any confusion. [Students laugh] I have that picture of my husband. So if that didn't make it clear... [Students laugh] So, yeah, I don't get a lot that say 'are you gay,' but I do get some about coming out and my experiences growing up. Okay, that is it for questions, so we've gone through all of them now. So now we're going to turn our attention to The Crucible. Who knows where we left off?*

Jonathan uses his own life experiences as a text and uses the process of building a relationship with his students as the vehicle for integrating LGBTQ content. He makes the decision to treat students' questions about his LGBTQ identity as appropriate and he addresses them in the public space of the classroom. Jonathan's use of index cards allows him to elicit questions from students without requiring students to ask them publically in front of their peers. When he poses students' questions to the class, he does not identify the student who asked the question. This allows students to escape the judgment of their peers while still giving them the opportunity to ask their questions. The use of the cards also provides Jonathan the opportunity to think and plan how to interact with students' questions on a topic that can cause both him and his students anxiety.

*I knew that I was doing these cards that day. I put them in a very specific order about how I was going to address them... I had thought out what I was going to say to a certain extent. I mean, I didn't have it written out or anything. I think I was a little bit nervous... It's really personal information... And in terms of building community, I thought that it was great that I went back to every single one of their questions and that I shared some really personal information... Maybe on that last question they were like, "how could [a student] really ask that? And will [the teacher] really answer it?" I think it's good for*

*them to see like, “Yeah I’ll answer your questions if you ask me.” It proves that I don’t have anything to hide and that’s important.*

Jonathan leverages the freedom that students feel in anonymous spaces to build a community where discussion of LGBTQ identity is acceptable. He also leverages the time that the index card strategy buys him to gain control of his own nervousness, plan his responses, and make all decisions about how to sequence students’ questions intentional.

***Using anonymity to build awareness about prejudiced language.*** Jonathan also used different strategies that allowed for students to anonymously make their ideas public. A student club at Jonathan’s school, the Gay/Straight Alliance, started a campaign to end the use of the phrase “that’s so gay,” a phrase which students often used to describe things that they found distasteful. As a part of this campaign, the Gay/Straight Alliance obtained permission from the school administration to use time during an all-school assembly to inform their peers about the campaign. Jonathan, who at the time was the club’s faculty advisor, worked with students to plan how they would introduce their peers to the idea that the phrase “that’s so gay” was derogatory. In their plan for the assembly, Jonathan and his students used an activity that utilized anonymity to navigate the privacy/visibility tension. They developed a plan that they hoped would reveal that the school community included many people who were negatively affected by use of the phrase, while simultaneously keeping the identities of those individuals private.

*We had a survey in advance that students took, and then we redistributed [the surveys] once students came into the meeting so that -- it was an anonymous survey, and you had a piece of paper, and then we asked people to stand at various points, so it was questions like: “I identify as gay or lesbian.” “I have a parent who identifies as that”. “I know*

*somebody who's been harassed because of their sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation." You got a real sense, just in looking around the room as a community of: "Hey, this is significant." And it wasn't like you were looking at the actual people because they had somebody else's survey, right? So it was anonymous, but you got to see numbers... We felt that it would put people too much on the spot if we were asking them to stand up on their own. This was one step removed from that and what we really wanted to show was: Hey, this is the impact on our community, numbers-wise.*

This activity was an attempt to make the LGBTQ community and their allies visible without putting people "too much on the spot" by asking them to risk the hostility that often accompanies visibility. The activity made the existence of an LGBTQ community visible while simultaneously maintaining the privacy of individuals.

Following this assembly, students extended the conversation by taking advantage of other anonymous spaces to interact around LGBTQ issues in ways that Jonathan had not planned.

*We put butcher paper up in the bathrooms so that students could write on the walls and not create permanent damage to the space. I remember hearing about conversations that were happening in the girls' bathroom in particular, just the paper being filled with these back and forth conversations about the word [fag] and about language and about those [homophobic] terms. That always stuck out to me, that it was what we were addressing in the curriculum, right? It was our discussions, but it was happening beyond the classroom.*

Unprompted, students began using the most private space – the bathroom stall – to share their ideas and respond to their peers. One interesting difference between the anonymous conversation

of the bathroom stall and Jonathan's intentional uses of anonymity is the role of facilitation. When Jonathan used index cards to solicit questions and when he redistributed anonymous surveys, he maintained his own role as facilitator, while the bathroom stall conversation was not facilitated. Jonathan did not censor student comments when he facilitated anonymous engagement. However, he did retain a modicum of control over when and how students' comments entered the space.

### **Discussion**

This study examined how secondary ELA teachers who held strong intentions to be LGBTQ-supportive facilitated student engagement with LGBTQ content. I situated my investigation at the intersection between knowledge about instructional practice and knowledge about the effects of societal inequities on classroom discourse. Using what we know from content-specific research on instructional methods, I investigated how teachers support students from a traditionally marginalized group within their classroom instruction. My choice to focus on teaching practice as a lens for more deeply understanding issues of equity and identity was, in and of itself, a significant scholarly contribution. Examinations of teaching practice often pay limited attention to issues of equity and identity (Bowman & Gottesman, 2013), while scholarship on equity and identity is often removed from practice (McDonald, 2010). By investigating how teachers supported marginalized students within the nuances of their daily classroom instruction, I aimed to bridge the gap between scholarship on teaching practice and social foundations scholarship on equity and identity. Building knowledge about how teachers promote justice and equity within their daily work as classroom instructors will benefit scholarly communities interested in both equity and instruction. In this section, I discuss the practical and

theoretical implications of my investigation and outline possible next steps for research and practice.

I turn first to the study's theoretical implications. My investigation of the classroom practices of LGBTQ supportive teachers reveals that teachers are using creative pedagogical strategies, such as anonymity, to promote democratic ideals without abandoning discourse when teaching LGBTQ content. This finding is significant because it answers a central question that has been raised in contemporary scholarly debates about classroom discussion: is it possible to facilitate equitable classroom discourse that reflects democratic ideals when discussing issues of equity and identity (Boler, 2004, Parker, 2006)? To characterize the scholarly debate surrounding this question and how findings from this study contribute to the conversation, I return briefly to my theoretical framework.

Boler (2004) and Jones (2004), present a critical view of discussion as a repressive and marginalizing instructional method for teaching about issues of identity. These scholars, and others from the Left (Houston, 2004; Mansbridge, 1991), highlight the ways that discussion can reinforce the subjugation of marginalized groups when identity itself is the topic of classroom discourse. How can LGBTQ identity be freely and openly discussed when LGBTQ students feel they must stay closeted to ensure their own safety? Parker (2006) has responded to these criticisms by acknowledging the importance of the questions that critics of discussion pose. However, he also cautions the field not to abandon discussion because, while imperfect, it may be our best existing pedagogical option for pursuing the goals of democratic education. Without discussion, will teachers be left only with teacher-centered pedagogical tools such as recitation, which do little to promote student learning (Cazden, 2001)? Responding to this dilemma, Parker

calls for the Left to develop “dialogic alternatives” (p. 15) or engagement strategies that do not abandon discourse, but still attend to the “relations of acquiescence and subjugation” (Parker, 2006, p. 9) that emerge when discussing issues of identity. This paper and the study upon which it is based is a response to Parker’s call. My findings offer some promising avenues for building knowledge about “dialogic alternatives” for facilitating student engagement around issues of marginalization and identity.

Instead of resorting to recitation, participants in this study used creative pedagogical methods, such as anonymity, allowing them to publically elicit students’ ideas and experiences in ways that took into account the risk involved in publically sharing about LGBTQ topics. This is a promising finding because it indicates that teachers are not abandoning discourse and are developing creative practices for minimizing risk and hostility when facilitating student sense-making about LGBTQ topics. When teaching about LGBTQ topics, teachers’ productive pedagogical creativity emerged in the ways that they navigated the tension between privacy and visibility. Some participants opted mostly for a parallel approach to managing this tension. Others, however, managed simultaneously to promote privacy and visibility through the use of anonymity when eliciting student ideas.

Next, I turn to practical implications. Although states and districts are beginning to adopt, and in some cases mandate, LGBTQ inclusive curriculum (Tintocalis, 2011), there remains a paucity of knowledge about the teaching of LGBTQ content. As curricula begin to include LGBTQ people, families, and communities, more and more teachers will need to develop skill at facilitating classroom discourse around LGBTQ issues. By investigating the nuances of the instructional practice of LGBTQ supportive teachers, this study offers valuable knowledge for

teacher educators and professional developers who will be tasked with preparing teachers to use new curricular content in productive ways.

Participants in this study began teaching LGBTQ content of their own volition. In the future, some teachers, responding to curricular mandates imposed by their states or districts, will have no choice in the matter (Tintocalis, 2011). Many teachers will face decisions about how best to engage students with newly inclusive curricula. If teachers choose not to abandon discourse when they adopt inclusive curricula, they will likely be faced with the same challenges that arose for Michael and Jonathan – the privacy/visibility dilemma and the specter of “disturbing silence” (Jones, 2004). However, unlike the participants in this study, most teachers will have no experience teaching about LGBTQ content and as a result may struggle to adopt productive pedagogical strategies. Continuing to build knowledge about the practices teachers use when teaching LGBTQ issues will inform the work of teacher educators and professional developers who are now tasked with preparing teachers for the demands of an inclusive curriculum.

The study also has implications for teacher education at a structural level. Opportunities for teacher learning about non-content-specific issues relating to identity and equity characteristically take place in the social foundations courses of teacher education programs. Foundations courses are typically built to help teacher candidates develop underlying beliefs and attitudes about social groups and issues of equity and justice, not pedagogical skill in the enactment of instructional practice. The split between foundations and methods is an entrenched programmatic structure found across teacher education programs. It assumes that strong dispositions and beliefs about social justice will translate into effective instructional practice. My

analysis describes a more complicated picture; that equity and justice occur within the enactment of instructional practice. Fine-grained questions about practice such as which strategies to employ when eliciting student ideas can deeply influence the extent to which a teacher is able to effectively support marginalized students.

A practice perspective on the work of supporting students based on their social identity raises questions about whether, by situating social foundations courses in the realm of beliefs and dispositions, we are bypassing a particularly fruitful site for teacher learning: instructional practice itself. If the support that teachers offer LGBTQ students occurs within their instructional practice, could we reimagine the pedagogy of social foundations courses in ways that use instructional practice as a primary site for novice teacher learning? While the move towards practice-based teacher education has taken hold in the content areas (Grossman et al., 2009; Kazemi et al., 2009; Windschitl et al., 2012; Zeichner, 2012), it has yet to significantly influence teacher education at the level of social foundations. This study could have implications for the way that we think about preparing teachers to do the work of teaching towards social justice.

As the mainstream curriculum becomes more inclusive of LGBTQ people, families, and communities, teachers and teacher educators will need to grapple with the pedagogical challenges posed by LGBTQ content. This study demonstrates that instructional practice is a fruitful site for developing an understanding of these challenges and the ways that teachers attend to them. Further research is needed to help teacher educators and professional developers understand how best to prepare teachers to respond to a more inclusive curriculum in ways that are productive for student learning.

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## Conclusion

The unique challenges of educating youth across lines of sexual and gender difference can no longer be ignored. Every year, more students, parents, and school staff come out about their sexual and gender identities (Pew, 2013). In addition, changes in public opinion and state-level policies are motivating more and more curricula to integrate LGBTQ topics (Tintocalis, 2011). Operating within this new educational reality, teachers cannot ignore the role they play in supporting LGBTQ students to participate and become agents of change in a self-determining civic society. Taking this role seriously requires teachers to interrupt the barriers that prevent LGBTQ students from fully participating in classroom life, most notably a lack of curricular representation and a hostile social climate. The task of interrupting these inequities is particularly difficult because when teachers address the problem of curricular representation by integrating LGBTQ content, the hostility of the social climate tends to become salient as students express their prejudices. It is between the horns of this dilemma that the papers in this dissertation rest.

In each of the papers that comprise this dissertation, I have done two things. First, I have discussed a challenge that teachers who wish to support LGBTQ students face. Second, I have provided suggestions for addressing these challenges. In the text below, I conclude this dissertation by revisiting each of these challenges and what educational researchers and practitioners might do to address them in the future.

### **Challenge One:**

*Our current understanding of LGBTQ issues in education is framed as a problem of individual identity, not a problem of practice.*

**The Challenge.** There is abundant research documenting the inequitable disparities between LGBTQ youth and their heterosexual peers. We know very little, however, about what teachers do to reinforce or to interrupt those inequitable disparities. This glaring hole in the scholarship on LGBTQ issues in education has significant consequences for teacher education and professional development. Without knowledge about the role of professional and social practice in either reinforcing or interrupting inequitable disparities, training teachers to be LGBTQ supportive is an exercise in changing beliefs, not in building professional skill, knowledge, and judgment. If we hope to change the daily in-school activity that reproduces inequity along lines of gender and sexuality, we will need to better understand the role that practice plays in buttressing or transforming the status quo.

**Moving Forward.** To begin to understand the role that social and professional practice plays in reinforcing and interrupting gender and sexual inequities in schools, educational researchers will need to apply theories of practice to investigations of LGBTQ issues. The type of knowledge that researchers produce will drastically change if we enter research with the assumption that students and teachers are collaborative agents in the production of social meaning through practical activity. This shift in our theoretical grounding will force researchers out of the individual mind and into the realm of social practice where we can build knowledge about the role of activity in the reproduction or interruption of an inequitable status quo. Armed with a knowledge base about what justice looks like in practice, we might transform our approach to training teachers so that teacher preparation more closely reflects the work of teaching for social justice.

**Challenge 2.**

*We want teachers to respond to prejudice in the classroom, but we don't know what we mean when we say "respond to prejudice."*

**The Challenge:** While there is a strong consensus that being a social justice educator involves "responding to prejudice," there is no professional consensus about what that practice entails. What different methods exist for responding to prejudice? What are the various learning goals of each of these methods? What counts as a response, what does not count, and why? Without specific language to describe the practical work of teaching towards social justice goals, professionals struggle to collaborate in the work of instructional improvement and the onus is left on each individual teacher to develop instructional approaches with very little guidance. As an example of how the specificity of language supports instructional improvement, I offer the words *discussion* and *recitation*. Without these two words, and their contrasting definitions, we would not know if an Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) talk pattern counted as discussion or not. Teacher educators would struggle to prepare discussion facilitators and researchers would struggle build field-level knowledge about the practice of discussion facilitation. Currently we have no language to describe the practice of teaching for social justice.

**Moving Forward:** Among contemporary scholars of educational foundations, there is a strong fear that the move to practice in research on teacher education will sideline issues of justice and equity in teacher preparation (Bowman & Gottesman, 2013). I take an alternate view, arguing that educational foundations scholars have a great deal to learn from the move to practice. I believe that the same logic that applies for the improvement of content-specific instructional methods applies for the improvement of social justice teaching. Similar to our efforts to improve content-specific learning outcomes, educational improvement focused on

other outcomes (prejudice reduction, civic empowerment, social consciousness, ability to empathize across difference, etc.) will depend on our ability to develop skilled instructional practice at scale. Such practice is complex and involved and the more we can specify what it entails, the more we will be able to learn about it, teach it to others, and argue for its centrality to the profession of teaching. By clearly articulating the principles, methods, and underlying knowledge that make up practices like “responding to prejudice,” we will only improve our ability to argue for the centrality of work on equity and justice in teacher education and research on teaching.

**Challenge 3:**

*We want teachers to integrate LGBTQ content, but we don't know how to support them to teach that content.*

**The Challenge:** Professional organizations are beginning to call for curricular inclusion of LGBTQ content. While there are many benefits to inclusive curricula, practitioners know that open discussion of LGBTQ topics often surface hostilities towards LGBTQ people, making safe and open dialogue nearly impossible. Without nuanced perspectives on pedagogical approaches to teaching LGBTQ content, teachers are left with a set of equally unattractive pedagogical options: (1) leave out LGBTQ content altogether, (2) don't surface student thinking when teaching about LGBTQ content, or (3) surface student thinking and risk creating a hostile learning environment for LGBTQ students.

**Moving Forward:** Becoming serious about the goals of democratic education pushes researchers and practitioners towards the development of a fourth option. One way to think about this fourth option is to adopt a phrase from Parker (2006). Frustrated by the tendency of critics

on the Left to criticize discussion without offering alternatives, Parker (2006) called for proposals of “dialogic alternatives” to traditional discussion in cases when discussion acts as a marginalizing force. The third paper in this dissertation is an attempt to answer Parker’s call and call for others to do the same as much more research is needed to develop a robust way of thinking about dialogic alternatives in cases when discussion marginalizes particular students. Researchers need to build knowledge about how teachers can leverage student ideas for instructional purposes without recreating the relations of oppression and subjugation that can characterize “free and open” discussions about marginalized people. Armed with this knowledge base, teacher educators and professional developers will be better able to support teachers to take up inclusive curricula and build nurturing environments for students to engage the content therein.



Focused on the case of LGBTQ supportive teaching, this dissertation investigated the practical work of teaching for social justice. Through a review of the literature on LGBTQ issues in education and two papers that came out of a comparative case study of LGBTQ supportive teaching, I make the case for a turn to practice in research on teaching for social justice. I see this dissertation as the first step in a much longer research agenda aimed at understanding the fine-grained work of justice in practice. My hope is that in the years to come my scholarship might contribute to larger efforts aimed at building a common professional language to describe what Shulman (2004) called “the most complex, most challenging, and most demanding, subtle, nuanced, and frightening activity that our species has ever invented” (p. 504) – the practice of teaching.



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## CURRICULUM VITA

**SARAH SCHNEIDER KAVANAGH**

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### EDUCATION

- |      |       |   |
|------|-------|---|
| 2014 | Ph.D. | University of Washington, Seattle, WA<br><i>Curriculum &amp; Instruction (Teacher Education &amp; Multicultural Education)</i><br><u>Dissertation:</u> <i>Justice in Practice: Investigating the Instructional Practices of LGBTQ Supportive ELA Teachers</i> |
| 2004 | BA    | Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT<br><i>American Studies</i><br>High Honors, Phi Beta Kappa, Outstanding Honors Thesis Award  |

### AWARDS & HONORS

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 2013-2014 | University of Washington Technology Teaching Fellowship  |
| 2012      | University of Washington Excellence in Teaching Award Finalist   |
| 2004      | Wesleyan University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M.G. White Award for an Outstanding Honors Thesis</li> <li>• High Honors</li> <li>• Phi Beta Kappa</li> </ul> |

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research is centered on understanding the relationship between teaching as a social justice mission and teaching as a professional practice. As a qualitative researcher, I have studied how teachers' social justice goals translate into their instructional practice, how teacher educators prepare teachers to enact core practices of teaching (e.g. eliciting student ideas), and how novice teachers' enactments of core teaching practices develop over the course of their first year in the classroom. My research entails collecting and analyzing data (video and audio recordings, interviews, artifacts, curricula, etc.) about classroom practice as well as teacher and student learning using a variety of ethnographic methods and analysis techniques across contexts and timescales.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**2012-2014**

***Program Director, Lead Teacher Educator (Secondary ELA), and Research Assistant***

*A University of Washington project funded by the Gates Foundation to Redesign Teach for America's Summer Institute*

College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle, WA & Chicago, IL

- Collaborated with a team to design and run a pilot pre-service teacher education program for TFA. The pilot program supported four hundred pre-service teachers and was organized around a specified set core teaching practices and a specified set of teacher education pedagogies.
- Designed and led a six-month professional development program for teacher coaches in secondary English Language Arts (ELA).
- Designed the curriculum for a six-week, practice-based, intensive ELA Teacher Preparation program. Led a team of eleven ELA teacher educators to implement this curriculum in the pilot program.
- Wrote grant proposals, and collected and analyzed qualitative data for an implementation study of the pilot program.

*Principal Investigator: Morva McDonald*

**2011-2014**

***Project Director***

*Teacher Education by Design (TEDD.org) -- A Gates Foundation Funded Project*

College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

- Managed the funds, personnel, work, and deliverables for the TEDD project. TEDD is a collaborative online space for teacher educators organized around collections of practice-based tools for teacher education in literacy, mathematics, and science. The work also includes collections aimed at supporting teachers to meeting the needs of English language learners.
- Coordinated a team of faculty and graduate students across content to collaborate around the development of a common framework for practice-based pedagogy for teacher education and supervised the production of tools aligned with the common framework
- Coordinated the development of the Teacher Education by Design website, TEDD.org, which houses the project's practice-based tools for teacher education along with a social network of for teacher educators to share and develop practice-based tools.

*Principal Investigator: Tom Stritikus*

**2010-2013**

***Research Assistant***

*University-Accelerated Certification for Teaching (U-ACT) – A Gates Foundation Funded Project*

College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

- Collaborated with Principal Investigators (Cap Peck and Morva McDonald) on the design and implementation of a study investigating practice-based teacher education in the context of an early-entry alternative route. Collaborated on the design of surveys, interview and observation protocols, and data analysis procedures
- Coordinated and conducted qualitative research on the experiences of teacher candidates and faculty in one early-entry alternative route teacher education program.
- Collaborated with the Program Director (Morva McDonald) and team to develop the U-ACT program including design principles, curriculum development, assessment procedures, and pedagogical approaches

*Co-Principal Investigators: Cap Peck and Morva McDonald*

### **2005-2012**

#### ***Writer***

New York Times Learning Network, New York, NY

- Collaborated with New York Times staffers to write weekly lesson plans that use New York Times content to build bridges between Secondary ELA and Social Studies curricula and current world events.

### **2008-2009**

#### ***Program Director***

Middle Grades Partnership, Baltimore, MD

- Recruited and supervised teaching staff, planned and implemented curricular and extra curricular programming, and retained administrative control over the budget of an academic summer program for 75 middle-school aged girls from poverty-impacted schools in Baltimore.

### **2007-2009**

#### ***Teacher***

Garrison Forest School, Owings Mills, MD

- Taught middle school history courses; directed the annual middle school musical; founded and led the Faculty/Staff Gay-Straight Alliance

### **2004-2006**

#### ***Teacher***

The Marin School, Sausalito, CA

- Taught high school courses in history and English Language Arts; directed the drama program; led the Hip Hop Dance club.

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE (University Level)**

Instructor      Seattle Teacher Residency, Elementary Program, Seattle, WA  
*Justice in Practice – A practice based social foundations course*      2014

- Instructor Curriculum and Instruction Program (C&I), College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle, WA  
*Pedagogical Approaches to Practice-Based Teacher Education* 2013
- Instructor University-Accelerated Certification for Teachers (U-ACT), College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle, WA  
*Secondary Humanities Methods* 2011, 2012, 2013, & 2014
- Instructor Secondary Teacher Education Program (STEP), College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle, WA  
*Multicultural Teaching* 2010, 2011, & 2012
- T.A. Curriculum and Instruction Program (C&I), College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle, WA  
*Shaping Learning* 2009 & 2010

## RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

### Chapters in Books

- Kavanagh, S.S. (2012). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in K-12 Education. In Banks, J.A. (Ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education*. Sage.
- Kavanagh, S.S. (2012). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students: Conceptual Approaches in Research Literature. In Banks, J.A. (Ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education*. Sage.
- McDonald, M., Brayko, K. & Kavanagh, S.S. (2012). Service-Learning In Teacher Education. In Banks, J.A. (Ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education*. Sage.
- Kavanagh, S.S. (2011). Haunting Remains: Educating a New American Citizenry at Indian Hill Cemetery. In Boyd, C. E. & Thrush C. (Eds.). *Phantom Past, Indigenous Presence: Native Ghosts in North American Culture and History*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

### Articles in Refereed Journals

- McDonald, M., Kazemi, E. & Kavanagh, S.S. (2013). Core practices and pedagogies of teacher education: A call for a common language and collective activity. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 64, 378-386.

### Talks, Abstracts, and Other Professional Papers Presented

### Invited Addresses

Kavanagh, S.S., (2014, April 4). Justice in practice: Practice-based approaches to teacher education in social foundations. In P. Grossman (Chair), *Enriching research and innovation through the specification of professional practice: The core practice consortium*. AERA Presidential Session. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, PA.

Kavanagh, S.S., (2013, December 3). Justice in Practice: Towards Practice-Based Teacher Education for Social Justice Teaching. Research presentation delivered at Harvard University and invited by the Civic and Moral Education Initiative. Cambridge, MA.

### Refereed Conference Proceedings

Kavanagh, S.S. (Accepted for April, 2015). Justice, practice, and teacher education: Conceptualizing the relationship between core practices, social justice, and pedagogies of teacher education. In K. Hammerness (Chair), *Social foundations for teaching practice*. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Davis, S. & Kavanagh, S.S. (Accepted for March, 2015). Practicing pedagogies: Teacher educator learning of pedagogies of enactment. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Atlanta, GA.

Kavanagh, S.S. (Accepted for March, 2015). Core Practices and Social Justice. In S. Goldin (Chair), *Social foundations for teaching practice*. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Atlanta, GA.

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Kavanagh, S.S. (April 7, 2014). LGBTQ-supportive teaching as a case of social justice teaching practice. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, PA.

Kavanagh, S.S. (March, 2014). Core Practices: Where's Social Justice? In P. Grossman (Chair), *Building a shared understanding for designing and studying practice-based teacher education*. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Indianapolis, IN.

Kavanagh, S.S. & McDonald, M. (April, 2013). Towards practice-based teacher education for social justice teaching. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.

Kavanagh, S.S. (April, 2013). The road from contagious to resilient: A periodization of the empirical literature on LGBTQ issues in education from Stonewall to today. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. San Francisco.

Kavanagh, S. S., & Mikolasy, K. (February, 2013). Teacher education pedagogy: Developing core practices for secondary social studies and English language arts. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Orlando, FL.

Kavanagh, S.S. (2012, April). From Safety to Empowerment: One LGBTQ-Supportive Teacher's Pedagogy of Empowerment. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Vancouver, Canada.

Kavanagh, S.S. (2011, May 20). Phantom Past, Indigenous Presence: Native Ghosts in North American Culture and History Roundtable. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association. Sacramento.

Kavanagh, S.S. (2004, Oct. 30). City of the Dead: Indian Ghosts and Haunting Hegemonies. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Ethnohistory. Chicago.

#### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS/MEMBERSHIPS

AERA, American Educational Research Association  
 AACTE, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education  
 LRA, Literacy Researcher Association